Making the Invisible Hand Visible: Ford Motor Company, Industrial Film, and the Rise of Economic-Organizational Rhetoric

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(English)

at the
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
2014

Date of final oral examination: April 30th, 2014

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ABSTRACT

Making the Invisible Hand Visible: Ford Motor Company, Industrial Film, and the Rise of Economic-Organizational Rhetoric

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This dissertation is a study of the rhetorical work of Ford Motor Company through its industrial films ranging from 1914-1955, and an examination of Ford's contemporary use of the genre to produce messages about the texts and literacies required in the so-called "Fordist" and "Post-Fordist" economies. Drawn primarily from the Ford Film Collection housed at the National Archives, these films make up one of the most expansive and influential collections of a genre—corporate "utility" film—that has garnered increased attention from a number of disciplines as important to answering the questions: "how does the corporation compose?" and "to what ends?" In answering these questions, the project considers how the company overlapped multimodality, constitutive rhetorics (to create "Ford Men"), spatial rhetorics (to depict a "Fordist" nation), rhetorics of authority (the Ford Empire) and posthuman rhetorics (Ford *as* man) to persuade individuals to think of themselves and their communities as extensions of an economic organization over the course of the twentieth century.

Once accumulated, these explorations make up what I have termed "economic-organizational" rhetoric—a rhetoric based on connectivity and circulation (rather than persuasion or identification). I argue that, where traditional approaches have positioned

rhetoric and the act of composing as the work of individuals functioning within political or intellectual rationalities and literacies, the twentieth century has witnessed the rise of an alternative frame in which individuals freely shift between identifying with these traditional civic and social frameworks and with economic rationalities/organizations. This project suggests that this shift in affiliations is no accident or natural historical movement, but the outcome of a particular brand of rhetoric based on making connections to integrate wide swathes of social life and mediate them through economic concepts like "Fordism."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I spent much of this dissertation studying what kind of men and women Ford Motor Company was trying to make through their “organizational” rhetorics. The project covers nearly a century, the spread of “Fordism” around the world, and the impact of “car culture” on the social fabric of the United States. In the end, however, can’t help but reflect that what Ford accomplished pales in comparison to the remarkable and organized effort it has taken to make a productive man out of me. I can only hope to express a fraction of my gratitude to those who have made this possible.

Mom and Dad, let’s face it, in the lottery of life, you were dealt a remarkably peculiar and stunningly disorganized kid. You supported, encouraged, and loved him no matter what. All that I am is because of you, and I can never thank you enough. Ben, thank you for teaching me what it means to be patient and driven, understanding and supportive, smart and ambitious, for being my big brother, my role model, and my friend.

Jim Phelan and Gerald Graff, you each taught me what it was to ask difficult questions, to engage in scholarly work, and to expect more of myself than I thought possible. Morris Young , your candor, humor, and wisdom as an advisor and teacher over the years has been indispensible. Christa Olson, Jim Brown, Mark Longaker, your research and writings are inspiring and have shaped me as a scholar. I am forever grateful that you have each been so generous with your time and support. Brad Hughes, if I grow to be half as capable, kind, and productive as you are each day, I will count myself a grand success. To the writing programs at UW’s Engineering Program, and Roger Williams University, you have taught me what it means to be a supportive and hard-

working professional and allowed me to disappear periodically into my dissertation offering only guidance and support. Thank you.

Michael Bernard-Donals, my advisor and mentor, you taught me to be a consummate professional, let me pursue my otherwise ludicrous plans while offering a balance of stern (and much needed) guidance and open-ended support. You helped me grow not only as a scholar but as a person, I cannot possibly thank you enough for all that you have done for me.

To my friends and colleagues Michael, Peter, Stephanie, 'Doyin, Rachel, Anne, Chris, Elisabeth, Antonio, Christopher, Becca, Annie, Rush, Rebecca, Ruben, Sharon, Ana, Annika, Nancy, there are few greater rewards than getting to work alongside smart, dedicated and just generally wonderful people on a daily basis. Thank you for the years of camaraderie and inspiration.

I have saved my final words for my wife, Katie. You have brought so much joy and meaning to my life—you have been my best friend, my greatest supporter, my motivation, and my refuge. I cannot possibly thank you for all that you have done for me, but I very much look forward to spending the rest of my life trying.

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Chapter One

Rhetoric, Incorporated: Fordism and the Theory of "Economic-Organizational" Rhetoric

The title of this dissertation makes reference to Adam Smith's influential metaphor of the "invisible hand" to highlight a set of rhetorical practices that are concerned with "assemblages" rather than individuals,[1] that produce connection and circulation rather than (more traditionally recognized acts of) persuasion, and that propagate and align with economic rationalities rather than exclusively political notions of citizenship and civics. In this regard, the metaphor represents one small example of an alternative framework for approaching rhetoric than the traditionally "political-communicative" arrangement that has dominated the concept's history, a model I will call over the course of this work "economic-organizational" rhetoric.

Smith's concept, drawn predominantly from its iteration in *The Wealth of Nations* argues that there is a wholly unique subjectivity identifiable as the "economic man" that can be recognized as he primarily "intends only his own gain." Unable to function exclusively as an independent actor, however, Smith argues that "he is in this [act of self interest], as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand" that makes up the primary agent of economic relations (Smith 353). Though much of the focus on this metaphor has drawn concern over the accuracy of the assumed self-centeredness that the theory presents (and thus its effectiveness), my interest in the concept stems from its position as a nearly perfect example of Kenneth Burke's rhetorical principle of "consubstantiation."

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[1] The term "assemblage" is borrowed here from the "assemblage theory" derived from the works of Humberto Maturana and Francis Varela, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and Niklas Luhmann. Collectively, an assemblage works not through individual cognition or volition, but through collective action.

Serving as one half of Burke's model for rhetorical practices designed to generate "identification," consubstantiation suggests that individuals come into being "both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with one another" ("Grammar" 21). Burke further suggests that it is rhetorical practices designed to both affiliate and distinguish individuals with and from one another that make this seemingly contradictory arrangement possible. Articulating a similar principle, Smith suggests that economic networks only work when all parties understand or intuit what mutually beneficial wares or services they have to trade and, in turn, accept why they must inherently act in certain ways when exchanging these wares. In this collective manner, the force of their choices ensures "equilibrium" that embodies the institutional arrangement of "the market."

In this way, the actual agent that Smith's economic theory posits is something of a hive-mind, a collection of individuals working in coordination to generate (often unintended) suasive forces on one another that keeps the economic system functioning. This highlights a wholly different apparatus for understanding agency than the "ontotheological humanism" that has undergirded much of rhetoric's history.[2] In pairing this cornerstone of modern economics' ethos with the principal of consubstantiation, I hope to highlight just how important the rhetorical work that undergirds what Burke identified as "people in their forming and reforming of congregations" or, what modern rhetoricians have taken to calling the formation of a communicative "ecology" have been

[2] In their work on considering the traditional position of the writer, Christian Lundberg and Joshua Gunn have warned against such a "characteristically theistic doctrine of rhetorical agency" that "yokes agency and agent in the service of an ontotheological humanism". Working, then, to uncouple theories of agency from being the "possession of an agent" they argue that rhetoricians must recognize "the possibility that the specter of language and other ghosts move us more than we know" (Lundberg and Gunn 88).

in making economic relations so central to the daily lives of so many ("Attitudes" i). In turn, this process of economizing everyday life provides ample opportunities to consider relatively new territory for rhetorical analysis that takes place in a system based on distributed rationality.

In order to better understand the role that such economic "consubstantiality" plays in this process, however, this work contests another feature of Smith's account—the idea that such a "hand" (as metaphor for assemblage) is primarily "invisible."[3] Taking Smith's use of visibility quite literally, and pairing the concept with a lengthy case study, this work analyzes rhetorical patterns in Ford Motor Company's industrial motion pictures from 1914 to 1955 as they worked to generate the discourse of "Fordism," concluding with a reflection on their continued use in contemporary settings.

The notion of "Fordism," then, is treated as an accumulated set of consubstantial discourses that dominated the trajectory of capitalism for much of the twentieth century but also as a case study in the confluence of rhetoric, visual culture, and economic rationalities. I argue that visual artifacts are integral to the emergence of economic ideology, particularly in light of the ability for these artifacts to generate connection and circulation between the ideas and images depicted therein.

From the earliest inception of its Motion Picture Laboratory in 1914 to its YouTube channel today, Ford Motor Company has taken up the idea of providing "ways of seeing" a full system of production, exchange, and valuation as it intersects with the

[3] Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar have argued that this is precisely what sets Marxism apart as a system of economic analysis stating that, "What Smith did not see, through a weakness of vision, Marx sees: what Smith did not see was perfectly visible, and it was because it was visible that Smith could fail to see it while Marx could see it" ("Reading" 169).

everyday actions of individuals.[4] In turn, these artifacts have invited their viewers to accept and take part in sets of collective action that ultimately make up the "Fordist" marketplace that dominated much of the twentieth century. It is, in part, for this reason that the company developed not just into one of the largest and most powerful corporate figures in the world, but an extensive metaphor for understanding the social patterns that appeared on a global level throughout the twentieth century.

In this way, Ford's motion picture work suggests that the guiding "hands" of economic ideology are not invisible at all; rather, they are the result of expansive and very much visible systems of rhetorical practice reliant on depicting the circulation and connectivity of particular tropes and ideologies to the public. They suggest that individuals come into being as iterations of an "economic man" only insofar as they have been persuaded to do so through the structure of a mass production regime (the same will ultimately be said of economic spaces and powers as well).

Once collected, the work of analyzing the films that depict this expansion of economic rationality attempts to weave together two separate threads—the first, a historical narrative of one of the most influential multinational corporations of the twentieth century engaging in the rhetorical work of making an economic paradigm visible; the second, the historical rise of alternative economic and organizational rationalities as increasingly integral frames for understanding rhetorical action. The

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[4] John Berger's theories of "ways of seeing" through cinema (and its subsequent theoretical legacy are important contributors to this work. For Berger, in viewing visual artifacts, the spectator develops subjectivity through their "gaze" thereby fusing individualized acts of viewing with expansive cultural narratives. Once carried to the concept of "publicity" in a capitalist system of economics, I argue, this produces categories of economic man that come into being by engaging in economic ways of seeing.

remainder of this work is, thus, twofold in nature. On the one hand, in David Zarefsky's terms, this dissertation became a "rhetorical study of historical events," related to the role of rhetoric in the rise of the economic formations deemed "Fordism" and "Post-Fordism." The trajectory of this history analyzes the expansion of Fordist principles from "Ford Men," to "Fordist Nation," and finally to a globally applied "Fordist Empire" as they get articulated in the company's film work. On the other hand, the work serves as a "history of rhetorical events" which have staged and performed the legitimization of economic and organizational rationalities like the "invisible hand" and "Fordism" (Zarefsky 24).

Over the course of four subsequent chapters, the notion of economic-organizational rhetoric is applied to some of the field of Rhetoric and Composition's most familiar narratives spanning notions of the constitutive (in chapter 2), the spatial (in chapter 3), the authoritative (in chapter 4), and concludes by considering the place of these ideas in a set of emerging "posthuman" rhetorical and economic frameworks (in chapter 5). Thus, more than just a theoretical inquiry into an alternative way of thinking beyond the individual, this work takes up a case study that explores *how* tropes of circulation and connection get articulated through artifacts and, thus, what role rhetoric plays in the production of the assembled and forceful economic "hands" that permeate throughout the lived world.

This approach will also organize the remainder of the present chapter into three sections—the first concerned with laying out the methodological and historical context for this work, the second considers a more immediately textual notion of "incorporative" rhetorics that generate the larger apparatus of "economic-organizational" rhetoric, and

finally it presents the implications of this genealogical case study on theory in Rhetoric and Composition.[5]

Manufacturing Modalities: Ford Motion Picture Laboratories and Visual Culture

In 1908, Ford Motor Company was a small, but developing, automotive manufacturer on the north side of Detroit, Michigan devoted to creating a piece of hobbyist machinery used primarily for recreational racing. By 1911 the recorded number of cars sold in the United States was just over 200,000, by 1921 the number had ballooned to just under 1.7 million—55% of which were Fords. Economists and social theorists have been attempting to explain how over the course of a decade, a company devoted to building cars not only expanded so rapidly, but became one of the great social and political metaphors of an age in the process (Banham 99).

For economists, the company's rapid ascension is generally considered the result of a number of revolutionary material innovations working together to define a new category of mass production-oriented organization: the moving assembly line, vertically integrated factories, profit-sharing models of wage distribution, and the investor-oriented corporate structure. Out of these innovations, Fordism became shorthand for a very basic and effective arrangement: produce commodities through mass, uniform production practices and pay workers enough to buy the fruits of their collective labor. The ensuing "unwritten deal" between capital and labor would become the model for nearly a century of economic output in the United States predicated on "rising quality of life" exchanged

[5] As an early, makeshift definition, "incorporative rhetoric" is a set of rhetorical practices that depict connectivity and circulation between individuals, objects, and institutions.

for a "quiescent labor force" mediated through the circulation of capital (Gabriel and Lang 10).

Accompanying these economic relations, however, was a vast "mode of regulation" consisting of "an ensemble of norms, institutions, organizational forms, social networks, and patterns of conduct" (Jessop 62).[6] In this frame, over the course of the 20th century, and the earliest decades of the 21st, Ford Motor Company functioned as both a powerful rhetorical and disciplinary actor, a representative for the ebbs and flows of global capitalism, and a metaphor for the rise of organizational logics and ontologies. Its story has been positioned as a classic example of Michel Foucault's disciplinary "episteme" (McKinlay and Wilson), Thomas Kuhn's "paradigm" materialized (Lipietz, Roobeek), as the subject matter through which Antonio Gramsci fleshed out the term "hegemony" (Gramsci), as Max Weber's "bureaucratic" nightmare (Ray and Reed), and an ideal case for studying Karl Marx and Joseph Schumpeter's separate accounts of "creative destruction" (Paz et al. 10).

I hope to add to this extensive list of affiliations an approach to the phenomenon, noting that the concept is also the legacy of a set of very real and circulated artifacts designed to generate both economic paradigm and "mode of regulation." Put more succinctly, I treat Fordism as foundationally a rhetoric working to circulate a particular framework for human action through many acts of public address—none more integral than the motion picture.

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[6] Much like Jessop, in the introduction of Post-Fordism: A Reader, Ash Amin explains that the "regulation school" has traditionally taken up an epistemological account of Ford's practices via "institutions and conventions which "regulate" and reproduce a given accumulation regime through application across a wide range of areas, including law, state policy, political practices, industrial codes, governance philosophies, rules of negotiation and bargaining, cultures of consumption and social expectations" (Amin 8).

The artifacts that tell this rhetorical history are drawn primarily from the Ford Motor Company Motion Picture Collection housed at the U.S. National Archives. Featuring over 1.5 million feet of film (now recorded to video cassette) the archive provides a remarkably complete set of artifacts spanning the work of an industrial film department from 1914 until 1955 (Bray 1). Additional films have been drawn from the digital holdings of the Rick Prelinger Archives housed in San Francisco and from the modest holdings of films still being held at the Benson Ford Research Center in Dearborn, Michigan. I have also, as much as possible, attempted to construct context for these films by viewing the tropes produced by Ford's films as the result of what Michael Warner has identified as a "concatenation of texts through time" that accompanied the serial nature of Ford's film releases (Warner 62).

In this way, where sociology may locate Fordism in the 1914 formation of the company's sociological department, and economists in the implementation of the moving assembly line/profit sharing in the same year, a rhetorical history of Fordism" begins with the appearance of the Ford Motion Picture Laboratories. A matter of historical significance in the development of visual culture in the United States, Ford Motor Company opened its Motion Picture Laboratories, one of the first in-house corporate film departments of its kind, in April of 1914. A close friend to Thomas Edison (who had been dabbling with the medium since the early 1890's), Henry Ford was intrigued by the new technology, particularly for its potential use in the education and training of his workers. As the work of the Laboratory progressed, however, these films were increasingly used to circulate messages about the nature of the company to the public in the form of short, newsreel-styled and weekly installments (Lewis).

Developing into one of the period's largest producers and distributors of motion pictures, the impact of these films stretches well beyond their commercial and entertainment value to play an integral role in proliferating Fordist ideologies and creating a cohesive narrative from the permutations of an emerging set of new economic relations at the time. In their earliest form, these films were distributed for free to schools, YMCA's, community centers, and movie theaters across the country as serial (often weekly) installments. By Ford's estimates, over the first six years of the laboratory's distribution (1914 to 1920) Ford's films were shown in over 4,000 theaters to five million people, or "roughly one-seventh of the nation's weekly movie-going audience," translated into eleven different languages and shown internationally (Lewis 117).[7] Through the work of this department, an individual could come to understand the connections between social relations and a new system of economic institution represented by Ford Motor Company.

An important trendsetter in corporate public address, in the wake of the appearance of these reels, fellow industrial magnates would begin producing, or contracting others to produce, this genre of "utility" films and the medium quickly developed into the mode-du-jour for these companies. By 1961, roughly the time when television fully replaced motion picture as the dominant medium of public address, Ford Motor Company alone captured an annual film audience of 64,000,000 (and it was, by that point, a distant second to General Motors in terms of public exposure) (Dunn 11). Yet, until very recently, these utility films have been a relatively forgotten footnote in

[7] In a more generous (and likely Ford-sponsored) account, Sarah T. Bushnell wrote in 1922 that "[Ford's educational pictures are shown in seventy per cent of our country's theaters," any school that should request them for educational purposes, as well as "Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Japan, China, Alaska and other countries" (Bushnell 192-194).

histories working to explain the rise of Fordism, the role of rhetoric in modern economic relations, and visual culture in the United States.

Reversing this oversight, Vizenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau have recently argued that industrial and utility films of this kind have served as a set of important "*interfaces* between discourses and forms of social and industrial organization" in which "what is at stake…is the complex interrelationship of visuality, power, organization and specifically how film as a medium creates the preconditions for forms of knowledge and social practice" (Hediger 11). As I work to "read" these films as "*interfaces*" throughout this dissertation, what develops is a "genealogy" of economic power. These early films were meant to make and remake conceptions of particular ideas and material settings in ways that fit in more clearly with the goals and practices of mass industrial production.

As rhetorical artifacts, I add, these films suggest that seeing/perception plays an integral role in the formation of new economic paradigms specifically by bridging the gap between important nodes that appear throughout rhetorical theory: ideology and performance, *phronesis* and *techne*, what Burke called the production of the "imagined" and the "bureaucratization of the imagination" ("Attitudes" 42). They are, in this regard, not only important historical artifacts in the development of visual culture in the United States, but also integral examples of economic (or economizing) rhetoric at work.

Turning more directly to the artifacts themselves, figures 1 and 2 present two screenshots captured from motion pictures filmed by Ford nearly a century apart. Figure 1 features a black and white, silent, analog film from 1914 that depicts the manual application of wheels and mirrors to a Ford Model T (fig. 1). Figure 2 is a digitally captured and distributed film from 2006 depicting two workers installing a complex

computerized unit into the central console of a Ford sports utility vehicle. Strikingly similar in their treatment of the laboring body, and in spite of the century that separates these films, these images function as fragments of nearly-identical visual narratives about the identity of a company, its role in shaping human relations toward economic ends, and the place of visual public address in this process (fig. 2).

Each image is only one in hundreds in their respective films, and each of their respective films are single entries in far more expansive networks of texts—visual or otherwise. In this way, these images serve as bookend artifacts that represent the nearly century-long relationship the American public has held with visual depictions of the consubstantial principle that is "Fordism." Because of the remarkable quantity of films held in the archives, the analyses included in this work are not exhaustive of the archive's holdings, but representative. I have attempted to identify films that represent consistent themes (sub-genres) in the collection and treat these analyses as synecdochal. These sub-genres span a wide variety of subjects—labor films, consumption films, travelogues, product planning films and, eventually, a collected set of digital shorts on company identity collected into a genre termed "brand journalism"—that all contribute to the production of the more expansive notion of "Fordism."

One reason for this method is to prevent an outlier from being positioned as central to Ford's rhetorical strategies. Secondarily, because it is impossible to fully unearth the significance of Ford's films without addressing their serial and intertextual nature, this approach allows for observation of evolving sub-genres and themes across time and texts. My goal, then, in reading these films, is to identify thematic threads that connect many artifacts into one cohesive narrative, as well as many ideas, objects, bodies,

and institutions into a unified, recognizable, and practicable paradigm (the production of what Gerard Genette has described as "architexture"—a process that will make up the focus of Chapter Two).

The primary communicative "thread" to emerge from these collective readings is a notion I will call acts of "incorporative rhetoric," and aim to lay out in greater detail in the next section. Defining rhetoric as "incorporative" plays on the dual nature of the term. On one hand to incorporate identifies a broad process through which one is made from many (respectively, an assembly line from the work of many laborers, "car culture" from the alignment of many economized spaces, corporate sovereignty from the collection of individual agency), on the other hand, "incorporation" in the specific context of economics defines the formation of a legally recognized entity. In this manner, rhetorics designed to "incorporate" work to generate connection and circulation between persons, objects, and ideas while also generating the culturally salient figure of the corporation in the process.

Alan Trachtenberg's work has already considered the historical importance of the term "incorporation" in steering American culture with remarkable detail (Trachtenberg). Yet, David Shumway has subsequently argued that such work is further evidence of a deep want to maintain Emersonian individuality at the center of cultural studies. Here, I attempt to modify the former's work to better account for the concerns of the latter. Rather than providing a purely theoretical account of the concept as rhetorical up front, however, I will begin with one brief but representative example of incorporative rhetoric at work in Ford's film canon.

Readin', 'Ritin', and 'Rithmetic: Incorporative Rhetoric and the rise of Industrial Education

Drawn from the "Civics and Citizenship" section of the Ford Educational Library, the 1919 film titled *Democracy in Education* provides a simple, clear, and early example of "incorporative rhetoric" at work. Likely drawing its name and inspiration from John Dewey's 1916 publication of *Democracy and Education*, the film reifies the recently popularized notions that "public" knowledge could be deeply ingrained in the construction of healthy national identity and thus a thriving nation could be achieved through education. Notably, the company's films often played directly on circulating public discourses in this manner.

In the fervor to fulfill the ambitious democratizing potential of public education outlined by Dewey, religious, national, and economic interests all lay claim to the potential outcomes of making education compulsory at the turn of the twentieth century.[8] Not to miss out on the opportunity afforded by such a movement, the focus of Ford's film production shifted in 1916 from a news-oriented "Ford Animated Weekly" to "Ford Educational Weekly" meant to introduce the public in matters of industrially-oriented "common" knowledge. By the time *Democracy and Education* was released, the films from "Ford Educational Weekly" were collected into the Ford Educational Library that could be sold or leant to local schools, community centers, and prisons and formed a kind of travelling course in industrial ideology.

Generating a narrative that mirrored traditional discourses of Progressive education, *Democracy and Education* began by fusing its storyline with that of a

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[8] In 1914, for example, a government commission formed to study the feasibility of a national system of trade schools reported that such a system would "have increased the wage-earning capacity of [its graduates] by ten cents a day" and reduced "a waste of wages, through lack of training, amounting to $6,250,000 every day, or $1,875,000,000 nationally" (Dodd 475).

fledgling nation declaring, via a text-based slide, that "In the early days of our country the labors and hardships of pioneer life in the open developed a sturdy race of resourceful, independent, clear-thinking men, who rebelled against tyranny." Juxtaposed with this written narrative are early icons of Americana—the flag-bearing fife and drum corps of the Revolution, the Constitution, and a pioneer's log cabin. The film then shifts this narrative into economic terms by declaring that "the new republic grew, prospered and became a rich, mighty nation." Visually, this maturation process from fledgling "republic" to recognizable "nation" is further developed in economic terms as both linguistically "rich" and visually "mighty" through the images of urbanization and industrialization (the film presents a non-descript skyscraper to counterpose earlier images of the frontier log cabin).[9]

Retaining these nationalist impulses, the film then pivots to recognize the global reconstruction process following World War I by arguing that "when the war of force shall be no more, a new struggle will arise, a battle of wits and diplomacy—but selfish lust for wealth and power will ever do its best to obstruct human progress." In the scene which follows this constructed exigence, the ideas of "wits and diplomacy" end up looking a good deal like acts of laboring, class, and wealth generation on a national level through mass production—and here we find what is, perhaps, one of the clearest examples of "incorporative" rhetoric at work in Ford's film canon. What would follow this carefully laid out framework for positioning education as a matter of national interest was a series of appeals that worked to establish the nation itself as a fundamentally economic entity. In a set of call and response integrations of text and images the three

[9] As chapter two will further unpack, images of homes and buildings become one of Ford Film's most frequented tropes.

fundamental R's of education are not directly associated with the classroom, but with commerce (fig. 3).

After the declaration that "school training must result in the development of those qualities which are essential both to the happiness of the individual and to the strength and vitality of the nation" the word "Readin'" (via a title slide) is visually recast as keeping up with the news. The image directly associated with attaining literacy consists of six individuals reading newspapers on two park benches—one for men, the other for women. The overall effect of this scene is twofold: on the one hand literacy practices become incorporated into vestiges of citizenship, on the other, the premise of a crowded area of well-to-do individuals spending their free time remaining informed about national news denotes the potential to join a sizeable class already engaging in civic awareness through their literate practices—thus championing both class and citizenship as outcomes of literacy acquisition (Wan).

Next "'ritin" is followed by images of Ford executives signing a military contract and posing with uniformed officers. The implications of the smiling group chronicling a major industrial/national merger is the suggestion that writing itself allows an individual access to contractual relations and the new form of economic output. The "R" that garners the most attention in this series however is "'rithmetic," which becomes closely associated with engineering. The images juxtaposed with this concept feature a man puzzling over a set of blueprints as he stands in front of the wooden frame of a building. He then takes up a ledger and begins to calculate—periodically glancing up at the structure. The shot then cuts to a close-up of the man's equations as they are being

written on the page depicting both the complexity and detailed nature of knowing how to write with numbers.

Here we see the two most important elements of “incorporative rhetoric”: the formation of apparent connections between disparate ideas to create a single network of coordinated concepts and the embodiment of these connected ideas by individuals (notably, none of whom are school children). By aligning narratives of national development, post-war systems of justice, and the production of industrial skill sets with economic sensibilities, the film effectively “incorporates” the collective of individuals, objects, and institutions into a narrative of primarily economic proportions. In this sense, the term highlights the necessarily consubstantial and performative nature of economic development in the period.

By the end of the film, public education has been charged with the task of developing the skills of “self-direction, self-appraisal, [and] self-control.” In other words, the film works primarily to affiliate public knowledge with those mental and bodily features most closely associated with life on the production line. The film then argues that it is only through the formation of these attributes that the American way of life can prosper (a notion driven home more overtly in the 1922 re-release of the film which depicts a troop of Boy Scouts assembling a wagon collectively, much in the way a Model T would be put together before the appearance of the moving assembly line).

In sum, *Democracy and Education* develops into a more expansive historical narrative which affiliates “America” and “American” as a trope that can (and must) be upheld by systems of public education while also contesting the manner in which “American,” “history,” and “society,” can be understood as extensions of mass

production paradigms; presenting notions of productivity, cultural uniformity, and economic prosperity as iterations of more traditional conceptions of deliberation, democracy, and civic engagement. This example has presented a very localized form of "incorporative rhetoric" in that its purpose is to incorporate systems of economic production and national ethos through structures of education through the work of a single text. Compounding this individual act of "incorporative rhetoric," however, *Democracy and Education* functioned as only a small part of a rapidly growing deluge of films and materials fulfilling the public's conditioned fascination with seeing and understanding its economy.

From a historical perspective, this rhetorical tension between the political and the economic flares up particularly in times of great upheaval repeatedly throughout the twentieth century. In this case, Ford developed a narrative that worked off of the circulating discourses of Progressive education that had been thrown into massive restructuring in the face of the Deweyan push for an educated polis. Providing logical connections between democratic impulses and mass production sensibilities, Ford's *Democracy and Education* provided one potential vision of how a public education system might be oriented.

In a similar pattern, subsequent chapters are organized around the visual public address of Ford Motor Company in relation to rebuilding national infrastructure (both material and social) in the context of wider discourses of Progressivism, The Great Depression, World War II and, most recently, the recession of 2008. In each of these contexts, Ford Motor Company is shown deploying "incorporative" rhetoric to re-systematize disrupted order to better align with economic rationalities and here-to-for

Fordist practices. Through this recursive reading of Ford's many overlapping visual acts of "incorporative rhetoric" we can see the role that such a set of "ways of seeing" played in the gradual emergence of economic and organizational rationalities as fundamental to the everyday lives of American citizens.

The present project is not, however, exclusively concerned with accounting for how such a set of visual artifacts played an integral role in shaping social relations in the United States. It is also concerned with drawing theoretical conclusions about rhetorical practice from this historical case that are applicable to contemporary scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition. Ford's films must be understood, I argue, as acts of economic-organizational rhetoric designed and disseminated to generate connection and circulation between many disparate ideas and objects (for example, in the case of *Democracy in Education*, literacy and industrial production are conjoined through visual narrative). In this way, there is a second history that I am concerned with in designing the present work: a history of thought in the field of Rhetoric and Composition.

Part Two: Treating Fordism As a Case in the Historical Study of "Economic-Organizational" Rhetoric

Despite the seemingly non-traditional nature of this project for a scholar working in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, its origins stemmed directly from narratives of the field's historical development. My original interest in Ford Motor Company and economic rhetorics began with a reading of James Berlin's *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures*, an integral text in the development of Rhetoric and Composition over the last twenty years.[10] In this way, the process of unpacking the historical narrative put forward

[10] To say the concept gained traction in the field would be a vast understatement: the book won the 1998 CCCC Outstanding Book Award, had an issue of JAC devoted to unpacking its implications, and has been positioned as a core text in developing the

by films like *Democracy and Education* is also an opportunity to reconsider the trajectory of the field—particularly as it has often skewed or excluded both economic and organizational frameworks for its subject matter. Taking this opportunity, the second half of this opening chapter hopes to work through the alternative forms of rhetorical theory taking place in this dissertation.

An integral figure in opening the way for considerations of economic ideology and rhetoric, Berlin suggested that fundamental changes in production and employment practices, more commonly deemed a move from "Fordism" to "Post-Fordism,"[11] had caused "disruptions [that] call for radically new responses at every level of our experience" (41). Out of these disruptions, he argued, developed an era in which worker/citizens must learn "flexibility," "innovation," and how to deal with "media-proliferated images" in order to function in a rapidly shifting global economy (41).

On this foundation, Berlin proposed that scholars and teachers of Rhetoric and Composition (and English more broadly) must consider their work the practice of identifying, critiquing, and teaching others to deal with deeply rooted and hegemonic ideologies as they appear embedded in written texts—a process he termed the "social-epistemic" model for rhetoric and writing. By understanding the textual nature of epistemic change, he argued, students of rhetoric and writing will gain a level of flexibility in understanding the demands on their communicative practices given periodic

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trajectory of the last two decades of practice and theory in Rhetoric and Composition (Hawk).

[11] Traditionally, Fordism accounts for mass production of commodities by many unskilled laborers performing the same task under the management of skilled supervisors while Post-Fordism accounts for many semi-skilled workers who perform many tasks and manage themselves in team settings.

shifts in social and economic discourses and, thus, set in motion a cultural turn in the field.[12]

Very much a text grounded in its time, in spite of this call for attention to "media-proliferated images," the social-epistemic classroom laid out in *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures* remained focused primarily on written texts circulated in traditional formats (newspapers, magazines, and fiction particularly). Despite his attention to the impact of wider economic conditions on rhetorical and compositional practices, Berlin's suggestions for rhetorical analyses were relatively standard in their treatment of textual exegesis. Finally, despite its recognition that late capitalism was an important and theoretically rich context for understanding reading and writing as cultural constructs, *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures* appealed to the more widely accepted cultural and Marxist turn going on in the humanities at the time and left the economic concerns that brought about the inquiry itself relatively tangential to the actual work of social-epistemic rhetoric.

For Byron Hawk, these decisions had a deep and lasting impact on the trajectory of the field. He argues that, "as Berlin accepts a Marxist framework for his politics and writing pedagogy, language and ideology become a more central element in his

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[12] En route to making such a contribution to rhetorical theory, Berlin accomplished three tasks with *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures* that I intended to emulate in this project. On one hand, he provided an integral theoretical bridge to span the millennia old tension between the rhetorical and the economic by framing rhetorical practices as extensions of much more expansive economic paradigms. On the other hand, in creating a theory of "social-epistemic" rhetoric, Berlin's work highlighted a world in which multiple "models" of rhetoric not only exist, but circulate and alternate in near-constant relation to one another.[12] Finally, he converted all of this into an organizational structure through the apparatus of English Departments by developing an effective pedagogy of "social-epistemic" rhetoric. More than just catalyst, then, Berlin's work also serves as a model for the intentions of the work at hand—though I only replicate the first two elements of his process here (saving the pedagogical step for later day).

epistemological maps, a turn that ultimately excludes vitalist or bodily epistemologies in favor of more mind-centered pedagogies that focus on unmasking false consciousness" (Hawk xx).[13] More than just omitting the immediate material and bodily rhetoric surrounding text-mediated realities, this "mind-centered" vision of the cultural turn in the field also redirected the focus of the turn from Fordism to Post-Fordism away from their immediate reference points in economic rationality and history and the accumulation of massive institutional actors in economic contexts.

Like Hawk, I walked away from Berlin's text with a number of questions—mine concerned with the relationship between rhetoric, writing, and the economic paradigm. I became concerned with why, in the face of a grand economic narrative like "Fordism," hadn't the field been equally interested in taking an "economic" turn?[14] Before appearing in this context, how had Fordism become a phenomenon powerful enough to affect so much of daily life in the first place? Was this purported shift to Post-Fordism not, in itself, a narrative and one worthy of closer attention? If so, what sorts of rhetorics were sending one cultural apparatus packing and constructing another in its place? Were there other "models" out there for thinking about rhetoric that might help to explain these developments?

These questions gesture toward the second reason I arrived at Adam Smith's "invisible hand" as the moniker for this work: its integral position in what can be considered a philosophy of economic thought that has been traditionally excluded from models of rhetorical action. It is also these questions that led me, in time, to Ford's films.

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[13] Locke Carter has similarly lamented the dominance of Marxist frameworks within Rhetoric and Composition's treatments of economy in her work *Market Matters*.

[14] Dierdre McCloskey had been calling for economics to take a rhetorical turn for nearly a decade by that point.

In answering such questions, I see the present rhetorical history of Ford Motor Company as a supplement to Byron Hawk's project of questioning what has been lost in the historical trajectory of the field (Counterhistory). Thus, I hope to answer a fundamental question in the following sections: "what would it mean to, rather than castigating economic rationalities out of the purview of rhetoric, simply study them as rhetorically complex narratives?"

In one sense, the impetus for such a question reaches all the way back to the discipline's historically specific narrative stemming from, as Susan Jarratt has put it "the power of a simple moral contrast between the Sophists and Plato/Aristotle [that] has infected the history of thought for centuries" (Jarratt 2). At the very heart of this contrast is Plato's consistent lambasting of the Sophists precisely for their acceptance of money in exchange for knowledge and Aristotle's divisions between the "good life" and *chrematistic* life (a life in pursuit of profits). From these origins, the field of Rhetoric and Composition has developed one of the oldest and best documented cases of an institutional narrative that places notions of the economic on one side of an ethical divide while positioning its work on the other as a corrective to the damage done by economic activity.[15]

It is not surprising, then, that the rhetorical work of economies and economic actors have often been cast out of serious consideration by scholars in Rhetoric and Composition as either the production of a "false" consciousness, ideological apparatuses

[15] Such a narrative was articulated, for example, by Pierre Bourdieu as he argued that "a necessary outcome of the intersection of the two principles of division which are at work in all class-divided societies-the division between the dominant and the dominated, and the division between the different factions competing for dominance in the name of different principles, *Illjarnus (warriors)* and *oratores (scholars)* in feudal society, businessmen and intellectuals now" ("Classes" 22).

or simply the domain of Marketing and Public Relations disciplines. As a result, these scholars have generated intellectual relationships with the narratives of social critics like David Harvey, Harry Braverman, and Mark Rupert to the work of economists like Joseph Stiglitz, Immanuel Wallerstein, and John R. Commons. The latter, however, have introduced deeply rhetorical notions like "information asymmetries,"[16] "World Systems Theory,"[17] and "institutional economics"[18] as ways of explaining the internal dynamics of economic activity in greater depth than the "self-interest" thesis that has pigeon-holed rhetoric's treatment of economics. More than just limiting the kinds of interdisciplinary links the field was willing to make, the construction of such a stringent binary meant excluding many ideas strictly through their affiliation with economic rationality.

Perhaps the most pertinent example of the limiting nature of this traditional binary to the present project appears in the field's discussions over how to treat the visual and the multimodal. Bruce McComiskey, in "Visual Rhetoric and the New Public Discourse,"

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[16] Joseph Stiglitz explains these asymmetries as "An essential feature of a decentralized market economy is that different people know different things… For instance, even if an individual has no more information about his ability than potential employers, the moment he goes to work for a specific employer, an information asymmetry has been created-the employer may now know more about the individual's ability than others do. A consequence is that the "used labor" market may not work well" (Stiglitz 469-470).

[17] In Hopkins' and Wallerstein's "world systems" model, the global economy is made up of six institutional "vectors": the interstate system, the structure of world production, the structure of the world labour force, the patterns of world human welfare, the social cohesion of states, and the structures of knowledge" (2). Wallerstein goes on to define nature of hegemony in the formation of a world system as, in part, a state's ability to offer "certain extra advantages for enterprises located within it or protected by it, advantages not accorded by the 'market' but obtained through political pressure" (Hopkins and Wallerstein 4).

[18] John R. Commons argued in "New Methods of Democracy" that "The new individualism is based on the fact that individuals to a great extent, are joined together in associations, and that it is these associations that participate in government" (Commons 4).

points out that one of the casualties of the rhetoric/economic divide was serious consideration of visual culture itself.

Turning to one of McComiskey's prime examples of such a legacy, he notes Douglass Kellner's previously unchallenged assertion that commercials as "artifacts of the culture industries have assumed tremendous cultural power; they are part of a cultural apparatus which has produced increasing privatization, commercialization, and reification of our culture that has led to a decline of individuality, community, citizenship and democracy" (Kellner 79). Ultimately, circumventing such a decline will require the field to "empower individuals to become more autonomous agents, able to emancipate themselves from contemporary forms of domination and able to become more active citizens, eager and competent to engage in processes of social transformation" (63).

Thus, for past rhetoricians, an artifact like *Democracy and Education*—a film produced by one of the world's largest companies to persuade its viewers to align with its interests—represented primarily a pariah in the communicative landscape, a fragment of the "culture industries," and an enemy of individual freedom. I have argued the film presents an interesting permutation of rhetorical practice designed to generate connection between the traditionally democratic and economic. Similar assumptions appear in the work of David Sheridan, Jim Ridolfo, and Anthony Michel as they argue that in order to pursue a truly multimodal public "citizens need to critique the logics of profit and consumerism that enforce overly narrow understanding of multimodality and technologies associated with it" (Sheridan 812). Drawing this distinction out further, they suggest that far from the overt consumerism often associated with advertising,

"rhetorical education needs…to re-imagine multimodal rhetoric as a tool for addressing public concerns" (812).

For McComiskey, these arguments are problematic on several counts. He argues that painting the potential for a mode like the visual with such a broad brush vastly underestimates the potential for it to hold multiple ideologies, for its uptake to serve more than just the powerful, and reduces the mode to a purely receptive concept (that is, Kellner assumes in his account that consumers cannot yield the visual to become producers as well).[19] I ask the same question of the economic.

McComiskey further argues that such work has also assumed that images *must* be perceived as reflections of absolute reality, thus positing an ignorant public being duped into cooperation by smoke and mirrors captured in visual artifacts. Extending this to the economic, this assumption precludes the possibility of a public that recognizes the "privatized" narratives embedded in such multimodal texts as fictionalized that also remains willing to find creative ways for integrating these private narratives with alternative models for identification and sociality.

In this context, the story of Fordism's visual rhetoric calls attention to why focusing on shallow accounts of "logics of profits and consumerism" ignores a far richer ecology of rhetorical work that both constitutes and disseminates human action in an economic frame. A film like *Democracy and Education* highlights that economies are

[19] By extension, this argument applies to the original articulation of "culture industries" by Adorno and Horkheimer as they argued that "The sound film, far surpassing the theatre of illusion, leaves no room for imagination or reflection on the part of the audience, who is unable to respond within the structure of the film, yet deviate from its precise detail without losing the thread of the story; hence the film forces its victims to equate it directly with reality" ("Culture Industry" 126-127). In rejecting this principle as reductive, I hope to continue the process of revisiting economic narratives as deeply rhetorical rather than inherently hegemonic.

written, they are full of writing (though not all of it print), and economics—as the explanatory methodology for making sense of these economies—need not remain cast as a callous mechanism for quantifying modernist value systems, an abstracted enemy of "citizenship," nor a deeply rooted mechanism for funneling wealth and power to an economic elite. Instead, economics serves as an attempt to make sense of an aggregate of living and unpredictable individuals, resources, and heuristics that garner meaning from the relationality that exists between them through systems of exchange and scarcity. Rhetoricians surely have an important role to play in the analysis of such a project (of which greed and uneven development are certainly very salient parts).

Additionally, the present rhetorical history of Ford Motor Company establishes that there are very real and traceable explanations for why the visual and the economic have developed in such tightly knit quarters. The present history serves as evidence that the field will be able to provide more useful treatments of the economic if it works toward models that attempt to identify and explain the nature of economic discourses rather than positioning them as inherently hegemonic and un-rhetorical figures.

Rhetoric and Composition is a more diverse field now than when *Rhetoric, Poetics, and Cultures* was published nearly two decades ago. As such, I argue, the field is poised (and more willing, perhaps) to give a more dynamic account of how economies are both composed and provide alternative frames and rationalities for composing. In the next section, I am indelibly aided in the process of answering the questions outlined in this section (and thus creating a more positive, explanatory account of economic rhetoric) by the many works which have expanded the scope of practice and theory in Rhetoric and Composition since Berlin's context—particularly theories of multimodality, materialist

rhetorics, ecological rhetoric and, above all, the expanded approaches that have directly taken up rhetoric in an economic frame.

Of Marx and McCloskey: What Are "Economic" Rhetorics?

Drawing from the legacy of Dierdre McCloskey's work in *The Rhetoric of Economics*, the discourse surrounding economic rhetoric has positioned traditional models of rhetorical criticism as a set of useful heuristics for understanding how economists persuade using literary conventions. In this line of scholarship, the written work of some of Economics' most canonical writers—including Adam Smith (Bazerman, McKenna), John Locke (Garrett-Longaker, Corbett), and John Maynard Keynes (Houcke)—have been churned through a rhetorical lens to discern how language has been used as a central tool in the movement and conceptual arrangement of resources and labors. The result of these analyses has led to an already rich rhetorical history of economic thought that points out the power of words in shaping economic relations.[20]

Through these works, rhetoric has become a useful way to understand that economists often use narrative to legitimate their "empirically supported" assumptions ("Rhetoric of Economics"), that the value and place of money is created through competing and contradictory "discursive mechanisms" (Longaker 141), that the rhetorically constructed notions of propriety and proportion link the fields of economics and rhetoric as ethical endeavors (McKenna), and that the speeches, texts, and legislation

[20] Collectively, these works have established that economies are deeply dependent on rhetorical activity as shifts in an economy function because the many "stakeholders" (consumers, laborers, financiers, and theorists) arrive at an understanding of how to think about and operationalize new arrangements for the distribution of capital, goods, and services through rhetorical means.[20] However, the rhetoric that makes these economies comes directly from intellectual economists writing in traditional mediums.

of political figures are integral rhetorical contributors to the formation of an economy (Houcke).

Given the luxury of hindsight, these accounts then accumulate into something of an ur-theory about the rhetorical shaping of economic relations. I have found most useful a diagram of the rhetorical performance of an economy mapped out by Gayatri Spivak in understanding the overall trajectory of these arguments about economic rhetoric. The diagram looks as such:

Labor —representation→ Value —representation→ Money —transformation→ Capital.[21]

In this account, it is rhetorical activity that takes the individual through several symbolic valences before they arrive at the necessary construct to understand their own sense of place within the economy—a place most frequently represented by the tropes of labor on one end and capital on the other. It is in these representational and transformational spaces that economic rhetorics take place in the form of semiotic and material chains that bring a public to understand contingent narratives of labor, its value, the role of money, and ultimately the final formation of capital structures within a new mass production, organization-oriented paradigm.

This work contributes to this ongoing discussion in two ways: first, by recognizing the place of multimodal texts in the proliferation of economic rationalities. Unlike many of the rhetorical actors covered by this line of scholarship, elements that made up the Fordist economy did not provide neatly bound tomes or speeches that outline and persuade the public of their merits. Instead, the company's films' ability to fluidly integrate bodies, objects, and spaces, allows for greater attention to be paid to the

[21] This diagram appears in Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Scattered Speculations on the Question of Value." Diacritics. 4:14, 1985.

relationship between symbolic and material orientations as they play out in multimodal and intertextual artifacts. Thus, this project aims to contribute to what Cara Finnegan has argued as the need for "the construction of a rhetorical history that accounts systemically for the ways in which images become inventional resources in the public sphere" and fuses it with the "Rhetoric of Economics" canon (Finnegan 198).

To further supplement these traditionally rhetorical treatments of the economy, throughout this dissertation I will also draw on the works of what I consider to be the "rhetorical theorists" of economic scholarship—figures who have already begun the process of thinking through economics as a discursive construct wholly different than traditional models of communicative action, or as Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari put it, those who have worked to establish that "the capitalist use of language…is realized or becomes concerted within the field of immanence peculiar to capitalism itself" ("Thousand Plateaus" 261). These include the theoretical principles of such a "field of immanence" put forward by Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Karl Polyani, Hannah Arendt, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak, Pierre Bourdieu, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari as they are concretized (made visible) in acts of public address. Though the presence of these figures is certainly not absent in rhetorical and compositional theory and practice, the work of collecting and aligning their many contributions into something of a wholesale theoretical apparatus from which economies can be "read" has remained in a mostly nascent stage.[22]

[22] Such concern for "reading" and "writing" economies is not something that Rhetoric and Composition has to start in discussions of economies, but has been a point of acute consideration for Marxist scholarship. For Louis Althusser "I dare maintain that only since Marx have we had to begin to suspect what, in theory at least, reading and hence writing means (veut dire)" elaborating that "to know the essence of things, the essence of the historical human world, of its economic, political, aesthetic and religious production,

Ford films suggest that economic rationalities go beyond just claiming to create different visions of the human, of space, and of sovereignty—they create lenses (ways of seeing) for understanding the material systems through which individuals enact these visions and direct the action of others. It is out of this kind of arrangement that economic-organizational rhetoric develops as an important intervention in a field that has worked to fit an idea like economics into its own traditional habits and lenses for textual production and reception.

In sum, the narrative that emerges in this work attempts at answering the question of economics as a rhetorical construct (and rhetoric as an economic construct) challenges rhetoricians to find a middle ground in the story of economic development, one that falls somewhere between the two most frequented frameworks traditionally used to do so—habitual resistance and traditional textual exegesis. I argue that the rhetorical formation and occupation of an economy, provides a rich frontier for rhetorical and compositional theory that often challenges and expands traditional views about the human, the social, and the political as they have been constructed over years of economic rhetoric.

However, as the metaphor of "invisible hand" suggests and the hyphenated structure of the model being explored gestures toward, it is impossible to unpack these rhetorics without also recognizing the extent to which organizational thought has played a role in premises of the economic (the "invisible hand" serving as a primary example) and, thus, one last detour is in order to understand the latter term in the presented hyphenated model.

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was simply to *read* in black and white the presence of the 'abstract' of essence in the transparency of its 'concrete' existence" (17). Thus, grounding of these theoretical accounts in a case study as concrete and pervasive as the story of Ford Motor Company's film work a useful thought project.

What are organizational rhetorics?

There is a second reason that Byron Hawk called into question the legacy left by Berlin's work concerned with the relatively new claims emerging at the intersections of rhetoric and network culture. For Hawk, "Network culture puts the importance of ecology and immersion in sharp relief, making Berlin's mind-centered epistemological categories much less relevant" (Hawk 45). In this moment, Hawk calls on Manuel Castells's argument that "cultures manifest themselves fundamentally through their embeddedness in institutions and organizations" and, thus, understanding rhetoric means unpacking "organizational logic which is related to the current process of technological change" (Castells 164). In this way, the penchant for claiming that a rhetorical education can "liberate" the individual from systemic understandings of the world seems to pass over the potentially rich logical context through which those systems are made.

For organizational scholarship, on the other hand, the economic is positioned as one such network, and the notion of economic rationality serves as a complex tapestry of persons, places, objects and institutions interwoven by narratives of economic ideology and resulting in one such "organizational logic" (the notion at the very heart of the "invisible hand"). Castells, providing his own notion of Fordism from within this frame, suggests that the "mass-production model" that dominated much of the twentieth century is simply the manifestation of "*a specific organizational form: the large corporation structured on the principles of vertical integration, and institutionalized social and technical division of labor"* (165, emphasis original). My question in this dissertation is how such an organizational form has articulated its nature to the public and, in the process, created modes for individuals to embody economies.

As a trope, then, the organization becomes the location for necessary closure in many meaning-making practices, as well as the creation of a mechanism for dealing with increasingly complex exigencies. For these reasons, organizational theorists in the last twenty years have, taken up a far more rhetorically-minded stance which positions organizations as "ongoing and precarious accomplishments realized, experienced, and identified primarily—if not exclusively—*in* communicative practices" rather than viewing organizations as "objects, entities, or 'social facts' inside of which communication occurs" (Cooren 2). As such, economic-organizational rhetoric is an attempt to recognize what Ashcraft et al. have described as "the ongoing dynamic, interactive process of manipulating symbols toward the creation, maintenance, destruction, and/or transformation of meanings which are axial—not peripheral—to organizational existence and organizing phenomena" (Ashcraft 22, emphasis original).

Thus, much like the "English Department" that Berlin produces around new Post-Fordist values, economies cannot exist free from the arguments and ideas of how they should be embodied (or, I should say, incorporated), and the mode du jour for circulating these resources, bodies, and services is, the reified organization. In turn, economies often require collectives and the extensive ebbs and flows of individual desires working as a single entity (an invisible hand, an assembly line, stock valuation, an English curriculum). Thus, I argue that the rhetoric present throughout Ford Motor Company's history is organizational in two senses of the word.

On one hand, the messages come from an organization—a car company that will eventually be made up of seemingly endless folds of institutional and bureaucratic matter—attempting to make sense of its own identity for both its targeted consumers and

its workforce. On the other hand, organizational rhetoric posits the system as the basis for alternative forms of agency and rationality that made up the opening exploration of the consubstantial nature of "the invisible hand." That is, to make sense of the material contexts that frame and direct rhetoric, rhetoricians have positioned these contexts as systemic in nature—giving the system itself both discernible goals and internal logics for achieving those goals. Progressing beyond its classical roots describing a whole made up of separate parts, the system in these theorists' hands has shifted as a critical lens to deal with this perceived rise in complexity in the material world—it has, in short, become rational.

Via the work of Jurgen Habermas and Niklas Luhmann, the very notion of organizational rhetoric positions the concept as uniquely communicative in its outcomes. They explain that "the rational system can deal with complexities only if its users give up the long established idea that systems exist strictly as a sum of their parts and relations among these parts" (Luhmann 39). For rhetoricians, this will mean calling into question the supremacy of the individual human as the ultimate rhetorical agent. Instead, contemporary systems theory posits that the system contains, precisely because of its many moving parts, a surplus of possibilities whose intersection self-selectively reduces possibilities for communication and persuasion.[23]

In other words, systems develop some set of decision-making apparatuses akin to human rationality, then distribute this committee model across many minds, bodies, and

[23] This phrase is universally attributed to biologists Varela and Maturana's account of the "autopoetic machine" which "is a machine organized (defined as a unity) as a network of processes of production (transformation and destruction) of components which: (i) through their interactions and transformations continuously regenerate and realize the network of processes (relations) that produced them; and (ii) constitute it (the machine) as a concrete unity in space in which they (the components) exist by specifying the topological domain of its realization as such a network." (Maturana 78).

objects. Fordism is one such system. This category of the "self-referential system" enters into the world of communicative action (and therefore rhetoric) as a structure which takes form when it is able to "create and employ a description of [itself]" and "use the difference between system and environment…as a principle for creating information" (Luhmann 9). This is precisely the process Ford engages in repeatedly throughout the twentieth century on film. In this way, *Democracy and Education* positions the public education system itself as the figure that enacts democracy rather than the individuals that it produces.

This new theory of the organization-as-agent, in this way, intersects with theories of rhetoric as it is practiced by a figure that is allotted agency and motives through *autopoeisis.* Such an apparatus challenges histories of rhetoric and writing that have been concerned with acts of grounded *poeisis* (strategic makings) for so long. For scholarship in rhetoric, such a shift suggests that rather than focusing on individual nodes (writers, readers, texts), rhetoric must become a heuristic for understanding "apparatuses" of meaning-making that are drawn from collective action.

Numerous attempts to ground rhetoric in these *autopoietic* systems have taken place, resulting in notions of "technical rationality" and "distributed cognition" (Flor and Hutchins 1991, Thompson 14).[1] These models argue that rationality reaches perfection "when it becomes a closed system of logic" that gets embodied by the individuals who have been persuaded to function as part of this logical structure (18). In this way, part of the goal of watching Ford Motor Company compose organizationally is to work through and understand organizational rhetoric as the recursive process of opening and closing

circuits of meaning (or planes of imminence) that travel within and around such a distributed economic entity.

These frameworks undergird recent explorations of "ecological" rhetoric in action. For example, in her reflections on the economics of rhetoric, Catherine Chaput suggests that supplementing notions of "rhetorical situation" with "rhetorical circulation" will allow not only make for a more dynamic reflection of how rhetoric moves, but also account for how it moves through these communicative avenues in ways that resemble economic principles like value, interest, and speculation (99). Jennifer Edbauer suggests positioning acts of composing within "a process of distributed emergence and as an ongoing circulation process" (13).

In this way, understanding rhetoric as a concept that appears, on some level, as the substance of organizations, systems, and publics has been in the works in the more immediate context of textual production for some time. One of the tricky elements of circulation, however, is that such movement requires a closed system of channels and depositories. Thus, Edbauer argues, the acts of rhetorical action often studied exist "where rhetorical ecologies are already spatially, affectively, and conceptually in practice" (23). From this perspective, in the face of the post-modern meaning vacuum, individuals have a vested interest in the creation and maintenance of these closed circuits (rhetorical ecologies, networks) in order to better allow meaning and value to travel.[24] It is from this realization that theories of external systems, networks, and ideologies have become of paramount importance to notions like rhetoric and writing as meaning making

[24] From the perspective of post-modern theory, a la Jean-Francois Lyotard "since performativity is defined by an input/output ratio, there is a presupposition that the system into which the input is entered is stable; that system must follow a regular 'path' that it is possible to express as a continuous function possessing a derivative, so that an accurate prediction of the output can be made" (Lyotard 54).

practices in the twenty-first century (Cooper, Edbauer, Castells). The rhetorical history of Ford Motor Company's film work, in this frame, becomes the study of how visuality (and textuality, for that matter) played an integral role in making *autopoietic* reasoning not only visible, but positioned such incorporated acts of reason as preferable to upholding the purity of individual agency. Moreover, these films present the economic as one such system through which notions of identity, space, and power can attain a closed structure.

In sum, I have argued that there is nothing particularly "invisible" about the hand that guides economic rationality. Rather, the force that produces something like an economic ecology throughout the twentieth century is a carefully orchestrated collection of rhetorical artifacts, bodies, and ideologies aligned through textual acts of "incorporative" rhetoric. In turn, paying attention to the work of such visual, economic, and organizational acts of rhetorical action also works to expand the discourses used to describe the scope and work of Rhetoric and Composition in what I hope are interesting ways.

Conclusion and Chapter Breakdown

The chapter layout is consistent throughout this work, though its organizing principles can be described in a number of ways. The work is at once chronological (narrating four subsequent eras of Fordist rhetorical work), spatial (chronicling Ford Motor Company's expanding influence from the bodies of its workers, to the structure of the greater Detroit area, to the entire United States, to a global scale, to the non-spaces of a contemporary digital age), and thematic (exploring "incorporative rhetoric" in the context of constitutive, spatial, sovereign, and the post-human rhetorics).

Chapter Two, titled "Manufacturing the "Ford Man": Constitutive Rhetoric, Industrial Progressivism, and the Architextual Film," is concerned with a specific textual form that appears throughout Ford's motion picture canon—"architextuality." Drawn from scholarship in of semiotics and post-structuralism, this theory suggests that texts must be understood as they work in collected webs. Taking up an intertextual film entitled *As Dreams Come True* (1921) the process of replacing the old symbolic order of economic relations and establishing the new was the production of the "Ford Man" through discourses surrounding the body at work.

As this narrative progresses, *As Dreams Come True*, calls attention to the many other films that have been put out by the company over the period—thus giving the chapter an opportunity to unpack Ford's deluge of films concerned with labor, consumption, education, and national development within a new Fordist paradigm. The questions that guide this chapter are: "how did Ford Motor Company use its visual texts to generate such a 'Ford Man' through rhetorically generated 'skillful combinations'?" and "what can this tell us of the kind of constitutive work that goes on in the wider theoretical context of 'economic-organizational' rhetoric?"

Chapter Three is concerned with the rhetorical production of economic spaces by the company in the years surrounding the Great Depression. From 1933-1945, the company took many of pre-Depression initiatives—national highway construction, the formation of "village-industries," and a car-mediated tourism (particularly through national parks)—and integrated them into narratives of the New Deal and spatial reconstruction of the nation. The unifying rhetorical principle behind this chapter's analysis is what I term the "economization" of space—the use of "rhetorics of

incorporation" to integrate both literal and symbolic conceptions of space into economic rationalities. In this case, the national, the domestic, and the natural all become economized and aligned to form a larger social structure termed "car culture."

Placing the theory of economic spaces, developed by Francois Perroux, as a way of supplementing the field of Rhetoric and Composition's recent spatial turn (which has been influenced primarily by the theories of space put forward by Michel De Certeau, Henri Lefebvre, and other cultural geographers) to consider this spatial production as a heterogeneous process—often positioning individuals to negotiate spatial occupation between social, political, and economic frameworks.

Chapter Four, "Building the Ford Empire: The New Industrial State, Tropes of Power, and the rise of Consumer Sovereignty," takes up the next expansive organizational shift in the company as it worked to embed itself in the race for global sovereignty that followed World War II. Economically, this "Cold War" period can be identified as one that initiated two overarching trends—globalization and corporatism—that would grow increasingly dominant over the next fifty years.

Sovereignty has a long history of being theorized as a deeply rhetorical concept often conducted through the symbolic formation of a figure or structure (Giorgio Agamben's *homo sacer*, Michel Foucault's institutions, Saskia Sassen's fracturing of the very notion of sovereignty itself). In this vein, this chapter asks the question of how the economic firm came to reconstitute, and subsequently embody, models of sovereignty and imperialism in the wake of World War II by aligning the individual agency of many with various iterations of the production, consumption, and intellectual assembly line through what I will term "tropes of power."

Deeply incorporative in nature, these "tropes" appear in films that first align the laboring bodies of female workers with military might during World War II. Next, I turn to a film set in Alexandria, Egypt as an example of how Ford Motor Company played an integral role in legitimizing the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism by visually extending its territory to a global level. Finally, this new global/corporate assembly line is the feature of many films and subsequent television programming after 1950 depicting the new intellectual work of finding innovative ways to measure and dictate consumer want through statistical reasoning. Creating such an axiomatic visualization of desire ultimately played a crucial role in lending authority to economic rationality in the latter half of the twentieth century.

The fifth and final chapter arrives at the question James Berlin asked nearly two decades ago. What to make of Post-Fordism from a rhetorical perspective? Now equipped with both a rhetorical history of the movement and the *economic-organizational* frame developed throughout, the chapter is positioned to consider how the contemporary (2013) economy is, at least in part, being constructed symbolically. The chapter opens in 2006 with the Alan Mulally takeover of Ford Motor Company, and traces the subsequent "Bold Moves" marketing campaign that ensued. This multiplatform (ranging from classic periodical ads to the creation of a video game) media campaign was highlighted by the launch of a website that would feature 30 digital short-films, released weekly, designed to depict a "behind-the-scenes" glimpse at how Ford Motor Company was restructuring to recover from imminent bankruptcy.

By 2010, the resurgence of the automotive industry—and an effective refusal of narratives that suggested its imminent industrial demise—made not only for remarkable

economic theater, but an invitation to reconsider some of the claims of a purely "knowledge" and "digital" economy in lieu of a more complex hybrid arrangement of nations, workers, and values into a "posthuman" economy.

Collectively, then, this work seeks to unpack the entity of Fordism and the practices it engages in encompass much more than a singular economic structure, but become so when these many folds of company structure can be aligned into a recognizable discourse about people, places, and power—a process made possible through various acts of "incorporative rhetoric."

Chapter Two

Manufacturing the "Ford Man": Constitutive Rhetoric, Industrial Progressivism, and the Architextual Film

The story of Fordism and the eventual film work that accompanied it begins (albeit tangentially) in 1911 when John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, then one of the largest companies in the world, was ruled in violation of the Sherman anti-trust act of 1890 and broken into separate competing parts. With its destruction, the era of the mass industrial monopoly (a period that spanned, roughly, from 1870 to 1908) effectively came to a close. As mass monopoly faded, an enormous symbolic struggle took place over how to fill in the vacuum created by the absence of long-standing and powerful social and economic actors, as well as the countless identifications that had been established during the period of their dominance.

Almost immediately after taking office in 1913, President Woodrow Wilson passed a series of legislative acts designed to establish the government funds necessary to jumpstart Progressive Movement initiatives that would remake the social and economic structures that once lay in the hands of massive corporate monopolies. In less than a year, Wilson instated the Revenue Act of 1913 which featured a national income tax, the Federal Reserve, and a new tariff structure that invited international competition for resources and products (Congress). Through these initiatives, Wilson hoped to wrestle power and money away from the large economic actor to, instead, allot the government resources for redistributive action on the behalf of its population (additionally, shifting power from producer and consumer to taxpayer and voter would theoretically allow for monopoly to be mitigated in the future through more democratic means).

More than just a collection of policy decisions, President Wilson's vision of Progressivism also consisted of a plethora of artifacts outlining and justifying these considerable legislative changes. As he explained in his first inaugural address:

> There can be no equality or opportunity, the first essential of justice in the body politic, if men and women and children be not shielded in their lives, their very vitality, from the consequences of great industrial and social processes which they can not alter, control, or singly cope with. (Address)

Wilson's ideas and speeches throughout his campaign were eventually collected into a published edition titled The New Freedom: A Call for the Emancipation of the Generous Energies of a People. The opening essay of this collection articulates both acute anxiety over the rise of the industrial corporation and the inevitability of immense change in the country's social fabric. Wilson argued, "Now this is nothing short of a new social age, a new era of human relationships, a new stage-setting for the drama of life…a new economic society has sprung up, and we must effect a new set of adjustments" ("New Freedom" 7-10). The goal of these adjustments, and the challenge of Progressivism, in this sense, was to return humanity and dignity to the working class through the auspices of democracy.[25]

In general, Wilson's goal in these many circulating artifacts was to generate a wholesale vision of a new "Progressive" society mediated through a realigned "Progressive" economy. As a result of the ensuing initiatives, locally-oriented citizens and communities were invited to see themselves as part of a much larger national

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[25] Notably, Wilson was also the first Presidential candidate to use the motion picture in such a campaign for wholesale systemic change through the 1912 silent feature "The Oldway and the New."

economic "body politic" and their labor as a form of interaction with fellow citizens (via income tax) and, conversely, their citizenship as access to certain rights and protections within the economy. The representation and transformation of the relation between labor and capital was, in this "Progressive" vision, mediated through democratic structures ensuring at least a representative level of control for the public.

In this regard, the rhetorical formation of a "mass" and nationalized economy based on more equitable capital distribution was already in the works when Ford Motor Company burst into the nation's social consciousness in early 1914. Just as the state had begun to work more and more as an economic figure, the traditionally economic figure began to position itself more like a state.

The company gained notoriety through two of its own well-publicized policy changes: the implementation of the moving assembly line,[26] and the announcement of the Five-Dollar-A-Day wage distribution plan.[27] Rhetorically, these policies were represented as a twofold process for re-narrating value redistribution through a mass-mediated marketplace. On one hand, this distribution put more capital into a wider percentage of the population's hands (a shared goal of Wilson's initiatives) and, on the other, it allowed

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[26] On October 7th, 1913, Ford Motor Company's Highland Park factory created its first automobile using a continuously moving assembly line—a process in which workers remained stationary as a series of conveyor mechanisms connected their labor to materials and other workers. As a result, the automobile that cost nearly eight hundred dollars in 1912 could be bought for less than four hundred dollars by 1921 (hence the very ability for tens of thousands to take their Model T's to town in the first place).

[27] On January 5th, 1914, Henry Ford delivered a speech to announce that Ford Motor Company was going to implement the first mass profit-sharing wage system in the industrialized world. Known as the "Five-Dollar-A-Day" plan, Ford explained that, from that point forward, the company would pay its workers bonuses in accordance with sales and productivity. With the addition of these bonuses to hourly pay, workers' wages rose to nearly twice that of equivalent factory workers at the time (from a net pay of $2.38 to $5.00 a day). In addition, the workday in the factory would be reduced from nine to eight hours and later from six days to five without a discernible reduction in production.

for that capital to achieve more by making commodities cheaper and easier to access.[28] In this way, the company provided an alternative strategy for mitigating monopoly (by ensuring the circulation of capital) but cast this fragmentation of power through the mediums of capital and market where Wilson sought circulation of democratic voting rights and citizenship.

Just as Wilson had worked to generate visions of a potential system of circulation and connection during his Presidential campaign and early legislative work, Henry Ford unleashed a deluge of artifacts meant to explain the Fordist vision of Progressive America. Presenting the changes in company structure simply, and as good business rather than political statement, Ford wrote in his autobiographical text, *My Life and Work*, that:

> "if we can distribute high wages, then that money is going to be spent and it will serve to make storekeepers and distributors and manufacturers and workers in other lines more prosperous and their prosperity will be reflected in our sales." ("My Life" 124)

As a result of Ford's narratives about the power of circulating capital, the American public was invited to return to the mass production marketplace to ensure some of the freedoms and rising quality of life promised by Wilson's Progressive initiatives.

As discourses of Progressivism continued to develop, however, they began to focus increasingly on the production of particular forms of subjectivity over and above these larger social movements—often cached under the broad figure of "American." Entering into the fray of this constitutive ordering, speaking to the National Education

Association in 1916 Samuel Marquis, Ford Motor Company's Sociology Department Director at the time, declared that:

> "The impression has somehow goat abroad that Henry Ford is in the automobile business. It isn't true. Mr. Ford shoots about fifteen hundred cars out of the back door of his factory every day just to get rid of them. They are but the by-products of his real business, which is the making of men." (Marquis 910)

In the company's structure, however, it was by identifying with the figure of mass laborer and consumer (the "Ford Man") rather than citizen that these freedoms could be achieved.

At the time of Marquis's speech, Ford Motor Company had been engaging aggressively in social engineering with its workers for two years. Following the announcement of the "Five-Dollar-A-Day" plan, the purpose of Marquis's Sociology Department, for example, was to inspect the homes and bodies of Ford workers to ensure an appropriate level of "American-ness,"[29] the company's "English School" taught compulsory classes in both citizenship and language acquisition, and its Security Department kept union mobilization at bay—typically through surveillance and force. Representing the deeply rhetorical element of this process, one of the most iconic images of this period features one of the Ford English School's "graduations" in which workers who had properly learned the lessons of the school emerge from a constructed "melting pot" having symbolically shed a costume representing their home country and now donning American flags and straw hats, converts into a proper "Ford Man" (fig. 4).

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[29] The initiative took on particular nationalist and xenophobic features. Clarence Hooker, for example, reflected that, in particular, "the mission of the Sociological Department was to reform (i.e., Americanize) the 'ethnics' so that they might become good 'Ford men'" (Hooker 48).

Rhetoricians have already positioned such a scene as imminently textual in nature. Theories of constitutive rhetoric suggest, for example, that the figure of the "Ford Man" is the product of economic discourses and textual circulation. For James Boyd White, this historical accumulation of texts surrounding such a production "creates a set of questions that reciprocally define and depend upon a world of thought and action; it creates a set of roles and voices by which meanings will be established and shared" as well as "a set of topics and set of occasions and methods for public speech" (White 71). For Maurice Charland, these "Narratives 'make real' coherent subjects…as they present a particular textual position…as the locus for action and experience" (Charland 139). Finally, James Jasinski and Jennifer R. Mercieca, more recently, suggest that "texts invite listeners and readers to modify the meaning of a culture's key terms…experience of public time…demarcations of social space…sources of cultural authority, bonds of affiliation, and institutional relationships (333).[30]

In this way, I argue that the early decades of the twentieth century were marked by an integral rhetorical struggle over which –ism would define the nation's symbolic core: Progressivism or Fordism. Not alone in this reading, in 1929, this competing pair of narratives led social theorist Antonio Gramsci to coin terms for the pair of emerging phenomena of this struggle he called "Americanism" and "Fordism." For Gramsci, these developments at Ford Motor Company over the previous decade represented more than just new modes of mass production, but "the biggest collective effort to date to create, with unprecedented speed, and with a consciousness of purpose unmatched in history, a

[30] They also, notably, expand this process to include the concept of "constitutive legacies" based on a text's "reception, circulation, and articulation" (334).

new type of worker and of man" (Gramsci 302).[31] For a figure witnessing the rise of fascism throughout the European continent from a prison cell in Turin, Italy, this was no small charge.

Nevertheless, Gramsci's accounts of the competition over the hearts and minds of the American people highlights that both Wilson and Ford were working to establish their larger social visions through expansive acts of constitutive rhetoric that carried across seemingly countless texts and contexts. Picking up on this multiplicity, Gramsci further argued that the industrialized process of creating "men" on the part of Ford Motor Company consisted of "a skillful combination of force (destruction of working-class trade unionism on a territorial basis) and persuasion (high wages, various social benefits, extremely subtle ideological and political propaganda) and thus succeed[ed] in making the whole life of the nation revolve around production" (Gramsci 285).[32]

For rhetoricians, it is worth noting that the phrase "Fordism" itself was first articulated as an act of constitutive rhetoric that lay at the crux of what it meant to exist as part of a national and corporate body (hence the overlapping of "Americanism" and Fordism"). In another sense, what Gramsci has identified is that this instantiation of constitutive rhetoric relies on the coordination of many disparate communicative acts.

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[31] Claims about the production of such an economically-oriented subject have been periodically explored in a theoretical fashion—as Chapter One pointed out, Plato and Aristotle spoke of the Sophists as disciples of the *chrematistic* life, John Stuart Mill echoed Adam Smith's concepts of "a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end," William H. Whyte spoke of the "organization man." Conversely, the figure of the political man has received similar attention. Indeed, Wilson's victory over Theodore Roosevelt and Taft came, in part, because he provided better answers to the question "who is a Progressive?"—the title of a 1912 Roosevelt speech.

[32] Notably, Gramsci's writings are generally recognized as the first articulation of Fordism as a concept. Dierdre McCloskey has suggested that as a result the concept was, and is, treated as an ideology and not as a historically potent rhetoric ("Bourgeois").

Thus, while scholars of Rhetoric and Composition have, traditionally, been inclined to study methods of generating "force" and "persuasion" in cases of constitutive rhetoric, a detailed look at Ford Motor Company's film work during the period highlights its ability to "make men" was predicated primarily on its ability to generate "skillful combinations" via film.

In this chapter, following Gramsci, I argue that Ford's competing narrative of the "economic" man is not so different from generating ideas of "man" in more traditional philosophical terms: it requires the individual to have some concept of an economic mind (epistemology), body (ontology), and spirit (ideology) and to understand the relationship between these three principles. In this sense, constitutive rhetoric requires the careful coordination of messages about these elements of personhood as they appear across many texts. In the case of the "Ford Man," the challenge facing the company was to present the American public with an appropriately Progressive form of "economic" man.

It is this final articulation that highlights the particular manner through which the "Ford Man" was produced via a "skillful combination" of many disparate textual articulations of economic structure (how, for example, *Democracy in Education* in Chapter One noted the incorporation of mass production, education, and forms of nationalism). By providing new images of affiliation with the mass-production market and providing new forms of authority within the mass corporation, Ford Motor Company would present a genre of film precisely designed to reveal the full structural arrangements that would make its vision for "Progressive" America more feasible than its democratic counterparts.

Thus, of particular concern to both the historical development of culture in the United States, and a case study in a particular brand of constitutive rhetorical practice based on heterogeneity, the remainder of this chapter seeks to unpack the integral role "architextual" films played in the production of the "Ford Man" throughout the early twentieth century.

As Dreams Come True: An Architextual Film at Work

The year is 1921, and the local movie theater in, say, Topeka, Kansas is filled with what one observer at the time described as "the many rural folk, who jounced into villages in their Model T's by the tens of thousands on the night of the week the 'flickers' were to be shown" (Lewis 117). The lights dim, the projector begins to whir and the screen is illuminated with the image of a fisherboy clad in overalls and a straw-hat gazing longingly at a gleaming spired castle as the words "As Dreams Come True" fade into the foreground (fig. 5). As these "rural folk" settle in, the narrative to come is nothing short of a fairy tale-like vision that comes when discourses of American "bootstrap" ingenuity meet with the still fresh mechanical prowess of American industry in the wake of mass production's appearance in Ford's factories. The audience is witnessing the latest release by Ford Motor Company's Motion Picture Laboratories and an open invitation to embody a new vision of the American economy—a process made possible by their ability to understand and become, as Marquis had suggested two years prior, "Ford Men."

The ensuing film consisted of the alignment (the "skillful combination") of a remarkable number of disparate ideas. Broken into a collection of "chapters," each with a

running time roughly between one and two minutes, *As Dreams Come True* depicts Henry Ford's upbringing, the spectrum of resources and production practices that go into the creation of a Ford automobile, the role of Fordist production in World War One, the social nature of doing business (from farm chores to large corporate mergers), the life of leisure enjoyed by Henry Ford and friends in old age, and the formation of The Henry Ford Trade School. Collectively, in just about ten minutes, these vignettes create a visual narrative that ties new forms of education, class, labor, and leisure to mass production and mass production to both national and personal advancement all under the auspices of Henry Ford's lifelong vision for society.

As a rhetorical artifact, *As Dreams Come True* works to narrate a complete network of structural arrangements that could be understood as an imminently embodiable (and Fordist) economy for audiences across the country. In this sense, its purpose was precisely to "skillfully combine" a series of messages that foster a new industrialized and mass-mediated set of aspirations for the largely localized, agrarian, and craft oriented communities of the American Midwest (messages that would quickly capture national and international imaginations as well). To do so, *As Dreams Come True* pulls together the many films already produced and released by the Motion Picture Laboratories into a set of multi-artifact "architexts."

Before turning to the many intertwined narratives on display in this film, then, I hope to clarify the term "architext" as it is integral to understanding Ford's particular brand of constitutive rhetoric on film. In his work on narrative structures in literature, Gerard Genette identifies the potential for thinking through the idea of "textual transcendence" in which understanding the nature of texts means paying attention to

"everything that brings [a text] into relation (manifest or hidden) with other texts" (Genette 81). In particular, Genette focuses on elements within a given text that directly generate such connectivity. He names these acts "intertextuality," "metatextuality," and "paratextuality" that generate an overlapping ecology of texts that better generate a performable identity for the reader. In the context of *As Dreams Come True*, this connectivity is both literal—as the film directly incorporates images from other films—and figural as it works to combine various material constructs (like doing chores) into more abstract principles (like learning discipline). In this way, the principles of intertextuality are themselves captured and disseminated via texts.

In the service of producing the "Ford Man," I argue that, in addition to the already established constitutive abilities of texts (creating questions, modifying terms, making subjects "real"), Ford's films put on display an ability to also generate a cohesive identity through the integration of a set of texts that depict and align messages about the mind, body, and spirit of its workers. For the individual attempting to generate or make sense of personal identity in the face of shifting national ethos, some of Ford's motion pictures, *As Dreams Come True* included, serve the explicit purpose of drawing such relations between multiple artifacts and narratives that, in turn, present a set of economically oriented relations as a feasible structure for forming identity. For the remainder of this chapter, I will read the "architexture" of Fordism as it is being mediated through its film collection.

Using *As Dreams Come True* as the central artifact for understanding the narrative form of Fordism's "skillful combinations," this chapter addresses treatments of Fordism's epistemology, ideology and ontology as they can be understood as architextual structures

that the company's various material and discursive initiatives "hook" onto through film. Circulating throughout this textual construction are images of "The Boy on the Farm," "Shop Theory," and industrial "dream" and "fictitious commodities" that collectively generate a powerful narrative of changing and nationalized forms of knowledge, labor as a commodity, and forms of non-monetary capital that develop from a "Fordist" vision of national relations. Ultimately, however, the real work of *As Dreams Come True* is to align these many "intertextual" messages into a discursive representation of the single "architextual" cultural formation of the "Ford Man." The first of these messages on display in the film is concerned with structures of education and the produced notion of industrial epistemology.

Shop Theory: Industrial Education and the Making of Fordist Epistemology

Returning to the film as it plays in Topeka, as the opening credits fade, the audience is introduced to the birthplace of Henry Ford, a small, white, unassuming farm home in Michigan. To see the home exclusively as such, however, would be a mistake as the image fades into a title frame that deems the home "the birthplace of the dream, the realization of which has increased the opportunities and added to the share of labor." For the constitutive rhetorician, such a depiction of young Henry Ford is the reenactment of what Maurice Charland described as a "founding" on two counts (Charland). In witnessing the formation of the first "Ford Man," through his relationship with a "hands-on" and informal educational system, *As Dreams Come True* highlights the expansive formation of a set of arguments designed to form new epistemological arrangements that

lent themselves to Fordist production practices. On the other hand, in seeing the birth of a "dream" grounded in mass production, the earliest vignette of the film makes way for important justifications of new forms of mass-mediated labor.

Rather than beginning with these labors, however, the film opens with a brief vignette about the education of young Henry Ford. Serving as the first departure point of this chapter and of the film, I argue that this choice was made to achieve more than just setting up a chronological narrative for the developing "Ford Man" through depictions of his founding. Rather, *As Dreams Come True*, in its opening scene, presents the first "architextual" arrangement carries across many of its films: notions of a "Fordist" epistemology that valued mechanical production as a form of integral and emerging cultural knowledge.[33] From a historical perspective, *As Dreams Come True* gestures toward two common themes circulating throughout Ford's film canon at the time to achieve this narrative construction of knowledge: the relationship between industrial labor and American values, and the shifting relationship between mechanical knowledge and the values of education circulating at the turn of the century.

Chapter One has already established the role that Ford's previous films have played in aligning nationalized education structures with mass production practices. Here, *As Dreams Come True* works this narrative into the context of a human life in hopes of aligning particular visions of education with other elements of the Fordist regime to depict to its audiences that mechanical knowledge is common knowledge. Turning these notions into narrative, after the opening frame fades Henry Ford, as an adolescent, is pictured walking to school when he sees, and picks up, a discarded machine part as he

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[33] As I invoke the term epistemology to make sense of what Ford is up to in its education films, I draw on the terms most basic definition: the study of the nature of knowledge.

passes the family's barn. He then races to a one-room schoolhouse where, once inside, he is shown working out design blueprints for what would become a steam-powered engine under the cover of a decoy textbook. Eventually, the boy pulls the actual mechanical pieces out from his bag and assembles them neatly out of the sight of the teacher, returning finally to the mechanical drawings to record his thoughts.

The audience is then invited to engage in two acts of identification, the first concerns the creation of an archetype: the "Boy on the Farm" (the moniker attributed periodically to Henry Ford at the time and literally called on in the film at this point). This archetype presents a new kind of young man developing into a mechanical visionary from humble beginnings by making his way through an inefficient educational environment. Such identification, on one hand, was a way of making it clear that Henry Ford was no robber baron, as had been the public perception of the Vanderbilts and Rockefellers who headed up large industrial fiefdoms in the prior monopoly era (Josephson). Instead, the scene argues that Ford has come from the American heartland, has worked his ideas from a common set of circumstances, and is a living, breathing arbiter of change. In itself, this presentation worked to generate discourses of meritocracy—as any industrious figure could become such an archetypal "boy" (where, it implies, traditional academic and industrial structures were elitist in nature).

On the other hand, this figure of the "Boy on the Farm" put a human face onto a far more expansive set of epistemological arguments about the relationship that was developing between education, "practical" models of knowledge, and the new paradigm of mass, mechanical production. Depicting Ford as the model for a new generation of mechanically oriented subjects that simultaneously maintained the traditional values of

rural America alongside modern mechanized production practices created an important link between the changing economic conditions of the country and traditional values. In turn, the film worked to capture the wholesale shifts in structures of knowledge that the company needed to accompany this shift.

Reflecting this new subject, the second identification recasts education itself as a space that ought to be about "practical" learning and its relationship to modes of production, as the schoolhouse is deemed, in this scene, "the first workshop." When placed in the historical context surrounding the film's release, the combination of these archetypes appealed to a largely agrarian Midwest, and to a national mythos that had been closely tied with self-reliance and land ownership as sites of common knowledge and not, necessarily, with academic achievement. Thus, the intertextual binding of depictions of "the Boy on the Farm" and the "first workshop," advocates for a more applicable model of education, justifies mechanical forms of knowledge as intellectual, and redefines what can constitute the successful student of Progressivism.

Contrasting with the formal education young Ford is busy ignoring in his rural school, the film then posits that it is outside of school that "the usual arduous tasks did their share to stimulate the mental activities of the 'Boy on the Farm.'" Young Ford is then shown looking at a farm's water wheel (ostensibly, the impetus for the company's use of hydroelectric power), and watching a boiler-engine tractor in action (the impetus for the diesel engine he was working out in class). In this way, knowledge is positioned as a phenomenon that comes from the everyday experiences of daily life rather than a set of ideas contained within a curriculum. Ultimately, such a narrative would play an integral role in connecting arguments about education, democracy, and disciplinarity with

the material structures of another of the company's most popular film subjects: the Henry Ford Trade School.

On its own, this opening vignette of *As Dreams Come True* might simply be seen as an act of self-aggrandizing on the part of Henry Ford. When placed as one node in the gradual "concatenation" of messages in Ford Film Laboratory's educational canon, however, this film draws on a far more expansive set of claims attempting to steer national systems of education and knowledge toward the mass and the mechanized. A point highlighted by the film's eventual return to principles of education by depicting the Henry Ford Trade School as an integral factor in turning the "founding" of the "Boy on the Farm" into a systematic and cyclical production of particular economic and social subjects.

In *As Dreams Come True*, the appearance of the Trade School is brief, simply touting the institution's ability to "give the boys a chance" and showing students exiting the school in mass. Yet, the effects of this cyclical depiction of the place of mechanical knowledge in the progression of a modern life were profound—and captured in a single representative institution. In this way, the brief appearance of the school serves as an example of the "architextual" nature of Ford Film's method of argument. In drawing on already circulating artifacts that have identified the Trade School alongside contemporary narratives about the "Boy on the Farm" and the "First Laboratory," *As Dreams Come True* also makes way for future depictions of the school to fit within the narrative of disciplining a particular form of economic subjectivity within larger discourses of American development.

Ford Motor Company opened its trade school in the Autumn of 1916 during that hotbed period in national educational practices outlined in Chapter One. As a brief reference in *As Dreams Come True* suggests, depictions of this school, its curriculum, and its students were a frequent subject for Ford's film work and made for integral tropes in legitimizing "Fordist" models of knowledge as an egalitarian force. Thus, rhetorically, the narrative of the original "Boy on the Farm" comes full circle in *As Dreams Come True* as his company puts in place an institutionalized process for developing many of this archetype of young, mechanically savvy, and yet deeply traditional men. It thus introduces The Henry Ford Trade School as a way for the educational formation of the "Ford Man" to develop as a cyclical process—from the original "Boy on the Farm," now thousands of similarly knowledgeable individuals can be created through public education.

In the cinematic culmination of the period's "architextural" rendering of industrial knowledge via education, a 1927 release entitled "Henry Ford's Trade School," the core purpose of the school was identified as allowing for its students to "produce, while learning, contribute to their own support, and become an asset to the community." The film then follows a young man who arrived at the school "to help support [his] mother and learn a practical trade." He is immediately shown how to roll up the sleeves of his shirt, tuck in his tie, and wear a protective bandanna he as heads off to his first class (the boy literally puts on the physical demeanor of the Ford Man).

The film subsequently lays out for the viewer, without visual interludes, the full curriculum for each of the four years required to graduate—a curriculum that, aside from minor adjustments, mirrors traditional educational structures. The film then turns to the

classroom directly to show how this traditional curriculum has been industrialized. The film then depicts the combined lessons of industrial manufacturing with lessons in physics and trigonometry. In a series of short scenes, a student is positioned between a piece of machinery and blackboard. As he works through assembling, repairing, or explaining the mechanisms of an engine, he also records the equations that explain its nature on a chalkboard in the background (fig. 6).

In this way, this later film is in position to argue that the use of a Micrometer to "compute gears on Indexing Head to show how milling cutter forms a drill" becomes a lesson in "solving shop trigonometry," and "the operation of a gas engine," combines with a class in physics that is subtitled "measuring the expansion rate of a steel bar." Clearly an act of "incorporative rhetoric," akin to *Democracy and Education's* earlier treatment of 'readin, 'ritin,' and 'rithmetic, the success of the film comes in its ability to collapse the distinctions between traditional educational structures and features of manual labor, thus lending an air of intellectualism to the work of constructing a car.

By part three of the film, however, the civic-minded education of earlier films, like *Democracy and Education,* all but disappear. Education's constitutive capabilities have not. The final sequences of *The Henry Ford Trade School* explain that, structured as an extension of Ford's factories, the school uses punch-cards to keep attendance and pays the students a "scholarship" of $7.20 per week (a figure which increases depending on performance, the school day lasts for 7 hours and takes place 14 weeks out of the year.[34]

The students, insofar as they can still be referred to as such, function within an actual factory setting designed to produce tools and smaller parts for Ford's larger

[34] By modern standards, a nasty business, however, on the heels of brutal industrial and agricultural revolutions—putting limits and compensation structures around child labor was itself a gesture toward more palatable practices.

factories. The scope of the film itself shifts away from both instructor and student to focus, instead, on the shop floor and products. The constitutive nature of this shift in generating this product, however, does not change. Instead, the film highlights the permutation of just what kind of individual is being generated and how an education in mass production achieves some of the goals of Progressive education.

Expanding well beyond just immediate "shop" theory, students are shown learning to sew, cut hair, landscape, and garden.[35] Of particular note, however, is the reappearance of directly incorporative appeals into educational discourses.
The visual depictions throughout the film are punctuated with interspersed text that draws constitutive power out of manual labor. Taking a sampling of these arguments, the film argues that "As the stubborn metal is hammered into useful form, so is the developing character of the boy forged into the strength of manhood" and "In removing the weeds that contaminate and destroy the good in plants, the boys are drawing for themselves an example of worth." Even during lunch, students enter the cafeteria "With an appetite that a growing boy must have, yet never forgetting for a minute the value of perfect order." In this way the symbolic circuit is closed through the complete fusion of bodily production and structures of culturally acceptable knowledge and sociality. The film concludes, then, with a wholly different vision of the enlightened "Ford Man" as it claims:

> "skilled mechanics at eighteen; non-employment has no terrors for these boys…instruction in mathematics and mechanical science makes it easy for the boys to master shop problems"

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[35] Notably enforcing traditional relations between gender and labor these tasks are labeled as "the time when thoughts of 'dear old mother' weigh heavily on the heart'."

In sum, by positioning both mechanical knowledge and physical knowhow at the intersection of the school/factory divide, Ford's many films concerned with education worked to legitimize the industrial as the knowledgeable, the work of the assembly line as skilled, and the role of education systems as the inculcation of this valued set of skills and knowledge. The films concerned with depicting the Trade School thus combatted characterizations of "bodily labor" as a lesser form of labor stripped of knowledge to, instead, braid the bodily and mechanical with the cerebral, social, and theoretical to create the concept of an education in "shop theory" (the namesake of the school's most enduring textbook).

Treating these films as a single drawn together "architext" about the changing nature of knowledge as they appear in *As Dreams Come True*, the symbolic work of Ford's educationally oriented motion pictures moved to first tie knowledge to democracy (reaching back to Chapter One's invocation of "incorporative rhetoric") and then industrial production to knowledge to complete the necessary framework to legitimize "Fordist" knowledge as integral to the economic man, and as a wholly performable subject position. From a historical perspective, there are numerous implications for these depictions of education as part of a more expansive epistemological set of values.

First, while few would argue that Ford Motor Company's production methods had not raised the capacity for bodily labor to create unprecedented volumes of capital, there were significant concerns that the production of this monetary capital through mass, bodily labor was being leveraged too liberally against the human mind and spirit.[36]

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[36] Adam Smith, himself, had described "the torpor of [the laborer's] mind renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part of any rational conversation, but of conceiving any tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life" (Smith 50).

Entering into this context in 1921, *As Dreams Come True* takes part in a process through which the company challenges the circulating concepts of what constituted “skilled” and “unskilled” labor.[37]

Second, Ford Motor Company's move from careful incorporation of the public education system into the confines of Fordist production to supplanting public education with outright Fordist educational structures relied on its ability to draw logical lines between notions of technical production, what makes up knowledge, and disciplinarity as the social “hook” through which individuals could see their labor (or the labor of others) as more than just transferrable with monetary capital. Learning to take part in the use of machine-enhanced and distributed labor was positioned as a mark of modernity, of proper conduct, and of embodied nationalism.

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[37] This is a debate that remains in question nearly to the present. Taking the case of Ford’s new 1914 labor/compensation process, on one hand, Rudolf J.R. Perlitz argues that, crucial to Ford’s new wage-based leverage over workers, was the assembly line’s ability to “de-skill [labor], taking away their ‘property’ of specialized knowledge” and establishing “a gap, a hierarchy, between workers, now unskilled, and management, now knowledgeable” (Perlitz 324). In this line of reasoning, Ford Motor Company created, and hoarded, value by creating the necessary symbolic leverage to increase demands on workers both on the production line and in their home lives. After the Five-Dollar-A-Day initiative Ford Motor Company, no longer afraid of high levels of turnover or union influence, crafted policies which demanded its workers function as an extension of the mechanical line itself. The ensuing outpouring of new value was thus leveraged against physically taxed bodies and repressed, docile minds. On the other hand, institutional economist John Hodgson argues that, “economic development is very much about building up [habitual] knowledge in individuals, and also building up routines that inter-lock this knowledge between individuals, to unlock it in appropriate circumstances” (68). Within this account of the Fordist explosion of value, it is not purely the exploitation of bodily labor (as 8 hours of standing is, by most accounts, preferable to 8 hours of sowing or reaping) but new forms of arrangement and organization that constitute the conversion of labor to more efficient output of capital. For this reason, Hodgson suggests that an allegiance to the “labor power” thesis too easily equates bodily exertion with notions of devalued and “unskilled” labor without first suggesting how value is being embedded in the worker’s ability to perform tasks consistently as, itself, a form of knowledge. Once again, rhetoric seems to be a useful intermediary in making sense of this discussion.

More than any of these discourses circulating individually, however, the narrative of young Henry Ford's education ties these concepts together into an observable narrative ten years in the making—a "script" of sorts about training the effective Fordist mind in particular competencies and knowledge sets.[38] For the audiences experiencing such a narrative in the context of the film *As Dreams Come True,* however, the attention to these new knowledge structures serves as a primer for the more expansive narrative taking place concerned with the development of a human life in he context of "Fordist" America.

The next scene of the film, in making this transition draws connections between the birth and development of Henry Ford as "Boy on the Farm," to the founding of a more collectively experienced "dream" that could ultimately contextualize the principle of creative destruction that is seemingly inherent when paradigm shifts on the scale of Fordism and Progressivism occur. This marks the next metatextual link present in the film.

An Ideological Interlude: Visualizing Dreams, Imagination, and Innovation

"at the end of every labour process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement"

Karl Marx, Capital, pg. 198

Immediately following the educational vignette, the film turns to a second narrative focused on a teenage Henry Ford pulling a wagon of wood slowly with the use of a team of stubborn horses. At the outset of the new chapter, young Ford halts the horses and looks downward, seemingly lost in deep concentration. In a sharp cut, the

[38] These industrial films as acts of "scripting" on the part of Ford Motor Company. Drawn from Bruno Latour's theories of "speaking to organize" rather than speaking about "organization" the concept of the "script" develops at the intersection of "performative" rhetorics and "architexture."

audience then sees the same figure hauling wood with a tractor at twice the speed. Suddenly finished with his daydream, the film snaps back to the wagon-laden Ford who spurs the horses onward at a plodding pace.

Invoking the same convention, the next scene opens with young Ford splitting the transported logs laboriously (and clumsily) by axe when he looks up into the distance—again lost in a daydream. The scene then sharply cuts to two older men socializing around a Fordson tractor rigged to split wood while young Ford pulls up on a second tractor to deliver a new batch of lumber—all appear in much better spirits. Once again, the film returns to young Ford in his present reality as he clumsily hacks at the wood with an axe (fig. 7).

Even in this brief scene, many of the ideological fragments that made up the emerging principles of Fordism were on display— the importance of finding intersections between innovation and production, the power of mechanical objects, the social progress made possible by their use, and the concept of "creative destruction" as the boy imagines the supplanting of one form of labor by another as a natural process in the face of human ingenuity. Many of Ford's industrial films are littered with such "ideographs" designed to rework economic relations—none more powerful than the dream itself that develops throughout these early chapters of *As Dreams Come True* (McGee).[39]

Tropes of the dream and the imagination have always been important metaphors in the legitimization of economic rationalities as a set of ideologies. The extent to which depictions of dreams, imagination, and innovation form a rhetoric—particularly in

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[39] In his own explorations of the relationship between the notion of ideology and constitutive rhetoric, Michael McGee has taken up the concept of the "ideograph." Similar concerns over the narrative nature of "ideologemes" have developed from the work of Frederic Jameson and Julia Kristeva.

conjunction with the epistemological claims circulating both within and beyond the immediate film were integral in the process of transforming laboring bodies and industrial knowledge into structures of value. *As Dreams Come True* thus transitions from direct attention to the education of young Henry Ford to the moment in which Ford becomes the visionary of contemporary acclaim through his private process of dreaming about the very origins of mass production.

We thus arrive at a second element of economic rhetoric at play in the film: the conversion of epistemological knowledge structures into new ideological practices. Noting the rhetorical nature of such a move, Hannah Arendt argued that the symbolic production of the imagined is critical to the discursive nature of labor itself, as it is created from otherwise non-descript bodily movement or basic resource accumulation. In *The Human Condition,* she argues further that across economic contexts depictions of bodily action as "labor" each rely on the creation of a principle that "naturalizes" the relationship between the individual and societal cycles of production.

Taking an historical approach, reading across multiple economic theorists' method for explaining what entails the economic, Arendt points out that "Marx had to introduce a natural force, the 'labor power' of the body, to account for labor's productivity and a progressing process of growing wealth" and in a separate model she argues that John Locke "had to trace property to a natural origin of appropriation in order to force open those stable, worldly boundaries that 'enclose' each person's privately owned share of the world 'from the common'" (Arendt 99). For Arendt, these instances of rhetorically producing theories of a "natural" force to economic theory are paramount

to integrating (or incorporating) individuals into a system of economic rationality and production.

Thus, the intermediary scene that transitions the audience from seeing figures of knowledge to the performance of innovation to the ensuing figures of physical production is an excellent opportunity to view one integral feature in the production of economic rhetoric—the affiliation of epistemology and ontology through the depiction of ideographs.

In Arendt's line of thought, I read this second chapter of *As Dreams Come True* as exemplary of Ford Motor Company's work to naturalize the combined force of the machine and human innovation to remake the nature of labor and growing wealth for its audience. It does so by "naturalizing" the changing look of labor into the imagined and progressive dreams of the company's figurehead as a boy. Viewers of the film, in this way, are invited to consider their entry into a Fordist economy as joining the dreams of an economic visionary.

In accomplishing such a narrative, the company remained on the favorable side of another of economics' fundamental narratives: "creative destruction."[40] Capitalism is, in this broad theory, a patterned phenomenon reliant on cycles that keep capital in motion by constructing and reconstructing ever-newer symbolic processes that instill value into objects, services, and ideas. In the case of the "Boy On the Farm" narrative at play, seeing young Ford embody earlier forms of labor as frustrating and isolated, then

[40] Initially sketched out by Karl Marx and expanded by Joseph Schumpeter, the "creative destruction" thesis suggests that, in order to give the appearance of continuous accumulation, capitalism must periodically experience a lurching shift which "revolutionizes the economic structure *from within*, incessantly destroying the old [regime of capitalization], incessantly creating a new one" (Schumpeter 89, emphasis original).

presenting a more socially-feasible and efficient method for work in the form of a dream sets up later scenes where new forms of labor get linked with narratives of human progress that are pitched in economic terms.

Returning to an almost identical wood-cutting scene in its seventh chapter, *As Dreams Come True* drives home the point more overtly. After a text-based frame declaring that “the ‘new’ relieves and assists the old” this later scene positions the three figures of Ford’s youth as “friends of forty years or more” bound by their production—by their pulling of boilers across farmsteads and ability to chat as a Ford tractor tooled with a function for splitting wood did most of the work.

This time, however, as the two farmers split wood using a Fordson tractor, an aged Henry Ford hops from his model T and declares, “Boys, that’s a whole lot easier than it used to be.” In this moment, the viewer sees the dream of young Ford literally come true and is invited to understand the significance of not only Ford’s innovation, but the humanist potential of economic and industrial advancement in general.

By resituating the discourses of “creative destruction” as a natural outcropping of human ingenuity, constant construction and reconstruction of conceptions of labor, structures of knowledge, and understandings of the relationship between individuals, *As Dreams Come True* has primed its audiences to see the now contextualized appearance of the moving assembly line and its resulting points of labor as part of a much different narrative than just mass production and laborious drudgery. Instead, such production practices are poised as the dynamic outcroppings of both changing and progressive forms of labor, as well as new outlets for recognizing knowledge and proper conduct. All of these claims are cached within a narrative of achieving a “dream.”

However, even if one grants *As Dreams Come True* the kind of formal unity to assume that these narratives have landed their intended result on the audience member, Kenneth Burke points out that, in the workings of constitutive rhetoric, "vexing things…happen when men try to translate some pure aim or vision into terms of its corresponding material embodiment" (v). Often, he notes in these cases, this results in actions that escape or function outside of the original "spiritual" ("imaginative") motive.[41] In other words, ideology and epistemology require particular ontological visions of individuals to perform their ideas.

True to this form, as convincing as the idyllic scenes of a young Ford developing into a new kind of economic agent would be on their own, to ensure the complete structural understanding of "Fordism" as a construct made up of "Ford Men," *As Dreams Come True* continues to develop these new forms and ideologies of labor through which audiences across the country could join the "Boy on the Farm" as a new kind of economic subject through their own inclusion in Ford's dream.

Turning Ford's vision into an operating set of economic relations involving thousands of workers would require a very different set of affiliations—thus, the depicted principles of education and ideology laid out in *As Dreams Come True* must also align with the mass production labor processes to produce a regime in which the established knowledge could be converted into capital—a process that was carried out next in the film through cinematic depictions of workers' bodies as labor commodities in an

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[41] Positioned in the terms of this chapter, Burke seems to suggest a) that one integral element of constitutive rhetoric is its ability to align epistemology and ideology with ontology for the simple fact that knowledge and ideas need bodies and minds to enact/perform them and b) this process is traditionally quite messy.

expansive system of production—an integral process Theodore Adorno once called the formation of the "imago of the laborer" (Adorno 54).[42]

Fictitious Commodities: Materialist Rhetoric and the Imago of the Fordist Laborer

Bodies are enmeshed in a turbulent stream of multiple and conflictual discourses that shape what they mean in particular contexts.

-Kevin DeLuca, Unruly Arguments, pg. 12

"I wonder whether, before one poses the question of ideology, it wouldn't be more materialist to study first the question of the body and the effects of power on it"

-Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge pg. 58

The constitutive nature of *As Dreams Come True* shifts, at this point, from the "founding" of the "Boy on the Farm" and a vision of a modern industrial mind to the depiction of a different entity: the modern mass production-oriented corporation and the place of the individual (particularly the individual body) in this process. If, the film seems to argue, the mechanization and distribution of labor can help three farmers on a single farm, imagine an entire region aligned by these principles. Reflecting this concept, chapters three and four of *As Dreams Come True* turn more directly to the narrative of the Fordist production regime itself. A regime, the film argues, that "will endure by faith in your fellowman's service to the World and Justice" as they are articulated through that fellow man's labor.

[42] Theodore Adorno has argued that such a narrative is integral to the hegemony of culture industries. He argues that it is precisely through texts like *As Dreams Come True* that the laborer "is persuaded that he does not have to renounce any of his dreams if he eventually becomes an engineer or a shop assistant…those dreams which in a class society are already in thrall to the world of things and directed towards the imago of the train driver and the pastry cook"

Ronald Walter Greene has suggested that "production is more than an economic category; it gestures to a historically variable ontology of labor that displaces old distinctions between production and consumption, and/or social production and social reproduction, in order to account for how new forms of labor generate new forms of value." (Greene 200). Such an "ontology" or "imago" of the laborer suggests that the rhetorical production, performance, and interpretation of laboring bodies on film has joined the educational and ideological initiatives of the company as integral parts of the Fordist whole.

Working from within this frame, the opening scene of chapter three sweeps across a series of panoramic and aerial depictions of Ford's Highland Park production plant, its hulking walls and smokestacks billowing out black smoke contrasts with the quick movements of Model Ts on the move and workers smoking outside of the factory. The frame of this enormous production facility ushers in a montage chronicling the many resources and objects that are drawn together to create the automobile. As "links in a mighty chain" of production, this chapter rattles off scenes of a dammed river used to run a hydroelectric power plant (seemingly recalling the lesson learned by the "Boy on the Farm" earlier in the film); the mechanical processes involved in mining, hauling, and refining of trees into panels; the lots of coal stored and shipped for blast furnaces; and the production of raw rubber into a seemingly endless stockyard of tires.

These resources are then put into a relationship with human bodies working inside of the factory. For example, the image of young Ford splitting a few branches into logs for a fire is now context for the image of two workers hauling a truckload of timber (at least 20 full tree trunks, stripped of branches) from Michigan's north woods (notably, a

very literal "intertextual" moment drawing on footage from a 1919 "labor" film entitled *Lumbering in the Northwoods* in the process). Filtered through the moving production line, this mass foresting is followed by a scene of one worker pulling wooden planks from the assembly line, shearing thinner strips from their trunks and setting them on the conveyor belt to make up side panels for the Model T.

In economic theory, this set of scenes depicts the process Karl Polyani described as the conversion of "labor" itself, along with nature and structures of money, into a set of "fictitious commodities." For Polyani, depictions like the one present in the middle chapters of *As Dreams Come True* serve an integral (though dangerous) role in the reification of economic rationality for their ability to present human experience as defined by its place in a "self-regulating market" (65).

For rhetoricians, Polyani's attention to the fictive nature of capitalist labor is worthy of greater attention. This third section is, thus, concerned with the visual production of a Fordist "ontology of labor" that matches the epistemological and ideological arrangements surrounding mass production (or perhaps, a rhetoric devoted to changing conceptions of labor) that was crucial to the proliferation of Fordism as a site of performable identification and visualization of value. For the laborer, making sense of these scenes means coming to understand that the value of one's labor is inextricably linked with the labor of the next—the value of each enhanced by the organized fashion in which they are connected. For the consumer watching this film, the Ford Model T rolling off of the assembly line comes to represent the increased capital invested in the automobile (both social and economic) as these resources and labors accumulate into a single object.

Far from an isolated invocation of this trope, in its relatively brief depiction of the actual production methods at Ford Motor Company, *As Dreams Come True* calls on the many films distributed by Ford prior to 1921 designed to document the mechanized creation of resources and their conversion into commodities through mass production practices. That is, for the "rural folk" witnessing the immediate and more expansive narrative, these brief scenes provide an intertextual link to nearly a decade's worth of films designed to posit the ability of labor within mass production to generate the figure of the economic agent.

In the years separating Ford Film Laboratory's first offering and *As Dreams Come True's* depiction of the immense coordination of labor and materials, the Laboratory created a deluge of motion pictures devoted to depicting the creation of many commodities: sugar, salt, barrels, chewing gum, steel, ice, cotton, automobiles and many other objects through mass, mechanized means. In each case, these commodities are presented as extensions of mass interconnected systems of machinery, transportation, and coordinated bodily labor (Bray). These ontological "labor" films reach back to the very origins of the Film Laboratory in 1914 when the very first film released by the unit was entitled *How Henry Ford makes 1,000 Cars per Day*.[43] When placed as a bookend with

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[43] Contrary to the film's title, its primary focus was not Henry Ford himself, but the assembly line and, as an extension of this innovation, the men who worked on it. The title, however, is telling of how these early depictions sent messages to potential Fordist producers and consumers about the nature of the organizational existence they were witnessing—much in the way the "dream" functioned years later. On one hand, by positioning the top figure at the company as the creator and owner of the products rolling off of the assembly line, this debut film establishes the extension of private property rights onto the many acts of labor that constitute the property manufactured—a point reified by the choice to position labor as the extension of Henry Ford's "Dream." By extension, purchasing a Ford Model T was purchasing the privately developed vision of the company's figurehead and an object produced by a factory rather than the crafted products of men at work.

As Dreams Come True this first film set the tone for what would be the seemingly endless stream of films concerned with the various elements of Fordist labor.

While organizational expanse and mass production were the stars of the show for many of these films, what viewers actually saw, almost unilaterally, were human bodies at work in new and increasingly complex ways. In this way, on film, the assembly line developed as a material metaphor, of sorts, tasked with "incorporating" its human figures into a dynamic production process. On film, the specific nature of individualized work is obscured to highlight labor as a contribution to the overall product through mechanical bodily output.

While the entirety of the this process is not captured in most of these labor films (even though it for a Model T only lasted ten minutes at its height of efficiency, a process shorter than the length of *As Dreams Come True*), the contributions to the construction of the automobile that do receive specific attention on film consist of tasks like pulling a wheel spoke from one machine in the line, turning 180 degrees, and setting it on a new track for further assembly or inspecting a newly cast part and setting it in a moving bin to be carried to the next point of assembly. These are tasks that require, almost exclusively, a body "ready and able" to perform repeatedly and without variation. The production of such a body—or, more precisely, producing those willing to occupy a body in such a state—is a matter of intricate rhetorical incorporation. These tasks, when viewed for more than the four to five seconds the film devoted to them would certainly appear menial and repetitive. Yet, to mitigate the monotony of Ford work, the individual worker was almost never featured in these "labor" motion pictures. Instead, panoramic shots of many generally indistinguishable bodies were used to present the nature of Fordist production.

More than this, the workers typically occupy the margins of a scene while the mechanical conveyor belt or automotive part takes up the central space. In this way, as part of the larger process of production, represented by a dynamic movement from one set of bodies in action to the next on film, these menial movements become the new method for producing unprecedented quantities and quality. When extended even further in a film like *As Dreams Come True*, the menial movement of tossing a lug nut into a bin becomes affiliated with physical and bodily knowledge, societal progress, and a life of personal gain.

This, more than any other feature of the film, is the rhetorical goal of *As Dreams Come True*. To accept the value of the menial bodily movement that highlighted the "Ford Man," the worker needed to be capable of conceiving the whole of both the production process and the meanings that could be ascribed to it. By capturing bodily labor as, on one hand, the extension of an immense Progressive vision for the nation and, on the other, one small element in a remarkable machine of production, *As Dreams Come True* highlights a larger "architexture" surrounding Fordist labor designed to produce willing and able bodies for production.

To this point, then, we have seen the film *As Dreams Come True* move its viewer through several valences of economic rhetoric. Establishing industrial knowledge as on part with traditional intellectual endeavors, creating a "natural" force to understand the cultural significance of this knowledge, and new ontologies based on labor to perform these knowledges.

Returning to Spivak's account, in any capitalist system, the final element in creating an economic system is presenting the public with a concept of "transformation"

into capital. The work of Ford's films is, then, to re-imbue the line worker's body with symbolic value (bestowed on it by humanist traditions). The crucial mechanism through which this balancing act takes place is the re-materialization of the body outside of the factory in the form of the consumer and this makes for the final act of "incorporation" that the film would provide to complete the symbolic core of the "Ford Man."

From Transportation to Transformation: Film and the Rhetorical Production of Capital

In many ways, Fordism would be an easy paradigm to pin down if it had functioned as a simple exchange of menial and physically taxing work for a considerable rise in wages that functioned to make workers forget about their bodies for eight hours. *As Dreams Come True* would have been a far shorter film as well. Turning one final time to this guide text, having briefly depicted ideas of industrial knowledge, visions of innovation and creative destruction, and in the expansive material network and place of workers' bodies in the Fordist production process, the final chapters of *As Dreams Come True* begin to shift the discourses of consumption into more clearly into social and personally experienced terms.

Such a social approach suggests that the objects and conceptions of labor created, bought, and sold on the market represent an ability to show, hide, cope with, and resolve fears, desires, and relations they are often very personal and very rhetorical in their deployment. Putting his finger on this notion, Polyani has argued against the kind of capital that lies at the heart of Economics' "self interest" thesis. He suggested that the economically oriented figure "does not act so as to safeguard his individual interest in the possession of material goods; he acts so as to safeguard his social standing, his social

claims, his social assets. He values material goods only insofar as they serve this end" (Polyani 171).

From this perspective, labor and money function as a set of emptied out signifiers whose value must be constituted through material and social exchanges. Thus, compensation for work does not always equate directly to monetary wages, but can often require that individuals weigh these wages alongside other socially constructed outcomes of work: a sense of self-worth, contributions to a greater good, intellectual stimulation, or future prospects. Making this principle visible, Ford's film canon highlighted repeatedly that the medium of monetary capital made possible by acts of mass manufacturing was equivalent with all sorts of domestic possibilities: owning homes, cars, providing food, and providing the means for leisure.

Facilitated by the implementation of profit-sharing, these acts of consumption also became a way of investing in the labor of the factory worker which, in turn, enabled their own purchasing power. Thus, the glut of labor films was balanced with a glut of consumption films—depicting suggested ways of spending the new surplus value created by organizational existence. Rhetorically, this constitutes an argument toward "compartmentalization" or, more classically, "substitution" inviting individuals to consider the economics or exchange value of their own bodily labor.

In presenting its new forms of labor, Ford Motor Company would require, an equally naturalized theory of labor and its connection to capital in order to add not only value to the economic system depicted on film, but also to the social well-being of those who identified with its structure. To do so, *As Dreams Come True* shifts in its final

chapters to present the many non-monetary benefits it imagined developed out of Ford's dream of mass production.

Chapter 5 of the film accounts for the company's role in World War One where "setting aside one's dearest ambitions and releasing a flood of unnatural power to relieve the world in one of its darkest moments," the film depicts the now retooled production line as it is producing warships en masse. Though brief in this particular film, Ford's Film Laboratory worked consistently to tie the victory of Allied forces in World War I with their access to superior production methods (a theme that, as Chapter 3 will chronicle, has emerge again during World War II). In turn, the outcome of the mechanically aided war effort is a nation safe for "fellowship and goodwill."

Chapter 6 then attempts to rework the large corporate merger as an act of fellowship and good will. Outlining the nature of Ford's purchase of Lincoln Motors, the film presents the event as both economic ("a step forward in the automobile world") and social ("the making of many steadfast friends"). The images accompanying this merger include the signing of contracts but conclude the transaction with a claim which works to re-integrate the task as a new form of affirming friendship. A text-based interlude concludes (as a result of contractual agreement) "old friends are good friends, as in the days of Auld Lang Syne."

Finally, this relationship is far more pointed as, immediately following the production vignettes, images of consumption are prefaced by the quote, "the greatest pleasure or constructive good that can come to any man anywhere in or out of business is in doing something for another"—a trope entirely constituted by the act of mass consumption. On film, this dictum is accompanied by images of men and women in

overcoats and furs purchasing prepackaged groceries, selecting mass-produced and packaged meats. Drawing visual parallels between production and consumption, these scenes feature the spaces of consumption at the center of each scene mediating between two embodied figures—buyer and seller—just as the production line mediated the relationship between worker and manager in the production scenes (fig. 8).

As Dreams Come True, then, rounds out its work by turning to depictions of leisure, Henry Ford is shown in old age surrounded by friends and family—they camp, go for a drive, and engage in a snowball fight and generally embody the leisure time made available by the film's prior innovations. The film then concludes where it began—asserting the remarkable potential for new arrangements of labor, capital, and organized action to remake the symbolic identities of many across the country.

The film ends with a quote from Henry Ford which reads: "My ambition is to employ still more men; to spread the profits of this industrial system to the greatest possible number, to help them build up their lives and their homes." Left with this message, as the viewers exit the theater, climb back into their Model Ts and "jounce" back to their homes, they do so now accompanied by a structural vision that has tied industrial action to new sense of Progressive national pride and modernity, their bodies and minds to particular forms of labor, and their access to new forms of classed consumption. In the rhetorical struggle over identification taking place throughout the early twentieth century, such a visually mediated "architexture" was integral to the success of the "Ford Man" as a point of national identification.

Conclusion

For rhetoricians, I hope, this chapter not only begins the process of filling in the role rhetoric plays in the larger patterns of economic and social development in the United States, but also explores the role that visual "architexts" played in the constitutive production of the "Ford Man" (a consummate example of the historical figure of the economic man). In working toward this goal, I have presented three elements circulating in the film *As Dreams Come True*. The first positions the place of film in the historical discourses surrounding economic development in the United States as the concept of "Fordism-as-rhetoric" supplanted (or at least severely adjusted) Progressive initiatives. Second, we have seen a number of integral elements of "economic rhetoric" as they appear on film: the formation of industrial epistemology, the articulation of a "naturalizing principle" (ideology) that attaches individual to system, and formation of an "ontology of labor" that changes the possibilities for occupying this new economic structure. Finally, for scholars concerned with constitutive rhetorical practices, the addition of such a genre suggests that "making men" rhetorically requires a "skillful combination" of messages about epistemology, ontology, and ideology that carry across many texts.

Placing these many parts into a single vision for the economy provides a model for home ownership, economic activity as social interaction, and mechanized production. It also, however, functions as a useful guide, to the larger collective set of messages that Ford's motion picture work disseminated in the first 20 years of the company's existence which aided in redirecting the course of industrial capitalism in the United States. Films like *As Dreams Come True* functions as a kind of visual index, chronicling the various constitutive parts of the Fordist regimes ranging from the expansive system of

accumulating resources to patterns of recreation and consumerism made possible by the efficiency of these production practices. As such, it is an ideal text for considering the organizational rhetorics of the company in a period of immense social change.

This genre of the industrial "architexture" film would become a staple of the Ford motion picture canon throughout its history and an important element of many company's utility film collections. Later examples of this kind of textual production within Ford's archived collection include the 1932 film "Harvest of the Years," the 1940 film (outlining the New York World's Fair exhibition) entitled "Roads of Tomorrow," the 1962 film co-produced with the National Archives entitled "Mirror of America," and even persists into the present via a Ford-produced 2010 documentary "A New American Road." In this sense, the conventions that animate the narrative I have unpacked here are still being used to tell and retell Ford's identity through visual artifacts nearly a century later—in what often amounts to a long autobiography of the company and the individuals that constitute it.

Chapter 3

Paving the Way to Prosperity: Ford Motor Company, Road Genres, and the Rhetorical Production of Economic Space in the New Deal Era

"A whole history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history of powers (both of these terms in the plural)—from the great strategies of geopolitics to the little tactics of the habitat."

Michel Foucault Power/Knowledge pg. 145

"The creation and re-creation of ever newer space relations for human interactions is one of capitalism's most significant achievements"

David Harvey, The Enigma of Capital pg. 254

If Henry Ford's autobiographical writing was any indication of the collective intentions at Ford Motor Company (which it usually was), by 1929, the company had been emboldened by its in-factory successes during the first wave of Progressivism both in terms of the production of cars and the production of "Ford Men." It was, thus, poised to expand its initiatives more directly into the structural fabric of American life beyond its factory walls. At the outset of a series of published autobiographical interviews titled "My Philosophy of Industry," Ford laid out the potential for the same broad principles that governed the production of automobiles to expand more directly into the daily lives of non-employees. The first chapter of this text, for example, focuses on housewives, farmers, and children as they are freed to live and consume more widely if Fordist practices are allowed into the home, the farm, and the school ("My Philosophy" 4-5).

As with his workers, in exchange for taking up practices indicative of a new industrial paradigm, Ford's treatise promised increased quality of life predicated on the use of machinery, a vast and interconnected economy, and mass production methods as they were translated into housework, agriculture, and leisure. It was, by nearly every

possible measure, the same utopian vision of an industrialized society that had been put forward by *As Dreams Come True* nearly a decade before. However, now this vision was being cast on a societal rather than a primarily individual level and thus was concerned with generating a cultural apparatus that aligned with Fordist principles, not just creating "Ford Men" through acts of production and consumption.

However, there was a serious problem with Henry Ford's new vision as he projected it onto populations he had no rational claim over. Unlike the production of the "Ford Man" from the immediate worker in its factories, Ford Motor Company could not simply leverage its messages against the corporeal bodies and minds of the American public by realigning the nature and value of their labor symbolically. Such an audience was not only too large and disparate to account for, but the company lacked the authority to extend its wage systems, assembly lines, and educational programs to discipline an entire nation.

In other words, remaking a national body politic into a single imagined community by disciplining individual subjects was beyond the scope of the company's constitutive rhetorical capabilities (there simply wasn't a way to make the incorporative rhetoric surrounding the metaphor of the assembly line appear long enough on film). In this regard, the company required a second image or medium through which it could extend the aura of the "Ford Man" to subjects beyond the factory setting—one that aimed at a cultural, rather than individual, level. A closer look at three thematic strands that emerge from both Henry Ford's writings and the Ford Motion Picture Laboratory's holdings at the National Archives suggests that the company turned, at least in part, to the production of economic spaces to fulfill the expansive vision of its figurehead.

Reflecting these changes, Ford's treatise articulated a brewing fascination with spatial practices. For example, one of the central tenets of "My Philosophy of Industry" was that "Fordist" individuals were liberated to "move about," through their affiliation with mass production and consumption practices. On a local level, he claimed new conceptions of the domestic, declaring that "Home will remain, but homes will greatly change—they always have" ("My Philosophy" 5). Carrying this new mobility outward, Ford then imagined that because of the newfound efficiency of production practices "People are no longer compelled to stay in the house, but may travel about, economically, and see things" (5). Finally, carrying this vision to its most extreme, Ford imagined that through the homogenizing effects of the mass economy "may we vision a United States of the World. Ultimately, it will surely come!" (19).

Reflecting the sensibilities of its figurehead, gradually, over the first fifteen years of filmmaking, the subjects of Ford's industrial films turned away from the documentation of internal production methods, individual workers, and principles of industrial democracy and knowledge to, instead, focus on more communally experienced and spatial outlets. These outlets included an ever-present push to improve and expand the national road system, early precursors to classed/suburban life in the form of "village-industries," and depictions of nature as a new kind of class commodity through the practices of leisure and tourism. Through the combined force of these cinematic depictions of spatial relations, the company seemed to engage in an expansive process of claiming (or creating) territory for the Fordist economy. In this regard, Ford's films took up the utopian vision of economic liberty and transitioned it into an economic version of what Michel Foucault would term a road-mediated "heterotopia." For Foucault, this term

reflects that “our epoch is one in which space takes for us the form of relations among sites” (“Of Other Spaces” 2).

Through the formation of such relations develops “a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted” that present “a sort of mixed, joint experience” (3-4). In this way, theories of heterotopia bring together principles of consubstantiality and spatial rhetoric. This chapter is, thus, concerned with the role that Ford’s “incorporative rhetorics” (as we understood them in the first chapter) played in the symbolic formation of a series of “economized” spaces designed to shape class relations in the United States as such a “joint experience” of emerging “car culture.” In particular, I argue that while these economized spaces develop through “architextual” narrative, they are ultimately connected and aligned through a single dominant trope: the open road.

A number of scholars have chronicled the appearance of a national fascination with mobility and freedom that developed into a discernible set of “road genres” during the 1930’s and 40’s.[44] As a trope, then, roads have been identified a mainstay across the mediums of film, radio, novels and periodicals’ depictions of national identity in the United States. Though only a sampling of films from the “road genres” that expressed and reified this “car culture” will be taken up directly here, titles such as *Road to Happiness (1924), Rhythm of the Road (1941),* and *Freedom of the American Road (1956)* produced by Ford directly suggest that the symbolic potential of pavement was never entirely lost on the company’s motion picture work for the better part of four

[44] These texts include Brian Ireland’s "American highways: Recurring images and themes of the road genre"; Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark’s *The Road Movie Book*; David Laderman’s *Driving visions*; as well as Ron Eyerman and Orvar Löfgren’s "Romancing the road: road movies and images of mobility."

decades. However, this narrative of the rhetorical work surrounding car culture is particularly interesting when paired with the literal national reconstruction that took place in the wake of the Great Depression—a period in which the mythology of a developing United States was fused intimately with discourses of "car culture" and its ensuing economic relations.

In this chapter, I trace the ways that Ford Motion Picture Laboratories positioned roads, streets, and highways to function as a powerful rhetorical figure in the production of economic spaces. Just as discourses about the "Ford Man" had developed through the dynamic relationship between mechanical knowledge, bodily action, and ideologies of economic progress on film, the road would become an important intermediary in the heterogeneous production of a properly Fordist set of spaces meant to, in turn, produce particular practices and identifications that made up a heterotopic arrangement of "car culture."[45]

As an act of "economic-organizational" rhetoric, I argue that the symbolic production of roads-as-performable-spaces has two main points of significance for rhetoricians. First, these films affirm claims that the rhetorical production of space is rarely a matter of a singular textual artifact; rather, it is the work of many texts that draw together disparate messages about spatial relations and asks what tropes and arguments generate such an assemblage of texts and ideas to do so. As developed on film, the work of positioning roads and the culture surrounding their construction is to form what Cotton

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[45] As I turn to "car culture" as a historically specific, and rhetorically produced phenomenon, I draw on its original articulation in the 1975 work of James Flink. In "Carjacked" Catherine Lutz and Anne Lutz Fernandez note the considerable history of "myth-making" that has surrounded the formation of such a culture, and its relationship to turning material vehicle into symbolic vehicle.

Seiler termed "'multilinear ensemble' of commodities, bodies of knowledge, laws, techniques, institutions, environments, nodes of capital, sensibilities, and modes of perception" through rhetorical practices (6). Second, as these roads develop particular spatial narratives, they do so through an economic (rather than social or geographical) lens thus making this an exploration of the role rhetoric plays in the historical laying of an economic map over traditionally nationalized spaces.

A Fordist Mythology of Roads: Circulation and the Economic 'Lifeblood of a Nation'

Social historian Peter Daniel Norton has argued that the story of roads' inherent connection with automobiles is not a natural one. Rather, "motorists arrived in American city streets as intruders and had to fight to win a rightful place there" (Norton 7). In this way, roads' integration into car culture was a matter of rhetorically remaking the narratives surrounding their interpretation as spaces of "automobility." For John Urry, "automobility can be conceptualized as a self-organizing, autopoetic, non-linear system that…includes cars, car-drivers, roads, petroleum supplies and many novel objects, technologies and signs" (Urry 45). Jorg Beckman has subsequently positioned the concept as a "mobility paradigm" made possible by "contests over the production and reproduction of mobility, that…inflect and interpenetrate the production and circulation of mobility's accounts" (xxiii). Thus, far from inventing the idea of roads as a point of national interest, the challenge facing Ford's Film Laboratory was to align its interests with a national fascination with road building that had been raging since the turn of the century.

In a 1904 Bulletin of the American Geographical Society titled "Good Roads in the United States," Albert Perry Brigham argued that, "if America be the most progressive nation in the world, her citizens will not much longer endure medieval discomforts when they go out to mingle with their fellows and market the fruits of their labor" (Brigham 735). By 1913, the newly formed National Highways Association declared in a widely circulated publication that true national progress would require:

> "the development of NATIONAL HIGHWAYS and GOOD ROADS everywhere in the length and breadth of these United States of America, and to secure the benefits—social, moral, commercial, industrial, material, educational, and personal—in the progress and uplift of the American people" (National 4, emphasis original)

Just as it had done with the discourses of public education stemming from John Dewey and the wider work of "Progressivism," Ford Motor Company's Film Laboratory worked to pick up on this symbolically ripe trope of roads and integrate it into the discourses of Fordist expansion and culture. In this context, the Laboratory's treatment of roads began much in the way its treatments of the "Ford Man" developed—on screens across the country depicting to rural audiences the potential benefits of investing in a national road system. The first step in such a process was to develop an effective mythology of roads as heterotopic spaces of an economic nation.

Returning to the hypothetical theater in Topeka, Kansas circa 1919, the lights once again dim, the "rural folk" have similarly "jounced into villages" to the local theater and the screen once again illuminates, this time with a narrative aimed to effectively spread Ford Motor Company's influence through spatial means. A title slide reveals the

medium through which it would do so: *Good Roads.* As this title slide fades, the film next declares: *"Good Roads? Years before the White Man came the Red Man came breaking rough trails through the forests"* and quickly pans to an actress dressed up as a Native American walking pensively through low brush. Behind her, a male actor—also in mock Native American garb— appears, smiles, waves from his tiptoes mouthing a jovial "hey!" and plants a kiss on her cheek.

Moments later he grows troubled, points in the distance, then plants his enclosed fist over his heart and swings his arm wide as he marches out of the picture. The cause for alarm is a ramshackle caravan of horses, wagons, and grizzled, gun-bearing men plodding along a trail as an accompanying slide declares: "And then the pioneer, whose clumsier conveyances demanded wider avenues of traffic…travelled 10-15 miles per day." The film then reveals the purpose of these early scenes as it explains that: "Transportation has wonderfully improved but the highways are lamentably behind the times. In fact, many of them are in identically the same condition when travelled by the pioneer in his oxcart."

Through this opening vignette, the film works to naturalize the road as a crucial bellwether of human development and ties the construction of an interstate system as part of the embedded discourses of "Manifest Destiny" and cultural superiority that were integral to national identity at the time. On film, roads were at once positioned as natural to human activity and equated with the very quality of social life itself and thus served as an important indicator of identity in a "modernizing" nation. As a synecdochal device for gauging progress, the film posits that the idea that roads could be in the same condition as a century before cast a pall on any notion that the audience was living in a more civilized

nation than the "simple" figures who occupied these physical spaces in prior eras. In turn, individuals' ability to maintain and occupy these spaces of modernity was depicted as crucial to national development.

Having established the idea of the road as an inherent feature of human and social progress, the film then moves on to a secondary narrative that is more immediately developmental in nature, envisioning the potential for a new era of appropriately modern transportation. In a call and response format, *Good Roads* proceeds through a series of images of juxtaposed pre- and post- automobile/road life to highlight the degree to which roads could potentially transform much of America.[46] In this patterned manner the film establishes a clear binary. For pre-"good road" America, the pioneer and Native American are joined by the brooding blacksmith, the frustrated postman, the country church, and the one-room schoolhouse as vestiges of an outdated era. Occupants of these scenes are almost unilaterally muddy, tired, and dressed in outdated clothing. For post-road rural America, the film depicts the mechanic, the urban cathedral, and the cinema filled with well-dressed and lively figures.

In, literally, *seeing* the difference between a tattered schoolhouse filled with muddy worn out children and a school bus delivering well-dressed and chipper students to a brick school house, in seeing the plodding work of making a horseshoe put against the efficiency of an in-and-out car repair shop, the film positions its rural viewer to experience its final claim that "*Good roads make for better homes and better schools for happier and more contented children."* This claim, seemingly, concludes the mythology of roads as actors in social transformation. Fittingly, the next step in Ford's rhetorical

[46] Notably, this call and response format is identical to that used in depicting the implications of young Henry Ford's mechanical visions in *As Dreams Come True*.

treatments of the road involved positioning these spaces as modes for incorporating national spaces into the wider economic vision of Fordism.

The film then turns toward a more overt narrative for the economization of space by positioning rural spaces through their potential inclusion in the abstract space of the "market" made possible by roads. In a series of text-based frames, the film argues that roads allow for "*saving time and enlargening the market*" by including these previously isolated rural populations. This section also argues that because of this market "*Cash comes into the house every day as the market shifts to the farmhouse gate*" that is "*Where the roads are good!*" The images that accompany these claims include a truck picking up a live calf to take it to market, a housewife receiving her milk and butter without having to leave the house, and finally a roadside stand allowing for the consumer to come directly to the farm for their products (fig. 9).

The film finally returns to its national frame positing that the viewer *"not think of a road as meaning merely the distance between two given points or cities. It is one of the arteries through which flows the life blood of the nation."* Expanded beyond just a bellwether for national progress, on film roads become a medium for affiliation between individuals in communities and play an integral role in making the wider heterotopic space of the national marketplace possible. It is through roads, *Good Roads* argues, that communities come together to build economic relations by gaining access to the new developing (and significantly more interconnected) Fordist marketplace. In turn, aligning with the narrative established in the first half of the film, these communities literally change culturally into more sophisticated and classed entities as the connection is made. In this way, as *Good Roads* made salient to its rural viewers, investing in roads was a

way of being included in not just a developing national economy, but also embodying modernity itself.

Part of an expansive "architextual" rendering of roads, later films in the "Good Roads" movement would echo this sentiment more overtly. For example, a 1924 film entitled *The Road to Happiness*, featured a young aspiring engineer who writes an essay that declares:

> "Vigorous churches and centralized schools are impossible in rural sections without good roads. Good roads can give the farmers' family social advantages and make possible a consolidated school and central church for the farm district. The farmer can move his crops in accordance with the market rather than the condition of the roads"

Following a similarly constitutive pattern as *As Dreams Come True's* treatment of "The Boy on the Farm" this young man, Joe, is depicted as he moves from rural schoolchild to a trained engineer employed by the Bureau of Public Roads. This sentiment then takes on new power and national implications through a cameo by President Calvin Coolidge who similarly declares (when presenting Joe with a college scholarship) that, "No expenditure of public money contributes so much to the national wealth as for building good roads."

As I position them here, the mythologizing that takes place in early films like *Good Roads* and *Road to Happiness* set the scene for a decades-long process of laying an economic map over the top of traditionally national and social scenes for considering the cultural core of the nation. Over the next 35 years, the building of, and taking to, roads was positioned as a marker of national solidarity and economic progress precisely because these roads were the bastions of a new mass production marketplace.

Such a set of "economizing" rhetorical practices become matters of historical significance in the face of tremendous rupture; something that would arrive on October, 29th, 1929 when the stock market crashed and the social and economic order of the United States functionally collapsed. Suddenly, the nation very seriously needed a transfusion of economic "lifeblood," and the trope of the road and its consummate set of economically-oriented practices became a wholesale vision of cultural reconstruction.

In response to the ensuing increase in unemployment from 3.2 percent in 1929 to, at its peak, 24.1 percent in 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration instituted the National Industrial Recovery Act. The act declared that it was designed

> to remove obstructions to the free flow of interstate and foreign commerce which tend to diminish the amount thereof; and to provide for the general welfare by promoting the organization of industry for the purpose of cooperative action among trade groups, to induce and maintain united action of labor and management under adequate governmental sanctions and supervision, to eliminate unfair competitive practices, to promote the fullest possible utilization of the present productive capacity of industries, to avoid undue restriction of production (except as may be temporarily required), to increase the consumption of industrial and agricultural products by increasing purchasing power, to reduce and relieve unemployment, to improve standards of labor, and otherwise to rehabilitate industry and to conserve natural resources.[47] (Recovery Act)

[47] Reading this passage 80 years later, it is remarkable how this act of progressive legislation seems to consist of a cobbled together combination of neoliberal logics (making way for a free and competitive market), Fordist production practices (maximizing efficiency and profit potentials through collective action), the formation of a nationalized/homogeneous labor force (creating unified and government run unions), and national social-welfare initiatives.

Seeking to generate interstate commerce, and allowing for greater distribution of resources, required a more expansive medium for travel. Additionally, facing increasingly dire conditions in urban settings, the ability for these roads to decentralize the living situation for many citizens could alleviate the need for resources in a handful of concentrated places. Finally, new spatial practices could begin to recover the nation's damaged economic psyche by providing new avenues of identification toward the "good life" that had, by that point, been deeply embedded in the collective conscious of a "middle class." In addition to formalizing many of the premises of "Fordism" into a full-scale plan for national development, New Deal initiatives like this act solved a serious problem for Ford Motor Company as, while it could produce cars, workers, and factories, it could not vertically integrate roads or consumers into its production lines: for that it needed to mobilize a nation (both figuratively and literally).

Within the folds of this new Recovery Act, the direct incorporation of "car culture" into the everyday lives of Americans was, in many ways, cast as a common sense initiative for achieving many goals. Roosevelt, seeking to put the nation back to work, needed massive infrastructural projects that would allow individuals to invest in one another's labor. Fulfilling Ford's many public requests to build a national system of roads and highways fit the billing. Thus, the era of grand building projects was underway with roads, cars, and mass culture seemingly at the helm.[48] In the years following the Depression, the "New Deal" organization Works Progress Administration (WPA) alone produced 651,000 miles of highway and 124,000 bridges (Hitzik 421). What Ford had established, however, was that this building was as much a re-imagining of the nation's

[48] To this day, discourses of national recovery are pitched in language that argues for "getting workers back to building roads and bridges" and this is no coincidence—but the legacy of a Post-Depression model of getting the American economy back on (a) track.

cultural and symbolic identity as an investment in its people. In short, collectively, these films establish that the building and taking to roads was something far grander than just a massive engineering project, but the enactment of "car culture" made possible through acts of "automobility."

In this frame, Ford Motor Company would wage a discursive battle in the public sphere for nearly 50 years pushing, always, for better and more expansive highway systems, and producing new and more innovative reasons for the populous to take to the road. It is through this massive overhaul of the American landscape—both physically and symbolically—that the company embedded itself in the recovery process that would reconstitute social relations across the country. As a set of historical texts capable of generating such a "heterogeneous ensemble," *Good Roads* and *Road to Happiness* highlight one of the fundamental reflections of spatial theory by rhetoricians—it's reliance on narratives that integrate many elements of spatial practice.

In this way, "car culture" and its practices of "automobility" serve as examples of one integral element in the rhetorical production of space: the tropes that facilitate its heterogeneity. On film, the complex of highways and county roads made increasingly possible the domestic/economic clusters the company would term "village-industries," and highways provided unprecedented access to the "frontier" United States as a source of "tourist" consumption practices—these projects will make up the remainder of this chapter. However, when taken collectively, these varying depictions of space highlight the fundamental goal of Ford Motor Company in the age of the New Deal: laying an economic map over traditional national concepts of space. Thus before turning to the other genres present in Ford's spatial depictions of "car culture," some theorization about

the rhetorical production of space within an economic-organizational framework is in order.

Heterotopic Highways: "Car Culture" and the Symbolic Production of Economic Space

"Two geographies together constitute a 'unity of opposites'; I shall call them life space and economic space. Although both are necessary for the sustenance of modern societies, they are inherently in conflict with each other"

-John Friedman, Life Space and Economic Space pg. 96

"the 'tropes' catalogued by rhetoric furnish models and hypotheses for the analysis of ways of appropriating places"

Nedra Reynolds, Geographies of Writing pg. 100

As I read them here, the road genres first developed on film by the "Good Roads" movement set in motion an expansive rhetorical project for converting nationalized spaces into economized spaces. A brief overview of such rhetorical treatments of this kind of production of space suggests a consistently heterogeneous procedure for converting place to space that has been typically understood as a three-part process. Edward Soja developed such a "trialectics" of space which layered the lived, perceived, and conceived spaces that accumulate through their perceived "continuity and some degree of cohesion" (33-40). For Henri Lefebvre, these traditional theoretical accounts of space consist of overlaying: "spatial practice, representations of space, and representational spaces" (cite). For Michel deCerteau, the "visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions" of a landscape develop through the combination of "operations, poetic and mythic experience of space, and opaque and blind mobility characteristics" (93).[49]

[49] Foucault would suggest that, "The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space" (3).

Folding these ideas more clearly into a working theory of spatial rhetoric, Nedra Reynolds summarizes the importance of these messages for spatial rhetoricians as she argues that theory must pay attention to "the interlocked relation" between these multifaceted spatial nodes as they "fold into and spin across one another, working together to accomplish the production of space" (Reynolds 16). In this sense, the production of economic space through a trope like the road requires a set of rhetorical appeals that are designed to align the (typically) tripartite elements of spatial relations.

Once again, the principle of "incorporative rhetoric" becomes significant in this process as it is through narratives and tropes of circulation and connection that spaces come into being through the overlapping of some combination of practices, symbolic spaces, and narrative. As the "arteries" through which a nation's "lifeblood" are positioned to flow, roads serve as an ideal case in making sense of such incorporative rhetoric in the production of a set of uniquely economic spaces as they "fold into and spin across one another."

Yet, as the company developed particular narratives about mobility and class, its films also highlight that space is not always exclusively perceived as a social or geographical entity. Rather, as with the production of the "economic man" in prior decades the production of economic space is both historically specific, and oriented through very different theoretical apparatuses. In this way, I argue that understanding what is taking place in the rhetorical treatment of roads in Ford's films requires attention to an alternative theory of spatial production based along economic lines.

For John Friedman, "economic space is abstract and discontinuous, consisting primarily of locations (nodes) and linkages (flows of commodities, capital, labour, and

information)" that, I add, are deeply wrapped up in the "incorporated" rhetorical practices that depict them (Friedman 97).[50] First articulated by Francois Perroux, such "economic space" has been theorized as a wholly different way of thinking of material relations between objects, persons, and landscapes though one that still developed through the interplay of a "trialectical" treatment of material and symbolic entities.

Perroux argued that this unique metaphorical theory of space—termed "monetary space"—has little to do with traditional geographical and social relations but requires, instead, a distinction between overlapping concepts of this "monetary space" and "national space."[51] Drawing on this frame, economic geographers define such monetary space by its own triumvirate of potential frames: "(1) economic space as defined by a plan; (2) economic space as a field of forces; and (3) economic space as a homogeneous aggregate" (Perroux 94). Ford's motion pictures suggest that each of these nodes in spatial production are deeply rhetorical in nature—often requiring texts to allow a public to see and understand the potential relations between these varying conceptions that produce economic space from place.

Perroux explains that "monetary" space defined by a plan measures the distance between inputs and outputs of a particular vision of capital—distance is, thus, measured in monetary terms and space is determined by relations surrounding the production and

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[50] Indeed, John Friedman is a considerable skeptic of economic space, positioning that, "the principal actors which constitute and, indeed produce this abstract economic space are firms and corporations". At the same time, a familiar narrative appears in his account: "just as the South Bronx is the symbol of the city laid waste by capitalism, so the television tube is the ultimate symbol of consumer idiocy: complete passivity, a catatonic frenzy" (Friedman 98).

[51] As a central example, Perroux suggests that the nation of France exists as "a political space which coincides more or less with a cultural space and with an economic space" only the first of which adheres to any fixed notion of geographical place (94).

consumption of capital. Clearly the most discursively oriented of the three, this notion of space relies heavily on the work of economic organizations and actors to make connections between physical spaces and objects by integrating them into the modes of capital production to form an abstract marketplace. It is precisely this vision of a "planned" national layout that Ford's earliest films concerned with roads sought to establish.

Though no physically closer to other portions of the country, *Good Roads* and *Road to Happiness* seemingly argue that there are two separate kinds of spaces—those with access to "car culture" and those without. Pitching these distances in terms of both culture and geography, suddenly outlying towns connected to a major urban center by a paved road were being positioned as closer to that center than to the other towns physically closer but not connected by quality roads. Separated from the "lifeblood" of national identification, spaces and social structures existing beyond the reach of car culture and the road system were, in this way, deeply un-American in nature. More than this, separated from the national marketplace, the figures left outside of the road system were living in a pre-modern society. This brings up the second element of constituting an "economic" space present in the formation of "car culture": the creation of a "field" of forces.

For Perroux, economic space as defined by a field of forces "consists of centers (or poles or foci) from which centrifugal forces emanate and to which centripetal forces are attracted." Creating such a "field" requires the rhetorical process of generating maps (both material and mental) that guide understanding of particular places. In this case, an enormous entity like Ford Motor Company would literally position itself as a mechanism

for creating spatial praxis by drawing in and pushing out certain bodies, materials, and places using both roads and the depictions of roads. Though not exclusively applied to domestic arrangements, the second section of this chapter will note how depictions of company-formed "village-industries" in Ford's motion pictures sought to generate such a "field" as well as the consummate class relations to accompany these new forms of domestic arrangement as it developed a "middle" space between urban center and rural town.

Finally, space defined as a homogeneous aggregate defines any units with the same price—regardless of geographic location—as occupying the same space (or workers earning the same wage as equal occupants on an economic plane). Akin to the work of "incorporative rhetoric" as I have articulated it in the first two chapters, the final section of this chapter takes up the plethora of "travelogues" produced by Ford's Motion Picture Laboratory that effectively flatten the national landscape into a vast space of consumption made possible by the road trip.

In sum, the historiographical narrative used to legitimate the "arteries"/"lifeblood" account of the "New Deal" reconstruction of national relations serves as an important rhetorical maneuver in shifting the perception of [national/personal] space to economic spaces, carrying with it notions of national progress as a concept that can be developed through the shift to a new "modern" set of relations facilitated by roads. On film, this takes place through the integration of disparate discourses about national progress, domestic arrangement, and tourism as spatially oriented economic practices.

In a more general sense, the introduction of an idea like "economic space" as it appears as part of Fordism's history does much to simultaneously bolster and complicate

the claims of spatial rhetoricians. For one, it affirms the claim that the conversion of place to space is a matter of rhetorical construction—as a given space can, depending on the discourse developed to talk about it, change in fundamental ways. It also, however, contends that any given concept of space functions through the layering and overlapping of various competing systems and theories of spatial orientation that is also deeply rhetorical in nature.

Individuals are often faced with the task of discerning which conception of space—economic, political, social, religious, etc.—they will choose to perform in a given situation. In such a frame, rhetoric can serve as more than just a process of producing space from place, but also ordering and organizing heterospatial relations, rectifying or determining the contradictions that stand between varying representations of space, or (as in the case of Ford in this period) realigning the theoretical frame for a particular set of places so that, for example, economic and political space overlap completely to make the heterotopia of "car culture."

We have already seen, in this way, Ford's films position roads as a planned set of relations that exist at the nexus of developing economic relations and social progress. Thus, one node in the theoretical production of space was already largely established when the Great Depression hit (by its various names, Ford had already established roads according to an economic plan, as conceived spaces, as mythic experience, and as spaces of representation). Taking up Perroux's second form of spatial production based on the creation of a network of central and peripheral nodes for economic relations, remainder of this chapter works to chronicle the ways in which Ford Motor Company worked to reorient domestic spaces as extensions of the modes of production through the trope of

the “village-industry.” These villages suggest that, as important as the building of roads had been to the expansion of Fordism’s influence, roads were not enough to generate comprehensive spatial practices on their own. These roads needed to also have spaces that they could connect and that their users could occupy through spatial practices of dwelling. To extend the company’s “lifeblood” metaphor, the nation still required “organs” that could serve integral functions in the everyday activities of both economic and social relations.

“Home will remain, but Homes Will Greatly Change”: Greenfield Village, Village Industries and the Symbolic Appeals of Suburban Publics

Aligning spatial theory with ideas of class-distinction, Henri LeFebvre once argued that an “examination of the transitions between modes of production will reveal that a fresh space is indeed generated during such changes, a space which is planned and organized subsequently” (“The Production of Space” 47). In keeping with Lefebvre’s claims, the production, and eventual reconstruction, of a Fordist middle class would require the production of an equally “middle” set of spaces that could gain meaning and give meaning to the road-making process. In the social and geographic context of pre- and post- Depression America, this would mean mediating between the largely agrarian existence of much of the nation and the emerging urban spaces made possible by the very processes of mass production and consumption.

To achieve this intermediary site, the company turned two elements of spatial rhetoric designed to introduce the “village-industry” as a new way of engaging in the practices of a middle class through the occupation of particular spaces of “dwelling.” The first element of this process was the formation of a representational space—Greenfield

Village. The second element is the depictions of actual village-industries as spaces of representation. Through the combined messages of the films devoted to these two features, these economized spaces of domesticity were positioned as extensions not only of the immediate modes of production of automobiles, but also as integral new spaces for recapturing an idyllic—but increasingly fading—form of middle-class America.[52] Thus, I read the films concerned with the village-industries as an attempt to generate these domestic spaces within a "field of forces" that are depicted as both socially and economically oriented.

For Ford Motor Company, late October of 1929 was intended to have a very different meaning than the relative obliteration of the American economy. Just eight days before the stock market crashed, a groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of Greenfield Village and the Edison Institute (now the Henry Ford Museum) took place. In many ways, the former catastrophe can be understood as a key element in opening the way for the latter's effectiveness as an enduring image of national resilience and important actor in redirecting the symbolic nature of neighborhoods in the United States. As part of the heterotopia of Fordist space captured on film, the production of Greenfield Village serves as an act of generating a "space of representation" that sought to establish new ideas about the scope of production and its relationship to neighborhoods as nodes (foci) in a national schematic for mass production and economic reconstruction.

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[52] In the terms drawn from the previous chapter, there has been (perhaps) no greater act of rhetorical affiliation between class and space than the development of suburban sensibilities over the course of the twentieth century. Initially a uniquely "American" spatial phenomenon, the emergence of the suburban neighborhood is traditionally located sometime after World War Two—I argue here that the symbolic production of an idea like the "suburbs" began much earlier and in close conjunction with structures of industry.

Greenfield Village had been a pet project of Henry Ford's, developed as a living museum that would commemorate the idyllic "American" city and function as a central space for Ford's many educational initiatives. It was constructed, seemingly, with two contradictory concepts in mind. On one hand, it was a living monument to innovation, production, and progress. The buildings featured in the town adjacent to the educational facilities included Thomas Edison's Menlo Park Laboratory, the warehouse wherein the Wright Brothers constructed the first successful aircraft, Henry Ford's first workshop where the Model T was developed, and a smattering of other buildings that commemorated great moments in the history of innovation and change in the United States.

On the other hand, the village served as an architectural rendering of a fading conception of small town American living arrangements. The attractions that the tourist would see while in the confines of the village or in the films that depicted it included a "smithy," an original log cabin relocated from rural Michigan, a 125-year-old post office, a 75-year-old schoolhouse, and a 75-year-old inn. As many who have studied Greenfield Village note, there was something bordering on the absurd about Henry Ford building a monument to the way of life and the craft-oriented industries his company played a seminal role in obliterating. As such, Greenfield Village as a representative space seemed to unmake many of the symbolic advancements that the company had painstakingly worked to identify as outdated through films like *Good Roads*.[53]

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[53] This may lead some to label the site little more than a monument to keeping alive the nostalgic dreams of an eccentric tycoon. Greenfield Village might, thus, fall into the field of rhetorical scholarship distinctly as a site of monument or commemorative rhetoric and on par with other "living history" sites. However, there are a number of questions worth closer scrutiny: why bother telling the history of American industry and ingenuity in village form? Why are buildings used to represent the achievements of the featured inventors? Why generate films that highlight the experience of occupying a living history via horse-drawn carriages and, eventually, Model-Ts?

Jean Baudrillard's metaphor of the "simulacrum" is apt here in attempting to explain such an oddity.[54] Just as Baudrillard posits that Disneyworld's fantasy affirms the reality that exists beyond its walls, Greenfield village affirmed the modernity brought about by Ford Motor Company beyond its walls by allowing its visitors, and those viewing the space on film, to escape the negative effects such modernity when in the confines of the village. It, thus, created a psychic space that countered the agglomerations of humanity and pollution that developed in and around mass production factories, and worked to combat any narratives that might label the kind of progress captured in "road" narratives as callous and homogenizing.

Greenfield Village thus functioned, primarily, as a "space of representation" which "need obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness" and thus could present an unencumbered vision of the village as a new vision of intermediate domestic space (drawn from the old) in the larger spatial dynamics of economic production rather than a space in which individuals "dwell" (Lefebvre 40). Thus, developed and disseminated as a scene of a lost world—the films position the space as both an opportunity to maintain the memory of a bygone era and to consider the merits of smaller clusters of domestic arrangement by mediating new classed forms of "dwelling."

These forms allowed an idea like "Main Street" to exist inside of what would otherwise appear to be an inherent contradiction—the figure both a symbol for old-fashioned Americana and the spiritual center of a village as well as the sign of modernity and new iterations of class development made possible by connecting the physical "arteries" through which cultural "lifeblood" could flow. A frequent setting for many of

[54] In fact, the space Baudrillard points the original notion of simulacrum toward—Disneyworld—has direct ties with Greenfield Village as Walt Disney visited the site just three years before breaking ground on his theme park (Miller, Cy.).

Ford's motion pictures in the 1930s, Greenfield Village was the background for films featuring a reenactment of the English tradition of May Day, Thomas Edison's birthday, and the site where countless figures of public prominence were brought to meet with the Fords. In this way, Greenfield Village functioned as a temporal middle space, a way of separating the domestic spaces of modern America from its emerging industrial infrastructure.

In sum, Greenfield Village was an attempt by Henry Ford to tie a set of societal values directly to a particular set of spatial relations. Here, the films argued, is what middle class space looks like. As a "space of representation," the now tropified "village" began to take shape as a spatial reclamation of America's past, and it is Greenfield Village's relationship to a second Ford Motor Company initiative taking place over the same period that a more expansive rhetorical project for changing spatial relationships—the creation of a number of "village industries." These "representational spaces," like the bodies of workers laboring in the 1910s and 1920s, work to re-introduce to the public the vision of rural life stamped out by the industrial revolution.

From 1919 to 1946 Ford Motor Company engaged in the practice of opening "village-industries" primarily located along rivers throughout Michigan (fig. 10). Though the early appearance of these films worked to make sense of the industries as they could be extended beyond the immediate waterways attached to the Dearborn factory, the massive infrastructural work of the WPA invited the company to reconsider the road itself as a new way of generating "nodes" and "foci" of industrial and domestic relations.

Over the next three decades, the concept of the village-industry would be positioned as much more than just the extension of production practices, but an important

turn in the performance of class in the United States. The Ford Motion Picture holdings at the National Archives feature nearly an hour of footage depicting the village-industries that were scattered in the company's various films throughout the early 1930's. A rare glimpse into the uncut background footage that would go into the eventual produced and distributed film on these industries, of this raw footage, three primary tropes dominate the subject matter: citizens at leisure, aerial shots of the villages, and in-factory production.[55] Collectively, these depictions work to make the process of dwelling part of the larger economization of space by incorporating domestic spaces into industrial relations, depicting the spatial relations between these rural-urban hubs and larger cycles of production, and suggesting the classed activities made possible by these new spatial-production processes.

These depictions would, eventually, however, become the content of a 1936 film, titled *Village Industries,* directly concerned with re-introducing the public to the concept of the village-industry in the wake of the Great Depression. As the film opens, the viewer is shown a series of flowing waterways, followed by a set of small converted mills that run alongside the water, concluding finally with a long look at Ford's primary factory in Dearborn, Michigan. This opening vignette positions the viewer to see these smaller factories and their adjacent towns as related to the wider process of production—though spatially diffuse. Though the film opens using the trope of the waterway to suggest the connected nature between the village-industries and its central manufacturing plant in Dearborn, the film eventually turns to the road as the primary mediating figure in understanding the spatial dynamics of the village-industry.

[55] In the National Archival account of these films, they feature "men and women workers in plants, eating on lawns, playing baseball, fishing, and working in fields and gardens" (92).

The next set of scenes develops through the use of camera shots taken from planes as they pass over each of the village industries. This overhead view allows the audience member to see not only the ordered fashion of the roads connecting these villages, but also the seamless fusion of rural countryside and modern industrial order instated by the roadways that connected one village to the next. The film then focuses more directly on the town of Milford, first passing over top of its Main Street, which is lined with parked cars, then shifts focus to a camera stationed directly on main street as a truck drives past. Here, the audience witnesses a bustling downtown occupied by individuals who have commuted from their homes to the central commercial hub in the town's center.

Returning to its plane-perched view, the film follows directly above the interstate to arrive at village-industry site Hayden Mills as a young man is shown riding his bike past the mill-factory. Seemingly, this Village has been positioned to capture the social benefits of living and working in such a village. After several shots of the town, which is also cleanly organized around a main street, ostensibly that same young man is shown seated with two of his friends as they fish by the river's edge.

Continuing its frenetic pace, the film flies over four more village industries before shifting to depict the in-house production taking place ate the Milan, Michigan village. Here men and women are shown engaging in labor not typically witnessed on the assembly line: hand crafting parts and folding linens and uniforms. The final break from the aerial depictions features images of various moments of transport—first a set of farmers loading their grains onto a truck, which then takes the crops to a train. Next, a second truck is shown removing water from a town's water tower and hauling it to the factory.

Collectively the film, which is notably devoid of narration, has allowed for its viewer to see the linkages between a series of cities made possible by the road systems, as well as the complex of activities made possible by the spatial diffusion. These scenes are also interspersed with the images of scenes of leisure: boys fishing, men and women walking to church in their Sunday's best, and a gang of bicycling boys and girls enjoying the open spaces afforded by "village" life.

We witness, then, two elements of spatial rhetoric at play. On one hand, Ford's production of spaces of representation, and representational spaces have allowed for particular forms of spatial occupation to represent the reclamation of an older model of spatial diffusion in patterns of residential settlement. Through film, Ford works to take the material spaces it had built to turn the "village" itself into a class-mediated set of spaces capable of reclaiming lost class relations by existing literally in the spaces between old and new models of economic activity and modernity/antiquity. Thus, depicting this distributed field of class oriented forces allowed for the company to incorporate the very notion of home and neighborhood into the wider spatial distribution of "car culture."

As historical objects, the village industries directly associated with Ford Motor Company were given over thirty years to fully catch on they never fully came to fruition—at least not as an extension of the company itself. However, rhetorically, the notion of the "village-industry" was a significant success. In the wake of the depression, external actors seemed to carry the village-industry legacy forward. Robert Kargon and Arthur Molella would come to label these intermediary spaces "techno-cities" which

combine notions of the "Garden City" with the industrial row housing "planned and developed in conjunction with large technological or industrial projects" (1).

For example, in 1938, as part of the New Deal a series of "planned cities" were designed by the U.S. Government—Greenbelt, Maryland; Greendale, Wisconsin; and Greentown, Ohio. Though the evidence that Ford's appeals both in film and in constructing a living history are only tangentially linked to the formation of these cities, the circumstantial evidence speaks volumes to the increasing attention that suburban living would garner. The pairing of maps depicting both the curving street pattern, and residential/commercial dispersion in Greenfield Village and Greendale, Wisconsin reveals a single access road curving around a central green space (fig. 11).

By 1939, a pamphlet on Ford Motor Company's vision for village industry cites Henry Ford's suggestion that "what we have learned is mass production makes decentralization possible. Congregating to a center has the advantage of coordinating many parts into a cooperative whole; disseminating them again possesses the advantage of bringing them to further refinement as separate units. Both movements must be looked upon as parts of one whole, a progressive whole" (Krebs).

Tangential or not, by 1945, as the notion of suburbia moved from isolated experiment to wholesale social movement, an advertisement for the company that ran in major periodicals (Life Magazine and the Saturday Evening Post) argues that such a movement was an extension of the innovation at the company—positioning "village industries" as the "Famous Ford First" of "decentralization." As the ad tells the story, these villages are home to "nearly 5000 men and women who know the peace and security of having "one foot on the soil…and one in industry" (fig. 12).

In sum, the narrative pieced together by Ford Motor Company's treatment of the "village" as an old-yet-new form of domestic life served to narrate that—when faced with the disastrous economic conditions—living removed from the many could serve as a way of retaining some of the pre-Depression American quality of life. It is through this alignment of space and cultural significance that "car culture" became associated with the trope of the village, and class became a concept that could be practiced through occupying particular living arrangements within a wider field of economic and social forces. By existing in this middle space, or understanding the potential of such a middle space made possible as an extension of "car culture," viewers of the village films could catch a glimpse of what reconstituted middle class life would look like in the wake of the Great Depression.

We have, then, seen two acts of spatial activity positioned as fundamental to enacting new visions of a "car mediated" culture. Such a culture has been projected as simultaneously reconstituting particular forms of economic relations and a set of "middle" spaces through which these relations could become domestically oriented. There is one final element to the affordances of roads that Ford develops into a narrative of economic space on film: the conversion of natural spaces through acts of car-mediated consumption.

"Travelling about, Economically": Spatial Consumption and Ford's National Park System

"for most of us, the world is more imperiously an array of places one might visit than it is a configuration of political or economic forces"

Johnathan Culler, "The Semiotics of Tourism" pg. 1.

"human hands have mapped and defined "natural" places…no matter how lost in the wild one tries to get, the natural environment is a world constructed and defined by human discourse"

–Sid Dobrin, Ecocomposition, pg 1.

There is one final manner through which roads were positioned to "economize" spaces in the wake of the Great Depression. While roads were, on one hand, being presented as the connective tissue through which national re-investment and re-invention would take place and, on the other, as access points to a new intermediate "village-industry" lifestyle, they were also being positioned as an important instrument in a different form of consumption facilitated by new notions of road-mediated tourism.

In the wake of the Great Depression the act of driving, itself, was presented endlessly as a new form of capital production and class articulation. As a form of recognizable consumption, then, the family vacation, the "daytrip," and the joyride economized movement through space by generating new forms of spatial consumption and a "homogeneous aggregate" of class through the subject position of the tourist.

On film, from "The Columbia River Parkway" in 1917 to "Edsel: West to the Tetons" in 1952, Ford Motor Company served as one of the prominent figures in the rise of the travelogue as one of the most popular of the "road genres" explicitly designed to convert natural places into commodified spaces through the trope of the open road. As an act of rhetoric concerned with establishing habitual identifications between natural places as economic and classed spaces these films argued that roads could provide mechanized *flaneurs* with cultural capital.[56]

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[56] For example, perhaps the most famous and lasting set of films to come out of the Ford Motion Picture Laboratory were those of the "Vagabonds." Comprised of Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Henry Firestone, and periodically President Herbert Hoover, the "vagabonds" were bound by their yearly trip into the great American wilderness that had

Highlighting this point, James J. Flink's work to understand "car culture" has argued that after "the advent of the Model T and improved roads, the automobile outing and the automobile vacation became middle-class American institutions" (169). In this way, the use of cars and roads to see the country became inextricable acts of performing one's middle class status. Tellingly, these acts of identification function through tropes of rapid, mechanized consumption made possible by the affordability of cars and gas, and the newly built sets of roads. Just as important as the physical act of taking to the road, was the visual narratives that leant class-oriented meanings to these spatial practices. Thus, Mark Simpson identifies these travelogues as "a method of commodification realized between motion and stasis, mediation and immediacy in which the "celluloid mimicked the materialities of modern travel so as to supplement while capitalizing on its practice" (Simpson 92).

The preeminent symbol of this new form of mobile consumption in Ford's film canon is the rise of discourses that tied the system of National Parks in the United States with the ever-expanding "car culture" in the wake of the Great Depression. Teaming up with the Department of the Interior in the years between 1933 and 1938, Ford Motion Picture Laboratory produced a series of films highlighting the National Park System and the roads that unlocked the natural wonders therein. From within the frame set out thus far, the notion of "car culture" is constituted through two primary acts in these films—first, notions of leisure (an image buried beneath economic depression) and second acts

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been made available by both the car and the relentlessness of human curiosity. First depicted on film in 1916, the vagabonds' adventures into nature set the scene for what would become a full-fledged phenomenon in the wake of the Great Depression—the weekend camping trip.

of rapid, homogenized, and visually-oriented consumption made available by the automobile and access to space facilitated by roads.

However, the chief rhetorical component of the film is not its narrative functions, but its ability to replicate the visual consumption made available by such a road-mediated experience of national parks. Peter Peters takes up the relationship between the car and the park system more directly through the trope of the "passage." For Peters, "passages" develop as "heterogeneous spatiotemporal orderings that assume both material elements and narrative-discursive elements" (57). In this way, he argues images depicting the park's "car loops" and the "road trip" develop as tropes that exist through a balance between the homogenized experience of gas stations, road stops, roadside diners, and fast food restaurants and the great myth of the unexpected and free American road trip.[57]

Not surprisingly, in many of the films, the central perspective through which viewers come to see the parks is the roads that pass through them. In the film focused on the gem of the National Park System—Yellowstone—and the first film in the series, roads become an integral mediator between an "army of semioticians" and the natural places they sought to consume. Highlighting the marriage between government and company, the 1932 film, titled "A Visit to Yellowstone National Park" opens by explaining that the project is housed in the Film Library of the Division of Motion Pictures, United States Department of the Interior and distribution made possible by Ford Motor Company. It then depicts to the viewer the various modes of transportation that can get the viewer to the park: mapping first the rail lines and then the highways (fig. 13).

[57] Peters also points out that the parks were never exclusively designed to function for the preservation of natural space—but as a park, a site of easily accessed and consistent recreation (hotels, points of interest, and easy transit).

However, taking Peters's notions of the "passage" very literally, the film's primary focus would be the "loop tour" of the park provided by roads. Beginning at the "entrance at Gardiner, Montana, the film carries the viewer onto the park's "car loop" through a massive arch brandished with the phrase "For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People." Seeking to appropriately frame this imagined visit to the park as a notion tied inextricably with car travel, the film then suggests that "visitors who drive private automobiles will find excellent highways within the park," later explaining that "those who arrive by train or by air will be taken from point to point in comfortable buses with careful drivers." The trajectory of the film is then made up of a call and response set of scenes juxtaposing a road sign designating the park's attraction, and then a rapid shot of cars pulling up to the attraction and, often, the drivers getting out to quickly see the object and return to the road.

Notably, within this frame, the nature of the park is set up primarily for consumption, demanding that the films find a delicate balance between depicting convenience and depicting pristine natural wonder. To achieve this balance, the most dominant feature of the National Parks film series is the use of a "car's-eye view" of the scenery made available for rapid and mass consumption. This entailed mounting the camera on the hood of the car so that, as the viewer watches the footage, they look down the hood as one might look down a nose. The combined effect of this is to first display the speed with which individuals could take in nature, and to feature the roads themselves—a sign of civilized passage through "untamed" wilderness.[58]

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[58] Michel deCerteau composed a reflection on the nature of travelling in this manner (albeit by train)—an act he dubbed "carceration-vacation." This kind of mobility consisted, paradoxically, of two "immobilities." First, the ordered human body sitting in the train; second, "towering mountains, stretches of green field and forest, arrested

As such, these early travelogues served to narrate a series of spatial practices through which individuals could embody their class status as well as their role in experiencing the modernity of the United States. As travelogues accumulated, however, they became a medium through which the "homogenous aggregate" of the middle class tourist could recognize itself on screen. Because of both their success, and the resurgence of the economy nearly a decade later, all of these films were released (or re-released) with sound and a new set of frames to accompany the (then) new medium. In these newer films, the ingrained nature of the family vacation moves from undertone to stated purpose of both the automobile and the park system.

Leading up to this point, the film has worked its way through the many transportation methods for moving throughout the park—beginning with the declaration that "walking, man's oldest form of locomotion, is a popular sport here," other patrons "take advantage of the fine supply of horses in the park," finally, however, it arrives at the nearly ubiquitous nature of "car culture" as it claims that "every state in the Union is represented among the license plates each summer...and people from all over the world are represented." In a most deliberate scene, the camera collects close-up shots of license plates from Utah, California, Missouri, Washington, Texas, Hawaii, New York, and Michigan. Immediately following this depiction of a "homogenous aggregate" of national identity represented by the license plates, the film turns toward what incorporates them together: their ability to consume.

As the narrator quips that "some of the visitors have their own special ideas of how to utilize this newest, most convenient way of modern travel. One enthusiastic

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villages, colonnades of buildings, black urban silhouettes against the pink evening sky" (111). Mediating between those immobilities is the glass pane of the train window.

visitor is determined not to miss a single thing…" a man is shown strapping himself to the hood of an automobile and, moments later, being whisked down the road "with nothing to interfere with his view of mountain and scenery" (fig. 14). This whimsical scene, however, is the culmination of a narrative about increasingly easy forms of consumption of the national landscape.

Perhaps the best example of this fusion of car-mediated consumption and wider notions of expanding car culture comes in the re-release of the 1941 film concerned with Glacier International Park. Imagining the global potential of the tourist-as-semiotician the film opens with the image of a spinning globe as the voiced narrator declares:

> "Adventure…far places! Who doesn't long to travel to see the things we've never seen and do all the things we've never done. Today the world rolls easily, swiftly on rubber tires. Highways stretch ahead of you. Adventurous men and women are driving across the burning Sahara, to India, China, across North America. The world is shrinking. There is the majesty of nature just off of our smooth highways. Every year they beckon to us all and with our motorist's magic carpet, we can answer. Come along for a quick preview of the best vacations that you can imagine. Perhaps we have only a few days or a few weeks but today we decide that this year we will make a *real* vacation in one of our National Parks."

As the narrator completes this opening monologue, the film turns toward a family of four packing their Ford and backing out of their driveway and launces into a (by this point) standard travelogue. As the film concludes, it reiterates the importance of the road, the car, and the role of taking in the world through the windshield as it posits:

> "as you drive out slowly, you can't help but be impressed with the privilege of our modern day, good roads to drive on and the last word in transportation…the modern automobile…will take you there and bring you back again safely comfortably for an unforgettable vacation"

The symbolic work of such a film, then, cuts in both directions—allowing for nature to become re-inscribed as visual commodity through its interaction with the road, and echoing the notion that roads represent collective national progress as they make available a set of consumable nationalized spaces that could reconstitute a collective sense of class and leisure. Joseph Culler argues that through this kind of spatially-oriented rhetorical work, roads had unleashed "unsung armies of semioticians, the tourists" (Culler 127). These armies served the explicit purpose of reconstituting a sense of middle-class leisure.

Once claimed as national spaces, interacting with nationalized spaces becomes an act of taking part in national identity—of heading West (echoes of Manifest Destiny), affirming the return of a healthy economy, while seeing and being seen by fellow classed travelers. Ultimately, then, the travelogue serves as the final road genre that completes the spatial production of a Fordist nation. Joining with images of road building as a bellwether of national progress, depictions of village-industries as new forms of middle class domesticity, these films have aided in the wider project of laying an economic map over the traditionally national and natural spaces throughout the United States.

Conclusion

When Jean Baudrillard wanted to write a book capturing the essence of the United States, the image he chose to precede the text's first words to represent this essence was a

wide, unoccupied road cutting through a desert landscape (fig. 15). As Baudrillard put it, he had gone in search of "astral" America and found "the America of the empty, absolute freedom of the freeways…the America of desert speed, of motels and mineral surfaces" ("America" 5). What he found was an entity defined almost entirely by circulation and mediated by roads and screens or, as Alan Shapiro has commented on the work, Baudrillard positioned an "American" landscape at the intersection of "the kinetic and the cinematic" as he had viewed it on the road (Shapiro). I have argued throughout this chapter that what Baudrillard identifies in his travels across the United States is the result of a historically specific set of rhetorical practices that sought to produce an immense economic territory in part through the heterotopic production of "car culture."

Baudrillard is not alone in his curiosity with roads as immense symbolic markers that have directed and been infused by a uniquely American social imaginary. Roads have been repeatedly positioned as important sites for rhetorical action and often function as rhetorical artifacts in themselves. For Nedra Reynolds, streets are highly metaphorical in nature as they come to represent the collective experiences of the inhabitants living on them (Reynolds). These experiences are defined primarily through two metaphors: mobility and dwelling. In "Resisting the Fixity of Suburban Space: The Walker as Rhetorician," Robert Topinka argues that through a network of streets and parking lots "Car traffic shapes [the capitalist] system of order, subjecting everything to the hegemony of the car and excluding pedestrians from footpaths" and thus "driving is built into [streets], making car culture central to everyday life in these spaces" (Topinka 70,

71).[59] In his ethnographic work in the suburbs of Chicago, Ralph Cintron notes the stark differences between the curving streets of suburban life and the rigid grid system placed in urban settings—spaces that form the "rhetoric of the grid" and the "rhetoric of circuitry" (Cintron).[60] We have seen here that these attachments and affiliations with particular spatial arrangements stem from the privileging of some economic "nodes" over others—a discourse found in the representative spaces and spaces of representation that made up the "village-industry."

Finally, in his work to reconsider Kenneth Burke's "scene" through depictions of American tourists taking to the road, Gregory Clark argues that the act of tourism worked "rhetorically to transform private individuals into public citizens…not so much by words as by sights, sounds, smells, feelings—by the experience of actual presence in a place" (4).[61]I have argued here, that this "body politic" was formed through collective acts of spatialized consumption on films that encouraged these nationalized figures to see their spatial practices as such.

Collectively, then, the works of Baudrillard, Reynolds, Cintron, Topinka, and Clark suggest that roads are utterly brimming with rhetorical potential that form an economic heterotopia. Roads are rhetorical in their material occupation, their symbolic

[59] Such a culture, in turn, promotes participation in "capital sponges" (malls, drive-thru businesses, superstores) that dislocate local circulation of capital and bodies. Roads are, thus, deeply capitalist entities by design.
[60] Here, roads are positioned as a twofold space at once capable of defining and delimiting individuals by directing their movements while also potentially providing a sense of freedom and individuality. More than this, roads become a medium through which a collective of politicians, city planners, private investors, real-estate agents, and community organizers express (or impress) societal values (through private property rights, loan structures, and pockets of class relations) on individual habitants.
[61] He argues that through the act of occupying scenes of national significance, Americans learned to identify with a national body politic and, for this reason, scholarship paying attention to the spatiality of rhetoric may be better off if it adopts the guiding metaphor of "travel" rather than "territoriality."

placement, and in the connections they make between spaces and individuals. They can (taking the theories chronologically), encourage particular kinds of sociality, define and delimit values, encourage particular practices as the enactment of ideology, and inculcate subjects.

Here, I have argued that roads can be understood primarily as rhetorically produced spaces that integrate these many symbolic shifts into a "network" of practices and ideologies that function as a very visible "car culture." Over the period of accumulated images of these spaces made available by the car—these affiliations were encouraged through an expansive set of messaging (particularly on the part of automobile manufacturers) about the relationship between spatial production and class distinctions. In this way, roads would function as much more than just a medium through which individuals could learn to function as part of their community. Rather, roads would also come to significantly change the potential for spatial living arrangements that defined community itself, and means through which long-suppressed notions of class-based practices could become re-established. This chapter has argued that it is through visual artifacts that the nation was invited to enact Henry Ford's vision for "home remained, but homes greatly changed," to "travel about, economically," and a "United States of the world" oriented through economic space by overlapping images of roads, village-industries, and car-mediated tourism.

Chapter Four

Building the Ford Empire: The New Industrial State, Tropes of Power, and the Rise of Consumer Sovereignty

On December 29th, 1940 President Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the nation in hopes of garnering support for the Allied forces in World War II, a move he felt crucial to spurning the advances of Nazi Germany that had taken place across the European continent over the course of the year. The support he asked for, however, was not traditional military intervention. Instead, Roosevelt declared that "American industrial genius, unmatched throughout all the world in the solutions to production problems has been called upon to bring its resources and talents into action" to turn the tides of the war. If unwilling to engage through military force, he argued, the nation must instead "be the Arsenal of Democracy" by devoting much of its energy to building war machines and funding credit lines to those democratic nations that needed them.

Notably, as Roosevelt developed this metaphorical "Arsenal," it was constructed to be a manifestation of national power through the collection of individuals identifying their labor with military-aided sovereignty. Roosevelt had asked the American people to literally "*be*" the Arsenal of Democracy—to change their very nature to accommodate this form of industrial power and with it change the identity of the nation as a collective force for good. As the speech would argue, to ensure the "preservation of American independence, and all of the things that American independence means to you and to me and to ours," the nation needed to produce in mass to outmuscle encroaching fascist regimes. In this way, the continued sovereignty of the nation would come down to the decisions by individuals to consume less and labor more—thus linking the performance

of individual agency in an economy with the structures and narratives of global sovereignty.

Further encouraging these acts of both mass and economic identification, the address suggested that the figure of the worker would be the primary agent in this process. Roosevelt directs the speech to "the workmen in the mills, the mines, and the factories, the girl behind the counter, the small shopkeeper, the farmer doing his spring plowing, the widows and the old men wondering about their life's savings" rather than to the nationalized, militarized, or politicized figure of the citizen. Driving this point home, Roosevelt then assured these economized figures that "the strength of [the United States] shall not be diluted by the failure of the government to protect the economic well-being of its citizens" as it enters into wartime production.

In this way, Roosevelt's speech played on a powerful narrative in the American social imaginary, American exceptionalism, but steered the concept toward economic terms. A seminal moment in the emergence of economic sovereignty, President Roosevelt had delivered an unprecedented symbolic link between mass production, economic activity, and the continued solvency of Western democratic values—and done so through what I will term new a "trope of power." He argued that it was precisely through mass production and industry that the legacy of American exceptionalism—"unmatched through all the world," after all—could manifest itself through the local work of its citizens. Discourses of American exceptionalism and the metaphors that so often accompany them have been prime examples of "tropes of power." Often religious ("The City on the Hill") and political ("Manifest Destiny") in nature, these tropes have almost always been invoked to create or justify structures of sovereignty (to colonize, to

claim territory, to invade). They have also been deeply incorporative in nature, reifying sovereign structures by collecting and overlapping the agency of many into a single organizational arrangement (a congregation, a people).

As Roosevelt's comments make salient, with mechanized warfare serving as a historical catalyst, this wartime period saw the symbolic space separating traditional forms of state sovereignty and the kind of economically oriented sovereignty represented by the "Arsenal of Democracy" become razor thin. The alliance forged by this arrangement would take on many names in the years following World War II—"the military-industrial complex" (Eisenhower),[62] "the new industrial state" (Galbraith), the Keynesian Revolution (Klein), and (eventually) Neoliberalism (Harvey).

As I will position it here, the use of a trope like the "Arsenal of Democracy" is an example of "economic-organizational" rhetoric at work in the production of economic power. It is "economic" in the sense that it generates avenues of identification into modes of production. It is "organizational," in that its primary purpose is to collect, connect, and direct the economically-oriented agencies of many individuals into a single incorporated entity—here, an industrially-oriented "Arsenal."[63]

The analyses that follow work to point out that the symbolic configurations of power that evolved out of this original trope—whether oriented individually through the

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[62] Notably, just two decades after Roosevelt's address, then President Dwight D. Eisenhower would lament the relationship established by the "Arsenal of Democracy" as the cause of a nation warped by a "military-industrial complex." I read the story that is bookended by these Presidential addresses as one of the rhetorical production of authority—a narrative in which the economic organization continued its creep into a position of power on a global scale (Eisenhower).

[63] Thus, where other models of rhetorical action highlight, for example, the persuasive nature of an artifact (the political-communicative), or the identifications that it encourages (the social-epistemic), the "economic-organizational" is concerned with the generation of connection and circulation that is drawn through the linguistic "turn" facilitated by the metaphor of the Arsenal.

concept of "agency" or systemically through sovereignty—rely on complex narratives that work to cede the power of the state as a defender of a nation, democracy, and citizens to the power of the multinational corporation, market, and the consumer. This shift was made possible through the "tropes" (figures of transformation) that express authority by harnessing the collective agency of individual and "economic" actors.

An integral actor in the production of symbolic material for the nation, by this point, Ford Motor Company played a central role in turning these "tropes" to become both recognizable and performable through depictions of its assembly line—though this line will shift significantly from material and domestic production, to global consumption, to an intellectual assembly line.

Taking the "Reigns": The Rhetorical Usurpation of the 'Arsenal of Democracy'

As the nation prepared itself for a wholesale shift from doctrines of isolationism to wartime production, the Fordist way of life became fused directly with the proliferation of democracy on a global scale. It is not terribly surprising, then, that large corporate entities like Ford Motor Company began the work of rhetorically embedding themselves into this powerful trope of national-industrial prowess. In "One Thousand Planes a Day: Ford, Grumman, General Motors and the Arsenal of Democracy," Robert G. Ferguson argues that through a "rhetoric of mass production," Ford Motor Company succeeded in "stealing the rhetorical high ground from General Motors and [President] Roosevelt" so that it was Ford's production practices, its workers, and its industrial

expertise that became the "pre-eminent symbol[s] of the Arsenal of Democracy" (Ferguson, R. 169).[64]

Never one to miss an opportunity to narrate its own importance in matters of national development, Ford Motor Company began the work of casting itself as the central figure in the nation's ability to transform into Roosevelt's economic engine for defending democracy. Repeatedly, from 1940 to the conclusion of the war in 1945, the company positioned itself as a mechanism through which the individual citizen could take part in the living defense system for democratic values through their labor. The primary medium for distributing these messages was through film. Holdings in the Ford Film Collection at the National Archives include a number of wartime films— *In the Service of America* (1943), and *The Story of Willow Run* (1945)—that reinforced the position of the laborer as the consummate figure for the spread and defense of democratic values and power. However, one offering, in particular, captures the spirit of these films' collective messages: a 1943 entry titled *Women on the Warpath*. The film argues that when patriotic duty called, it was on the assembly line that the women of America, in particular, could become manifestations of national power.

For Maureen Honey, a film like *Women on the Warpath* was simply a drop in the bucket of a more expansive "campaign to attract women into war production [as] part of a drive to weld the home front into an economic army" and comprised a collective of industrial organizations, "Eureka vacuums, Maxwell House Coffee, and Kleenex all taking part in this collective" (Honey 5, 109). Honey's contention, however, is that such a

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[64] Notably, Ferguson concludes that this narrative was an historical misnomer, an act of mere rhetoric, as it was not mass production that generated the greatest success of war-time production but General Motor's lower volume/higher flexibility approach. Never the less, it was Ford that once again placed itself at the center of wartime activity.

campaign also sought to establish its power without disrupting conservative social relations that positioned women as subordinate to their soldier husbands thus making for "a complicated mixture of strength and dependence, competence and vulnerability, egalitarianism and conservatism" (7).

In this way, these films' ambivalence are a reminder of Judith Butler's claims that "as a form of power, subjection is paradoxical" in that it "signifies the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject" (Butler 1). More to the interests of the project at hand is Butler's attempts to synthesize this paradox of power and agency by understanding the concepts as tropological in nature. In a footnote explaining her use of "tropology" to explore the reflexive nature of power and the individual, Butler points out that "a trope can produce a connection between terms that is not considered either customary or logical," in this case, *Women on the Warpath* needed to unmake years of "customary" presentations of female agency in the United States as domestic and outside of the economy to pool such agency into an effective representation of national power. It is precisely in this process that incorporative rhetoric present in Ford's film work ventures into the formation of sovereign structures.

Highlighting the textual nature of this process, Butler explains that "not only is generation what a trope does, but the explanation of generation seems to require the use of tropes, an operation of language that both reflects and enacts the generativity it seeks to explain, irreducibly mimetic and performative" (Butler 201-2, n.1). She thus gestures toward a theme that has run throughout the present project: that rhetoric is both connective and circulatory in nature as well as an account of the effects of a series of textual artifacts that generate this circulation. *Women on the Warpath* will serve, then, as

an opportunity to further explore Butler's ideas about the relationship between sovereignty as a rhetorical principle and the formation of economic subjectivity—positing "tropes of power" as an important term mediating in such a process.

Turning directly to the film, two primary observations will shape the present reading. First, in affirming the agency of female workers, the tropological formation of power in *Women on the Warpath* bears a striking resemblance to Louis Althusser's process of "*interpellation* or hailing."[65] More than mere coincidence, I read this film as an artifact that suggests sovereignty itself is a deeply rhetorical concept. Second, I note that such power is generated by a "trope" capable of connecting two historically unexpected figures; audiences of this film were positioned to literally "see" the agent of the "Arsenal of Democracy" take shape through the performance of a national power structure as it framed and used the laboring bodies of women.

After an opening vignette featuring panning depictions of factories and production practices (accompanied by a rousing rendition of the song "America the Beautiful"), the film dedicates itself "to American women everywhere, whose valor on the industrial front has sped the day of victory." The film then engages in a narrative that—despite moments of overt condescension[66]—works to extend a degree of authority to a population otherwise systematically stripped of such inclusion in other formats and economic settings prior to the war. Keeping in mind the historical discomfort with traditional

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[65] In this illustrative scene, Althusser explains a police officer hails an individual on a crowded street, and this individual turns recognizing him/herself as the subject of the address. In this act of turning, this figure accepts and recognizes him/herself as a subject of juridical law and the structures of order represented by the police officer. In this moment, the officer and the language he uses become instruments of power and the turning subject effectively performs this power's existence (Althusser).

[66] The film regularly reminds the viewer of the women's adequacy and, at times, superiority as substitutes for their male counterparts as a remarkable feat.

gender relations, the film presents these subjects as being suddenly imbued by the power of the nation through the mechanism of mass production-mediated labor (something like the Holy Spirit entering the body of the Christian religious figure).

Placing particular emphasis on the voluntary nature of joining this "industrial front" (and thus extending the figurative language of an industrial "Arsenal") the film then follows four women as they turn away from the very activities of leisure and domesticity (golf, laundry, swimming, and shopping) Ford's earlier films had worked so hard to rekindle in the wake of the Great Depression, to instead take up positions on the assembly line. The film portrays this conversion from the classed figures of the post-Depression era to wartime figures of national power through a narrative in which the women are "hailed" by a set of war planes flying overhead (fig. 16).

Mapping Althusser's scene of *interpellation* onto the film's subsequent scenes directly: the four women are shown individually—one shopping, one golfing, one swimming, one hanging laundry (pictured below)—when, in sequence, a set of planes flies overhead and the roar of their engines forms the equivalent of the sovereign's call and a close-up shot of each subject in the very moment of being hailed. As the camera zooms in on the faces of the woman as they look up, this moment chronicles the act of gazing up (rather than turning 180 degrees) through which, Althusser would argue, these figures "become[] the subject" by recognizing their place and responsibility within wartime production (Althusser). The sovereign structure that welcomes these individuals on film, however, is not the traditional political/national form of identification, but a

complex of production practices, national defense systems, and social support structures mediated through the economic organization.[67]

Women on the Warpath, thus, does not stop at the moment in which these subjects develop Althusser's psychic space of subjectivity. Instead, the film also depicts the second step in what Maurice Charland identified as the two-step process of engaging in constitutive rhetoric. Once "successfully interpellated," he argues, a system of power "must necessitate action in the material world," by providing acts and ideas for the newly hailed figure to embody so that an organization's "embodied subjects act freely in the social world to affirm their subject position" (Charland 150).[68] In turn, these affirmations of subjectivity also become performances of power. Butler concurs that "power not only *acts on* a subject but, in a transitive sense, *enacts* the subject into being" (Butler 14).

Arguing that, during war, "labor became a patriotic privilege," the film then develops a narrative of new forms of agency as the hailed women take to the assembly line in response to a "call for help" represented by the planes overhead. The women are then shown arriving at the factory as the narrator declares that "the call for help was still echoing when women in the Detroit area began to respond." Once integrated into production, the film claims that a complete transformation of the subject takes place. The narrator declares that through her involvement with the Willow Run plant "the lady of the

[67] Butler suggests that making sense of these "turns," these symbolic moments of subjection, makes for an intellectual departure point from traditional accounts of sovereignty as a purely top-down process. Instead, she argues, that such "a 'turn' is, rhetorically, performatively spectacular;" explaining that 'turn' translates the Greek sense of 'trope.' Thus the trope of the turn both indicates and exemplifies the tropological status of the gesture" (4). In this way, by creating a text which visualizes such a turn/trope, Ford Motor Company reifies an *a priori* subject that will—when the moment comes—also make the important turn and broadcasts it across the country.
[68] Here, then, the production of power meets up with theories of the production of an economic subject explored in chapter 2 through "intertextual" acts of incorporative rhetoric.

clothesline became an expert of the hydraulics line" (in fig. 17, the actress who was hailed by the plane while hanging her laundry is now pictured examining the bomber's hydraulic tubing) and through the smallest of associative leaps the film claims that Ford's Willow Run factory could turn "beauty operator to crane operator," and "sewing machine operator" into "jigsaw operator."

The film, in this way, follows the pattern of subject production chronicled in Chapter Two by engaging in "incorporative rhetoric that expands the historical project of generating the "Ford Man" to now include the "Ford Woman." However, where the "Ford Man" was produced through the overlapping of claim about industrial ideology, epistemology and ontology, the figures in "Women on the Warpath" get articulated almost entirely as extensions of a military-industrial power regime. Collectively the women's work and conversion into soldier/workers, then becomes equated with the direct fight with fascism itself: their "riveting" the narrator quips "sounding like gunfire."

We thus arrive at an integral role for the continued circulation of industrial utility films (particularly as they combine with genres of wartime propaganda)—what Butler identifies as the "regulatory formation of the psyche" through transformational tropes grounded in new forms of industrial power (Butler 18). For the rhetorician, these films generate forcefulness for the company by not only affiliating mass production with militaristic power, but grounding this power in the actions and decisions of individuals.

The film concludes, having now depicted a complete process of interpellation and performed national sovereignty, with a scene directed at the viewer. The shadow of the bomber returns, this time overlaid on top of a sea of uniformed women saluting and

singing "Glory, Glory Halleluiah." The combined symbolic thrust of this final set of images appears to be a direct call to those still abstaining from joining the "Arsenal of Democracy." The audience—having already witnessed the trope of interpellation—is now hailed by the already initiated and by the cinematic roaring of bomber engines to similarly "perform" the structures of national sovereignty that is being extended to them through mass production.

While there is much to potentially unpack in this depiction of the female laborer, my focus here has been on the interplay that takes place between depictions of individual agency and wider structures of sovereign power on film. As this reading of *Women on the Warpath* suggests, agency is often not only a collective instrument for performing acts of subjectivity, but one that is primarily dependent on more expansive narratives that connect the action of the individual to "tropes of power" wrapped up in institutional structure. In doing so, *Women on the Warpath* illustrates a most basic point—that sovereignty is, perhaps primarily, a rhetorical construction that exists to align, or collect, principles of individual agency into institutional structures through "tropes" that turn individual performance into manifestations of power.

Where we have seen the "Ford Man" and "car culture" develop through a repeated rhetorical process of drawing single narrative figures of person and place from many disparate figures, here the notion of power is developed through the collection of individual acts of agency into a single recognizable sovereign structure. Notably, at this early stage, the place of economic output in the formation of sovereignty is still mediated through more traditional sovereign structures—particularly forms of nationalism and military power. In time, these economized visions of power will challenge the nation-

state as a site of identification. However, before chronicling the shifting nature of economic-industrial power, I turn to the field of rhetorical studies to better understand the significance of an analytical term like the "trope of power."

Rethinking Rhetorical Sovereignty and Tropologies of Power

Recognizing Butler's recursive process as it appears on film, I turn now to how these films respond to traditional treatments of power in rhetorical theory. Michael Leff, articulating a habit of scholars in Rhetoric and Composition, has argued that within rhetoric and writing's "humanist" tradition, agency itself has been firmly embedded in the political orator-as-agent who, in turn, "serves as the source and ground for civic discourse" that "sustain[s] the identity of the community, while it also functions as an instrument to effect change." To this day, the notion of "agency," he argues, has developed at the crux of intentionality, individual subjectivity, and political action. A trope like the "Arsenal of Democracy" directly challenges such a frame—as it re-orients not only identity, but sustained processes of change primarily through economic frameworks (Leff 219).

Notably many of the industrial films taken up thus far have sustained all three of these characteristics—creating a civic (national) discourse, generating a community (of laborers, consumers, and drivers), and effecting change precisely through the constitution of the subject via the economic organization. Thus, paying greater attention to these artifacts works toward dealing with what Christian Lundberg and Joshua Gunn have warned against as a "characteristically theistic doctrine of rhetorical agency" that "yokes

agency and agent in the service of an ontotheological humanism" (Lundberg and Gunn 88).

Working, then, to uncouple theories of agency from being solely the "possession of an agent" they argue that rhetoricians must recognize "the possibility that the specter of language and other ghosts move us more than we know" (88). It is in exploring this specter, the notion of "tropes of power" and their ability to pool individual agency in Ford's post-war films, that this chapter intervenes in such discussions of agency and sovereignty. Though not ghostly, the specter of Ford's "economic-organizational" narrative during World War II serves as an integral example of rhetoric generating connections and circulation to collect individual agency into structures of sovereignty—a point that highlights sovereignty's inherently rhetorical nature.

Working to alleviate these concerns about an overly insular theory of agency rhetorical scholars have turned to performance theory in the last decade. Carolyn Miller, for one, suggests that rather than a possession of the individual, "we think of agency as the *kinetic energy* of rhetorical performance…the energy of motion" (Ca. Miller 147). Similarly, Carl Herndl and Adela Licona describe "the agentive intersection of the semiotic and the material through a rhetorical performance" as the site for the subject to assert herself (Herndl and Licona 141). Finally, Marilyn Cooper has re-defined the concept of rhetorical agency as "an emergent property of embodied individuals" through which they enacted personal structures of power (Cooper 420).

These accounts, then, suggest that the very notion of agency can be derived from the organized enactment of a narrative structure of power and vice versa. When embedded in a "trope of power" like the hailing of a militaristic defense of national

sovereignty, I have argued, the energy of these individual performances becomes the very basis of sovereign power as they are collected and aligned on film through re-orientation of, in this case, laboring women's bodies. Thus, the performance of economic agency is positioned as also the performance of economic sovereignty facilitated by particular acts of rhetorical work that generate connections between the former and the latter.

Thus, in order to fully unpack the rhetorical nature and legacy of this usurpation of the "Arsenal of Democracy" in films like *Women on the Warpath*, and the anxiety over the very nature of rhetorical agency, I argue that scholars of rhetoric will have to face up to a concept that has not been particularly well received in the history of rhetorical theory: sovereignty. John Schilb has recently suggested that, because of its preoccupation with the traditional concept of "agency," the field of Rhetoric and Composition has remained particularly uncomfortable with broaching the subject of sovereignty directly. Arguing that the idea of the autonomous rhetorical agent has served as a "conceptual or theoretical impediment… [that] has prevented us from generating more scholarship on sovereignty," Schilb points out that the field has frequently, instead, staged "conniptions about agency" (Schilb). As a result, he argues that scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have largely ignored contemporary discourses about the role of institutions and ideologies in rhetorical actions that have legitimated anything from the use of torture to the stripping of citizens' fundamental rights by nation-states/governments.[69]

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[69] While performing an important intervention on the behalf of structures of power as deeply rhetorical figurations, Schilb's work also reinforces a familiar limitation: that sovereignty is inherently a matter of the political and of the nation-state. As the entire episode surrounding the Arsenal of Democracy and Ford Motor Company's work to gain a rhetorical upper hand on it suggests, concepts like sovereignty, authority, and agency are discursive mechanisms that may well be economic, religious, social, or hybrid in nature.

Though this critique largely holds, the phrase "rhetorical sovereignty" is not an entirely unexplored principle. Quite to the contrary, the term has taken on a scholarly life in discourses concerned with the place of rhetoric in shaping the rights of indigenous peoples. For Scott Lyons, "rhetorical sovereignty is the inherent right and ability of *peoples* to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse" (Lyons 449-450).[70] Thus, "rhetorical sovereignty" has not necessarily been ignored as wrapped up in exploring the specific right to choose one's rhetorical practices. In the process of exploring this concept, however, rhetorical theorists have made a number of observations about the theoretical principle of sovereignty of particular interest to understanding what is taking place in Ford's films.

Tracing its history through medieval Europe, Lyons notes that "sovereignty came to mean something systemic and relational. [Because] a sovereign's power was generally a force understood in relation to other sovereigns in the emerging international scene" and thus "the location of power has depended upon the crucial act of recognition—and vice versa" (Lyons 450). As *Women on the Warpath* suggests, focusing on the act of recognition between systemic sovereign structures ignores how these figures have been, already, formed through rhetorical practices that align individual agency into collective assemblage (that is, a second narrative is present in any discussion of how such a "*people"* comes into being through both recognition and performance or narratives of power). This reading suggests that the very ability for organized assemblages like the

[70] When structures of power use their control over discourses about both power and who/what can speak, the story of rhetorical sovereignty becomes also the story of "rhetorical imperialism" (Lyons 452). It is through legal/juridical control over who could and could not be recognized that this sovereignty shaped the relations between American government and Native American populations.

"tribe," "nation," and "empire" to exist depends on "tropes" that interpellate and align individual volition as well as performances of such structural power—thus making the basis of sovereignty constitutive/incorporative rhetoric.

Thus, turning to an alternative approach to sovereign studies, I argue that from Michel Foucault's accounts of institutions ordering epistemological knowledge (from the scaffold to the panopticon) to Giorgio Agamben's theories of a sovereign's bodily exception to Max Weber's categories of "rational-legal" and "charismatic" authority, making sense of power has meant making sense of the "tropes" through which individuals are persuaded (and, at times, coerced) into not just adhering to, but enacting structures of power by recognizing particular material manifestations of it (the prison, the body of the king, the contract, the "Arsenal").[71]

In this way, the sovereign itself—the figure imbued with the power to make decisions over a circumscribed social terrain—is always in the process of legitimating its position through a series of rhetorical maneuvers that order the power of individual volition. Disconnected from individuality (the king can be killed, the throne cannot; the figure at the center of the panopticon is fully replaceable, the individuals that make up the invisible hand matter little, the power of Ford's assembly line can be extended to anyone) this collective sense of agency is very much wrapped up in incorporative rhetoric in action.

[71] Expanding this idea outward, for a representative democracy, tropes surrounding voting serve as the mechanism through which the Senator and Representative gain authority, tropes of accreditation and qualification grant the teacher the right to grade and school the right to confer degrees. *Women on the Warpath* suggests that achieving an industrial trope of global power meant visualizing the interpellation of a new workforce into a massive industrial war-state.

In this way, the story of Ford Motor Company's post-war film offerings provide another potential understanding of "rhetorical sovereignty" that is related to Fox's accounts, but concerned with a particular act of textual production that aims to "incorporate" many acts of agency into a single recognizable sovereign form. It is in this context that these films serve an integral role in shifting discourses of "rhetorical sovereignty" that stemmed from the course set by the "Arsenal of Democracy."

As the remainder of this chapter will argue, *Women on the Warpath* was simply the tip of the iceberg as, at the war's conclusion, Ford Motor Company (and the larger collective of corporate entities that benefitted from depicting the subjectivities of wartime production) would develop new "tropes of power" designed to legitimize the marketplace and the consumer as a new conglomerate of global power that functioned above and beyond political structures. This power would, almost immediately, become an integral element in the next great struggle for global power-production: The Cold War.

Having established "rhetorical high ground" through films like *Women on the Warpath* during the war, Ford Motor Company gained much more than just industrial prowess (and an enormous quantity of government contract money), it established inside position on the process of re-signification—and re-territorialization—that would take place on a global scale at the war's conclusion. Accompanying these changes, the wartime re-signification of the "Arsenal of Democracy" sets the scene for the remainder of this chapter's consideration of the relationship between rhetorical theories of agency and sovereignty as post-war discourses shift away from political forms of sovereignty and toward economically-oriented subjects (laborers and consumers) and sovereign structures (markets).

The Ford Empire: Consumer Sovereignty, Ford Egypt, and Visualizing Global Markets

"Although 'globalization' is one of the dominant issues of our time, relatively little attention has been paid to the metaphors and images that constitute the very idea of the "global" and the whole genealogy of 'world pictures' that accompany it"

-W.J.T. Mitchell, World Pictures: Globalization and Visual Culture, pg. 49

As was the case for most of the world, 1945 was a year of monumental change for Ford Motor Company as the war concluded. The company would need to reconstruct itself in the wake of immense conflict (not, however, because it had been adversely effected, but because it had so unilaterally remade itself into an agent of mechanized warfare and now the world needed cars and commerce again). At the conclusion of the war, the metaphorical "Arsenal of Democracy" that the company had relied on to legitimize its power changed from defense to offense, now devoting its energy to developing and expanding (rather than defending) Westernized democracy through the development of a global marketplace.

As it did so, the movement also changed weaponry, trading in the production of tanks, ships and planes for more abstract economic arrangements like rhetorical capital in the form of credit and global finance structures: 1945 saw the formation of the International Monetary Fund, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and increasingly complex supply chains open under the Marshall Plan that would, in turn, form new markets to ensure the feasible extension of mass production, and new forms of intellectual labor based on quantitative reasoning and product planning.

With these new mechanisms, the United States would wage a very different kind of war (a "Cold War," as history would have it) on a global stage. Notably, Martin

Medhurst and Robert Scott have described the Cold War as a uniquely new form of "Rhetorical War" in which victories were won through the formation of perceived sovereignty and "fought with words, speeches, pamphlets, public information (or disinformation) campaigns, slogans, gestures, symbolic actions, and the like" (Medhurst 89). Thus, the goal of this new expansionist "Arsenal" was still ensuring "freedom" for as many individuals as possible—but this freedom would become oriented through the tropes of the workplace and the marketplace. The changing of industry was also, however, a story of changing sovereignty in that it required a claiming of symbolic territory and varying performances of power for Fordist practices and, more resolutely, for Westernized capitalism. In short, as Mitchell argued, the ensuing conflict was over the "world pictures" that divided East and West, capitalist and Communist, democratic and socialist society. Ford Motor Company, as a multinational corporation, reflected this change by not establishing its sovereignty in the same manner as it had during (and prior) to the war—rolling out the industrial titan in the same basic position as the prince and the president, but through its very multiplicity as a corporation and reflection of consumer need.

Immediately following the conclusion of World War II, this claiming of territory through symbolic means was enhanced significantly by a remarkable set of rhetorical affiliations between policy decisions, bodily orderings, and vast production chains advantageous to the American economy as important reconstruction principles. Thus, accompanying these changing structures of global finance and manufacturing, the U.S. government established a wide array of artifacts working to envision a global marketplace centered around a set of films produced out of Paris to reveal and market the

"Marshall Plan." Primarily concerned with European reconstruction, these Marshall Plan artifacts presented the scale on which such a "rhetorical" war would be waged against both Communism and Isolationism.

Thus, his father, Edsel, and grandfather, Henry, passing away during the war, new company president Henry Ford II turned his attention, and the company's toward a new era of international presence. The new intention was to give the American parent firm ownership of controlling stock interests in Ford companies around the world, facilitating its efforts to coordinate management, sales policy, and capital expansion. More than any of these internal and financial consolidations, however, it was the symbolic depiction of a global "Fordist" marketplace and workforce that would become the new weapons of the new "Arsenal of Democracy."[72] Not surprisingly, Ford Motor Company's film work during this period played a significant role in the claiming of agencies to perform this permutation of global power.

As *Women on the Warpath* suggested, prior to the war company authority took the form of a kind of manufacturing feudalism dependent on the positioning of a central sovereign structure—Henry Ford's assembly line—as the locus through which value creation flowed through subsequent levels of managers, assembly line workers, and

[72] Taking over the suddenly floundering company in early 1946, the 28 year old immediately set to making considerable changes to its organizational structure. Ford II immediately fired many of the labor busting figures that had embedded themselves near the elder Ford. The company began integrating its global industries and production practices, and instituted quantitative measurement as the core of decision-making. Over the next ten years, Ford Motor Company would begin openly negotiating with unions (developing its first comprehensive labor contract in 1955), was trading publicly on the stock exchange by 1956, and opened its in-house credit company in 1959 (Byrne). In short, under Henry Ford II's tenure, Ford Motor Company was converted from one of the largest and most centralized economic actors in the world into a properly "corporatist" organization that was simultaneously, and paradoxically, more diffuse and more centrally determined in nature.

eventually consumers. Now unable to rely on the narrative of global struggle associated with literal World War, the trope of "hailing" individuals into the auspices of such militaristic mass production became a more difficult prospect.

In the place of this tropological hailing, the company would construct a different "trope of power" for creating authority on its behalf based on claiming territory on which interpellated international bodies could be integrated into the power structures of Western capitalism. Where the bodies of domestic female laborers were converted through their labor within wartime factories, the performance of global power after the war consisted of consumption on the part of international individuals facilitated by new structures in finance and lending to make a Fordist consumer on six continents.

Reflecting this shift, under the new direction of Henry Ford II, the film department began to place much greater emphasis on depicting the spaces of this global marketplace. Between 1945 and 1952, Ford Motor Company turned to what was left of its film department to embark on an expansive process of documenting the company's many global factories. Over this period film crews were sent to the ends of the earth to capture the reach of the Fordist manufacturing and commercial empire—seeking new economic agents as the conduits for its expansion. Thus, a Fordist "world picture" would begin to take shape.

Depicting factories in settings as disparate as Buenos Aires, Antwerp, Sao Paulo, Santiago, Shanghai, Copenhagen, London, Bombay, Singapore, and Mexico City— in total, Ford's film crews created content for twenty-five global locations, each set in a different country, their sights set on generating different regional clusters of consumers around the world (Bray). These films are notable for their uniformity and thus their

ability to place each of these international spaces onto a single plane of productive force ("a homogenous aggregate," Francois Perroux would point out). On film, these depictions of foreign markets followed a twofold process: first, by developing a series of representative spaces of production and consumption and second, by extending the influence of consumer sovereignty to a global framework (something that would be of paramount importance to the post-war success of the company—and the country).

Similarly, these introductory tropes worked to redraw the simulacra of global economic spaces through their most recognizable features. Most of the film fragments follow a uniform format: they open with a depiction of local landmarks to situate their viewers then follow with a sequential depiction of the relationship between consumption and production in the new global setting, ending by highlighting the degree to which Fordism has extended access to the global marketplace for individuals around the world. Seemingly intended to document that the sun nearly never set on the Fordist Empire, all of these isolated sequences never became a fully articulated set of individual films—instead they ended up being condensed into a single distributed film entitled *Around the World with Ford Motor Company* to represent the company's role in the global expansion of capitalism.

Singling out one of these stock film sources that chronicles the complete process of buying a Ford vehicle from an assembly plant in Alexandria, Egypt, this section hopes to lay the groundwork for understanding the rhetorical production of a newly forming global economy as it intersected with local structures of governance. As a foil for the larger change in the company, the Ford factory in Alexandria had once functioned as a wholly independent subsidiary of the company primarily overseen by the Britain-based

Ford investment company, Ford Limited (Wilkens and Hill 384). Under the presidency of Henry Ford II, however, subsidiaries like this one were brought under the control and into the financial web of the central corporate structure in Detroit—Ford II was placed directly on the board of directors at Ford Egypt and, almost immediately, construction of a new Alexandria factory designed for production rather than just assembly commenced. From that point forward, Egypt was to be Ford's gateway to the Middle East and Eastern Europe both materially and rhetorically for the company.[73]

At the structure's groundbreaking ceremony, booklets were handed out which declared, amongst other messages, that "*today Ford Motor Company (Egypt) S.A.E. has the sole right in thirty-one separate countries or distinct territorial units to trade in Ford products.* This is the Empire of Ford Egypt" (Ford Egypt 5, emphasis original). Further evidence of the groundwork surrounding the plant's construction appears in a June 11, 1947 wire report from Belgrade, Yugoslavia that ran in the New York Times. The report explains that Ford Motor Company of Egypt obtained a "contract for approximately $500,000" that would allow the company to sell cars and parts in the country despite its fraught position between the democratic West and Communist East (N.Y. Times).

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[73] As Wilkins and Hill tell the full story, the very acquisition of Ford Egypt by its own parent company speaks to the complexity of the emerging financial marketplace after World War. They explain: "the European and Egyptian companies were controlled by the Ford Investment Company, Guernsey [England], a wholly owned subsidiary of Ford Ltd. The latter firm made a cash distribution of £4,256,860 to the American Ford company…Ford Ltd. also capitalized £2,943,140 in favor of the minority stockholders of the English company. This last sum was applied in full payment of 3,678,925 new 4 ½ percent redeemable preference shares of 16s. which were then allotted to the minority stockholders. The American company paid the blocked £4,256,860 to the Guernsey investment company in return for the latter's interest in the European and Egyptian subsidiaries. Early in 1951 the Investment Company was liquidated and all its funds transferred back to Ford Ltd." (Wilkens 377).

In this context, the film engages in a different kind of optic that focused on the spaces and mechanisms that would make consumption possible in markets where the democratic influence of nations could not immediately intervene. In itself, this shift in focus is telling of the changes in the symbolic core of the economy Ford was taking part in. As chapter 3 has argued, Ford Motor Company was no stranger to the kinds of visual narrative that could collectively convert national places into economic space. Here, this process of generating such space, however, takes place in a context in which the global expansion of capitalism was very much a matter of national interest and of perceived sovereignty—car culture was on the move with democracy in tow. It is through the film intended to depict this new era in Ford Egypt's history that the vision of a new globalized economy would take clearer shape.

The footage taken in Egypt opens with a Ford coupe pulling up in front of the pyramids and its occupants leisurely stepping out to take a look at the wonders—a scene repeated on every continent in *Around the World with Ford Motor Company* (Big Ben in London, the streets of Copenhagen, government buildings in Sao Paulo each frame the space about to be Forded). The film then cuts to an overhead shot of the Ford Motor Company plant set amidst a modern Alexandria. As the plane circles, the clear grids of tree-lined streets surround what appears to be a complex of factories, apartment buildings, and distribution hubs. A second rapid cut positions the audience just outside of a car dealership attached to the factory, and the familiar block letters FORD are now joined by Arabic counterparts. Finally, a series of overhead, plane-perched shots of the new manufacturing campus appear and, from above, the organized industrial park has the visual effect of creating a seemingly nation-less economic zone.

The film then enters the factory just as a crate of parts (ostensibly designed in Detroit and produced in Dagenham, England) is being transported by a conveyor to the shop floor. Notably, the production of cars assembled in the Egypt plant at the time of the film did not use Ford's standard moving assembly line. Instead, raised on platforms, the cars are assembled by teams of workers methodically piecing them together through craft labor. Unlike Ford's earliest films, however, the "trope of power" in this film is not concerned with the bodily labor of figures assembling the car. Instead, the film places finance and consumption at the center of a post-war "Arsenal of Democracy." This power is set up through the performance of international bodies and minds.

Once inside, as the film begins to capture the consumption side of the Fordist process, the feature of the film reveals the globally oriented extension of a wholly different kind of assembly line concerned with marketing and financing. A woman enters the attached dealership unaccompanied wearing a black dress, high heels, and (the only sign of any ethnic difference from a woman entering a Ford dealership in, say, Topeka, Kansas) a striped headscarf (fig.18). Similarly homogenized, she speaks to a suited businessman who directs her to the show floor. Briefly, the film dwells on the automobiles themselves as the viewer is positioned directly as the consumer as she inspects a line of new Ford and Lincoln models. The camera-as-consumer focuses in on the new hood, wheels, and steering console of an automobile. However the film then quickly cuts away from the cars and focuses closely on a typewriter as it finishes up the application process for owning the car.

The film then cuts to the operator of this typewriter—also a young woman in a business suit sitting, along with a dozen equally Westernized others (also identified by

business suits), behind a glass partition. She is in the process of carrying the document to an expansive back room wherein an army of Egyptian underwriters (notably, all men) is working through what appear to be similar applications for credit (fig. 19). Once again the document itself takes the central position in the scene as the camera peers over the underwriter's shoulder as he reviews the paper work. Upon his approval the scene returns to the dealer and buyer as the drives off of the lot in her new Ford.

While the tropes at work in these global films provide the same basic template for depicting economic activity as earlier films—an emerging economic paradigm gets codified through new forms of labor in the context of economized spaces—the simultaneous execution of these same principles throughout the world becomes an important symbolic process in producing territory. For audiences of this internationally released film, *Around the World with Ford Motor Company* depicted American-styled capitalism personified across an endless array of cultural contexts and made possible by the transformation of individual agencies into a collective articulation of economic sovereignty via a set of embodiable practices, spaces, and ideologies that could make connections between work and the West.

As *Around the World with Ford Motor Company* highlights, the rapid movement of investment capital was not limited to global financiers—but generated as a new staple of consumerism through structures of credit and access to Westernized products (none more symbolically-laden than the car). It is in this context that Ford's motion pictures served an integral role in generating "territorial" sovereignty by generating Fordist spaces on a global scale and allowing for global individuals to occupy these spaces through acts of consumption.

Depicted in this immense "de-nationalization" of territory, however, was a budding new sovereign structure that would become the subject of varying "tropes of power," particularly on film in years to come. Thus, as Ford was depicting new economized forms of global sovereignty through expansion of the marketplace, it was also in the process of developing narratives that could position the company at the center of "consumer sovereignty" measured through quantitative reasoning. Coming out of the era of global reconstruction, it is this model of sovereignty that would become the dominant medium through which economic frameworks would fully challenge the political as the central framework for sovereign identification.

"The Human Bridge": Product Planning, Consumer Sovereignty and the Rise of Axiomatic Reason

In the face of this global application of Fordist production and consumption practices, the post-war years of Ford's motion picture work also continued to develop narratives of American exceptionalism through new "tropes of power" designed to set apart American industry from its global contemporaries. In these nascent tropes, a new epistemological arrangement of economic power would begin to take shape that would guide the second half of the twentieth century. The final section of this chapter, then, takes up Ford's production of sovereignty based on "axiomatic" reasoning that gets articulated through the trope of the "Human Bridge" on film.

The year is 1949, ten years after Roosevelt's speech and four years removed from the conclusion of World War II, thousands of veterans are coming home from work to their GI Bill sponsored houses, to gather, with their wives and young children, around the increasingly commonplace television set (since the conclusion of the war, the number of

homes owning a television had jumped from 44,000 to nearly 25,000,000 in 1953) (Edgers 28). Likely the carry-over of the dominance of Ford's motion pictures, one of the period's more popular shows was "Ford Television Theatre Hour" which had recently shifted from a monthly to a weekly showing. In itself, this shift in medium mirrors the wider movement away from the mass mediated method of production and toward individualized and flexible methods for thinking about economic relations (perhaps all of this mirroring, in some way, discourses of Capitalism and Communism as a war of the individual and the collective).

Generally consisting of a dramatic remake of a theatrical classic and broadcast live using Broadway actors, the show was also accompanied by a set of industrial shorts focused on the show's sponsor: Ford Motor Company. The evening's supplemental offering is a Wolff Studios, Inc. produced industrial short film titled *The Human Bridge* intent on explaining to the post-war public how the internal dynamics of the company under the new regime of Henry Ford II and a set of former naval officers now called Ford's "Whiz Kids" works. In the process, a final "trope of power" would begin to take shape via visual artifact.

After the opening credits, *The Human Bridge* opens with a close up shot of a plaque that reads, "Mankind passes from the old to the new on a human bridge formed by those who labor in the three principle arts—agriculture, manufacture, transportation." In addition to the far more aggressive articulation of industry's place in the social order, this opening scene highlights that post-war Ford Motor Company was not just competing for the allegiance of its viewers with nation-states and industry competitors, but also with its former self—this wasn't, the plaque seemed to say, your fathers' Ford Motor Company

any longer. It thus called into question what kind of labor would remake these three fundamental fields and would move on to articulate yet another new permutation of the "assembly line."

Then, just as the company had once meticulously documented the moving assembly line years before, the trope of "The Human Bridge" emerges as a new metaphor at the core of the company's ethos and its ability to function by converting and pooling the work of many economic agents. It does so by telling the three-year story of how the 1949 Ford line-up of cars came into being.[74] Unlike the original moving assembly line, this bridge does not simply begin with the dreams of one man and then represent the infusion of these ideas into the company. Rather, the "bridge" is a metaphor for how the company is now an organization made up of an aggregate of thinkers and methods designed to constantly and collectively make and remake consumer needs and the material manifestations of those needs.

The rhetorical production of a "human bridge" entailed depicting an enormous collection of minds joined together to perfect the planning and construction of a machine that the consumer could be sure had been prepared in their best interests. In the new Ford's depictions of Fordist labor, labor and its production of direct capital is not the focus of the film, rather, the purpose of the labor is to provide some account of the consumer—their safety, their wants, their needs.

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[74] Curiously, it is actually the failure of the 1949 line that solidified the "Whiz Kids" methods, as, while they were able to apply quantitative methods to design and testing, manufacturing remained in the hands of managers and workers selected from Ford senior's stock. When the manufacturing side of the new line didn't live up to its visions for consumer enjoyment, the factories themselves came under the purview of the "bean-counters" and their quantitative measurements (Byrne).

Reflecting this larger point, rather than positioning the product of this "human bridge" as a dream or car, the organizing force, the film's audience is introduced to "an idea" that remains unidentified for the first two minutes of the film. After a montage of workers walking into Ford's enormous River Rouge plant, the "idea's" story begins as part of a flashback to 1946, as the narrator declares "a revolutionary event…a crystallized dream that cycles in the transition from the old to the new." This mysterious idea is set in motion as Henry Ford II sits down at his desk, rifles through his messages from the night before, and then calls his chief designer, Harold, by intercom. After a short conversation between the two, the narrator returns to declare, "so here is the idea: a motorcar conceived as a space for the riders" a concept that will serve as "more than an automobile design, it is a set of new horizons." Though the narrator suggests that the "idea" is a car designed for the consumer, the visual montage that takes place as he explains the core features of the car adds a second narrative—one concerned with projecting the very nature of the labor-oriented "Human Bridge" that makes the now sovereign consumer apparent to the audience. The "new horizons," ostensibly, suggest a more "democratic" marketplace derived from the needs of the many rather than the production potential of the few.

The camera's central focus remains on depictions of the new automobile's design, first roughly sketched by "Harold" on a sheet of paper, then drawn to scale on a wall so that a second set of designers can take measurements. This fades into a set of blueprints which, once lowered from the screen, reveal a prototype under construction in a test garage. As the film's narrator draws attention to the fact that months of work have gone by in nine seconds of film, he also highlights that, in this time, "dozens of people are

teaming up to develop" the basic principle of the new car. From these dozen minds, the multiplication of expertise continues as the film works to make the audience privy to one of the secrets of Ford's success.

The film allows the viewer to see the work going on behind the doors in the "Styling Department" a place typically "kept under lock and key." As an overhead camera pans across a set of designers sketching out futuristic designs and set against a black backdrop, the narrator explains that small pieces are taken from each conceptual design until "finally, they arrive at something that may be the composite of visions in half a hundred fertile minds." In the next scene, the idea, now the work of hundreds of these designers, is materialized as a model "so other minds can work on it, so they can walk around it and talk about it." This process of walking and talking continues through a montage which shows the technical elements of the car divided up to allow specific attention from trained experts so that they "can have ideas on the details" (fig. 20).

Two distinctive tropes of power emerge here as important to the post-war product planning film: the notion of distributed agency for the intellectual laborer, and the ability for the company to align these acts of agency into an apparatus that could measure, predict, and cater to the sovereignty of the consumer. Thus, where *Women on the Warpath* aligned the female laboring body with discourses of national sovereignty, the "trope" of the "Human Bridge" positioned the intellectual work of designers and engineers as the performance of consumer desire (and positioned this desire as the central locus of power in structures of sovereignty). As the audience is introduced to these "secretive" laboratories, the images and words are littered with assurances of the

innovativeness and accuracy with which the company's planners could anticipate and adjust to the public's needs.

Speaking more broadly of the arguments used to legitimate economics' scientific foundations, Dierdre McCloskey touches on the basic logic behind such a shift from a "rhetoric of mass production" to a "rhetoric of scientific method" in justifying economic rationality. She suggests that this kind of representation of testing and quantification works because individuals "look naturally for external standards with which to make judgments, quantitative or not" and, to be persuasive "one needs a standard." In the world of positivist reasoning, then, "You persuade your audience that something is big by laying it down on a ruler that the audience considers relevant"—an *axiomatic* ("Rhetoric of Economics" 103, 108). Concurring with this assessment, for economic historian E.R. Weintraub, if a dominant "trope" for establishing economic power exists in the latter half of the twentieth century, it comes through the mechanism of statistical reason. He argues that:

> "theories of descriptive statistics and classical statistical methodologies as they developed over the decades of the twentieth century present a story of progress as more and more data were developed and were better and better documented, and better and better integrated with other sources of data" (Weintraub 140)

This story, he further suggests, is one of power as it ultimately provides "the possibility of control of economies based on the collection of data about these economies" (141).[75]

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[75] In a tremendously useful bit of translation, Weintraub points out that "In economics…philosophical systems are called methodologies" denoting both the increasingly "scientific" nature of the field, and highlighting the rhetorical power of providing assurance in language rather than contingency.

In the case of the film, the concept of "The Human Bridge" becomes that ruler just as the assembly line had in prior—it also becomes the structure through which said power becomes a performable structure of agency. On film, this intellectual assembly line becomes the crucial visual standard by which the quality of the car, the validity of desires, the normative nature of purchasing power become observable phenomena to be assessed by the consumer through the "scientific" method of manifesting consumer desire. Thus, it is through the collective intellectual labor of the company's designers and engineers that the company could assert its ability to create knowledge. The value of the products, on film, is guaranteed by the number of minds working on it and the infallibility of the statistical methods they enact (fig. 21).

It is in this historical confluence like these that James K. Galbraith positioned the birth of a new forms of governmentality within the sovereign structure he termed the "New Industrial State." For Galbraith, the collective thrust of the many changes in the company are evidence of "a new shift in the industrial enterprise, this time from capital to organized intelligence" taking the claim a step further to argue that "this shift would be reflected in the deployment of power in the society at large" (Galbraith 59). Affirming the claim being held in this chapter such a shift in power, he argues, must take place through "the association of men of diverse technical knowledge, experience, or other talent which modern industrial technology and planning require" (61). Galbraith then termed "this new locus of power in the business enterprise and in the society," which consists of "all who participate in group-decision making or the organization which they form" as "the technostructure" in which statistical knowledge becomes the locus of decision-making and an integral portion of a wider nexus of power (61,74).

There are few periods in the medium's history that the industrial utility film would serve such an integral role in institutional change.[76] On film, and in traditional theoretical/metaphorical terms used to express systems of sovereignty, this might be positioned in the years following war that Ford Motor Company began to generate power less through the stagings and visualizations of Althusser's "interpellation," or claims over territory and more through a "trope" of power akin to what Deleuze and Guattari have termed a "body without organs." A process chronicled by the rise of a genre of utility films concerned with "product planning." Deleuze and Guatari explain:

> A body without organs is not an empty body stripped of organs, but a body upon which that which serves as organs is distributed according to crowd phenomena, in Brownian motion, in the form of molecular multiplicities. (A Thousand Plateaus 30)

Within the narratives of the company, the metaphor works double duty as the power imbued in this metaphorical body also becomes the bodies of many intellectual laborers attempting to concretize the notion of consumer desire. In this way, the post-war forms of power taking shape relied on a very different set of tropes to propagate the figure of the consumer as a sovereign in economic structures.[77]

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[76] Ford Motor Company historians McKinlay and Starkey note that "Before 1945, manufacturing had been all powerful. Gradually, under the beancounters, power moved from the factories to Detroit Headquarters," the site of research and marketing (117).

[77] Not an exclusive feature of "consumer sovereignty," this act of fragmentation has also been applied, by Giorgio Agamben, to more overtly political structures as "Modern democracy does not abolish sacred life but rather shatters it and disseminates it into every individual body, making it what is at stake in political conflict" (Agamben 127). Similarly, for Max Weber, notions of agency in this newly formed distributed sovereign become "dissociated from the person of the individual leader and embodied in an objective institutional structure, so that the new holders of authority exercise it at second remove as it were, by virtue of an institutionally legitimized status or office" (Weber 67).

For this principle to work, however, the mechanisms through which the “axiom” takes shape require the consumer to be able to see the process of measurement. A trope that appeared periodically in Ford’s film offerings, this industrial “body without organs” served as an extension of the assembly line as a site of subjectivication; it also, however, represented a shift in sovereign structure. Where, in a film like *Women on the Warpath,* personal agency and national sovereignty were affiliated through the process of laboring, *The Human Bridge* was a bastion of producing “consumer sovereignty,” an economic principle that would dominate post-war economic relations.[78]

Eventually, the “product planning” films would also construct a supplementary narrative that affirmed claims about this “consumer sovereignty” under a competitive free capitalist system, but ground the consumer’s power in the corporations’ ability to measure their needs. By the early 1950s, this genre of the “product planning” film was not only a staple of the industrial film genre as it remained alive in Ford’s television offerings, it also evolved to depict such planning as the very core of capitalism’s most crucial feature for developing a “trope of power” globally: competition. In such a model, the power allotted to the organization is given not through democratic consent, royal lineage, or interpellated identity, but through financial success in the global marketplace. Highlighting this point, a second television short, aired in 1953 and titled “Product Planning,” highlights this notion as it declared that:

> The competitive drive to satisfy [the consumer’s] desire, to build that better mousetrap is the force that has made the American marketplace the most abundant

[78] In its original definition, provided by William Harold Hutt in 1940, "The consumer is sovereign when, in his role of citizen, he has not delegated to political institutions for authoritarian use the power which he can exercise socially through his power to demand (or refrain from demanding)" (Hutt 236).

> in the world. We in the automobile industry know this story, we helped write it. Under the spur of competition, of having to come up with something newer and better every year, the automobile industry has pointed the way for our whole economy not only in mass production methods but in long-range planning and thinking.

As the film's "product planning" narrative unfurls, it does so through a recursive process of batting an idea between the designers of the car and those concerned with measuring the response of the market place. In the images depicted in figure 21, this concern for codifying consumer need is made particularly overt as executives take rather cartoonish notes asking about the "market?" and "what will the customer want?" (fig. 21)

From these accounts, the question of what is right and good in the marketplace is resolutely answered by the narrator: "There's only one person that knows…the customer." However, as "product planning" films like *The Human Bridge* articulate, the only figure that can "know" what the consumer wants is an assemblage of managers, designers, data-collectors, and manufacturers as they are aligned within the corporate structure of Ford Motor Company. In this way, the sovereign regime that eventually coalesced in the wake of World War II was neither a matter of interpellation, nor spatial production. Rather, power was derived from an "axiomatic."

As they appear on film, "axiomatic" articulations of sovereignty are still reliant on recognition but change what is being recognized. Rather than recognition that serves to form identification or spatial production, the rhetorical formation of an "axiomatic" like "The Human Bridge" recognizes and codifies knowledge as concrete and measurable.

The figure that yields this mechanism for measuring reality and desire also yields the power to dictate the wants and needs of the many.

Conclusion

In sum, this chapter has argued that the rhetorical work performed by Ford Motor Company, through the production of visual artifacts, represents a series of visualized permutations of authority. In each case, the company's films reveal a process through which "tropes of power" are used to harness the collective energy of individual agency from (often previously marginalized) populations. From the interpellation of female laboring bodies into discourses of the "Arsenal of Democracy," to the creation of an "axiomatic" designed to affirm the consumer as the new sovereign of Western democracy, to finally expanding the combined force of these messages to an international framework.

By 1955, the image of Ford Motor Company as a force of global political good was fully integrated into the company's rhetorically constructed identity in its television offerings. Fusing the two tropes of the global and consumer sovereignty, one of many promotional films from 1955 opens with a visual depiction of the "Fordist Empire" spreading from one side of the planet to the other. As a map of the world scrolls across the screen, every nation is highlighted in yellow (seemingly representing "Fordist" territory directly) except Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as the narrator declares, "The Ford mass production idea spread all around the world, creating new jobs, and now there are Ford People at work on every continent."

Driving this point home visually, the film then turns to six identical scenes: a Ford worker introducing himself while screwing in the rim surrounding the front headlight on

various 1955 Ford models. The significance of this repeated scene comes from the fact that each worker represents a different arena of Ford's international production: Norman Florcheck from Dearborne, Michigan; Dennis Weatherhill from Dagenham, England, Hugo Swaggenbach (speaking German) from Belgium, Joaquin Verlin (speaking Portuguese) in Sao Paulo, Brazil; and Keith Dawson in the Australian Ford Assembly Plant. Mirroring their worker counterparts, the film then shows the British, German, and American (driving in Brazil) car models joyriding in their respective spaces before launching into the now familiar "product planning" narrative—this time narrating the three year process that went into the re-emergence of the Lincoln Continental (and so further establishing the "architext" of the product planning film.

Positioned in the historical context of this chapter, this film is a victory lap, of sorts. Ten years after the conclusion of World War II, the company was presenting a unified vision of a globalized company and a marketplace linked by the labor of Fordist workers around the world measuring consumer needs on six continents. On a theoretical level, for theories of rhetoric this collection of industrial films highlights the tropological nature of sovereignty and suggests that rather than separate and competing entities, agency and sovereignty are often linked rhetorically through the development of "tropes of power." Through these tropes, as they appear on film, I have argued that the company has established "rhetorical sovereignty" by collecting the actions and agencies of individuals and positioning them within larger narratives of expanding economic power. In turn, these performances and their recursive relationship with discourses about "Arsenals of Democracy," global economic spaces, and "Human Bridges" play an

integral role in not only the rise of economic power in the second half of the twentieth century, but in understanding what rhetorical work aided this rise in the process.

Chapter 5

From the Order of Things to the Internet of Things: Posthuman Rhetoric in the Hyperreal Economy

Man does not have to be theorized away; the intersection of consumerism and techno-culture has already done the job

-Steve Beard, "Logic Bomb," pg. 114

On December 4th, 2008 Bob Nardelli, Rick Wagoner, and Alan Mullaly the respective CEOs of Chrysler, General Motors (GM), and Ford Motor Company sat before a Congressional panel in hopes of persuading the U.S. Government to provide loans to an American automotive industry teetering on the edge of bankruptcy.[79] The trio had been, just two weeks before, publicly lambasted for arriving to the first scheduled hearing in private jets and not having clear plans for how to restructure their companies. As the scene was parodied on Saturday Night Live, and made the rounds on 24-hour news networks, the event became one in a series that were positioned as evidence of how far "corporate America" had drifted from serving the interests of actual Americans (Ross).

Returning, seemingly better prepared (and having, somewhat ridiculously, carpooled together in a hybrid automobile from Detroit), the three executives served as the headlining speakers in a nearly six-hour Congressional affair titled "A Hearing on the State of the Automobile Industry, Part Two." At the hearing, each executive needed to persuade a Congressional panel that their respective company had a feasible plan for

[79] A play on words, this title makes reference at once to Michel Foucault's influential *The Order of Things* in which he argues that knowledge and the notion of personhood are epistemic principles—always shifting and discursive in nature and "The Internet of Things," a relatively new theoretical concept devoted to the idea of increasing "communications with and among smart objects, thus leading to the vision of 'anytime, anywhere, anymedia, anything' communications" Knowledge, in this model seems to move beyond exclusively human contributors to the discourses generating knowledge.

returning to profitability.[80] I read this event, then, as an opportunity for the "Big Three" (Ford, GM, and Chrysler) was to generate rhetorical capital (or, in their case, rhetorical collateral) that would, in turn, be exchanged for actual monetary capital in the form of Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) funds.

More than just an immediate economic exchange of rhetoric for money, these hearings suggest that the discourse surrounding such a bailout functioned as part of a more expansive rhetorical struggle over who or what should exist at the center of national economic relations. Coming on the heels of a major bailout of the financial industry, the nation was already embroiled in a discussion over the efficacy of taxpayers collectively floating enormous institutions to astronomical sums: the automotive industry receiving 75.9 billion dollars of the TARP's 363.8 billion dollars distributed (U.S. Treasury Department 3). In this context, I read the circumstances surrounding these bailouts as distinctly rhetorical in two ways.

On the one hand, the hearings highlight that perhaps more than at any point in economic history rhetoric plays an integral role in the literal production and circulation of capital. In such a view, the modern economy relies on a great deal of capital based on speculation, persuasion, and narrative. As Dierdre McCloskey has suggested, this is an era in which "one quarter of national income in a modern economy is earned from 'sweet

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[80] Ford's particular role in these hearings was curious, as well as telling. While struggling, the company was not on the brink of bankruptcy like its counterparts, Mulally was there because of fear that Ford Motor Company would become collateral damage if its two chief competitors dissolved and took with them the infrastructure needed to maintain the industry itself. In his written testimony, Mulally makes it abundantly clear that, unlike his competitors, "Ford does not require access to a government bridge loan," in effect a bailout, but rather needs "a credit line of $9 billion as a critical backstop or safeguard against worsening conditions" (Congress). Though a seemingly minor differentiation, such a statement generated countless "profits of distinction" in that the company's value went up as it is able to differentiate its level of need from competitors.

talk'" ("Bourgeois" 2). Such production of rhetorical and virtual capital also explains how, as Niall Ferguson has argued, "Planet Finance" has been able to outgrow "Planet Earth" so that sums of debt and Gross Domestic Product have reached previously unimaginable sums (Ferguson, N. 3).

On the other hand, these debates are distinctly constitutive in nature as they functioned as a trial over the fate of a set of legally recognized corporate persons that needed protection from failure in the global marketplace. In this sense, at the heart of the five-hour hearing with the Congressional Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee was a meeting of competing narratives about what, or who, was being saved by these safety-net measures: a collective of investors? of workers? an administrative/managerial structure? A manufacturing entity? Or an integral piece of America itself? Just as the "Ford Man" was identified decades before by Antonio Gramsci as a matter of extensive rhetorical and constitutive practices, the "corporate person" would find itself very much at the center of a considerable debate about identity in the contemporary national landscape. In this sense, the hearings were a discussion about just how far the notion of corporate citizenship, the pervasiveness of the abstract marketplace, and neoliberal ideologies would become ingrained into structures of national policy.

On one side of the testimonies, members of the Congressional committee expressed concern about money taken from the general public and funneled into the coffers of companies with little accountability and a history of overtly favoring dividends over workers, of globalizing manufacturing at the expense of national economic health, and cutting safety and environmental concerns in the process (United States Senate

Committee). In this view, such a set of bailouts would suggest that structures of national and political assemblage had become subordinate entirely to economic sovereigns and ideologies in the form of large multinational corporations (notably, this is a correlative narrative to the discussion of monopoly capitalism that had appeared a century ago, and from which Fordism and Progressivism originally emerged).

On the other side, representatives of the "Big Three," labor unions, and financial experts forecasted economic and social disaster if the automotive industry faltered. Expressing this point overtly, while prefacing his explanation of the company's solvency, Ford's CEO Alan Mulally suggested in his testimony that "Ford is an American company, and an American Icon, we are woven into the fabric of every community that relies on our cars and our trucks" (Mulally). He further argued that to allow Ford (or Chrysler, or GM) to fail was to jeopardize these countless communities by damaging such an integral figure of civic life and national identity (fig. 23).

Cached in this context, Mulally then touted the distinctive features that Ford had taken to save itself—features that meant it only needed loans to support it if the industry were to falter (in years to come, Ford's ability to avoid labeling its aid as an outright "bailout" would generate a great deal of rhetorical capital for the company in its own right). These features center around a plan "launched in late 2006" which featured the company "reducing its workforce by 50 percent in just three years," new agreements with the UAW in which workers gave concessions to stave off government interference,[81] and the sale or cancellation of many ancillary brands and elements of the company (Mulally).

[81] At the ratification of these new agreements Garry Somerville, representing UAW Local 3000 members, suggested that the concessions by workers were difficult to take but "help keep the company in business and keep them from having to ask for a loan from the federal government" (John).

Cumulatively, Mulally offered a vision of, essentially, a set of "posthuman" economic relations in which the living human beings eating, sleeping, working and dwelling in their homes and workplaces (members of the traditional sense of community) would need to reasonably sacrifice to keep corporate persons healthy in an abstract global marketplace (figures of the neoliberal community).

We have seen, throughout this dissertation, historical moments similar to this hearing: scenes that have played out on a very public scale that concern steering the symbolic makeup of a nation's identity and purpose toward a particularly economic framework. Given the luxury of hindsight, I have argued that these moments reveal a pattern in which the rhetorical work of a large multinational corporation has shifted the symbolic affiliations of persons, places, and powers toward economic ends. Forming this pattern I have argued are acts of "economic-organizational" rhetoric that "incorporate" individuals and, in turn, align the assembled into a functioning economic vision of the world.

This final chapter is concerned with the most recent iteration of this historical pattern in which, as the hearings suggest, a period emerges in which the individual laborer and consumer has become secondary in economic narratives to the flows and agglomerations of multinational corporations as they exist in an abstract marketplace based on speculation. In the process of considering such history, this chapter analyzes the "incorporative" rhetorical work that led to the emerging "posthuman" vision of economic relations and positions this vision as an integral element of the "hyperreal" cultural turn that has emerged in the earliest decades of the twenty-first century.

Consistent with the rhetorical history laid out thus far, at the center of this wider set of structural changes were many acts of visual public address working to generate "ways of seeing" the contemporary economy and the corporate figures that occupied it. Far from developing the tropes surrounding the 2006 plan for the first time in his speech at the hearing, what Mulally (and, by extension, Ford) was working to "cash in" on was the tremendous rhetorical collateral the company had generated through a narrative about the structural changes it had made over the prior year and a half.

As has been the case of acts of incorporative rhetoric throughout this dissertation, such a narrative developed over time and across many texts deeply wrapped up in "visualizing" the many changes of the company into a recognizable system of economic output. However, in 2006, digital technologies have allowed for these artifacts to appear in a single platform and as part of different forms of textuality. To capture this full process, I turn to a set of artifacts initiated by the company in 2006, two years before the Congressional hearings,that set the scene for such a meeting of organizational actors as they appear on the website *fordboldmoves.com*.

Seemingly, as a precursor to the eighteen month-old "plan" Mulally testified about on Capitol Hill, Ford Motor Company posted, on June 27th, 2006, the first of thirty weekly updates to *fordboldmoves.com*, a website devoted to chronicling Ford's restructuring for public consumption. At the heart of this website was a digital and serially released "documentary" depicting a potent combination of narratives about corporate personhood, the de-territorialization of global commerce, and a "trope of power" designed to enact sovereignty based on "too big to fail" logics. Once braided together through the hypertextual nature of the website, these concepts combined into a

forceful narrative about what social theorists would traditionally call the "hyperreal" nature of economic existence. Few likely knew just how lucrative this narrative would become in such a short period of time (Ford was granted the nine billion dollar loan it requested at the hearings).

Given the parameters of "economic-organizational" rhetoric laid out over the course of this dissertation, I have argued that we should ask of this website: What forms of personhood/subjectivity are being proffered by its vision of contemporary economic relations? What forms of economic space are being produced and circulated by these texts? And, finally, what forms of "rhetorical sovereignty" are being used to propagate the economic organization as a sovereign figure? As was the case with the original appearance of Fordism-as-rhetoric, the first question that I will take up is "what forms of textuality are being deployed by Ford Motor Company in its *Bold Moves* initiatives?"

From Architext to Hypertext: Generating a Virtual Ecology of Interests on fordboldmoves.com

In years to come, I believe historians and anthropologists alike will reflect on the Ford Bold Moves campaign—especially its episodic online documentary—as a harbinger of transparency in marketing.

Bob Jeffrey, Chairman and CEO of JWT Worldwide in an interview featured on the blog "BeyondMadisonAvenue"

As was the case with the original appearance of Fordism, the opening section of this final chapter is a study in the forms of textuality that worked to create a perceivable economic paradigm. Billed as an innovative, multiplatform, user-inclusive look into the structure of the company the *Bold Moves* initiative spanned across standard television commercials and magazine ads, a video game, and a website featuring weekly releases of

thirty short digital films accompanied by structured debates and informational articles. These weekly entries to the website covered topics ranging from the insertion of a new engine into an automobile to Ford's involvement with breast cancer awareness initiatives. On the whole, *Bold Moves* was positioned as showing its viewers a "behind the scenes, no holds bar" look at the reconstruction of one of the world's largest companies and encouraging them to interact with the company accordingly (jwt.com). It was an invitation to, as Mulally had offered the Senators at the hearing, "come to Dearborn and 'kick the tires'" virtually (Mulally).

As the language used by its CEO suggests, J. Walter Thomas Agency (JWT), the large advertising firm that Ford hired to put together the *Bold Moves* campaign, viewed the execution of *Bold Moves* as an epochal shift in corporate public address.[82] Chronicling its production, the agency simultaneously generated its own digital short about the radical nature, and making, of the digital documentary.

On the website itself, managing editor Jonny Leahan, reflected that "the original idea was to pull back the curtain and watch as Ford attempted to turn around its struggling business in North America," a process through which the viewer was able to:

> witness important decision-making meetings where cameras had never been before...the launch of new products, from the design stage all the way to the vehicle testing. We saw factory workers as they applied their expertise to building

[82] On its website, JWT explains that it "first introduced the practice area of Brand Journalism in 2006 via the Ford Bold Moves campaign. Fordboldmoves.com housed blogs, articles and weekly documentary videos as Ford worked on revamping its brand" (jwt.com).

high quality vehicles, and watched as they met with management to iron out restructuring issues (Leahan)

Though posited as a new and radical mode of public address by JWT, the previous three chapters have established that this campaign simply extends one of the oldest genres Ford Motor Company used to engage in economic-organizational rhetoric—the industrial "utility" film—and clothes it in new jargon and mediums for the (post)modern age.

Just as silent films like *As Dreams Come True* once attempted to make visible (to "pull back the curtain on") the complete structural arrangement of mass-mediated Fordist livelihood throughout the twentieth century, here *Bold Moves* attempts to capture and package the many facets of Ford Motor Company into a discernible entity in the twenty-first (particularly, an entity worthy of saving from potential oblivion).

Once expressed through the relatively new medium of the motion picture and the ensuing forms of "architexture" generated on film, I have argued that "Fordism" developed as a rhetorical phenomena as well as an economic paradigm shift. Looking to *fordboldmoves.com* as a rhetorical artifact aiming to steer the Post-Fordist economy, I argue that the website can be similarly understood as a digital iteration of "architexture" concerned primarily with generating connection and circulation.[83] Though similar in this broad sense, the basic structure and affordances of the website also serve as an opportunity to consider the premise of "hypertextuality" in the digital age en route to understanding the role that these shifting forms of textuality have played in the rhetorical formation of a "posthuman" economy.

[83] This is not to suggest that the internet and the website were somehow new in 2006; rather, I argue that the direct coordinated confluence of these digital mediums, traditional analog multimodal texts, participatory texts, and economic paradigms into "brand journalism" seems to capitalize (literally) on the many affordances of digital textuality often associated with Web 2.0.

As an artifact, the initial interface of the website features a considerably pared down design. Aside from the signature royal blue "Ford" logo, the entirety of the website is cast in red, black, or gray and arranged to focus the user's movement from center to periphery of the screen. The top and center of the page features a large red rectangle filled with smaller boxes, one outlining the words "Episode 01" in white. This rectangle is adjacent to an embedded thumbnail image that, when clicked, initiates a three to five minute video that makes up the crowning achievement of the *Bold Moves* initiative (each digital short is one installment of the larger serial documentary).

Beneath this multi-media box, at least for the earliest entries, a "Point vs. Counterpoint" arrangement pitted two opinion pieces against one another. For example, in the very first upload of the series, "Point" was titled "The Concept of the American Car is a Thing of the Past," while the "Counterpoint" was titled "Is the American Car Irrelevant? Not by a Long Shot." Each of these entries then served as a hyperlink to an article presenting one side of a debate over the fate of the American automotive industry. In this manner, the structure of the website itself encouraged debate and further interaction as well as a greater understanding of the structural challenges facing the economy at the time. Encouraging the user to move beyond seeing the weekly updates to the site as isolated narrative events, beneath the central thematic box is a horizontal panel that allows for the user to scroll between the previous and future updates to the website. Finally, the bottom of the page features a box containing links to other non-featured articles written to accompany the digital shorts.

As the entries progressed and users became frequent enough contributors to sustain externally produced content, this "Point/Counterpoint" interface was replaced by

a "Community Buzz" feed that allowed for direct links to external websites and highlighted user content that ran along the right side of the page's interface and made up the discourse accompanying the film. In this way, where older industrial films treated their respective forms in a relatively isolated fashion—splitting them into recognizable genres like the travelogue and the labor film—*fordboldmoves.com's* digital format allows for the many circulating narratives about personhood, space, and power to exist within a single dynamic platform (*Fig. 24 features fordboldmoves.com's interface*).

In addition to shifting focus from text to a connective interface, *fordboldmoves.com* worked to generate a more dynamic public than its predecessors. Far from "rural folk jouncing into villages" to get a glimpse of an overall vision for the national economy, the contemporary audience for the website serves as an active figure in the production and circulation of the narratives held therein. The many subjects covered in *fordboldmoves.com* do not inherently progress in any sequential order or, seemingly, logical pattern in the same manner that an "architext" like *As Dreams Come True* mediated company/ideological structure through the chronology of Henry Ford's life.[84] Rather, the website braids together a series of simultaneous and interrelated narratives about corporate resurgence in a manner that allows users to experience the narrative of a changing Ford Motor Company at their own pace and in their own order.

In other words, *fordboldmoves.com* is interested in generating a "rhizomatic" textual experience of narrative rather than a more traditional linear set of appeals. As

[84] After an introductory entry on the project itself, the next four films follow the design, building, and launch of a new Mustang GT500, this is followed by a three film focus on conservation and fuel, then four films on administrative and procedural shakeups, four films on unveiling new car lines, three films on "repurposing" laid off workers, three miscellaneous films, then three films on remaking the traditional assembly line and a pair of summary films about the company's future prospects.

explained by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, “the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even non-sign states…it is composed of directions in motion” (“Thousand Plateaus” 23). When paired with the size and scope of an enormous multi-national corporation, such a rhizomatically-oriented textual platform mirrors the ecological structure of the multifaceted Ford Motor Company that appears across the many mediums on the website.

Gary Heba has used the term “HyperRhetoric” to make sense of this kind of rhizomatic textual phenomena as “the social act of transmitting and receiving multiple-media information through, and with an interactive, electronic, communication environment” (Heba 23). Thus, the primary distinction between the architextual form of earlier industrial film and a hypertext like *fordboldmoves.com*, for Heba, is that the former marks a “static, physical object” presented through a text while the latter makes up a “fluid, electronic *place*, composed of numerous objects” allowing for the user to move more freely within this space (23).

As a user navigates the site, they do not engage in the kinds of author/reader relations that rhetorical theory has traditionally dealt with. Rather, the user enters into an ecologically structured architext that allows them to move between sponsored (films, articles, ads) and unsponsored (comments sections, discussion forums, and user-generated) content. The user is then encouraged to interact with these pages through comment functions and by submitting links to their own reviews of the site’s content.[85]

[85] *Fordboldmoves.com* is, in this sense, the same basic process of recursively returning to the theater over weeks and months, or watching the various films of a Ford Motion Picture Library collected into a neatly condensed and packaged digital space—a kind of rapid browsing with the intermittent commercial.

In this manner, the audience itself functions as a co-designer of the textual space through their movements and points of attention. In navigating the website, they become a digital *flaneur* (much as the tourist became a spatial *flaneur* through their use of roads*)*, a "passionate spectator" that performs the company's identity by turning their attention and ideas toward particular points of content in a digital "space."[86] Once captured and packaged into a single digital platform, these interactions come to function as an expansive narrative that has been deeply economized in nature.

Thus, the website encourages users to not only browse for longer, but also contribute directly to the company's ability to exist in the virtual spaces of the marketplace. Highlighting this point, at the conclusion of the campaign Leahan argued in an on-site article, "the most important thing that happened here was the response from you, the readers" (Leahan). There is double-meaning to his description; on one hand, this phrase articulates the company's valuation (some may say pandering) of its consumer, on the other hand, this phrasing also reveals that the website's purpose was to garner attention and speculation. Seemingly succeeding in promoting this new interactive form of textual production, JWT's estimates note that "In seven months, the site generated 1.9 billion impressions" (jwt.com).

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[86] Charles Baudelaire has said of tradition *flaneurs*, "For the perfect *flâneur*, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define" (Baudelaire 268). In transferring this term to the context of a corporate website, Ford's work on *fordboldmoves.com* is committed to attracting sustained attention and movement within its digital spaces in order to generate speculation about the company's reformation.

More than just producing a virtual and economized space, however, it is through these digital movements that users generate quantifiable interest and, in JWT's terms, leave collectible "impressions" that have very real value in a marketplace based on these speculations.[87] In this way, the formation of new textual forms and interface-oriented incorporative rhetoric is also the production of new forms of economic relations.

In his work on the "Rhetoric of Speculation," Michael Kaplan has argued that within the contemporary marketplace that *fordboldmoves.com* enters:

> when investors "read" patterns of change in valuations, they are in fact reading an index of changes in the speculations of all investors. Seen in this light, "fundamentals" are themselves governed by speculation, which they represent indexically. Thus when investors sell their stock, they do so not because they realize shares are "overvalued" (as if that were possible) or because they believe others will think so, but because they assume that others will act on what they believe everyone else will believe about what everyone else will believe, and so on. Each investor is speculating about what all the others are speculating about. The dynamic of speculation is a continuous reflexive cycle. (Kaplan 280)

Thus, the website's goal was to collect and direct a set of affiliated individuals from within the company, the media, and the public, to generate an online community to speculate over the changing nature of Ford Motor Company—and it is through their speculation that value returns to the company. Indeed, turning the trajectory of the

[87] In a recent article on just what the company has been doing with such a mass of "impressions," Julia King has pointed out that Ford's decision making practices have been based on the collection of mountains of data on their consumers as, "Since 2007…analytics experts have contributed mightily to urgent strategic and tactical turnaround decisions, working on projects that ultimately decided issues such as which brands and models to discontinue, where to procure parts and materials, and how to enable dealers to tweak their inventories to improve sales" (King).

company around was as much a matter of shifting narratives as adjusting industrial practices. This highlights that in the modern economy what has been treated here as "incorporative" rhetoric becomes the kind of textual work that generates a "continuous reflexive cycle" needed to create capital on the speculative market rather than something like transferrable persuasion or identification of/with a particular message.

In this way, the hypertextuality of *Bold Moves* extends beyond just the modal ability to link texts through digital mediums. Rather, the hyper- nature of this website is both about digital linking, and the hypermodernity that has been posited separately in the works of Jean Baudrillard, Gilles Lipovetsky and Umberto Eco (8). For Eco, the defining feature of hypermodernity is "a search of instances where the American imagination demands the real thing and, to attain it, must fabricate the absolute fake" and thus, for the contemporary cultural zeitgeist, "authenticity…is not historical, but visual" (Eco 6-8). This explains the many descriptive acts on the part of JWT to attest to the websites "transparency," and its insistence on the "behind the scenes" nature of the company's depictions in the digital documentary.

For Baudrillard, "hyper-" is a prefix similarly applied to systems attempting to create a "reality more real than the real" through rhetorical practice. In his work, the hyper- functions as a closed and recognizable system of perceived "reality" that has been rhetorically produced and exists only insofar as it is recognized by and circulates within an established public's speculations about it. Thus, as Ford Motor Company attempts to generate the premise of such "transparency," it also generates corporate "being" based exclusively on recognition and that is valuable in an equally speculative marketplace—a being that, in time, supplanted the traditional human at the center of economic relations.

Effectively capturing this textual form, as a digital and multimodal artifact, *fordboldmoves.com* serves as a useful source to consider the role and nature of contemporary digital hypertextuality and its place in relation to the rise of particular forms of "hyperreal" economic rationality. Taking these "hyperreal" figures in order, *fordboldmoves.com* engages in the process of generating new forms of personhood, place, and power that have moved from the concrete to the abstract, from the material to the speculative, from the local to the global, and from nation-state to corporation.[88]

In the first departure point from this broad account of how the interface of the website functioned to encourage speculation, I argue that the "human" that is formed out of these new "hyperreal" narratives is not the symbolic production of a "Ford Man" from the humanist subject, but the formation of the corporation itself as a form of personhood that comes into being through recognition and speculation (that is based on a set of data points representing human interest).

From Homo Economicus to Deus Ex Machina: Constitutive Rhetoric, Ontology of Assemblages, and the Premise of Corporate Personhood

everyone seems to agree on the macro-level that a certain style of consumption-based capital both puts the "post" in postmodernism and runs the "human" out of posthumanism

Jeffrey T. Nealon "Nietzche's Money!" pg. 825

[88] Pramad Nayar has argued that "By rejecting the view of the autonomous subject and instead proposing a subject that is essentially intersubject and intercorporeal, posthumanism refashions the very idea of the human. The human is a node, one that is dependent upon several other forms of life, flows of genetic and other information, for its existence and evolution" (Nayar 76).

In *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault argued that the notion of personhood has always been, to an extent, both hyperreal and epistemic in nature.[89] As he explores these notions, Foucault points out that "language" has been integral to constitutive action and functions through historical instances of claiming and re-claiming "the birth of man." We have seen this kind of discursive birthing once already in this dissertation via the rhetorical formation of the "Ford Man" in the early twentieth century. For the most recent economic cycle, it appears, such a process of epistemic change is in the works on a site like *fordboldmoves.com* with one fascinating wrinkle—the birthed "man" and his subsequent languages are not exclusively human in nature but constitute the notion of "corporate personhood." Ultimately, the company's ability to successfully engage in constitutive rhetoric to form an identity for the company will play a major role in the bailout hearings years later.

While such legal recognition of corporations and organizations as "persons" was primarily positioned as a legal technicality throughout the twentieth, I argue here that in the age of the hyperreal corporate personhood is far more ontologically challenging as rhetorical structures are put in place by figures, like Ford Motor Company, that make very real claims about their own ontological, epistemological, and ideological senses of

[89] In this regard, the trajectory of Ford Motor Company's attempted production of "Ford Men," follows the pattern of disciplinarity laid out by Michel Foucault across his various "genealogical" inquiries. Foucault argues that "there was no epistemological consciousness of man as such" ("The Order of Things" 309). Instead, the idea of particular subject positions came into being alongside the emergence of institutions and their discursive articulations of identity. Thus, what Foucault deems the "'quasi-transcendentals' of Life, Labour, and Language" can become rhetorically linked with organizational structure as an integral precursor form personhood, and it is precisely this concept that *fordboldmoves.com* puts into play as it posits the "corporate person" incarnate.

self.[90] Aligning, then, with the work of constitutive rhetoricians, whose theoretical frameworks would position the "corporate person" as primarily a textual phenomenon rather than legal or social one, this section explores how *fordboldmoves.com* positioned Ford Motor Company as a recognizable and personified being that has been made visible through the various interconnected messages made possible by the website's hypertextual production.

This process begins from the very first digital short that makes up the centerpiece of *fordboldmoves.com*'s opening entry, titled "Change or Die." Continuing the now century-old narrative of Fordism as "the birth of a dream," the 2006 artifact finds Ford's dream on its deathbed. However, it is in this looming death that the website reveals the company's identity to be wrapped up in a very different entity than it began.

At the outset of this opening text, the words "Change or Die" ominously fade in and out of a black screen, and the viewer is then introduced to a montage of workers from all levels and facets of the company reflecting on its ontological nature as they articulate ideas about company identity. The montage opens with Sonia Shrank, Manager of Ford Brand DNA, declaring that, "Bold moves is about innovation, it is about moving forward, it is about a person, a being, or a group of people who are confident about who they are…and Ford Motor Company started that way" as she drives her car (snapshots of the montage are depicted in fig. 25). Next, designer Carroll Shelby declares from the floor of

[90] Michael J. Phillips outlines a handful of frames that have been used to define the essence of the corporation's many potential identities. He first notes the concession/fiction view which defines the corporation as entirely constituted within the structures of state law and thus as an imaginary legal person with bound rights. Next is the "aggregate view" which sees the corporation as taking on the subjectivity of its many constitutive human parts. Finally, is the "nexus of contracts view" which modifies the aggregate theory to place a corporations many parts into a unified system by internal and legally binding contracts.

an automotive show that "They say a corporation has no heart and soul, I believe that Ford has a heart and soul. You see Ford is a family, there is still a Ford there, there's always been a Ford interested." The short then shows a middle aged African-American man who declares, "My dad worked for Ford, I worked for Ford. I retired from Ford." The figure is Calvin Stephenson, a former Ford employee, as he prepares to go for a bike ride. Stephenson will return later in the montage to declare: "Ford Motor Company! Five dollars a day! Ford helped the people on both sides of the fence. Both white and black." Next, a lineup of workers compare their tenure at the company, declaring:

> "Twenty-eight years. Twenty-eight years!"
>
> "Sixteen years"
>
> "Thirty-two years"
>
> "Oh, thirty-two years?"
>
> "There's over a hundred years right here!"

The film then cuts to Hau Thai-Tang, Director of the Advanced Product Creation and Special Vehicle Team, as he declares that:

> Ford is a part of America, I mean it has been around for one hundred years. Henry Ford founded the automotive industries, he was one of the pioneers and the fact that we're still around after a hundred years speaks volumes…It's a brand that really transcends—it sort of symbolizes freedom

Finally Dorinda Elliot, a journalist, suggests more overtly that "This is about America. This is the story of a family, and about a company, but it is also about America" while seated in her office.

Through this opening montage, the notion of the corporation is positioned as a very much real and ontologically substantial being, a subject with a flexible identity and a hallmark of the post-modern economy. Setting the tone for much of the Bold Moves campaign, the collective knowledge of these figures suggests that Ford Motor Company has many subjectivities: a "being," an entity with "heart and soul," an agglomeration of generations of workers, the accumulation of their labor, a "brand," a "family," and a timeless citizen that embodies the United States itself. As a symbolic entity at the heart of a lengthy opening act of epideictic rhetoric, the company is positioned to represent even more expansive notions of "innovation," "freedom," "equality," and, ultimately, "America" itself. To let any of these entities "die" would be the tragic loss of a valued identity, the work implicitly suggests (an argument, we have seen, that was called on explicitly in the hearing).

However, as the rest of the entries to *fordboldmoves.com* continue to elaborate these ontological claims, this collective narrative becomes one of a flexible identity made possible (and necessary) by the hyperreal nature of economic actors in a contemporary marketplace. In *Flexible Citizenship*, Aiwha Ong pinpoints the figure of the "flexible subject" as "an effect of novel articulations between the regimes of the family, the state, and capital" as they each enter into the structures of late capitalism. In her accounts, the notion of citizenship itself becomes deeply rhetorical, a way for the post-modern subject to "accumulate capital and social prestige in the global arena" by moving between, around, and through various associative networks (Ong 9). Though designed to account for the place of human-oriented citizenship in a (dia)sporadic world, Ong's theories map particularly well onto the rhetorical work taking place in the opening vignette of Bold

Moves as the company works to identify itself as chiefly an assemblage of varying subject positions. Despite these many potential roles, the company remains always an entity that is deeply bound up in the bodies and ideas that ought to be protected by American law and exceptionalism. In short, the company articulates itself as a flexible corporate citizen.

As an extension of this principle, Ong's notions of the "flexible citizen" becomes a discourse that has been utilized by the corporation specifically as it draws on narratives of both nationalism and personhood to achieve its institutional goals. Where Ong explains that a traditionally human subject will choose between entities like nation-state, family, and corporation to accumulate desired cultural capital, the corporation has also developed a flexible set of identities in the modern economy that allow it to signify very differently depending on its needs—at times functioning as an aggregate of workers, sometimes a protected legal citizen, other times as a supremely rational being, others as a legal screen for the supremely irrational beings that run it, and finally as a mechanism for providing returns on investment.

No less "incorporative" in nature than the original symbolic formation of the "Ford Man," articulating its "personhood" in 2006 required that the company reflect some recognizable form and "skillful combination" of post-modern rationality (epistemology), some embodied form of presence (ontology), and generate a depository of values and value (ideology) that could mutate as needed to survive economic recession and political intervention alike. Stemming from this opening depiction, these messages are scattered throughout *fordboldmoves.com.*

Framed through this opening short, the narrative of corporate personhood continues to develop in the second through fifth short entries to *fordboldmoves.com* which were posted throughout July and August of 2006. Collectively, these entries worked to place a narrative around the start to finish process of planning and executing a new design for the Ford Shelby Mustang GT500—one of the new models that was to save the company from ruin. These shorts suggest that creating such an object was a process that required the coordination of myriad layers of designers, managers, workers, media workers, dealers, and consumers.

In this early narrative, Peter Horbury, Ford's Executive Director of Design in North America, suggests the linguistic and constitutive power of what the viewer is about to witness in the Shelby Mustang project as he declares that: "I think that to many people, Ford is America, it is America's car company…if there is one word that has summed up America over its history, that's optimism. If I can capture that in sheet metal, then we're really onto something. We'll have a specific design language that is only American." Thus, after the opening episode and theme of the project concerned with reflecting on the changing subject of Ford Motor Company, *fordboldmoves.com* turns to a narrative designed to depict the *autopoietic* subject of the corporation at work expressing itself through such a uniquely American (and thus optimistic) "design language."[91]

[91] As a precursor, in 1914, changing the epistemological structures of a nation required the presentation and legitimization of industrial knowledge as a form of national and public enlightenment—rather than "design language" then, the boys at the Henry Ford Trade School were learning through particular forms of "industrial language" that, in turn, embodied national values. By 2006, this kind of industrial knowledge is presented as a distributed process scattered throughout the many minds that work at the company that accumulate into a set of material objects designed to capture the spirit of a nation.

Notably, however, this design "language" cannot be spoken by any one individual, but only by an accumulated assemblage—a "Human Bridge" as it has been called. Modernizing this narrative, the short accompanying the fourth update to *fordboldmoves.com,* titled "The Build," works to capture the particular sets of knowledge of the assembly line, skilled work of the line laborer, and innovation of the engineer as they collectively create such an articulation of "design." In this sense, "The Build" is devoted to depicting this new *autopoietic* form of rationality. It is in this early depiction that we see *Bold Moves* developing notions of the corporation as the result of accumulated knowledge sets.

As the short opens, Special Vehicle Team Program Manager Jamal Hameedi explains that "installation of the drive train has been a real challenge" because it involves not only fitting a larger engine into a traditional Mustang frame, but creating a seamless manufacturing process to do so. The viewer then sees Hameedi in a meeting with twenty other executives working out how to allocate particular teams to figuring out the challenge of the new engine. The meeting concludes with the identification of the particular car on the assembly line that will get the new engine.

Returning the next day, Hameedi and a handful of members on his engineering team head down to the manufacturing floor to supervise the implementation of the new engine. Noting that the design is now out of the hands of the engineers, the short recognizes the need for mechanical dexterity to execute this design. The film then turns to assembly line worker Cornelia Mell who explains that "basically, in my area we connect the engine to the car, we've got the hardest area 'cause I've got all of the connections everything except a couple of the hoses, those get done in the other areas."

Seemingly, as the engine is connected successfully to the frame on film, the triumph does not belong to either Hameedi or Mell but to the collective structure that brought this design to fruition. In this way, the short seems to suggest that there are few places where the kind of innovation and production could take place outside of the collective of Ford workers and the procedures that link them together. Thus, the film breathes to life into a well-ingrained economic narrative. This narrative was, perhaps, best captured in a famous analogous precursor to these early digital shorts: Leonard Read's 1956 essay "I, Pencil." In this canonical work, Read personifies the pencil to explain the ideology that economies are made up of distributed assemblages rather than autonomous individuals. Read's pencil-narrator suggests that:

> millions of human beings have had a hand in my creation… [yet] there isn't a single person in all these millions, including the president of the pencil company, who contributes more than a tiny, infinitesimal bit of know-how. From the standpoint of know-how the only difference between the miner of graphite in Ceylon and the logger in Oregon is in the *type* of know-how. Neither the miner nor the logger can be dispensed with, any more than can the chemist at the factory or the worker in the oil field.

Thus, in capturing the production of a car as the collective structure that brings together a wide array of "knowhow" *fordboldmoves.com* uses this narrative to legitimize the notion that "as a whole that is greater than its parts, the corporation is a real person, qualitatively different from the kinds of human persons who are part of its makeup" and capable of speaking the kind of "design language" that can recuperate the fading identity of the many human figures that make up the corporate assemblage (Ripken 34). Indeed, just as

the personified pencil is capable of telling its own story in Read's work, *fordboldmoves.com* engages in the process of transcending its individual parts to work as a distributed production process speaking through such "design language."

Seemingly pivoting on its flexible identity, however, the documentary then works to answer questions of what happens to the actual people that make up this hyper-rational Ford capable of speaking a uniquely American language in the face of this new corporate figure working to survive, even at their expense. Over the course of three weeks and three digital shorts, the serial documentary turns toward placing a narrative behind the many layoffs that the company would engage in to return to financial solvency. In short, *fordboldmoves.com* works to account for the story of the human within the post-human economy as a figure that is largely expendable.

In Episode 18 of Bold Moves, titled "Walk the Line," the documentary takes the viewer to Flat Rock, Michigan to chronicle the damage of the struggle to maintain relevance within the global investment marketplace. The chief narrator and focal point of the short is Ramon Rogers, a third generation Ford assembly line worker. As the film follows Rogers throughout his house, he touts "living simple" as the key to getting by in tough times. Rogers is a familiar figure in the *Bold Moves* campaign as he was first introduced as one of the line workers offering commentary on the quality of the new Shelby GT500 in "The Build." Here, however, Rogers serves as a sacrificial figure guiding the viewer through the need for the "corporate person" to expel many of the actual persons that previously served an integral role in its formation.

After a brief explanation of his fascination with building model cars as a young man leading to work on the assembly line, he explains that he is also acutely aware of the

company's struggles on the global investment market—admitting that "if you look at the stock over the last ten years, and you see their stock barely making the double-digits, it doesn't look promising." He and his fiancé then reflect on the insecurity this knowledge leaves them with, hoping only that Roger's work can help the company get back on track.

After such an endearing depiction of a single worker, the entry ends with a considerable admission that Ford would be laying off all of its hourly employees at the Flat Rock plant, leaving its viewer with the knowledge that Rogers, "along with 75,000 of his fellow employees" across the country, "have two weeks to make decisions about their severance packages." In this way where the identity of the "Ford Man" was once defined by the integration of individuals into a narrative of mass production and consumption—here, the identity of the corporate person is reified as individuals are cast out in order to ensure its continued solvency.

Positioning this contraction as simply a survival tactic for the figure of the company within the virtual "marketplace," Episode 19 "Preparing for Life After Ford" takes up the layoff process directly. As this digital short opens it notes that "Shifts in the market have caused Ford to cut production by 21% and idle plants." Shifting from Flat Rock to a Norfolk, Virginia plant, one of the largest of the suddenly "idle" plants being shut down. The film then presents workers reaction to the announcement. After several shocked line workers express their disappointment, the plant's manager Joseph Lee suggests that "it is very painful what we are going through, but it is about the future," ostensibly of the company's survival. On this notion, the narrative turns toward the systematic approach the company took for un-incorporating individuals from its structure.

The short explains that laid off employees are given three options—early retirement, a financial severance package, or a re-education package. As scenes of employees visiting various booths at the fair occupy the screen, Marty Mulloy Ford's Vice President of Labor Affairs explains that "We're looking to succeed: we're looking for the company to succeed and our employees to succeed. If we don't have as many hourly employees as we started [with] when we go through this journey we want to make sure that these employees are placed in a situation where they have the financial wherewithal and the benefits to succeed going forward." The remainder of the short follows former employee Michelle Everette as she explores the path to becoming a registered nurse—something, she notes, that would not have been possible without the support of Ford.

Expanding on the narrative of Everette's transferal of skill and opportunity, Episode 20 "Moving on" completes the narrative by following employees as they apply the skills they developed on the assembly line to new professions more appropriate for the contemporary economy. Setting up the film, a text outside of the video box asks, "What do guitars, martial arts, and dentistry have in common? They are just three of the ways workers are applying their Ford skills and experiences to new lives and ambitions." Thus, the epistemological vision of the company lives on as its industrial and design knowhow becomes a flexible concept that allows the human figures exposed to it to successfully dis-aggregate from the company. In this way, even when dis-aggregated persons retain some of the industrial knowledge and personal advancement that functioning as part of the corporate person made possible.

The film is structured around one employee that selected each of the potential buyout options. Scott Crawford of St. Louis took the financial package and opened his own music store. In Ann Arbor, Michigan, Meggan Aiuto-Haselschwerdt a former assembler of instrument panels in SUV's is followed as she returns to school to become a dental student at the University of Michigan. Finally, David Beaven of Tulsa, Oklahoma took the retirement buyout and opened a martial arts school. He argues that without the discipline and networking skills he learned in his years at Ford, his dream would not have been possible. Cutting across these depictions of "Post-Fordist" (literally) workers, is the notion that certain skills and opportunities were afforded the individuals for their work with the company and, even in leaving the company, they do so having benefitted from their inclusion in its structure.

In the end, the chief rhetorical thrust of *Bold Moves* is to unmake what the company had so carefully worked to established over the prior century. If "incorporative" rhetorics in the age of Fordism had played an integral role in getting individuals to identify as workers and sacrifice bodily and mental freedom by joining the assembly line, the new initiative needed to depict the structural narrative in which they must leave this affiliative chain in order for the figure of the company to survive—and do so as a win-win scenario.

Highlighting this notion, one of the final installments to *fordboldmoves.com's* serial documentary suggests that such a narrative played an integral role in the company's ability to attain concessions from the UAW and the many aggregate workers that once made up the company's primary symbolic core. Collapsing these two integral narratives, Episode 27, titled "Working Together, chronicles the changing structure of labor itself as

a mode of further integrating distributed logic into the form of a single company. The short begins as a Ford representative from Dearborn is sitting down to a meeting at the Chicago Stamping Plant. His goal is to get the plant onboard with the company's suggested changes in labor structure.

Juan Perez Johnson, a young worker who does most of the talking in the short, seemingly, plays the figure of the new "Ford Man." In his first appearance, Johnson declares that "when you look at what they [management] were asking, it wasn't as much as we thought it was. Certain jobs will be combined, but it's all for the good. It goes back to being open-minded and understanding that we are facing tough times and our competition is gaining our ground. It's time to flip that, and that's the direction that we're headed."

Providing, perhaps, the clearest moment of traditional "incorporative rhetoric" in the series, Johnson turns away from the language of "they" and "us" to instead posit aloud in the meeting that "it is not a 24 line where I work, it's not Chicago Stamping, it's Ford Motor Company." Seemingly carrying the day, Johnson's sentiment is greeted by applause by all.[92]

[92] Continuing the precedent of adjusting labor structure to carry out larger corporate initiatives, 2011 marked the acceptance of a new Ford UAW contract, a document which, keeping in Ford's legacy for constructing corporate ethos through the ordering of bodies and understanding of their significance within the order of production. A document most prominently highlighted for its commitment to "in-sourcing"—the return of manufacturing jobs to the United States—the new contract codifies this role of the intellectual worker as well as the structures of disciplinarity contained within the process of production. In particular the company adjusts its focus from educating the worker as an extension of material production, to educating the worker to become an extension of autopoietic system of rationality that makes up the "being" of the company.
Central to the new agreement is a new commitment to an education in which "the company will ensure that necessary training, such as group problem solving, facilitation and instructional skills, effective listening and feedback, assertive communication, interpersonal skills, managing conflict and diversity is provided on a timely basis to

In a much broader sense, these interwoven narratives of personhood put a series of faces and voices to perform one of the most prevalent features of the contemporary symbolic landscape: the gradual ceding of power and identification from the individual to the organization—and suggest that this ceding has been made possible by rhetorical narratives like those developing across the many entries to *fordboldmoves.com*.

Yet, largely indicative of the whole, this section considers the kind of rhetoric that is on full display on *fordboldmoves.com* as the company works to establish itself as the ontological substance created by rhetorically facilitated "assemblages."Michel DeCerteau has argued that human action in postmodernity is not absent but "concerns modes of operation or schemata in action, and not directly the subject (or persons who are their authors or vehicles)" (xi). For Saskia Sassen, "Economic citizenship does not belong to citizens. It belongs to firms and markets, particularly the global financial markets, and it is located not in individuals, not in citizens, but in global economic actors" (38). Finally, speaking more directly to the communicative frameworks that have surrounded such a ceding, Rebecca Meisenbach and Jill McMillan have argued that "organizations have usurped the rhetorical ground that individual rhetors and spokespersons have vacated" (Meisenbach and McMillan 86).[93]

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hourly employees"(CBA Book 1, 044A). In addition to reframing the role of the worker, such a process also represents a commitment to reducing the surveillance based model for generating quality, Ford has turned to a process of ensuring self-reliance underscored by the declaration that "the traditional role of the supervisor may change in the future to that of coach, innovator, educator, and resource person" (045A). The role of the supervision, then, is deferred to "Manufacturing Work Groups," dedicated to ensuring "work group effectiveness, improving business results, [and] technical skills" (CBA Book 1 046A).

[93] "Meisenbach, Rebecca J. and Jill J. McMillan. *Blurring the Boundaries: Historical Developments and Future Directions in Organizational Rhetoric.* Communication Yearbook 30.

From the opening vignette of the *Bold Moves* documentary to the ensuing narratives of sacrifice on the part of individuals to save the whole, the rhetorical thrust of visual and hypertextual artifacts on *fordboldmoves.com* has played an integral role in this historical ceding by providing visual narratives that position the new "corporate person" as both plausible and necessary. This entire rhetorical process creates a networked form of constitutive rhetoric designed to generate the corporate "person" that exists in a marketplace in which it is joined by competing corporate figures and must be aided in its survival by the real individuals who are now temporary figures within its structures.

In this frame, the Congressional hearings of 2008 are inextricably linked with the kind of constitutive rhetoric present on *fordboldmoves.com*. The publicly aired hearing featured eight speakers and twelve members of the Congressional panel, each serving as the representative figure for organized assemblages—primarily corporate and governmental. In a veritable parade of organizational bodies, the human individuals in attendance served as placeholders for organizational actors. The hearing, then, was not a discussion between, for example, Alan Mulally and Senator Christopher Dodd—but a meeting of Ford Motor Company, the state of Connecticut, and the United States' Senate (and by the logics of representative democracy, the "American People"). Thus, the recognized figures in attendance at the hearing were Chrysler, Ford, GM, the United Automobile Workers (UAW), the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Federal Reserve, and the United States' Senate.

I have argued, throughout this dissertation, that what makes a meeting of organizational bodies like this possible (and central) is a set of "incorporative rhetorics" in which wide swathes of individuals have been persuaded to see, understand, and agree

to be represented by such organizational actors as they make decisions about the trajectory of social relations.[94] In studying the rhetoric that made the figure of Mulally-as-Ford possible, I am but scratching the surface of one of the many actors present at the hearing—particularly to one on some form of trial.

Having established the role of visual artifacts in articulating the flexible identity of the corporate person in the twenty-first century, the second section aims to identify the spatial dynamics that *Bold Moves* puts forward to generate territories in which these "persons" function. Just as the company required more expansive narratives involving space to originally expand its influence, I note that *fordboldmoves.com* overlays its new vision of corporate personhood with narratives of economized space and place to further explain the posthuman economy unfolding on screen.

From Wall Street to Main Street to Parque Industrial: Producing Rhetorical Spaces of the Virtual Economy

neoliberal reason…has taken economic rationality in a highly flexible direction that does not use the national territory as the overriding frame of reference for political decisions

[94] Lest we think that this is a unique structure of rationality isolated to the organization itself, there is a noteworthy shift in conceptions of the human appearing in Rhetoric and Composition more generally that also recognizes this flexible subjectivity. One of James Berlin's chief concerns in the fate of the rhetorical in the age of the post-modern takes up the formation of a distributed notion of the writing subject. Recording the demise of the classical rational subject of rhetorical theory he argues that, "The speaking, acting subject is no longer considered unified, rational, autonomous, or self-present...each of us is heterogeneously made up of various competing discourses, conflicted and contradictory scripts, that make our consciousness anything but unified, coherent, and autonomous" (66). In this sense, arguing that corporations and incorporations are now being treated as human is matched by the idea that humans function much like incorporated committees within themselves. Thus, in the age of the hypermodern the disparate nature of the "self" is joined by alternative structures for reason based on distributed rationality and represented in tropes like the "Human Bridge" of Chapter 4 or the corporate person that appears on fordboldmoves.com here.

-Aiwha Ong, Flexible Citizenship pg. 77

This work has established that throughout the twentieth century, Ford expanded its influence by producing heterotopic and economized spaces on film. Just as this "economization of space" in the context of Fordist production aligned with the symbolic depictions of national and personal spaces as "car culture," *Bold Moves* remains committed to producing, or at least providing narratives to cope with, the spaces of network society on a global scale.[95] However, the contemporary spatial arguments of the company lack the kind of clean material symbol provided by the road to convey their messages. Quite to the contrary, much of the work of *fordboldmoves.com* involves an attempt to make sense of the kind of hyperreal abstraction that surrounds notions of space and place in the age of globalization.

In one sense, this chapter has already been concerned with the textual production of virtual spaces of speculation mediated through the website *fordboldmoves.com.* As Ford goes digital, the spaces created by global capitalism over the last century no longer even require material surfaces (roads, national parks, and neighborhoods) to "smooth"—they are, instead, developed as entirely ephemeral digitized spaces affiliated with economic output and occupied by digital *flaneurs*.[96] In this manner, producing economic

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[95] Manuel Castells defines these acts of "mass self-communication" as possible because of "the proliferation of social spaces on the Internet…As Castells describes it, the digital age has witnessed a distinction between the "space of places" and the "space of flows" (xxxv).

[96] Deleuze and Guattari explain that a "Smooth space is filled by events or *haecceities*, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of affects, more than one of properties. It is *haptic* rather than optical perception. Whereas in striated forms organize a matter, in the smooth materials signal forces and serve as symptoms for them. It is an intensive rather than extensive space, one of distances, not of measures and properties" (479).

space for the Post-Fordist regime remains a deeply rhetorical process but shifts from the very material manifestation of the road to more abstract experiences of the "hypermarket"—digital or otherwise.

A natural outcropping of theories of simulacrum and simulation, Jean Baudrillard has already noted the "hyper-" nature of these spatialized economic markets through the terms of connection and circulation. He explains that in the contemporary age "we are no longer dealing with towns and political cities defined in terms of *civitas*, or the *polis*. We are no longer dealing with a *polis* but with a liberated, expanded space" that is constantly changing via "discourse." As this discourse becomes economic in nature (something that has been apparent throughout this work) the discursive and material get overlapped so that:

> The hypermarket cannot be separated from the highways that surround and feed it, from the parking lots blanketed in automobiles, from the computer terminal - further still, in concentric circles - from the whole town as a total functional screen of activities. The hypermarket resembles a giant montage factory, because, instead of being linked to the chain of work by a continuous rational constraint, the agents (or the patients), mobile and decentered, give the impression of passing through aleatory circuits from one point of the chain to another. ("Simulacra" 76)

As a spatial phenomena, then, the production of such a "hypermarket" is very much a matter of economizing existing spaces in the same manner "car culture" had throughout the twentieth century: by imbuing the visible "aleatory circuits" that make spatial systems possible with particular values and ideologies. Compounding this process, as the "computer terminal" produces virtual spaces, it also requires the simultaneous formation

and overlapping of the already economized material and the new virtual spaces of globality and investment markets.

In Baudrillard's terms, the goal of Ford's digital text, then, is to generate a "retranscription of the contradictory fluxes in terms of integrated circuits; space-time of a whole operational simulation of social life, of a whole structure of living and traffic" that is mediated through economic reason. In these moments, *fordboldmoves.com* fulfills the postmodern process Deleuze and Guattari outlined (in conjunction with theories of the "assemblage") as a call to, "Write, form a rhizome, increase your territory by deterritorialization, extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes an abstract machine covering the entire plane of consistency" and then "reterritorialize" the new semiotic chain (Plateaus 12).

As rhetoricians have begun exploring both the overlapping of the material and digital, as well as the larger process of re- and de- territorialization, Jeff Rice has already begun the process of understanding the collisions of virtual and material spaces into "integrated circuits" (or abstract machines) in his work Digital Detroit: Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network. As the title suggests, he has turned to the "Motor City," the birthplace of Ford Motor Company to do so. For Rice, the space of "Detroit," with its myriad histories and socialities, is less recognizably a geographical city but, rather, "a more complex situation and system of information" he terms a "network." More to the roots of Rice's project in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, he identifies such a network as a "spatial story" being told by many overlapping rhetorical acts (Rice 7). Reflecting this concept, there are narrative elements scattered throughout *fordboldmoves.com* that tell the story of such networked spaces in relation to a

"hypermarket" marked by anxiety over globality and a metaphorical "market" through which corporations become both agents and consumable products.

Notably, many of the narratives surrounding the survival of Ford Motor Company relied, seemingly, on the visualization of abstract "aleatory circuits" that placed the entity within the context of a global market filled with competitors. Setting the scene for this virtualization of economic activity into a discernible spatial market, Episode Ten of *Bold Moves* is titled "Fist Full of Doubters" and opens with a panoramic show of New York City. Seemingly, the early goal of the short is to establish the company as an entity that exists on the stock market (an abstract economic space of the first degree).

Converting the utopian space of speculation—the stock market— to a heterotopic set of material spaces, as Vice President Mark Fields addresses the shareholders, the images on screen are not of his presentation but of iconic spaces on Wall Street: the famed bull statue, the façade of the New York Stock Exchange, the street signs for Wall Street and Broadway, and finally the floor of the Stock Exchange. In a sudden cut, the camera focuses on a computer screen to show that Ford's stock has dropped 2.21% that morning. A rapid montage of stock market runners punching numbers into computers, running across the stock exchange floor, and talking on the phone suggest that this piece of information is circulating around the abstract marketplace.

In this digital short, the floor of the stock market serves the same general function as roads in terms of constructing economic spaced "defined by a plan." Where roads were once depicted as the bellwether of societal progress, here the floor of the stock market is presented as the site where crucial societal valuation takes place as it is gauged and guided by screens and networks of buying and selling. One might say that it is the stock

exchange's floor that the public can witness the movement of "the [new] lifeblood of the nation" and it is in this space that Ford is in trouble.[97] In this manner, the abstract marketplace depicted here provides the kind of "space defined by a plan" that Francois Perroux identified as integral to the production of economic space throughout the twentieth century.

As the third chapter of this work suggested, however, such an abstract depiction of the marketplace (as lifeblood) is not enough to create a complete circuit of economic space. Supplementing this narrative must be an accumulation of representative and representational spaces that are aligned into a "field of forces" defined by such a market. This explains why *fordboldmoves.com* does not provide a complete departure from traditional material and nationalized spaces to achieve this process of securitization. Instead, it weaves this narrative of abstract space with the formation of a representational space in the form of Ford's "Truck Territory." Immediately following "Fist Full of Doubters," *Bold Moves* intimates a very real anxiety over the changing nature of the global to its viewer—often in deeply contradictory ways—to engage in the process of economic "reterritorialization," Episode 11 of the series, titled "King of the Hill," witness Vice President of the Americas for Ford Mark Fields and William Sims Jr. a Customer Relations Manager from Southaway Ford in Texas, heading to the San Antonio area.

As they continue driving toward an unrevealed location, the success of Ford's trucks gets posited as a matter of spatially-defined sovereignty. Sims, from the cab of the

[97] Manuel Castells has argued that the emergence of a "Network Society" has developed "the securitization of every economic organization, activity, or asset, making financial valuation the paramount standard to assess the value of firms, governments and even entire economies" (xx). The result of this process of "securitization" is that "the very real benefits of the new economy were appropriated in the securities market and used to generate a much greater mass of virtual capital that multiplied its value by lending it to a multitude of consumers/borrowers" (Castells xxi).

truck he is driving, suggests that “Nobody can touch a Ford Truck” and positions the vehicle as the company’s “bread and butter.” He then continues to explain that Texas is the “key area for Ford’s F-series [truck], we’re used to being the King Kong Chuck-a-Bobo around here.” Initiated by (what I assume is) a bit of local-Texan idiom, the film suddenly takes on narratives of defending territory as it shifts to the familiar figure of Executive Vice President Mark Fields.

Also seated in the cab of a Ford truck, Fields reveals that “we’re going to ground zero, where Toyota is building their new plant because I feel it is very important for us, as the leader, to say that ‘this is our territory’ and ‘we are going to defend our customers real vigorously.’” Fields is then shown meeting with local dealership owners where he reiterates that, “our competitor is building a plant here, we’re a leader here, and we’re not backing off.” The scene then cuts to Fields riding again in the truck with the caption “Mark Fields Scouts The Toyota Plant” running along the bottom. Seemingly emulating a “stakeout” scene, Fields peers down on the construction site from a hill above. It is at this point that the viewer sees why Sims and Fields have headed to San Antonio: to get an image of the many Ford F-150 vehicles parked at the construction site for the Toyota factory, many of which sit right in front of the “Future Site of Toyota” sign. At this point, the episode becomes, for all intents and purposes, a standard commercial for the F-150 as various employees of the company tout its forthcoming clean-diesel option, its new interiors, and its commitment to consumer needs and that if they need any kind of building job done (like, one can deduce, building a Toyota plant), it is a Ford truck that they will use (fig. 26).

Through this vignette, the company has worked to collapse the distinctions that exist between the social and national "network" of Texas, and the economized notion of "truck territory." In short, while Toyota can build in America—it cannot replicate American quality and is thus an intruder to the re-territorialized space of "truck territory." This is how the company develops distinctions in a world in which the old adage "Buy American" has seemingly lost its immediate referent. This process of aligning spatial affiliation with an abstract notion like quality, rather than nationalized borders becomes an even more important message as the company works to explain its own globalizing manufacturing with non-truck lines.

Three episodes after "King of the Hill," the company presents a second entry concerned with clearing up apparent rumors about the company's manufacturing practices in Mexico precisely by extending this territory of "quality production" beyond traditional national lines. Titled "The Untold Truth," the film takes its viewer to a production plant in Hermosillo, Mexico. The general trajectory of this film is, roughly, the same as 'King of the Hill:" in the sense that it opens with a narrative concerned about the seepage that takes place in a global marketplace and uses it to set the stage for more standard marketing practices.

The short opens with Paul Eisenstein, President of *thecarconnection.com* first explaining that "part of the problem that Detroit is running into is that conventional wisdom has not caught up with reality. So, in some cases, the manufacturers are sometimes trying to get a message across that consumers aren't quite ready to listen to." Such blatant articulations of the hyperreal (the company must show the collective of speculators the "real" nature of what is going on) nature of these arguments are frequent

throughout *Bold Moves.* The screen then fades to black and the words "The Untold Truth" appear in white letters. Ostensibly, the "untold truth" that the film gestures toward is that the internationalization of production has resulted in unrealized benefits to the American consumer through lower prices and higher quality goods and the expansion of the same zone of quality-oriented "territory" expands beyond national borders.

Once again concretizing these abstract notions, the content of the digital short opens with a panoramic shot of Hermosillo, a street vendor, and the city hall before cutting to a street sign that directs the driver to go straight for the city of Hermosillo and right for "Planta Ford." As Enrique Delannoy, Assistant Chief Engineer at the plant explains, the choice to build in Mexico was based on factors like "embracing lean manufacturing" "flexibility," "excellent communication," and "the pride of the people." Concurring with this assessment J.D. Shanahan, the Ford Fusion Name Plate Engineer, declares that "Hermosillo is just a fantastic plant, they are just team-oriented and they have a long reputation of delivering quality."

The short then turns away from this brief depiction of where the car is made to chronicle how this quality is tested. Much like *King of the Hill*, *The Untold Truth* concludes by turning to more standard commercialized depictions that articulate the "design language." Once again, a collection of workers voice the quality, features, and dependability of the car, leaving the viewer that these are "going to be the key in bridging that gap between the reputation that Ford sometimes has, and the Fusion reality, which is a solid, durable, dependable, quality-based vehicle." Here, wherever quality work is being done—Ford country exists and thus a homogenous aggregate of workers and factories jumps the rails of national lines. In this way, the intermediate entries to

fordboldmoves.com develop a complex set of re- and de-territorialized spaces oriented along economic lines.

Three weeks after this assertion of the quality of global production methods, the *Bold Moves* narrative returns to a sense of enclosed territoriality in Episode 17: King of the Hill Part II. The content of this entry centers around the unveiling of the Ford F-450 Super Duty at the Texas State Fair because, as the short explains (re-establishing the "truck country" trope): "you win Texas, you win trucks." Framing the stakes of this presentation, Ford Truck Marketing Manager Ben Poore revives the territorial/spatial narrative as he suggests of the unveiling that "we're being attacked on all sides. You've got Toyota coming in, you've got Chevy coming in, Nissan coming in, and so we've really got to hit a homerun with this one."

Sans the intertwined arguments about company identity, generating such a seemingly contradictory set of narratives about space simply wouldn't work. Instead, the company's attempts to re-territorialize the state of Texas as "Ford Country" and the work to simultaneously de-territorialize Hermosillo, Mexico represents an attempt at squaring away the company's presence in both a virtual (economized) space, and an older model of material and nationalized economic spaces. By overlapping and aligning the "plan" of a market based on speculation, the representative space of Texas-as-"Ford Territory," and generating a global homogenous aggregate of workers committed to quality and flexibility where its factories exist the company succeeds in generating the kind of de- and re-territorialization that Delueze and Guattari have identified as integral to making meaning in a post-modern context.

In the process, what these scenes highlight is the messiness of space and identification in an age in which a car built by an American company but in another country can be identified as American, while the inverse as an intruder requires establishing that "America" is a space of quality production and values. By depicting such an abstract and economized space, the *fordboldmoves.com* engages in Baudrillard's hyperreal "retranscription of the contradictory fluxes in terms of integrated circuits" based on economic space.

As claims of the "king-kong-chuck-a-bobo" make clear, such a spatial narrative is also an integral piece of a larger mutation of power taking place in the era of the hyperreal and being developed throughout the website. Saskia Sassen has noted that post-war structures of sovereignty that have relied on such a "new geography of power" have been comprised of three emerging phenomena: "territoriality," "a peculiar passion for legality (and lawyers)," and the "growing virtualization of economic activity" (Sassen 5-7). The subsequent effect of these elements' "denationalizing of national territory" is a "control crisis in the making" (21). Thus the final section of this chapter turns toward such control to consider the role that economic-organizational rhetoric plays in the formation of economic sovereignty in the age of the hyperreal.

"Too Big to Fail": Simulating Authority in the Rhetorical Economy

Writing the state in an order of simulation requires simulating the sovereignty/intervention boundary and other boundaries.

-Cynthia Weber, Simulating Sovereignty, pg. 129

Much of this dissertation, stemming from its accounts of shifting personhood and space, has been an analysis of the rhetorical usurpation of models of power on the part of

a large multinational corporation. As a historical trajectory, we have seen Ford Motor Company develop correlative narratives on film to Progressivism, The New Deal, and the "Arsenal of Democracy" by producing what I have termed "tropes of power." Through these tropes, an economic organization like Ford generates sovereignty by collecting and aligning individual agencies into the material and ideological structures of the company through visual narrative (in Weber's terms, how the company managed to "write" itself alongside the state). These tropes have interpellated individuals into an industrial-military power block, generated territorial sovereignty through contractual and capitalized relations, and imbued the company with the power to measure consumer choice as a new form of distributed power. This final section asks what tropes of power have circulated within the wider turn toward a posthuman framework for economic relations.

Recently, sociologist Joshua Barkan has argued that corporate power must be reconceived as a modern permutation of sovereign power. He suggests that "rather than beginning with distinctions between the economic power of corporations and the political sovereignty of states…corporate power and sovereign power are *ontologically linked*" (4, emphasis original). Marking a particular category of sovereign production, Barkan argues that "corporate sovereignty highlights the way the law's ability to suspend itself enabled corporations to exercise prerogatives of sovereign power in the name of governing life, while also explaining the politics of abandonment that results from such a formulation" (8).

In this frame, the bailout hearings of 2008 highlight that the many connections and acts of circulation taking place on *fordboldmoves.com* were integral in the eventual formation of sovereignty on the part of the corporate person. In traditional sovereign

studies, this assertion of power comes from establishing the state of exception on the part of large multinational corporate actors. As Barkan's work suggests, when sovereign exception has been achieved, it has drawn on discourses of either religious divination or legal-juridical necessity. For the former, exception is generated through the duality of a sovereign's body: while the human figure could be killed the sovereign (because part of the body was divine) could not. In Giorgio Agamben's articulations of the latter, juridical exception, sovereignty is achieved through "an attempt to include the exception itself within the juridical order by creating a zone of indistinction in which fact and law coincide" (Agamben 26). For example, the eleventh amendment provides this kind of exception to states as they cannot be prosecuted for laws they are designed to uphold.

Thus, for Barkan, the basis of an emerging power bloc in the twenty-first century is a potent combination of corporate governance practices and law. While agreeing with his basic premise, I have argued that this emergence develops as part of a set of rhetorical maneuvers that have pooled individual agency into an economic system constituted by corporate citizens onto whom constitutional rights can (and have) been applied and generated economized territories like the stock market and "Ford territory" over which these figures reign. In this way, the state of exception from law is not simply juridical, but deeply rhetorical in nature. Further, the plane on which this exception is applied to Ford outlines a global marketplace rather than a legal/national setting.

While the state of exception was certainly applied to both banks and the automotive industry as they were granted loans to ensure their survival, the logics on which this exception took place were both deeply economic and organizational in nature. As *Bold Moves* makes salient, the companies on trial in 2008 (both banks and automobile

manufacturers) were presented as far too intertwined into the social and economic fabric of the country to be allowed to fail (hence the popular phrase "too big to fail" coming out of such discussions). At the time of the hearing, this phrase was used fairly often as an indictment of allowing large profit-oriented companies to become so entrenched in the social fabric of national relations that they could not be allowed to disappear. In this way, I argue that the state of exception from a global marketplace is made possible through "tropes" of the corporate assemblage that allow it to reach critical mass.

For critics on the right, such a principle transgressed free market ideologies—no one, they posited, is above the market. For critics on the left, the problem was that, without the threat of failure or potential prosecution, these enormous companies would become hotbeds for unethical behavior and would come to act as despots. However, in the present reading through the lens of economic-organizational rhetoric, it is the company's ability to lasso the actions of enough of the populous into an interdependent web that has generated a remarkably potent power structure. Thus, I argue that a system of sovereignty developed in which power is derived by generating a network that can be seen as so integral to the everyday functioning of individuals' lives that it cannot be resisted and thus creates a state of exception for the corporate person. The trope of "too big to fail" is more than just a catchy slogan, it is, seemingly, a phrase that pinpoints the latest in a line of "tropes of power" designed to make sense of the rise of economic sovereignty.

In this way, the rhetorical work of collecting and aligning narratives of person and place across *fordboldmoves.com* played an integral role in Alan Mulally's ability to argue for exception status in the bailout hearings based on the ubiquity of the company. As was

the case with the "Arsenal of Democracy," however, in time the defensive nature of *Bold Moves* shifted to an offensive narrative about the right for an economic actor to occupy the traditional figure of the sovereign. In this way, the work of *Bold Moves* not only created an immediate state of exception for the company, but also generated a series of nascent "tropes" that would come into play upon the company's eventual economic success. To understand the nature of these nascent tropes, we must look past both the immediate website and the bailout hearings to a point in 2011 when the economy seemed to be in less dire straits.

In short, it is in discourses surrounding the automotive bailout that the "corporate person" of Ford Motor Company rose to the position of a sovereign figure as the company was able to once again become a figure capable of collecting agencies and forming new sovereign arrangements through rhetorical fashioning. As a set of hyperlinked texts, *fordboldmoves.com* did not present immediate "tropes" to form such "networks of power." Rather, it presented only the first half of this process—generating a network and imbuing it with the characteristics of a human figure. Such a narrative, however, would become one of power and sovereignty years after the website and the initiative had run their course and the company had returned to a position of power after being granted the status of exception in times of economic trouble. Not surprisingly, the company re-introduced their power primarily through visual and digital media.

For a two-week period in September of 2011, Ford Motor Company ran a seemingly innocuous television and internet commercial featuring one of their consumers in a surprise press conference. When asked, during the two-plus hour interview, why buying another American car was important to him, Ford owner Chris McDaniel

delivered what would become a televisual image event. The portion of the interview that was featured in the commercial showed McDaniel seated in front of a backdrop clad in the Ford logo, with the slogan "drive one" beneath as he declared:

> "I wasn't going to buy another car that was bailed out by our government. I was going to buy from a manufacturer that's standing on their own: win, lose, or draw. That's what America is about is taking the chance to succeed and understanding that when you fail you need to pick yourself up and go back to work. Ford is that company for me."

It was a pure moment of hyperreal identification—Ford, McDaniels seemed to posit, was more American than America, the nation, itself (a country that had decided to bail out companies that had not taken care of business.[98] More than this, the company had been reborn to save a fading economy from itself (notice that McDaniels says little of workers or of Mulally, but only of the figure of the company as the ideal economic citizen). Once posted to Ford's website the video went viral, garnering over one million hits in the period of several days and many have suggested that McDaniel's words struck a chord with a frustrated American public amidst a considerable recession. In this episode, Ford had taken the now years of "Bold Moves" public address and thrust itself back into a position as the model American figure for present times.

Further, by framing the message through a non-actor consumer, the commercial invites the public to see themselves as also enacting this new form of sovereignty into the civic realm—siding with Ford means more than just aligning with the traditional

[98] There are, it seems, a number of follow-up questions for McDaniels in this moment: didn't Ford also support those bailouts? Did they not accept a billion dollar loan as well? If, in fact, that is what "American" means, isn't the newcomer Toyota the most American car company of all, having gone from rags to riches while standing on its own?

bootstrap narrative of American self-reliance and innovation, but purchase-power becomes a form of civic engagement by implicitly suggesting that nation/state-bound or representative democracy-based governments have become less effective (if not toxic) where market-logics can succeed.

The event codified that Ford had, once again, developed a model for economic revival worthy of praise and emulation in an period where industry peers had failed to do so. More generally, in such a narrative, the concept of nationalism remains a powerful unit for identification, but has been carefully shifted to function via abstract economic notions of production and self-reliance. I have, ideally, established that rather than an "image event" suddenly seizing the attention of a powerful mediascape, this commercial had been years in the making.

Thus, the narrative work represented by *Bold Moves* surfaces in this very public spectacle as a claim to the "ontologically" central nature of identifying first with company and abstract economic values and second with nation when speaking of what it means to be "American." In this moment, what has been identified as "neoliberalism," while still a powerful set of national policies and corporate influences is also a matter of public address and "incorporative" rhetoric (Harvey, Ong). It is a rhetorical construct being played out in the mediascape and working to provide alternative narratives for understanding the place of power and governance in the contemporary era.

This power-grab was simply a latent feature of the narrative until the company pulled the popular advertisement from television and later its website after a very brief airing period and the video went from a significant viral event to a full-blown mainstream media spectacle. Rumors, originating from an article by Daniel Howes in a report run in

The Detroit News, rapidly circulated that the White House, displeased with the adversarial nature of the message, had pressured Ford to pull the spot. Though Ford refuted these claims, suggesting that standard cycling of its media was the reason for the abrupt pull, speculation continued to escalate particularly in conservative leaning media outlets (as we have seen, in the age of hyperreality, little more is needed than speculation to make a salient phenomenon). Articles on the pulling of the ad were featured in Time, Forbes, Fox News' *Hannity* program ran a lengthy segment interviewing McDaniel's and deemed the event the latest in what would be a long line of abuses of government impeding in free market principles.

It is in the wake of this sudden and explosive media speculation that Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform at the time, Darrell Issa, upped the ante on this event, calling into question Ford CEO Alan Mulally's decision to pull the advertisement. In his letter to the company he argued that given "The close relationship between American automobile manufacturers, workers unions and the US government in the wake of a series of loans, grants and stimulus programs, accusations of White House interference in private business matters to support its own political and policy agendas are very serious issues and warrant a full airing of facts" (Sink). These "facts" were never, it seems, aired publicly—neither was an explanation of how such a contradictory sentence could remain unchecked. Indeed, the notion of exception for the corporation on the "free" market had seemingly been immediately brought to the chambers of congress.

In this sense, the flexible identity of the company also makes varying articulations of exception. Where Ford once was positioned as exempt from the free market because

of its affiliations with national frameworks, it was now being positioned as exempt from (likely mythical) national/juridical frameworks on grounds of its affiliation on an abstracted "free market."

Additionally, clearer evidence that the country was amidst an immensely polarized political atmosphere is hard to find. This kind of bickering, however, also contributed to Ford's ability to wiggle its way back into a position of aligning individual agency into collective economic authority. As political figures seemed more concerned with gaining political capital from the debate over whether a television commercial has been wrongfully pulled, the company has gone from an economic horror-story to industrial titan precisely on the narrative that it managed to stay solvent on the securities and speculation market.

Though there is potentially much to reflect on in this moment—the rise of the viral image event, the paradox of government intervention to ensure neo-liberal separations of state and market, and the changing nature of the contemporary digital "forum"—this project positions such an event as the latest instantiation in what has been a long history of rhetorical tactics which conflate ideas of personhood, nationhood, and power with increasingly corporatized structures and, ultimately, presents neoliberal ideologies as central to American life by generating a simulacra of the economically-oriented United States.

We have seen, throughout this dissertation, "tropes" of power legitimize a top down form of sovereignty floated on staged "interpellations," a territorial form of sovereignty based on claiming psychic landscapes and an axiom-mediated form of consumer-sovereignty. *Bold Moves* suggests that, for hypermodernity, the company

regained a certain degree of power by tapping into these prior tropes while also developing a new set of "tropes" of first, being too big to fail, and later as a better representation of the true power of identifying with "American" as an economically oriented figure. Ultimately, the collective of constitutive and spatial rhetorics circulating throughout *Bold Moves* amount to a diagram-able network of corporate sovereignty in the making.

Just as workers once aligned to generate a material assembly line for making cars, now the work of a corporation is to generate "flows" of attention and desire to uphold its "brand" as a form of identity. Finally, just as the "mass" once emerged to remake so much of individuals' daily lives, now the overarching "critical metaphor" of the "hyper-" has emerged to describe an economy beholden to international finance structures and "economies of attention."

Out of these principles, new forms of personhood, place, and power have formed that economic-organizational rhetoric has played a considerable role in promulgating. In this chapter I argue that the production of the "Ford Man" has given way to the production of *corporate personhood,* "smooth spaces" of global production haave disrupted the already economized local spatial dynamics of Fordist ilk, and narratives of neoliberal power based on exception that has been articulated tropes of "too big to fail" logic.

This final notion serves as the point of departure for Ford's particular brand of "incorporative rhetoric" in 2006: re-making the machine that will save the economy (24). In the contemporary marketplace, digital technology has made possible a world of hyperreal capital that is, in itself, valued rhetorically. Making sense of the people, spaces,

and powers that circulate to make this hyperreality function was the goal of this final chapter—and ultimately the legacy of economic-organizational rhetoric as I have laid it out in this project.

Conclusion

How can systemic indictments be persuasive to audiences who have a stake in the survival of the system?

-James Arnt Aune, Rhetoric and Marxism, pg. 146

In 1928, Henry Ford wrote (or had ghostwritten) an article titled "Machinery: The New Messiah," in which he argued that "machinery is accomplishing in the world what man has failed to do by preaching, propaganda, or the written word…they are binding the world together in a way no other systems can" ("Machinery" 45). Postmodern theorists would suggest that he may well have been right. However, where Ford meant the very literal mechanical entity, contemporary theory has grown more concerned with the metaphorical potential of "machines" to explain the ways of the world.

Thus, the new world of rhetorical work is conducted by Katherine Hayles' "writing machines,"[1] driven by Deleuze and Guattari's "desiring machine[s]" and "territorial machine[s]"[1] who function not within spaces, but in Henri LeFebvre's ideas about cities as "possibilities machines" and "production machines" (Postmodern Geographies 101). These figures are guided by Hardt and Negri's "administrative machines," and "machines of innovation"[1] (369). Even the entire system itself coalesces into an "autopoietic machine," that does the thinking and guiding of social system (Luhmann). At the heart of all of this machinery, I have argued, are acts of increasingly complex "incorporative" rhetoric that generate the circuitry through which these metaphorical networks function.

Reflecting this shift in considerations of agency, invocations of "posthuman rhetoric" have been defined by the challenges to composition posed by the integration of human and technological elements of the composing process. Thus, centered around the metaphor of the "cyborg" first provided by Katherine Hayles. Hayles argues that in the posthuman world:

> "emergence replaces teleology; reflexive epistemology replaces objectivism; distributed cognition replaces autonomous will; embodiment replaces a body seen as a support system of the mind; and a dynamic partnership between humans and intelligent machines replaces a liberal humanist subject's manifest destiny to dominate and control nature." (Hayles 288)

In effect, Hayles theories point out that the legacy of Fordism, as we have seen it develop on film over the course of a century, has congealed into new theoretical arrangements about social and economic relations. As the legacy of this century-long process, *Fordboldmoves.com* highlights that this "posthuman" understanding of social relations has been converted into a direct narrative of corporate personhood, abstract spaces of the marketplace, and neoliberal power.

As rhetoricians and social theorists have continued to play with the notion of posthuman rhetorics, this concept has extended well beyond just the intersections of the human body and the physical machine—but rather to consider the "intelligent machine" as it gets associated with the corporate person appearing both on film and in the hyppereal space of the market (Hawhee and Muckelbauer, Halberstram and Livingston).[99] Thus, where social or political models of rhetoric often deal with a clear

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[99] Hawhee and Muckelbauer write that "the posthuman thus offers a style of theorizing or weapon invention in which disciplinary boundaries become sites of connection rather

human agent as the "locus of motives," rhetoric after postmodernity and the digital turn has accounted for all sorts of alternative agencies and subjectivities that have accumulated around the metaphor of the "machine" this chapter has attempted to consider the rise of the corporate person in just such a context (Burke 75).

Taking up the visual artifacts that revealed the collective of bodies and minds as they dis-integrate and re-integrate into a new kind of ontological entity, this project has argued that it is rhetoric—economic-organizational rhetoric to be precise—that makes such an economic system possible. Ford Motor Company's work here to generate the organization as an ontological being provides an alternative conception of the "posthuman" that is integral to understanding contemporary constitutive, spatial, and authoritative rhetorical practices.

In this regard, the second section of this analysis considered the intersections of constitutive rhetoric and emerging post-human theories in Rhetoric and Composition to understand the impact of *fordboldmoves.com*'s textual structure. Next, providing visions of the abstract spaces on which these hyperreal entities could function, I then explained that *fordboldmoves.com* braids this constitutive rhetoric with spatial rhetorics designed to de-territorialize national space and re-territorialize these spaces around economized notions of quality and efficiency. Finally, just as "Fordism" developed as a powerful rhetoric for disseminating a particular set of identifications and practices through "tropes of power," so this new set of economic relations has been accompanied by radical forms of rhetorical activity that formed, in Bruce Kapferer's terms, the rise of the "corporate state" and thus claims to neoliberal sovereignty reliant on the perception by an

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than enclsosures of autonomous interiorities" (770). This is as true of understanding the making of the corporate person.

established public that an "emergence of economic principles as ontologically foundational, permeating all social and political relations" has taken place (Kapferer 127).

In the end, the 2006 Bold Moves campaign, the 2008 Congressional hearings, and the 2011 kerfuffle over the pulled critique of the bailout form a narrative around the state of contemporary economic relations. It is economic-organizational rhetoric that binds these moments together as such a model is orchestrated by the company through its website. I return to note that the "invisible hand" is not human, but rather a hyperreal figure comprised of collected human action that has been subsequently personified, the de- and re-territorialized spaces of a global marketplace, and ultimately collected enough affiliations to garner power akin to those yielded by the nation state.

Figures

Figure 1: "Ford Assembly Line," Ford Motion Picture Laboratories. 1914

Figure 2:"Reinventing the Rouge" *fordboldmoves.com,* December 7, 2006

Figure 3: "Democracy and Education," Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, 1921.

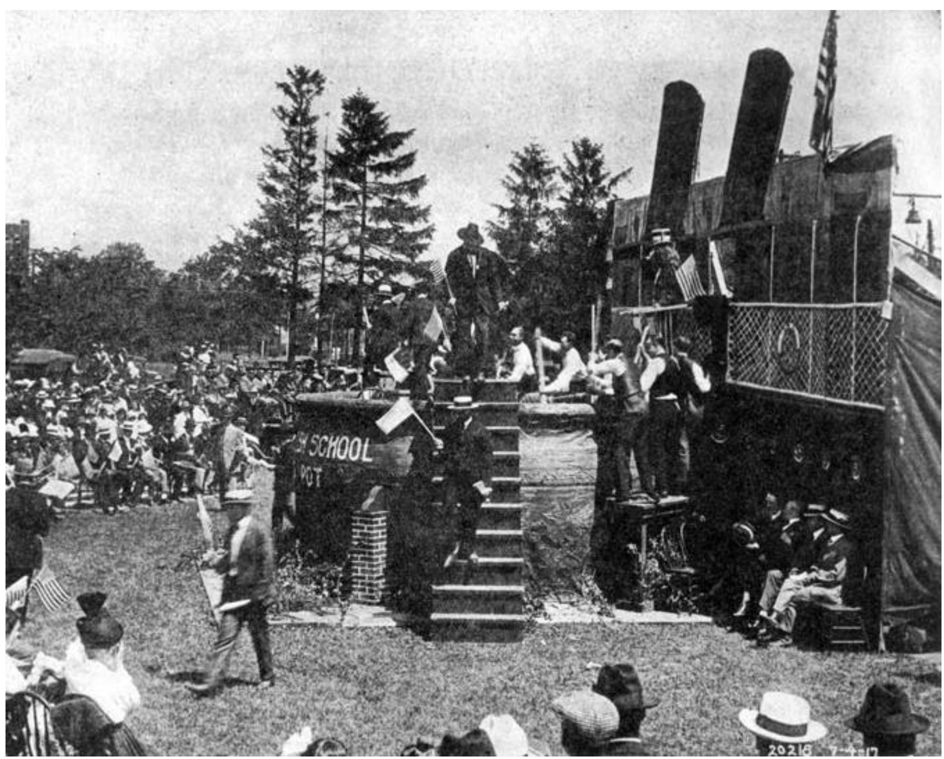


Figure 4: A photograph of the Ford Motor Company English School's Graduation, from the Collections of the Henry Ford, *P.O.7227*

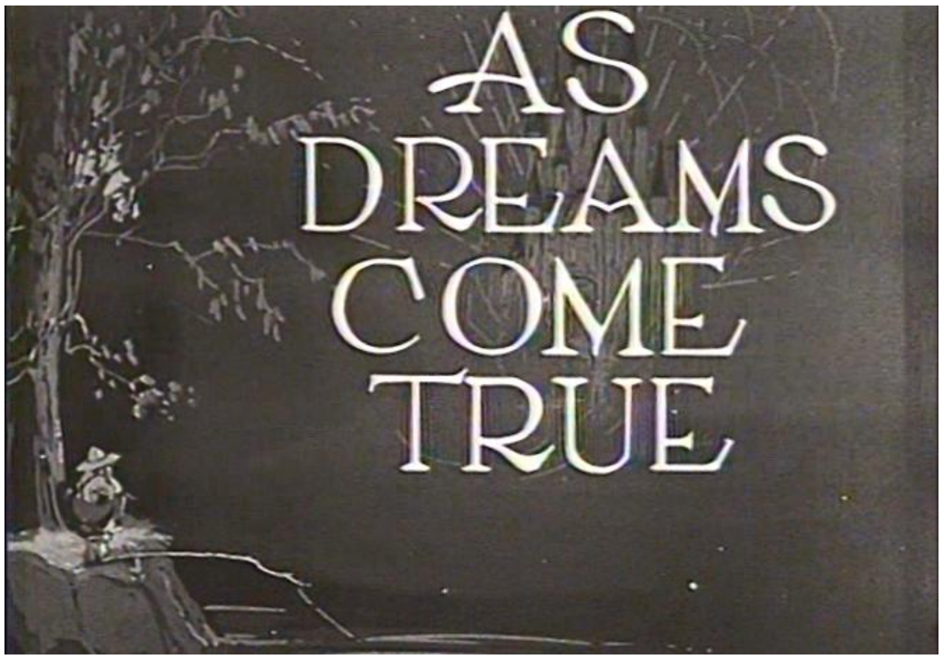


Figure 5: "As Dreams Come True," Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, 1921.

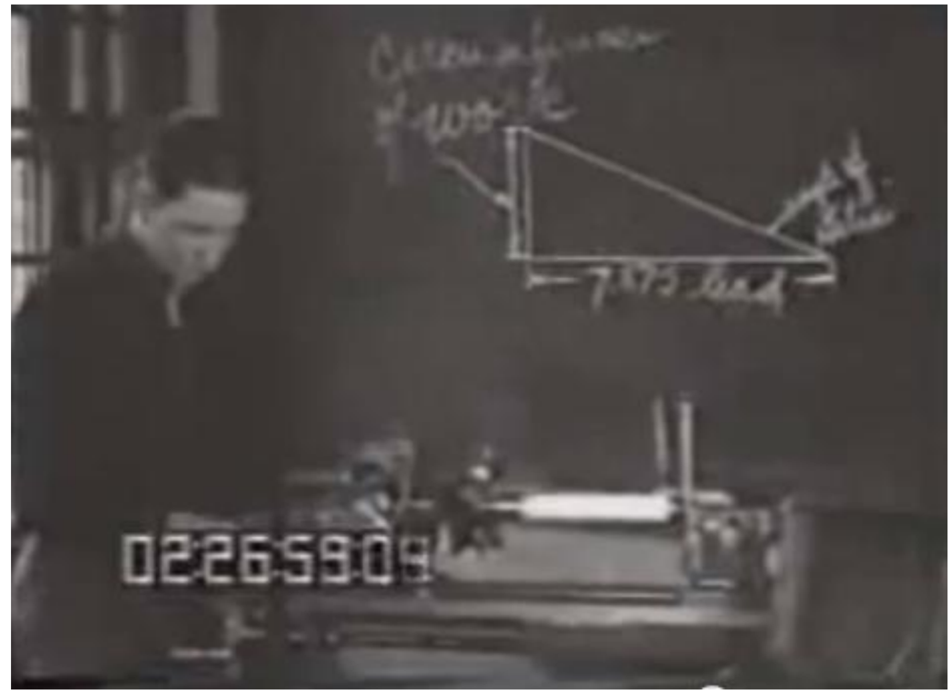


Figure 6: *"*The Henry Ford Trade School," 1927.

Figure 7: "As Dreams Come True," Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, 1921

Figure 8: "As Dreams Come True," Ford Motor Company Motion Picture Laboratories, 1921.

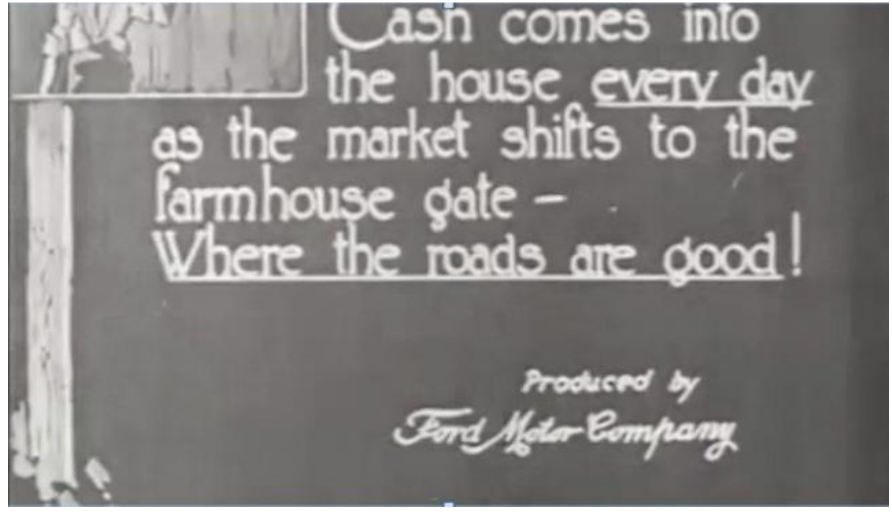
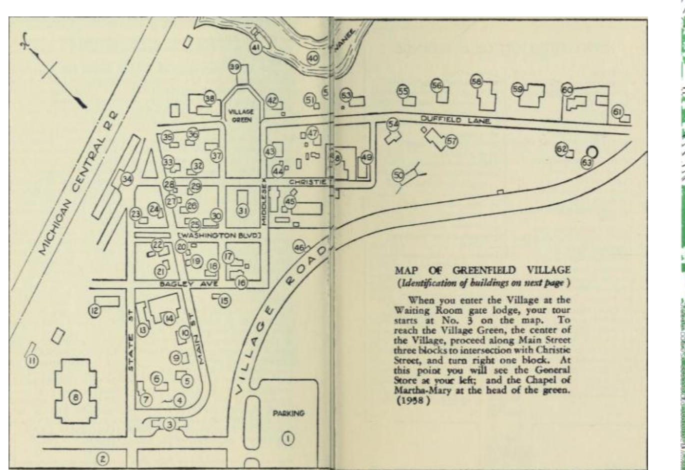


Figure 9: "Good Roads," Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, 1919.

Figure 10: "The Story of a Little River," Ford Motor Company Motion Picture Laboratories, 1919.



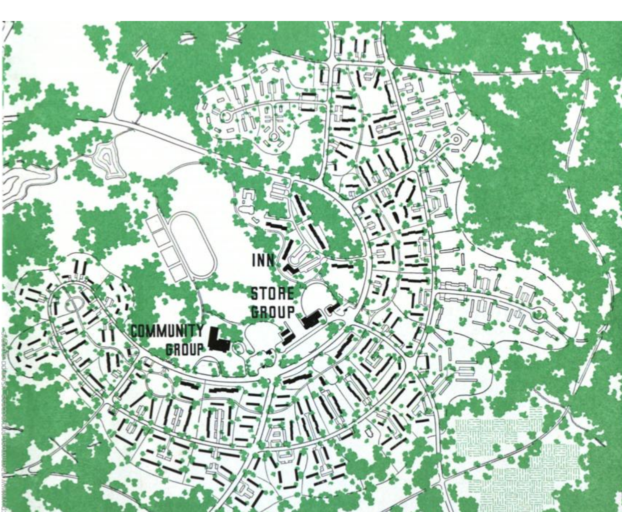


Figure 11: A map of Greenfield Village from the *Guidebook for the Edison Institute Museum and Greenfield Village, 1963* and a map of Greenfield, Wisconsin from

Figure 12: "Famous Ford First" Advertisement, Life Magazine, June 25th, 1945.

Figure 13: A Trip to Yellowstone National Park, Ford Motion Picture Laboratories, 1932.

Figure 14: "Fairy Fantasy in Stone-Bryce National Park," 1937

Figure 15: From Jean Baudrillard's "America." Verso, 1988.

Figure 16: "Women on the Warpath," Ford Motor Company, 1943

Figure 17: "Women on the Warpath," Ford Motor Company, 1943

Figure 18: "Women on the Warpath," Ford Motor Company, 1943

Figure 19: Ford Motor Company, Alexandria, Egypt,"
Ford Motor Company, 1949.

Figure 20 Ford Motor Company, Alexandria, Egypt,"
Ford Motor Company, 1949.

Figure 21: "The Human Bridge." Wolff Studios, Inc.
Ford Motor Company, 1949.

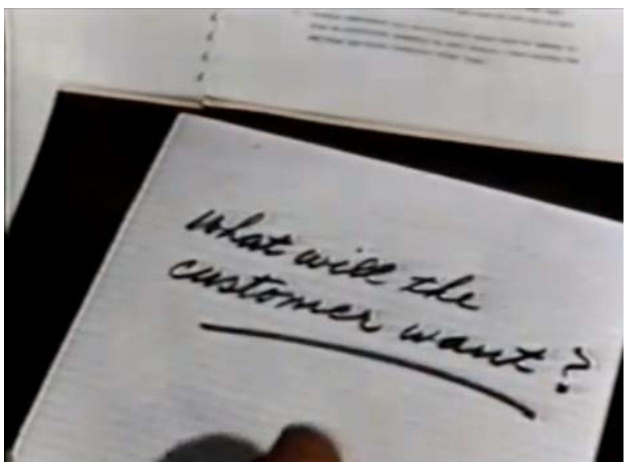


Figure 22: "Product Planning," Ford Motor Company, 1953

Figure 23: Video footage of Alan Mulally's testimony at *The State of the Domestic Automobile Industry: Part II*, Hearing, December 4, 2008.

Figure 24:
The Interface of www.fordboldmoves.com, archived on June 2nd, 2008.

Figure 25: "Change or Die," *fordboldmoves.com*, 2006

Figure 26: "King of the Hill," *fordboldmoves.com*, 2006

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