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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the apparent inconsistency of meaning connected with the term "professor," using the problematic aspect of the term as a way of examining tacit features of a particular speech community. The "social drama" that served as a catalyst for the study centers around the presence of the national "Accuracy in Academia" organization, brought to the campus of the University of Washington by staff members of a self-described conservative campus journal that implemented a campaign to monitor professors suspected of spreading liberal, leftist, or Marxist views in the classroom. Over the course of an eight-month period 65 different occurrences of talk relating to the social drama were collected, and from these data, 215 statements relating to the term "professor" were recorded. Based on ethnographic interpretive analysis of text, two distinct cultural conceptions of "professor" emerged--liberal and conservative. The liberal group within the speech community defined a "professor" as a person who treats students as critical thinkers, thereby eliminating the need for balance in the classroom, while the conservative group defines him/her primarily as one who respects student beliefs while exposing students to different viewpoints. An exploration of these two conceptions revealed that the conservative culture can be identified as a traditional society by virtue of its veneration of an episodic sequence (way of doing things in the classroom), adherence to which determines the quality of a "professor," and by its reiteration of the status quo. The liberal culture group displays several attributes of classic (rather than modern American) conservative thought--for example, the rights of the individual and the legitimacy of opinion for presentation by the professor in the classroom. References are included and appendixes contain a comprehensive inventory of data citations.) (NKA)

Accuracy in Academia?

"Professor" as a Problematic Cultural Term:

An Ethnographic Study

By

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"Professor" as a Problematic Cultural Term: An Ethnographic Study

> Not only the character but also the degree of a culture is responsive to the prevailing image of man. For what man tells himself he is manifests itself soon enough in what he does and may even predetermine what he can do. (Weaver, 1964, p. 134)

Introduction

Dell Hymes (1962) claims three things to be true about the speaking done in any given speech community. First, the speech of any given group constitutes a system; second, speech and language vary cross-culturally in function; and third, the speech activity of a community is the primary object of attention. Thus, speech is seen as systematic, varied, and constitutive of a shared world-view in any given speech community. Based on these assumptions, Hymes asserts that the everyday speech of community members can be studied in order to determine tacit knowledge within a given speech community.

It has been stated that this tacit cultural knowledge is essential in order to make sense of speech whose meaning is not apparent (Philipsen, 1986). A study which utilizes the speech of a community as a way of determining this cultural knowledge is labeled by Hymes an "ethnography of communication" (Hymes, 1962). The current study is an example of this approach, with goals similar to Katriel and Philipsen's (1981) study of the term "communication". This study seeks to determine the system of symbols which comprise the talk about the cultural term "professor" within a specific speech community, and to explicate dimensions of meaning which will help to make that discourse intelligible.

The title "professor" labels a role whose interpretation is sometimes problematic in American culture. The appearance on the University of Washington campus in recent months of a group whose stated aim is to monitor and make public the talk of "professors" has once again made this a prominent term in the discourse of a speech community; in this case, the speech community which encompasses the University of Washington.

There is no one, clear, coherent conception of "professor" apparent in a cursory reading of discourse from this speech community. This statement, made by an emeritus professor of history, hints at one perspective: "Once a professor has established himself in his field, he must be free to state his conclusions."(24) Contrast that conception of "professor" with the one embedded in this discourse, taken from The Washington Spectator, a self-described "conservative" journal published at the University of Washington in Seattle: "The question is: Has Professor Ames forgotten the difference between a UW communications course and a democratic party function? Answer: Either yes or he doesn't care."(29) Another statement from The Washington Spectator reads: "Ramet is an excellent professor, covering [his subject] from a completely unbiased position. You hear no polemics...just the pure, unadulterated facts."(29)

This research project, rather than bemoaning the apparent inconsistency of meaning in the talk about the term "professor," instead chooses to use the problematicity of this term as a key, a way of examining tacit features of this speech community which might not otherwise come to light. Submitting a large sample of discourse to ethnographic interpretive analysis produces two different and related groups of conclusions.

First, the term "professor" will be treated as a "cover term" and "included term" for other, related speech within this speech community (Spradley, 1979), so that some measure of order may be brought out of chaos. This stage of analysis first displays community discourse about "professors", and then demonstrates that the discourse emanates from two distinct cultural groups (terminology Geertz, 1973) within the speech community, each of which has its own conception of what a "professor" should be and do.

Second, having established the existence of these two cultural groups through their differing conceptions of "professor", the speech of these two groups is then submitted to further analysis. This allows for the placement of these groups on a general descriptive framework explicated by Philipsen (1981), and a discussion of several ideological features apparent in community discourse.

In order for this project to utilize the problematicity of the term "professor," it is necessary first to demonstrate that such problematicity exists in community discourse. This demonstration will be accomplished in two general ways. First, an accurate account will be presented of the events which acted as catalyst for the talk about the term "professor" within this speech community. Second, the discourse which emerged within this context, and subsequently served as the data for this study, will be displayed. In this way, the problematicity of the term for the members of this specific speech community will become apparent.

The Context: Social Drama

The talk about the problematic term "professor" arose from what is termed a "social drama" (Turner, 1980). Social dramas "occur within groups of persons who share values and interests and who have a real or alleged common history" (Turner, 1980, p.149). Social dramas (along with "rituals" and "myth") are characteristic forms by which a community's sense of shared identity can be affirmed and negotiated (Philipsen, 1981). The dramatic action follows a sequence of four phases.

First, a violation of the communal code occurs, a breach. Then follows a second stage of crisis, wherein community members attend to and make public the violation. Third comes redress, in which the offender attempts to correct the damage caused by the breach. Last, the offender is either reintegrated into the community, or a schism is recognized by the community (Turner, 1980). Social dramas serve the unique function of defining the boundaries of communal life and of reintegrating into the group those persons who have tested those moral boundaries (Philipsen, 1981, p. 9).

The social drama which served as the catalyst for this study centers around the presence of the national "Accuracy in Academia" organization on the campus of the University of Washington in Seattle, Washington. The organization, formed in August of 1985, is headed by the co-host of a fundamentalist Christian radio show and is

directed by the son of a Hungarian "freedom fighter". Its stated aim is to expose professors who lean ideologically either left or right in the classroom. The group alleges that there are 10,000 Marxists currently among the 600,000 professors in the United States.(39)

Staff members of The Washington Spectator, a self-described "conservative" campus journal, brought the movement to the University of Washington by implementing a campaign to "monitor professors suspected of spreading liberal, leftist, or Marxist views in the classroom."(23) In October of 1985, The Washington Spectator published a list of those professors they deemed "the worst on campus", along with a rationale for the inclusion of each on that list. Reaction to this list from the campus community and the community at large was immediate, energetic, and varied, making the air thick (during the "crisis" stage of this social drama) with public discourse about "professors". This public text formed the majority of the data base for this study.

The first stage of analysis can be conceptualized as an attempt to make that talk about "professors" less problematic by demonstrating the ways in which the natives of this speech community themselves render this talk intelligible. A description and display of their talk about the term "professor" is the necessary first step in this process.

Method

Procedures for Data Collection

Data for this study were gathered over the course of an eight-month period, beginning with the publication of The Washington Spectator's list of suspect professors at the University of Washington in early October of 1985. Data which were collected during the latter months of the study were included only if they made some reference to the controversy, or social drama, surrounding the role of "professor" at the University of Washington. This criterion served to maintain the desired focus of the study on speech situated in a particular time and place.

Sixty-five different occurrences of talk relating to the social drama were collected. From these various occurrences, 215 statements relating to the term "professor" were recorded. Included in this number are statements culled from articles, editorials, and letters to the editors of the two large city newspapers (The Seattle Times and Seattle Post-Intelligencer); statements discovered in articles, editorials and letters to the editors (published and unpublished) of both the campus newspaper (The Daily of the University of Washington) and The Washington Spectator; and statements given during a series of unstructured interviews with eight members of the speech community under investigation, including four faculty and four students chosen for their awareness of but lack of public, verbal involvement in the controversy. The interviews were used primarily to determine whether the ethnographers conclusions, at various points in the study, were intelligible to other members of the speech community, and for the purpose of adding to the available discourse.

A comprehensive listing of all data is recorded in the appendix at the end of this paper. All references to community discourse in this text are followed by a reference number in parentheses.

Condensed verbatim field notes were recorded immediately after each of the interviews (Spradley, 1979, p. 75). These condensed versions of the talk which took place during the interviews served the purpose of recording key terms and relationships as expressed by the informants. In addition to the field notes, regularly written memos delineated concerns, problems, and insights encountered during the process of data collection and analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1984). In this way, the ethnographer's thought processes, as well as the data, became part of the permanent record which assisted in the drawing of conclusions from the information available in the discourse.

The Nature of the Discourse.

> "[Professor Barash is on the list of 'the worst on campus'] because he teaches his viewpoint and his viewpoint only." (Statement attributed to Joe Friend, a former editor of The Washington Spectator; 39)
>
> "But I think we all teach from a perspective. A class in women's studies doesn't give a balanced look at men's studies." (Statement attributed to professor David Barash; 39)
>
> "You can't very well tar a man with 'unscholarly conduct' if he reaches a conclusion that's different from your own." (Statement attributed to Arthur Bestor, professor emeritus of history; 24)
>
> "Conservative ideas are being squelched on campus." (Statement attributed to John West Jr., managing editor of The Washington Spectator; 23)
>
> "All we ask is that [professors] at least have the courtesy to respect our beliefs. All we want them to do is introduce students to differing points of view." (Statement attributed to John West Jr., managing editor of The Washington Spectator; 33)
>
> "Professor Willis Konick has endeared himself to students with his most unusual teaching style...Willis has been known to walk atop classroom desks, pull students' hair, and quite often sing. 'Willis classes' are extremely entertaining to be sure, but students learn a lot about the topics they study from Willis." [Emphasis added](29)
>
> "If you're the type of person who thinks English ought to be classified as a social science, then Prof. Patterson is for you. Patterson likes to be trendy. He'll try to find feminism in Edgar Allen Poe; he'll apply Clifford Geertz's cultural anthropology to Puritan Literature." (From The Washington Spectator's list of 'the worst on campus'; 29)

"[Professor Pedro Ramet] allows an amount of freedom in the class for students to explore specific areas of interest to them. Ramet is truely [sic] engrossed in his subject, covering it from a completely unbiased position. You hear no polemics on the evils or virtues of Communism, just the pure, unadulterated facts."(29)

"They have a right to academic freedom, but with that right they also have a responsibility not to use their position to propagandize or promote a political belief." (Statement attributed to Laslo Csorba, director of "Accuracy in Academia"; 39)

"Reading Thursday's article on the group called Accuracy in Academia was interesting. Liberals call it censorship; conservatives call it an attempt to create a balance."(5)

"It is an attempt to insist that in an institution of higher education, opposing viewpoints be admitted to the classroom (this point ought to be moot; any responsible professor is probably already doing this). For the few professors who abuse their position and the public trust, [Accuracy in Academia] becomes a disseminator of information to the general public informing them of this fact."(5)

"Academic subjects can rarely be objectively presented. The purpose of learning is to promote thought, and thought inspires opinion. Balance in an academic setting, if such a thing can ever be attained, can only come about by broadening rather than restricting the ideas taught therein."(12)

"...almost every class you go to, you hear the professor as he spouts off about how stupid the conservative viewpoint is. (Unless it is a sensible class like accounting!!!)."(10)

"We're not censors; we're not ideological hit men, we're just students who want to learn instead of being indoctrinated." (Statement attributed to John West Jr., managing editor of The Washington Spectator; 33)

"We want to make sure professors are held accountable for what they teach." (Statement attributed to Laslo Csorba, director of "Accuracy in Academia;"33)

These statements have in common two important elements: all discuss the role of the "professor", and all emanate from the same speech community, that of those persons concerned with and verbally involved in the University of Washington. These statements, however, are also different from one another, in that all of this discourse is clearly not spoken with one "voice". The immediate task in analyzing these samples of discourse and the larger body of discourse of which these are representative, is to determine how many "voices" there are in this discourse, and from where those "voices" emanate. Based on analysis of the above statements and others, it appears that one way in which the members of this speech community make this potpourri of talk intelligible is by bearing in mind attributes of the person or persons who utter a given piece of discourse. There are two general ways this is accomplished.

First, embedded in the discourse are repeated references to one ideological orientation or another. The two most prevalent labels which the speakers assign to themselves and others are "liberal" and "conservative". Attaching one of these labels to a speaker apparently helps a listener from this speech community make sense of that speaker's utterance.

Second, by also looking for a speaker's position on the issue of whether it is the "professor's" responsibility to assure "balance in the classroom", a listener is assisted in making sense of discourse, and of the controversy as a whole. Utilizing the above and further samples of talk, I will now demonstrate the validity of these two types of indicators for the members of this speech community.

"Liberal" and "conservative" as labels. As can be readily shown through a display of relevant discourse, the labels "liberal" and "conservative" are the ones most commonly used by speakers to identify their ideological orientation. "Conservative University of Washington students... said they will expose UW faculty members whose teaching excludes conservative viewpoints," stated one reporter from the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.(23) One reporter from The Seattle Times began her article with the statement "Conservative college students have formed a national group to spy on professors whose politics are considered questionable."(39) The Washington Spectator repeatedly identified itself as "a conservative journal."

At the other end of the spectrum, The Washington Spectator charged that "liberal professors commonly ignore- or attack-conservative ideas in the classroom."(24) The editors of The Seattle Times stated that "conservative students propose to expose professors who demonstrate a liberal slant in the classroom."(20) Laslo Csorba, the director of "Accuracy in Academia", was quoted as saying "Social science departments have traditionally been havens for liberal doctrine...AIA investigates cases not only of professors who are too liberal, but also those who may be too conservative. The problem, however, is coming mostly from the left."(33)

The above discourse, being representative, demonstrates that the labels "liberal" and "conservative" are used consistently within this speech community to denote a speaker's ideological orientation. Speakers identified as sharing a common label are also identified as sharing a common position on an important issue. Although several issues appear to be in dispute within the discourse, the one which appears most central to the controversy is the issue of whether or

not it is the responsibility of a "professor" to present all sides of a given issue to his/her class. Further samples of discourse can be examined in order to assess the accuracy of this claim.

"Balance in the classroom": Indicator of orientation. This statement, made by David Barash, one of the professors named in the 'worst on campus' list, typically addressed this issue: "It's dishonest for an instructor to claim he's presenting an unbiased, God's-eye view."(33) The Washington Spectator seemed to agree only in part, stating that "[Professors] have every right to make [their] point of view known to [their] students...as long as they don't give short shrift (or no shrift) to other viewpoints."(1) This point-of-view was amplified by an anonymous letter-writer, who stated that "...anyone who resists the introduction of opposing viewpoints in his course and calls it 'academic freedom' is probably himself a master of both thought control and Doublespeak."(5)

Steve Olswang, vice provost for academic affairs, stated that "There's no policy that says [professors] can't be one-sided. If the stated purpose of the course is to teach about the negative impacts of nuclear war, and that's what the professor teaches, then he's doing his job. A faculty member teaches from the perspective he's familiar with."(24) Another professor, Bradley Scharf, claimed that even though his long-term goal is for students to have "a balanced picture of the world", he doesn't have to teach students "the official government view" in the classroom. "They can get it every day on television."(39)

To the extent that the above statements are typical of the discourse surrounding the term "professor", it would seem that the public assertion that it is the "professor's" responsibility to ensure "balance in the classroom" appears to be the actual breach of the communal code which instigated the controversy. One apparent method by which members of this speech community make intelligible the talk about "professors", then, is to determine whether a given speaker is in favor of or opposed to the "professor" being responsible for assuring "balance in the classroom".

It can also be shown that each ideological label ("liberal"or "conservative") consistently covaries with one of the two positions on "balance in the classroom". In the discussion which follows, these relationships are made explicit.

Hubert G. Locke, one self-proclaimed "ultra-liberal professor" stated, "I am quite open about my political biases in the classroom...I believe my students have a right to know what my biases are."(38) David Barash, another professor labeled as "liberal," stated "I'm not going to make any effort whatsoever for a balanced approach [in the classroom]."(21) Based on these statements and many others like them, it is apparent that persons who are opposed to "balance in the classroom" are the ones generally referred to as "liberal" in orientation by members of this speech community.

The Washington Spectator, repeatedly self- and other-described as a "conservative journal," wrote "We want to encourage professors to include a diversity of views [in the classroom]."(21) Another statement, attributed to the editor of that journal, asserts that "...when only certain points of view are included in the classroom, then students are being denied their right to academic freedom; their right to listen to all points of view; their right to make up their

own minds intelligently - without being led along like pupils in a catechism class."(21) This discourse shows that speakers in favor of "balance in the classroom" are the ones generally described as "conservative" by members of this speech community.

Utilizing the question of "balance in the classroom" as a sort of fulcrum, the natives (and the ethnographer) can then divide up the discourse about the term "professor" into two general camps. If the speaker is in favor of the "professor" ensuring "balance in the classroom," that speaker is identified as a "conservative." If, on the other hand, the speaker is opposed to the "professor" ensuring "balance in the classroom," that speaker is identified as a "liberal."

Utilizing these two distinctions, it was possible to identify segments of discourse as emanating from either the "conservative" or the "liberal" cultural group. This produced a twofold data analysis yielding two separate and distinct conceptions of "professor." This analysis also allowed a much tighter focus on the cultural groups themselves by treating them separately, and emphasizing dimensions of similarity and contrast between the two.

Two distinct cultural groups. Geertz (1973) defines "culture" as "an historically transmitted system of symbols and their meanings." In order for the labels "liberal" and "conservative" to denote two distinct cultural groups within this particular speech community, it must be shown that while the entire speech community may share a system of symbols, each of these two labels represents a group which utilizes its own unique system of meanings. The remainder of this study sets out to show just that.

Analysis will continue by demonstrating the disparity, within this speech community, between "liberal" and "conservative" cultural conceptions of the term "professor." Then, by demonstrating the dissimilar placement of the term "professor" within each group's system of symbols and meanings, societal values and views of the communication process can be shown to differ between the two cultural groups. Intelligible accomplishment of this analysis enhances the validity of the "liberal"/"conservative" and "balance in the classroom" distinctions as indicative of the two "voices" within this speech community.

Procedures for Data Analysis

Data analysis involved two general moves. These were not accomplished in a linear fashion, but rather were allowed to feed into one another as new data and insights were exposed at one or another stage. The first move involved a "domain analysis" utilizing the term "professor." Spradley (1979) defines this type of analysis as "a search for...cultural symbols which are included in larger categories (domains) by virtue of some similarity" (p. 94). This study sets out to look for cultural symbols which make up the domain "professor," as well as the symbols which make up the domains of those terms.

A previously published list of types of semantic relationships was utilized in the initial stages of this process (Spradley, 1979, p. 111). These semantic relationships were found to be prevalent in the talk and language systems of many different cultures, and proved to be a useful tool in the analysis of discourse. The two semantic relationships which proved to be the most useful during the initial

stages of data analysis were "x (is a kind of) y," and "x (should be done by) y," with the term "professor" functioning as the "y" term in each case. These semantic relationships yielded several other terms which are used by the natives to refer to "professors," and norms dealing with a "professor's" behavior, respectively.

Domain analysis continued, utilizing the semantic relationship "x (should be done by) y," with the "y" terms being several of the most prevalent other terms used to refer to "professors" (e.g."x" should be done by "instructors," "x" should be done by "members of the academic community"). This procedure facilitated the emergence from the talk of norms pertaining to the behavior of someone called by one of the other terms. This procedure was accomplished separately for "conservative" and "liberal" discourse, as were all procedures of data analysis.

The second move in the data analysis process involved examination of the domains identified in the first part of the data analysis. In particular, the norms pertaining to the behavior of a "professor" were compared with the norms pertaining to the behavior of someone called by one of the other terms (e.g. "scholar") in order to achieve a taxonomic analysis of the term "professor" (Spradley, 1979, pp. 144-150) for each cultural group. The goal of this step was to demonstrate the relationships among the terms discovered during domain analysis, to determine which of the other terms are actually "cover terms" (domains of which "professor" is a subset) and which are "included terms" (or subsets of "professor") relative to the problematic term "professor" (Spradley, 1979). This was accomplished through a comparison of the norms and roles talked about by each cultural group.

Accomplishment of this taxonomy facilitated the definition of the term "professor," utilizing the explicit symbols and tacit relationships discovered in the discourse of each cultural group within the speech community. The symbols and relationships by which the members of each cultural group make this term meaningful fall most intelligibly under two distinct definitions. Explication and analysis of these two conceptions is detailed in the following section.

Results

Initial analysis of the problematic term "professor" yielded the presence of several other terms which symbolize different "types" of "professors." Most pervasive and consistent among these terms were "scholar," "instructor," "faculty member," and "member of the academic community." These terms were used by members of both groups within the speech community. Subsequent analysis, however, demonstrated that the two cultural groups define these common terms in very different ways.

In the discussion which follows, these common terms will be defined, utilizing the indigenous terminology of each group to articulate the "norms," or "behaviors which are obligated, preferred, or prohibited" (Shimanoff, 1980, p. 57) for a person who is called by one of these terms. Once these norms have been explicated, they will then be held up for comparison with the norms which regulate a "professor's" behavior. In this way, not only can the term

"professor" be culturally defined, but it can also be accurately placed in context with other related talk which surrounds it.

The two cultural groups found within this speech community will be explicated one at a time. First, two culture-specific definitions of "what a professor is" will be set forth, one from each group ("conservative" and "liberal"). Second, the two definitions will be compared in detail, not only to each other, but also to concepts outside of this specific case and community.

The "Liberal" Cultural Group

The "liberal" group describes a "scholar" as one who is an "expert," who "puts ideas down on paper where they can be criticized" by other "experts." The "scholar" is in the business of "creating knowledge through research" which s/he then submits in accordance with the "publish-or-perish rule." Although a scholar is held responsible for his/her "views" by his/her peers in the "academic community," and is expected to be "accurate about factual things," that same scholar is "not told what to teach by non-experts" in the classroom.

The "liberal" group talks about an "instructor" as one who "teaches courses." "Instructors" should be "clear" and "open-minded" with their students about their "political biases" "in the classroom." This person should not "claim to present an unbiased, God's-eye view," nor should they "teach a course to please any particular point of view"; an "instructor" should, however, be able to "justify his/her teaching perspective." Ultimately, an "instructor" teaches students to be "critical thinkers" by "making his/her decision-making process explicit."

The "liberal" group describes a "faculty member" as a "teacher" who teaches from the "perspective" with which s/he is familiar. As seen by this culture, "faculty members" should "speak their minds" and be free from "intimidation." A member of the faculty is rewarded with "tenure" for abiding by "professional standards of conduct."

Members of the "liberal" culture talk about a "member of the academic community" as one who must, most importantly, "defend" and "maintain" "academic freedom" and "free speech," both "within our own ranks" and "in the classroom." A "member of the academic community" should "create knowledge through research" and be "free to state his/her conclusions." This person should also prepare students to "understand and change the world" by "improving their minds" and "training them for careers." A member of this community should not "express dogmas" or "promote action regarding personal views in the classroom."

The above cultural conceptions provide a set of behaviors perceived as appropriate for the most common types of "professors" referred to in the text. By comparing these descriptions of appropriate behaviors with the behaviors described as appropriate (by the "liberal" group, below) for a "professor," a definition of the term "professor" can then be formulated, utilizing terminology and interrelationships found within this culture.

Norms for a "professor": The "liberal" group. The "liberal" culture talks about a "professor" as being a person who, most importantly, "treats students as critical thinkers." Because of this basic orientation toward students, a "professor" does not need to

have a "balanced approach" or teach the "official government view" because students can hear that "every day on television." The job of the "professor" is to "interpret" the subject matter, and that interpretation can be "one-sided."

In addition to the freedom implied in the definition up to this point, "professors" also have certain responsibilities up to which they should live. This can be summed up by talking about the "professor" as the "creator", both of "curriculum" and of "knowledge." This "creator" should know how best to "present" information for "maximum impact," and should hold to the "stated purpose of the course" when creating curriculum. This person should "be accurate" when talking about "factual" things in the classroom, and should not "ask students to agree" with everything s/he presents. In sum, the "professor" is a person who "creates" and "interprets" "knowledge" and "information" for students who are "critical thinkers."

In the discussion to this point, this culture's views on what constitutes appropriate behavior for a "scholar," an "instructor," a "faculty member," a "member of the academic community," and a "professor" have been demonstrated. By looking for dimensions of similarity and difference among these sets of norms, these five cultural terms can be placed in relation to one another. By accomplishing this taxonomic analysis (Spradley, 1979), the term "professor" can be culturally defined, utilizing accurately the terminology of the culture.

What a "professor" should be: The "liberal" group. The "liberal" cultural group talks about a "professor" as primarily a "member of the academic community" whose job is to "create knowledge through research." One maintains one's standing in this community by being a good "scholar"; one who "puts ideas down on paper to be criticized" by other "experts" and "professionals" within the "academic community." The "academic community" is larger than the university itself, but is locally represented by "faculty members." A "professor" is ultimately answerable not to the "public," but rather to the "academic community." This abstract community becomes more concrete as a "faculty" which can reward good "scholarship" with such things as "tenure." Because a "professor" is responsible for "creating knowledge," as an "instructor" s/he is entitled to teach from an "educated perspective." It is by cultivating and learning more about this "perspective" that a "professor" maintains his/her standing within the "academic community." It is this pursuit which is protected by "academic freedom."

The "Conservative" Cultural Group

The "conservative" group describes a "scholar" as one who does not suffer from a "lack of knowledge." If this person is an "extremely intelligent individual" and a "real scholar," then s/he is described as an "academician."

The "conservative" group talks about an "instructor" as one who "leads classes." The "instructor" should "love what s/he teaches," be "filled with enthusiasm," and should be "open to criticism of his/her teaching ability." This person should have "scholarly value," but "should be more than an extremely intelligent individual." An "instructor" should not "censor the conservative

point of view," but rather should "teach so that students learn a lot about the topics."

The "conservative" group describes a "faculty member" as a "teacher," often a "60's radical" who "indoctrinates instead of educates." "Faculties" are talked about as often being "havens for leftist and Marxist doctrine," and as being groups which reinforce the denial of "academic freedom" of students.

The "conservative" group talks about a worthy "member of the academic community" as one who should pay more than "lip service" to such goals as "promoting the free exchange of ideas," "encouraging students to think for themselves," "tolerating a wide range of political expression in the classroom," and "providing a forum for vigorous debate." This person should not see it as their "duty" to "show leftist views."

Norms for a "professor": The "conservative" group. The "conservative" cultural group talks about a "professor" as being a person who, most importantly, "respects student beliefs" while "introducing" or "exposing" students to "differing points of view." Because of this twofold approach, a professor should not only admit "opposing viewpoints" to the classroom, but should also let his/her "moral conscience" prevent him/her from "using his/her position" to "propagandize" or "promote beliefs."

A "professor" has the freedom to "teach his/her viewpoint" and his/her "educated, intelligent opinion." A "professor" even has the right to "make [his/her] point of view known" to students. While these freedoms are tolerated within this culture, they are clearly not the preferred behaviors for a professor.

An ideal "professor," as talked about by this cultural group, should not make students hear "polemics" on the "evils or virtues" of a given subject, but should rather cover his/her subject from a "completely unbiased position." This "professor" should expose students only to "pure" and "unadulterated facts," and be held "accountable" for what they teach. In this way, "professors" do not "abuse the public trust" placed in them by virtue of their "position."

Because this "professor" should also "respect student beliefs," several other behaviors are prescribed and proscribed in the classroom. Broadly, students should be "allowed to explore" specific "areas of interest to them" within the "topics" being "learned." This exploration is facilitated by the "professor" exposing students to "facts" about a "diversity of views," being "engrossed in [his/her] subject," and being "open" to "questions" and "disagreement" from students.

In sum, a good "professor" "enthusiastically" "exposes" students to a "diversity of views," then allows "freedom" in the classroom for students to explore "topics of interest to them" by "welcoming questions," "discussion" and "debate." By exposing students to a wide variety of "facts," a "professor" rewards the "public trust" in him/her and does not "abuse his/her position" by "teaching opinion as fact."

Again, as for the "liberal" group discussed previously, appropriate behaviors related to the five cultural terms have been explicated. By using these behaviors as a means for placing the five terms in relation to one another, a "conservative" cultural definition of "professor" can be accomplished.

What a "professor" should be: The "conservative" group. The "conservative" cultural group, interestingly, also sees a "professor" as primarily a "member of the academic community," whose job is to "promote the free exchange of ideas" rather than to "create knowledge through research." The "academic community" is no larger than the university itself, and includes both students and "faculty members." "Faculty members" are, by virtue of their position in society, held "accountable for what they teach," not by a large body of "professionals," but rather by "the public", of which students are an important part. A "professor" is a "scholar" if s/he "teaches so that students learn a lot about the topics."

For members of this culture, then, a "professor" is talked about as primarily an "instructor" who is a "member of the academic community." As such, it is his/her primary responsibility to "expose students to a diversity of views" and "promote the free exchange of ideas." The extent to which a "professor" does these things determines the extent to which s/he is a "scholar," with an excellent "professor" being labeled a "real scholar."

The "professor" is answerable to "the public" by virtue of his/her "position" within the "academic community." This "academic community" is talked about as a localized version of "the public," and as such, all "members of the academic community" are subject to the same rules and censure applied by all other "members." "Academic freedom," for the users of this culture, is the name given to the freedom to discuss and debate the behaviors of all members of this "community."

Two Conceptions of "Professor": A Comparison

As spoken by members of this speech community, "liberal" and "conservative" conceptions of "professor" differ substantially. This section will attempt to make those dimensions of contrast more explicit by summarizing the two conceptions along specific dimensions.

The major difference between the two cultural conceptions of "professor" concerns what is seen to be his/her primary responsibility. The "liberals" claim "creating knowledge through research" as most fundamental, while the "conservatives" maintain that a "professor" should be first and foremost an "instructor" who "respects student beliefs" and "exposes students to a diversity of views in the classroom." It seems that this distinction between research and teaching as primary focus accounts for many other differences between the two cultural conceptions of "professor," including significant contrasts in the meanings of the shared cultural terms "academic community," "scholar," "academic freedom," and "learning."

Although the two conceptions of "professor" are very unlike each other, on the surface they appear to be very similar. Both "liberals" and "conservatives" see the "professor" as primarily a "member of the academic community" who retains his/her good standing within that community by being a "scholar." Both groups also claim

that the "professor" has a right to "academic freedom," and a concomitant responsibility to impart "learning." By keeping in mind, however, that "social expressions [are] on their surface enigmatical" (Geertz, 1973, p. 5), it is possible to delve beyond the "surface" and show actual dimensions of contrast between these two apparently similar definitions.

The "liberal" conception. Significantly, the two groups define the nature of the "academic community" differently. The "academic community," as talked about by the "liberal" culture, is larger than the university itself, and is comprised of all "scholars" who are engaged in "creating knowledge through research." A "professor" maintains his/her standing within the "academic community" by being a "scholar"; that is, making a "significant contribution to his/her field." These "scholars" are generally employed by institutions of higher education, where they are entitled to "academic freedom," that being "an atmosphere where one is free to state one's conclusions" without threat to one's livelihood. Students are a part of this process to the extent that they are privileged to "learn" from these "scholars," and are allowed that opportunity only after being accepted into the university.

While "professors" do have the responsibility to be "accurate about factual things in the classroom," they are not subject to censure or criticism of their "scholarship" by students. The responsibility for whether or not students "learn" is placed heavily on the students themselves. The "liberal" cultural group is more inclined to "get good students and get out of their way," leaving the motivation to "learn" to the students themselves. The "professor" is at the university primarily as an expert who demonstrates "scholarship" and is willing to share both the fruits of his/her labors and the methods by which s/he arrived at them. His/Her responsibility does not extend to creating motivation in students, nor to discovering and presenting the counterpoint for every assertion s/he makes "in the classroom."

Learning as apprenticeship: A metaphor. A metaphor which aptly captures this relationship is one which pictures the student and "professor" in an apprentice/expert relationship. The apprentice is placed with the expert in order to learn what the expert knows. The student must be accepted by the expert (or the expert's employer) in order to study under him/her, and once there, must keep in mind that s/he is apprenticed to a person who knows more about his/her specialty than does the apprentice. Upon acceptance of an apprentice, the expert does not significantly alter the way in which s/he goes about fulfilling his/her responsibilities. Rather, the apprentice is encouraged to note how the expert goes about making significant contributions to his/her field, and to "learn" through observation and practice of what is observed.

The more outstanding the expert's work, the more recognition and esteem that expert will receive from others in his/her field. As a given expert becomes more and more esteemed by his/her peers, s/he also becomes more in demand as a tutor for apprentices. Hence, the better the expert is, the more of a privilege it becomes to work under this person. By showing him/herself to be an expert, a person earns the right to practice whatever pursuits s/he, as an expert, feels are appropriate for an expert in his/her field, and

apprenticeship to that person becomes more of a privilege than a right.

The "conservative" conception. For the "conservative" cultural group, the academic community does not exist as a singular entity outside the university itself, as it does for the "liberals". Because the "academic community" is seen as synonymous with "the University of Washington," both "professors" and students are considered to be "members of the academic community." Because all "members of the academic community" are entitled to "academic freedom," this right then is seen as applying both to "professors" and to students. The "conservatives", rather than defining "academic freedom" as the right of a "professor" to pursue and present his/her "perspective" (as it is defined by the "liberal" group), defines it as the "student's freedom to explore topics of interest" to him/her "in the classroom," and the right to censure those (including "professors") who inhibit that process.

This group, then, sees the role of the "professor" to be more of a localized one, with the campus itself seen as the primary focus of a "professor's" professional activity. As such, a "professor's" standing within the "academic community" is assessed locally, through his/her behavior at the University of Washington. A "professor" in good standing within the "academic community" is called a "scholar," and, for the culture, one practices good "scholarship" by being a good "instructor." A good "instructor" is one who "exposes students to facts about a diversity of views," "allows freedom to explore topics of interest to individual students," and is "enthusiastic" and "engrossed in his/her subject."

As seen by the "conservative" culture, the "professor" is more responsible for "learning" taking place than is the student. The student does not "learn" simply by watching how the "professor" makes significant contributions to his/her field, but rather expects that the "professor" will expend the effort which ensures that the student "learns." As this conception of the "professor"/student relationship is inconsistent with an expert/apprentice relationship, a different metaphor is necessary for further explication of this view.

Learning as investing: A metaphor. By picturing students as stockholders in "The Corporation" and "professors" as that corporation's board of directors, it is possible to illustrate several features of the "conservative" cultural conception of "professor." The student decides to "invest" in this specific "corporation" based on what it can do for him/her. In return for "investments" of time, money, and energy, the student expects a substantial return, in the form of useful "learning."

In this corporation, as in any corporation, it is the responsibility of the company to make itself attractive to "investors." This means that a good share of what the company does must be accomplished with the "investor" in mind. Once the student has "invested," s/he has a voice in determining where the company's (including his/her) "investments" might best be placed so as to yield maximum return; "investors" are not powerless in this milieu. Because the corporation has an interest in keeping the students "invested," its board of directors should continue to respect the judgements of its stockholders. In this way, the corporation is more likely to supply what its "investors" see as a healthy "return."

If, on the other hand, "investors" don't feel they are given enough voice in the handling of their "investments," they are entitled to call the board of directors to account. If enough stockholders were to do this, it would be in the best interests of the corporation to take the "investors'" judgements into account by either changing the way the current board of directors handles "investments", or by replacing the board with a new one. In any case, it is the primary responsibility of the corporation to assure that students get a healthy return on their "investment."

A corporation becomes a good one in which to "invest" by demonstrating its ability to deal with the needs of its "investors." This ability (on the part of the board of directors) involves both the acquired skill of placing "investments" where they will produce most effectively, and the ability to be sensitive and receptive to the differing preferences and judgements of individual investors.

The "conservative" culture asserts that there is a certain method of "investing" student time, money, and energy which facilitates "learning" while leaving room to accomodate student beliefs and judgements. This "preferred episodic sequence," or preferred method by which teaching should be accomplished, is presented as one further method by which the "conservative" conception of "professor" can be made more intelligible to the reader.

The preferred episodic sequence. The "conservative" conception of the cultural symbol "professor" can better be understood by examining a sequence of events which, for this cultural group, embodies what should occur "in the classroom". This more specific set of expectations is represented by the native phrase "taught like an academic course", when that statement is uttered by a member of the "conservative" group. For example, "conservative" statements disparage one "professor's""trendy" teaching style as "non-academic," and point out that even though another "professor" "walks on desks" and "quite often sings" as part of his "entertaining" teaching style, students can "learn a lot about the topics" in spite of this style of presentation. In what follows, the elements of this episodic sequence will be discussed in terms of several components of speech events from Hymes (1972), including topic, key, end, participants, setting, and norms of interaction.

First of all, the topic of this sequence involves what is actually presented by the "professor" to the students "in the classroom," these things being "pure, unadulterated facts" and "topics." If there arises a "topic" about which relatively little is "factually" known (e.g., Einstein's theory of relativity, Communism), the "professor" is expected to present "both sides" of the issue. In addition, "professors" are expected not to talk at all about "topics" which have nothing to do with the subject matter of the class.

According to the "conservatives" then, the "professor" can present both factual and conjectural "topics" "in the classroom," provided they are relevant to the class, and that s/he does not advocate one position over another.

Closely related to the topic is the "key" or "tone" a "professor" uses when presenting information to the class. This norm mandates that all "topics" be presented using language which can be shown to be free from opinion. In addition, a "professor" is

expected to demonstrate interest and excitement his/her subject through presentational style. The more objectively excited a "professor" can be about the topic in the classroom, the better a "scholar" that "professor" is considered to be.

Third, the purpose (or end) of an "academic course" is to "teach so that students learn about the topics." This purpose can be seen in contrast to the "liberals'" expressed purpose of "teaching students to become critical thinkers." The "conservatives" say it is more important that the student "learn facts about topics" while "in the classroom" than it is that the student be taught to be a "critical thinker" by the "professor."

The "end" which is to be avoided at all costs "in the classroom" is that of "indoctrinating" students to a certain belief or point of view. It is very important to the "conservatives" that "professors" "distinguish between a classroom and a political convention," and abide by the norms appropriate to the context in which they find themselves.

Fourth, the identities of the participants in this sequence are the "professor" and students. The "professor" is an "instructor" who is "accountable to the public" for his/her teaching by virtue of his/her "position" within the "academic community." This view of "professor" can be seen in contrast to one held by the "liberal" group within this speech community, in which the "professor" is a "scholar" who is "accountable" to the "academic community" for his/her "scholarly actions" and "professional conduct." The "conservatives", then, define a "professor" more by his/her "position" within the community than by what "actions" s/he performs. Students are talked about as "members of the academic community" who are entitled to "academic freedom", that being the right to criticize those whom they feel inhibit "learning."

Fifth, the setting should be "academic." This can best be understood when seen in contrast to a setting which is called "an advertisement for a lifestyle," a "rap group," or a "catechism." In an "academic" setting, discussion and debate are welcomed, and examples add to that setting by "illustrating" without being offensive (e.g., "explicit" or "pornographic"). All elements of this sequence play an important role in the setting, and this seems to be a primary focus of attention in the assessment of "professors."

Finally, the norms of interaction delineate which behaviors are appropriate "in the classroom." In this ideal sequence of events, the "professor exposes students to facts about a topic" and "welcomes questions, debate, and discussion about the topics" while "in the classroom." Although the "professor" can teach "his/her own viewpoint," s/he must also "teach other viewpoints" and not "promote his/her own beliefs in the classroom." Students are viewed as capable both of "learning" and of "being indoctrinated," dependent upon the behaviors of a "professor" to which they are exposed. This will be discussed further below, under the heading "an implicit theory of communication".

All of the above centrally inform an episodic sequence which formalizes what members of the "conservative" culture talk about as appropriate behavior "in the classroom." The closer any given "professor" adheres to the norms set forth in this sequence (as

opposed to being "trendy" or "entertaining"), the more of a "scholar" s/he is seen to be. By taking into account both the existence and the function of this sequence as a whole, it is possible to map this cultural group onto a framework proposed by Philipsen (1981).

Discussion

A "Traditional" vs. "Personal" Society

Philipsen claims that cultural communication functions so as to maintain a balance of communal and personal forces so that individuals can both live in community and yet remain free (1981, p. 12). One can characterize the location of a certain society on an imaginary continuum which stretches from emphasis on the individual to emphasis on the community. This can be accomplished by examining which "forms" of cultural communication are prevalent within the given society. Philipsen identifies three of these forms, mentioned earlier as "ritual," "myth," and "social drama" (1981, p. 9), and identifies three types of societies as "personal," "positional," and "traditional" (1981, pp. 9-10).

Each of these societal types can be characterized by a "sacred object" which "carries the greatest degree of unspoken force in regulating public conduct and in affirming shared identity" (Philipsen, 1981, p. 10). In a "personal" society, the self-concept of the individual is most important and worthy of fulfillment, and consequently, the form "social drama", wherein individuals test group boundaries, is most prominent there. In a society found to be "positional," the group is most important and worthy of veneration, and the cultural form "myth" is most prominent, as it allows the individual to borrow from the group heritage and by doing so "to dignify and give coherence to his life" (Philipsen, 1981, p. 8). A "traditional" society venerates the code, or law, as the "sacred object" most worthy of veneration, and the form "ritual" is most common in this type of society. "Ritual" is the form in which there is "a structured sequence of symbolic acts, the correct performance of which constitutes homage to a sacred object" (Philipsen, 1981, p. 6).

The "conservative" cultural group within this speech community, by advocating just such a sequence, appears to be an example of a "traditional" society. The sacred object, or element most worthy of veneration for this cultural group, is the "code" which conceptualizes "academic" behavior in the classroom. A "professor's" standing as a "scholar" within the "academic community" is assessed primarily by measuring the degree to which his/her behavior patterns adhere to the ritual (or "preferred episodic sequence") and thus pay homage to this "code".

Contrast the above view with the view held by the "liberal" cultural group. The "liberals" are concerned that the individual "professors" be allowed to express themselves freely, without fear of censure from non-professionals. In addition, they are concerned with "helping students become critical thinkers". Through these concerns, this cultural group shows the attributes of a "personal" society, wherein the self-concept of the individual is seen as paramount and most worthy of veneration.

The intent of this discussion is not to build a case for the "correctness" of one group. It is instead an effort to demonstrate a method by which to include relevant context as an aid to understanding the people involved in a given controversy - a way of exposing their most fundamental level of disagreement. The ability to uncover this level of belief in talk allows the observer a lens which is capable of both wide-angle and tightly focused examination.

Some of the themes which run consistently throughout the discourse require further clarification in order for their role in the controversy to be appreciated. Among the most notable of these are statements central to the controversy which assert that there are such things as "unadulterated facts" which can be presented "objectively" by a "professor."

Logical positivism. The conservative author Richard Weaver claims that beliefs such as this one reflect what is called a "semanticist" view, in which "...the duty of anyone using language is to express the 'facts' and avoid studiously the use of emotional coloring" (Weaver, 1964, p. 67). The "conservative" cultural group in this speech community would clearly prefer that "language for which a referent can be shown to exist in the world" be used by "professors" in the classroom. Talking about language in this way reflects a "positivistic" world-view (Weaver, 1964, p. 71).

Daniel J. O'Keefe provides a helpful discussion of "positivism" (or "logical empiricism"). He states that:

> ...contemporary empiricists distinguish observation statements (or terms or language) and theoretical statements (or terms or language). Observation statements are straightforward and uncontroversial; they are factual, theory-free descriptions which form the foundations of scientific knowledge...because of this common "observation base," all theories are ultimately comparable by reference to observations (observation statements). Sharply distinguished from observation statements are theoretical statements; these are problematic, and questionable if not tied to observations. (O'Keefe, 1975, p. 170).

The purpose of "teaching" held by the "conservative" cultural group might best be phrased as "Here is the world expressed in language that has been freed from tendency and subjective coloration" (Weaver, 1964, p. 69). "For him [a positivist], an opinion...is just an impediment in the way of the facts. On his principle a cohesive or systematized outlook must involve distortion, and this explains why he automatically refers to rhetoric as "propaganda" (Weaver, 1964, p. 71).

By way of contrast, the "liberal" cultural group within this speech community states that not only "facts," but all "intellectual creations" have a place in the classroom. "Intellectual creations are judged by the criterion of truth, by which I mean not only fidelity to reality but also theoretical simplicity, explanatory power, conceptual elegance, and logical coherence" (Wolff, 1969, p. 21). "The teacher communicates skills, to be sure, but more importantly he communicates an attitude toward skill, as well as

attitudes toward clarity, honesty, responsiveness to evidence, a concern for relevance. In short, the teacher, when he is successful, teaches values" (Wolff, 1969, p. 100).

Clearly, the two cultural groups differ dramatically regarding which subjects are appropriate for classroom presentation. What the "liberal" group regards as one goal of "successful" teaching (the imparting of values), the "conservative" group disparages as the product of persuasion and "rhetoric", and therefore "propaganda" and undesirable. This way of talking about the uses of language reveals the "conservative" cultural group (within this speech community) to be one which is "positivistic" by nature. Many statements emanating from this group become more intelligible to the outsider once this assumption is understood.

Code of honor. Second, the group identified as "conservative" within this speech community asserts that "professors" should be "held accountable to the public" for what they teach. They are subject to this accountability because of their "position" in what is seen as a hierarchically structured society; they should not "abuse the public trust." Weaver calls this a "status" view (as opposed to a "functionalist" view), in which a person's primary identity and power is derived from his/her institutional role (1964, p. 28).

Berger, Berger, and Kellner (1973, p. 90) demonstrate this way of looking at a person to be characteristic of a "code of honor." "The concept of honor implies that identity is essentially, or at least importantly, linked to institutional roles. The modern concept of dignity, by contrast, implies that identity is essentially independent of institutional roles" (Berger, et.al., 1973, p. 90).

The "liberal" group, for instance, talks about "professors" as accountable to "peers" rather than "the public." A "professor's" standing as a "scholar" is determined both by "contributions to the field" and by "abiding by professional standards of conduct". In effect, members of this group are given identity and power primarily by virtue of their actions, a belief consistent with a "code of dignity".

By talking about a "professor" as one who has a "position" of "power" within the community, and as one who has the "public trust" because of that "position," the "conservative" cultural group demonstrates its admiration for a hierarchically structured society, driven by a "code of honor," in which all members have a voice relative to their "position." The "liberal" group, by way of contrast, places the most importance on the interests and experiences of the individual, reflecting a "code of dignity" at work in this type of society. Understanding these assumptions also helps to render more community discourse intelligible to the observer.

An implicit theory of communication. The group which instigated the observation of professor talk "in the classroom" did so, at least in part, based on their view of how the communication process works. Members of the "conservative" culture described themselves as "students who want to learn rather than being indoctrinated"(33). Rather than recommending the alteration of "student" behavior in the classroom, so as to enhance this desired "learning," this group instead insisted that "professors" adapt their behavior to the ritual detailed above as the "preferred episodic sequence."

By talking about the teaching process in this way, members of this cultural group demonstrate their belief that a sender ("professor"), can, by presenting a message ("facts," "topics," "opinions," "polemics") in a certain way, cause receivers ("students") to "learn" rather than "be indoctrinated." One implication of this view is that a "sender" intentionally encodes information in a certain way (into a "message"), "sends" the "message," and most importantly, can cause that "message" to affect a "receiver" in an unmediated way. By way of contrast, the "liberal" culture treats students as "critical listeners": or put another way, as "receivers" who are at least capable of mediating a "message."

Members of the "conservative" cultural group in this speech community who have obviously achieved the stage of "critical thinking" are making sure that the "senders" present unbiased, uncontestable "facts" to students who might otherwise see "opinion" as "fact." Belief in this one-way, source-oriented view of the communication process seems to be a prime motivator for the observation and monitoring of the talk of "professors," and again, awareness of this implicit theory helps the observer make sense of community discourse.

Conclusion

Based on ethnographic interpretive analysis of text, two cultural conceptions of the problematic term "professor" emerged. The first stage of analysis demonstrated that there were two distinct bodies of discourse present in the public text, and that those bodies of discourse emanated from cultural groups labeled "liberal" and "conservative" by the members of the speech community. Analysis demonstrated also that "liberals" were labeled as such because of their belief that "professors" should be allowed to present whichever points-of-view they feel are appropriate, while "conservatives" were so labeled because of their assertion that "professors" must assure "balance in the classroom."

Having established the existence of these two cultural groups, analysis then proceeded to the determination of a "professor's" place within the world-view of each of the two cultural groups. Broadly, the "liberal" group within this speech community defines a "professor" as a person who "treats students as critical thinkers"; the "conservative" group defines him/her primarily as one who "respects student beliefs" and "exposes students to a diversity of topics." Exploring these two conceptions and the discourse surrounding them revealed several relevant features of each society's world-view.

First, the culture which advocates "balance" in the classroom (the "conservative" culture) can be identified as a "traditional" society by virtue of its veneration of an episodic sequence (way of doing things in the classroom), adherence to which determines the quality of a "professor." Second, this "conservative" group demonstrates a "positivistic" outlook on the world. Third, this cultural group predominantly subscribes to a "code of honor," as opposed to the "code of dignity" which drives the "liberal" group within this speech community. Finally, the "conservative" group's theory of communication is a primary force driving this group's insistence that "professors" present information in a certain way.

Fifth, and perhaps most interestingly, this study offers the opportunity to compare community-specific conceptions of "liberalism" and "conservatism" with larger-societal definitions of these terms. Through comparison of the features of these local cultural groups with accepted societal definitions of liberalism and conservatism, the appropriateness of the labels chosen by this community can be assessed.

The "conservatives" within this speech community, being positivists, talk about such things as the existence, desirability and presentability of "unadulterated facts." Richard Weaver, himself a well-known conservative, attacks this view as incompatible with the more "truthful concept of what it means to be a human being" (1964, p. 134); hence incompatible with his conception of conservatism. Although the "conservative" cultural group appears to stray from an accepted definition of conservatism via its positivistic world-view, the group actually adheres fairly closely to the modern societal definition of the term.

In its broadest sense, conservatism defends the status quo and resists change (Almond, 1974; Baradat, 1984; Macridis, 1983). Interestingly, by showing themselves to be very much in favor of respect for each individual's beliefs in the classroom, the "conservatives" within this speech community express "the basic concept associated with the origin and growth of liberalism and of liberal societies" (Macridis, p. 18). This belief puts them right in step with modern American conservatives. Conservatives today in the U.S. actually subscribe by and large to the tenets of nineteenth century liberalism: economic individualism, competition, free enterprise, personal freedom, and no state intervention (Macridis, p. 82).

This group also subscribes to a "code of honor", a code which, according to Berger, Berger, and Kellner (1973), has been losing favor in the world (and the U.S.) for decades, even centuries, and is rooted very deeply in history. The modern concept of "dignity" has been gaining favor in its place. The "conservative" cultural group within this speech community manages to be conservative in the broadest sense by trying to preserve the status quo in the classroom; the hazy, traditional, historical concept of "an academic course," which is translated into behavior as the ritual (or "preferred episodic sequence") outlined earlier. This group also reflects current American conservative thought by emphasizing the rights of the individual while harking back to the traditional ways of doing things which they feel worked so well for this country.

The "liberal" cultural group, on the other hand, displays several attributes of classic (rather than modern American) conservative thought. "Liberals" within this speech community view opinion (as well as all "intellectual creations") as legitimate for presentation "in the classroom", a view consistent with the conservative Richard Weaver. This group also believes, as expressed by one informant, that "professors have a place in the university because they know more than students do"(47). Society at the university, in this view, is hierarchically arranged, with authority going to those who are equipped for it in this society. This view is consistent with classic (e.g. British) conservative thought (Almond, p. 155; Macridis, p.78).

This group also expresses the liberal emphasis on the rights of the individual, or the "code of dignity." In this case, they talk about the "professor" as one who has the right to express him/herself as s/he feels is appropriate to the situation.

To what does this discussion add up? The terms "liberal" and "conservative," as applied to the controversy within this speech community, are very helpful for analyzing community discourse. The match between the community definitions and societal definitions, however, is not close enough to warrant general claims regarding national political thought. The discussion remains interesting at the level of showing how members of one speech community label and talk about their belief systems, and how that discourse informs the conclusions drawn from it.

This study is not meant to be a basis for universal assessment of what a "professor" is and should be. Comparative ethnographies would need to be conducted in order to discover dimensions of meaning for this term in other speech communities, should such a thing want to be done.

A more immediate goal of this study is to point up the facility of the ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1962, 1972) as a method of discovering tacit cultural knowledge within a given community. To realize that talk, <u>especially</u> everyday talk, can manifest the system(s) of symbols and meanings within a speech community (Geertz, 1973), and that the systems and their users can be discovered and investigated using this methodology, is heartening to the student of culture.

Once this underlying cultural knowledge has been unearthed within the specific community, it has the capability of reflecting back on and illuminating what is occurring in larger society, as in this study's comparison of local and larger-societal conceptions of "liberalism" and "conservatism." In <u>Cities on a Hill</u>, her examination of four distinct American cultures, Frances FitzGerald chose to study those cultures as expressed in and through four small communities, saying that "They had a prismatic quality...they served to show what was happening in a much more diffuse fashion in the society around them. As they were carrying on social experiments, so they were themselves exploring the American Scene and themselves, asking the essential questions of who we, as Americans, are, and how we ought to live." (1986, pp. 19-20).

It is hoped that this study demonstrates both the need for and utility of local cultural knowledge. This knowledge serves as a means of unraveling problematic community discourse, and by so doing, offering a point of reference for larger-societal constructs.

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Appendix

Comprehensive Inventory of Data

1. Alas, we must disappoint. (1985, December). The Washington Spectator, p. 5.

2. Allan, I. (1985, October 16). The era of blacklisting: Profs remember Canwell; criticize moves to monitor classes. The Daily of the University of Washington, pp. 1, 9.

3. Allan, I. (1985, October 18). Spectator gets stay of execution. The Daily of the University of Washington, pp. 1, 6.

4. Allan, I. (1985, October 28). No apologies. The Daily of the University of Washington, pp. 1, 6, 7.

5. Anonymous. (1985, October 17). Pure and simple [Letter to the editor]. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 5.

6. Anonymous. (1985, October 23). OK, really the last Spectator letter [Letter to the editor]. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 5.

7. Anonymous. (1985). [Unpublished letter to the editor]. The Daily of the University of Washington.

8. Black, D. (1985, October 10). Daily guilty of making reader chuckle [Letter to the editor]. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 5.

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11. Callero, M.R. (1985, October 28). Thank you [Letter to the editor]. The Washington Spectator, p. 5.

12. Card, S. (1985, October 8). Right-wing informers turn informants. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 4.

13. Card, S. (1985, October 24). Free speech for all...even them. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 4.

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21. From the editor: What the controversy is all about. (1985, October 28). The Washington Spectator, p. 3.

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23. Goldsmith, S. (1985, October 9). Conservative UW students to monitor profs. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, p. A16.

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25. Graduate Student #1. (1985, November 5). [Interview with doctoral-level graduate student/teaching assistant in speech communication at the University of Washington].

26. Graduate Student #2. (1985, November 5). [Interview with doctoral-level graduate student/teaching assistant in speech communication at the University of Washington].

27. Graduate Student #3. (1985, November 5). [Interview with doctoral-level graduate student/teaching assistant in speech communication at the University of Washington].

28. Graduate Student #4. (1985, November 6). [Interview with masters-level graduate student/teaching assistant in speech communication at the University of Washington].

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30. Hedman, M. (1986, April). WASHPIRG takes petition drive into classroom. The Washington Spectator, p. 1.

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32. Israel, M. (1985, October 15). Brown takes an encore [Letter to the editor]. The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 5.

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34. Kendrick, M. (1985, October 11). Lord have mercy [Letter to the editor].The Daily of the University of Washington, p. 5.

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48. Professor #3. (1985, November 5). [Interview with tenured associate professor of speech communication at the University of Washington].

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