BLOODY BOGALUSA AND THE FIGHT FOR A BI-RACIAL LUMBER UNION: A STUDY IN THE BURKEAN REBIRTH CYCLE

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ABSTRACT

The Great Southern Lumber Mill (Great Southern Lumber), for which Bogalusa, Louisiana was founded in 1906, was the largest mill of its kind in the world in the early twentieth century (Norwood 591). The mill garnered unrivaled success and fame for the massive amounts of timber that was exported out of the Bogalusa facility. Great Southern Lumber, however, was also responsible for an infamous suppression of a proposed biracial union of mill workers.

“Bloody Bogalusa” or “Bogalusa Burning,” to which the incident is often referred, occurred in 1919 when the mill’s police force fired on the black leader of a black unionist group and three white leaders who supported unionization, killing two of the white leaders, mortally wounding the third, and forcing the black unionist to flee from town in order to protect his life (Norwood 592). Through the use of newspaper articles and my personal, family narrative I argue that Great Southern Lumber Company, in order to squelch the efforts of the union leaders, engaged in a rhetorical strategy that might be best examined through Kenneth Burke’s theory of the Rebirth Cycle. In order for the company’s rhetorical strategy to operate within the realm of Burke’s rebirth cycle, the pentadic ratio of Agent: Act was employed in each phase of the cycle in order to define the individual elements that proved pivotal in the success of this drama.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Great-Grandmother, Mary Ruth O’Rourke Burks. Without Nanny’s story of her father’s murder, my discovery of Bloody Bogalusa would have been highly unlikely. Though she may no longer physically be on this earth, I have felt her spirit pushing me forward during the time spent working on this project.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

As a small child, I always noticed an over-powering smell, much like rotting eggs, which often pushed its way across my hometown of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. This putrid aroma crept in from the southwest and hung heavily in the air on hot, humid mornings. Blame for the smell was always placed on the paper mill located sixty miles away in Bogalusa, Louisiana. All of the mornings that I passed by my great-grandparents’ home on the way to school, it never occurred to me how deeply connected the smell was to my family’s heritage. The smell that my family associated with the mill, however, was a bit more sinister than rotting eggs.

Currently, Bogalusa is home to the International Paper Company Mill (“Career Opportunities”). Though the mill has produced paper products in its most recent history, it was once home to a flourishing lumber mill. The Great Southern Lumber Mill, for which Bogalusa was founded in 1906, was the largest of its kind in the world in the early twentieth century (Norwood 591). The mill garnered unrivaled success and fame for the massive amounts of timber that was exported out of the Bogalusa facility. Great Southern Lumber, however, was also responsible for an infamous suppression of a proposed biracial union of mill workers. “Bloody Bogalusa” or “Bogalusa Burning,” to which the incident is often referred, occurred in 1919 when the mill’s police force fired on the black leader of a black unionist group and three white leaders who supported unionization, killing two of the white leaders, mortally wounding
the third, and forcing the black unionist to flee from town in order to protect his life (Norwood 592).

My Great-Great Grandfather, Stanley J. O’Rourke, was the leader who was mortally wounded.

Through historical research of the event, I located several historical texts that chronicled not only the labor struggle, but also the history of the mill and the town of Bogalusa. A thorough exploration of these texts, led me to nineteen newspaper articles from local, regional, and national newspapers. From the nineteen articles, I analyzed sixteen articles from the following papers: The Daily Picayune, New Orleans Time Picayune, Atlanta Constitution, Nashville Tennessean and Nashville American, Louisville Courier Journal, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Chicago Defender, Chicago Tribune, and New York Times. Each of the selected articles dealt specifically with the events and people surrounding, and associated with, Bloody Bogalusa. It is important to note that the politics and ideologies of these newspapers are difficult to ascertain from this particular time period. Due to this difficulty, analyzing the articles, it became apparent that the articles were biased toward Great Southern Lumber Company. This bias then drove the remainder of my analysis.

From the use of these newspaper articles and my personal, family narrative I argue that Great Southern Lumber Company, in order to squelch the efforts of the union leaders, engaged in a rhetorical strategy that might be best examined through Kenneth Burke’s theory of the Rebirth Cycle. The narratives provided by the newspaper reports and my personal narrative differs greatly in their accounts of Bloody Bogalusa. Though these narratives differ, they each provide a deeper breadth to the events that constitute this drama. In order for the company’s rhetorical strategy to operate within the realm of Burke’s rebirth cycle, the pentadic ratio of Agent: Act was
employed in each phase of the cycle in order to define the individual elements that proved pivotal in the success of this drama.

This thesis presents four additional chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of relevant and related literature surrounding the areas of Kenneth Burke’s Rebirth Cycle. Burkean concepts of dramatism, logology, the negative, and hierarchy are examined prior to guilt/pollution, purification, and redemption phases of the rebirth cycle. Chapter Three presents a personal narrative and historical context of Bloody Bogalusa. Chapter Four analyzes Bloody Bogalusa through the lens of Burke’s rebirth cycle. Finally, conclusions and implications of the thesis are presented in Chapter Five.
This literature review first examines Kenneth Burke’s dramatistic foundations. Under the moniker ‘Dramatistic Foundations,’ the areas of dramatism, the pentad, pentadic ratios, logology, the negative, and hierarchies are explored. An examination of these areas then leads to a review of literature regarding Burke’s Redemption Cycle. Under this category, the areas of guilt/pollution, purification, and redemption are examined.

**Dramatistic Foundations**

**Dramatism**

Dramatism as a theoretical concept is used to determine the motives of individuals (Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*). Gusfield defines dramatism as “a method of analysis and a corresponding critique of terminology designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives is via methodical inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions” (135). In simpler terms, dramatism allows for the study, and subsequent critique, of terms that represents and encompasses similar items or concepts that are present within the lives of individuals. Dramatism allows language to be viewed as an action. In order for an action to occur, the conditions of freedom, purpose or will, and motion, must be satisfied (Foss, Foss, and Trapp 196).
By definition, freedom requires that an individual make a decision while being fully aware of all consequences of her or his choice (Burke *The Rhetoric of Religion* 281). This requires that the individual have sufficient knowledge of the consequences that could occur due to the action. In reality, true freedom is virtually unattainable due to human beings’ inability to foresee all potential consequences of a decision. In order to reach freedom through these circumstances, an individual must make a choice based on the consequences that she or he logically foresees. After fulfilling the first condition, one must next fulfill the purpose or will. In order for an action to be more than motion, there must be a distinct purpose that motivates the freedom and purpose or will, the condition of motion must be satisfied (Burke *A Grammar of Motives* 14). Finally, after identifying freedom and purpose or will, the condition of motion must be satisfied. This concept supports the logic that “action cannot exist without motion” (Foss, Foss, and Trapp 197). In this instance, action is best understood through the symbolic naming of a duck. To properly function with the symbol system of the human language, a duck must possess both symbolic and non-symbolic representations. Through the recognition of the interdependence of the symbolic to the non-symbolic, one can observe the relation of action to motion. Without motion, an action is unable to take place due to the lack of momentum that is provided by motion. In other words, action is simply a sitting duck without motion.

The study of dramatism provides the foundation for the concept of motive. Foss, Foss, and Trap assert that through freedom and purpose, two of the characteristics of dramatism previously discussed, it is logical to believe that the two concepts would allow for the motives of a rhetor to be discovered (198). To Burke, this translates into the desire to know, “what people are doing and why they are doing it,” (*A Grammar of Motives* 1). This train of thought gave rise
to the need for a critical apparatus that would allow for the pinpointing of individual aspects influencing motive.

The Pentad

The pentad, as defined by Borchers, is a “tool of analysis that lets us trace how our worlds are constructed through rhetoric” (152). Through the use of the pentad, an individual is able to discern the individual factors that influence and drive the available means of persuasion, or rhetoric, produced by a specific rhetor. Burke explained the Pentad in *A Grammar of Motives* by stating,

In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the *act* (names what took place, in thought or deed), and with another that names the *scene* (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred,); also, you must indicate what person or kind of person (*agent*) performed the act, what means or instruments he used (*agency*), and the *purpose*. (1)

The five elements previously mentioned, including act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose, constitute the pentad.

The five elements of the pentad enable humans to provide a symbol that allows for the understanding of a broad category through the simplicity of a single word. Each element forces the rhetor to ask the questions of who, what, when, where, why, or how this element occurred (Foss, Foss, and Trapp 199). Burke explains his selection of these terms and their usefulness, when he states,

Men may violently disagree about the purposes behind a given act, or about the character of the person who did it, or how he did it, or in what kind of situation he acted; or they may even insist upon totally different words to name the act itself. But be that as it may, any complete statement about motives will offer some kind of answers to these five questions: what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency), and why (purpose). (*A Grammar of Motives* xv)

Burke’s explanation of his selection of these five terms allows for the simple identification of the individual tributaries that reveal a specific motive.
In order for the Pentad to properly function, Burke proposed the idea of ratios that describe the interactions and relationships of the five elements. The elements are consubstantial, meaning they possess shared aspects of the five categories. This relationship is viewed through the interdependence of the elements that forces the five categories to work together in order for an act to occur (Foss, Foss, and Trapp). Within the ratios there tends to be a dominant term that guides how the interactions of the related elements occur. In order to better understand the mechanics of the pentadic ratio, I present two examples.

During the 2008 presidential campaigns, Mitt Romney possessed one striking similarity to a past presidential candidate who rode to victory through his campaign. John F. Kennedy, like Romney, was the first of his religious faith to ascend to the highest tier of American politics. As a Catholic, Kennedy faced skeptical audiences who were unsure of his “fitness” for public office due to this religious affiliation. In 2008, Romney faced the same skepticism due to his belief in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Brian T. Kaylor addressed these issues, first, through the agent-scene ration where he pointed out that even though the situations of the politicians are similar, the reality of the two scenes and two agents are quite different (498). In this discussion, Kaylor showed that the scene of the two presidential campaigns took place in two different stages of the election process while also highlighting that the agents possessed different levels of acceptance from their audience. Through this example, it is possible to see how the scene and the agent each contain shared aspects that allow the other element to properly function.

While still using agent as an element of the pentadic ratio, an example of agent-act ratio appears in Colleen E. Kelley’s critique of Representative George Hansen’s 1984 campaign rhetoric (207). U.S. Congressman George Hansen received a felony conviction for filing false
financial reports in April 1984, then ran for reelection the following November (Kelley 204). The Congressman would not be re-elected. In order to establish this ratio, Kelley first explores the media’s use of the agent-purpose ratio. Through the use of the agent-purpose ratio, Kelley shows that the media is able to address Hansen’s guilt, his dunce-like persona, and his overdone/stupid rhetorical style (Kelley 206). In order to respond to the media’s portrayal, Hansen must also employ a pentadic ratio. The congressman selects the agent-act ratio. Hansen casts “big government” in the role of a demon set upon persecuting the incumbent (Kelley 207). In this critique, the federal government represents the agent, while Hansen paints himself as an innocent victim of the actions taken by this evil agent. Kelley shows that Hansen attacks the agent, the federal government, mainly for actions responsible for abuses of power and double standards. Hansen is able to set others at odds with the federal government by the recounting of these actions. He is able to elevate “his argument from his personal plight as a convicted felon to a more universal theme of conflict between ‘Good and Evil’ – from Hansen versus the Department of Justice to the people of Idaho versus Washington D.C., West versus East, Conservative versus Liberal and, finally, George/The People/The Dragon Slayer versus Federal Courts/Politicians/The Dragon” (Kelley 209). By establishing two sides that are at odds with one another, Hansen attacks the agent, and the actions taken by the agent, in order to paint himself as a victim.

Logology

Moving forward from the pentad, Burke next introduced the rhetorical concept of logology. Foss, Foss, & Trapp define the term as Burke’s “effort to discover how language works to discover motivational systems and orientations through the examination of words” (202). Burke’s study of logology is an extension of his study of symbols. In order to better
understand how symbols and logology functioned in language, Burke studied Christian theology due to the persuasiveness of the messages produced by the religion.

The god term serves as an almighty, omnipresent symbol for religion. The presence of this primary vehicle is only possible through a symbol system. In this model, God is not a person. There is not a concrete example of a non-symbolic entity. Instead, the beliefs and perceived actions of this Supreme Being, mesh together in order to form a symbol that represents those characteristics. His creation supports the idea that language creates symbols which leads to the creation of reality. Through Burke’s understanding of theology, and the discovery of the fundamental truths of nature and the various forms of language used, Christian theology proved to be the most effective model of understanding the functions of language and symbol systems.

Through his study of theology, Burke discovered that language systems need the ability to identify what something is not. Burke’s use of the Christian theological model allowed the scholar to call upon the texts of the religion in order to show how the system shows what something is not. “Logologically, the distinction between natural innocence and fallen man hinges about this problem of language and the negative. Eliminate language from nature, and there can be no moral disobedience. In this sense, moral disobedience is ‘doctrinal.’ Like faith, it is grounded in language” (Burke, The Rhetoric of Religion 187). Through his study and examination of this model, the prevalence of the negative within human nature was put under a spotlight. Burke stated, “In the world of nature, there are not negative conditions, but only positive conditions. The only way whereby one can not be at one place is for one to be at some other place” (Burke, A Grammar of Motives 295). Negatives are distinctive to symbol systems due to humans needing the ability to distinguish between what an item is or is not (Foss, Foss, &
Trapp 203). This can be expanded to include individuals’ differentiation between right and wrong. Burke highlighted the evolution of the negative having arisen as,

…a moral function rather than a semantic function. The negative would thus arise in some such usage as this: for the positive, kill; for the negative kill, at your peril. It would thus in its origin not have the force of a negative at all, but of some deterrent positive state. The suggestion is buttressed by the fact that in both Greek and Latin, verbs suggesting fear, apprehension, misgivings, and the like, require negative forms for the positive state.” (Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* 296)

Because Burke defined humans as symbol using and misusing creatures, it is evident that our ability to misuse symbols necessitated the creation of negative within our language system.

The use of the negative within the theological model can first be witnessed in the naming of the attributes of God. “Infinite,” “incomprehensible,” “unending,” and “incorporeal” all suggest that there are alternatives to the characteristics of God that call for a need to explain the negative (Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* 295). Burke explained this phenomenon by stating, “Accordingly, the applying of negative terms to God does not indicate that God Himself is negative, but only that the human imagination is unable to transcend the limitations of the senses” (*A Grammar of Motives*, 295). This allows the vehicle of symbol use to be identified for what it is not in order for mankind to understand what that symbol represents.

The need for the negative within the realm of human language can be seen through Burke’s example of what a tree is and what a tree is not. Burke states, “Language, to be used properly, must be ‘discounted.’ We must remind ourselves that, whatever correspondence there is between a word and the thing it names, the word is not the thing. The word “tree” is not a tree” (*Rhetoric of Religion* 18). In order for humans to differentiate between objects, the need to identify what an object is not, becomes a necessity that allows our symbol system to function properly. Burke continued to explain this idea,
The Paradox of the negative, then, is simply this: Quite as the word “tree” is verbal and the thing tree is non-verbal, so all words for the non-verbal must, by the very nature of the case, discuss the realm of the non-verbal in terms of what it is not. Hence, to use words properly, we must spontaneously have a feeling for the principle of the negative.” (Rhetoric of Religion 18)

The negative provides the means to properly identify the symbols of the language system in order to increase clarity and continuity amongst people who participate in the language system.

Hierarchy

The negative, thus, leads to the creation of hierarchies. Hierarchies motivate their members to strive for perfection in order to advance or maintain upper echelons of power within the hierarchy. “As they desire to use language correctly, they strive toward perfection in all of their symbolic action-driving toward unattainable ideals and given to excess in their attempts to attain those ideals” (Foss, Foss, & Trapp 205). This highlights the accuracy of Burke’s belief that human beings are rotten with perfection (Language as Symbolic Action 16).

Borcher’s explained hierarchy through the example of the U.S. Government. Within this hierarchy, the President sits atop the summit. In order to protect the importance of this position, and the privileges and duties that come along with it, rhetoric is created to perpetuate the belief system surrounding the office. This is seen through the laws and customs of the U.S. Government. The hierarchy is able to flourish due to the fact that those in the position of power tend to be a mystery to those beneath them in the hierarchy. Thus, mystery allows for differences in class levels that create distinct barriers between the various class structures involved in the development of a distinct hierarchy (148).

Burke’s Rebirth Cycle

After establishing a foundation of understanding with regard to the above-mentioned areas of study, one is led to Burke’s Rebirth Cycle. Guilt/Pollution, Purification, and Redemption
constitute the areas encompassed by the cycle. Burke introduced the idea of the function of this cycle within the realm of society through the following poem.

Here are the steps
In the Iron Law of History
That welds Order and Sacrifice

Order leads to Guilt
(For who can keep commandments!)
Guilt needs Redemption
(for who would not be cleaned!)
Redemption needs Redeemer
(which is to say, a Victim!)

Order
Through Guilt
To Victimage
(hence: Cult of the Kill)” (Rhetoric of Religion, 4-5)

This particular poem provides an example of how each of the individual elements of the rebirth cycle interacts. It shows how the introduction of order into the realm of humans unsurprisingly leads to guilt. Guilt then necessitates the need for redemption in order to make right the difficulties imposed by order. Finally, there must be a victim in order for a redeemer to be introduced into the cycle. This poem provides an abstract example of redemption. Through this instance, we are provided with concepts that allow us to dig deeper into Burke’s Rebirth Cycle. I will first explore the Guilt/Pollution stage.

Burke’s pollution stage of the Rebirth Cycle represents the initial recognition of guilt due to an action taken by taken by an individual. Guilt results from the rejection of a hierarchy. The results of guilt can be seen as causing challenges to relationships, changes in power, and appropriateness of behaviors to change (Rybacki & Rybacki 72). Parallels can be drawn between the concept of pollution and the concept of original sin. Original sin can be seen as “… an
offense that cannot be avoided or a condition in which all people share” (Foss, Foss, Trapp 207). In essence, pollution is the initial action that strips a situation of purity.

The second stage of Burke’s Rebirth Cycle is the purification stage. In order to remedy the effects of guilt there are two forms of “ritual purification” that are prevalent. These two forms include mortification and victimage. Jasinski defined mortification as involving “personal sacrifice by the guilty.” He went on to define victimage as publicly saddling a scapegoat with guilt (365).

As addressed earlier, hierarchy creates stratification within society that enables those in the upper echelons of power to marginalize less powerful groups of individuals present within that society. Through this marginalization the need for mortification becomes apparent. Burke stated, “The principle of Mortification is particularly crucial to conditions of empire, which act simultaneously to awaken all sorts of odd and exacting appetites, while at the same time imposing equally odd and exacting obstacles to their fulfillment” (Rhetoric of Motives 190). This observation highlighted the need for individuals to have an outlet for which to express the desire to achieve to glory within the ranks of empire, while still maintaining a façade of purity. Through the use of mortification, individuals can preserve the façade of purity.

Mortification allows for an individual to self-sacrifice in order to cleanse themselves of the impurities that the public deems the individual is responsible for or possesses. The degree of purification must be equal to the severity of the guilt. If the purification is not equal, then purification can never be reached. The inability to reach mortification forces an individual to project, “his conflict upon a scapegoat, by ‘passing the buck,’ by seeking a sacrificial vessel upon which he can vent, as from without, a turmoil that is actually within” (Rhetoric of Motives 190-191). The need to use oneself as the sacrificial vessel allows an individual to rid herself or
himself of the sins they are burdened with while still remaining virtuous. Burke continued by saying, “In an emphatic way, mortification is the exercising of oneself in ‘virtue’; it is a systematic way of saying not to Disorder, or obediently saying yes to Order. Its opposite is license, luxuria, ‘fornication,’ saying yes to Disorder, or disobediently saying no to Order” (Rhetoric of Religion 190). Individuals embrace their innate ability to distinguish between order and disorder so as to support the need for order within society.

The concept of mortification can be seen through Jason Edward Black’s critique of Maka-tai-mesh-ekia-kia’k’s (Chief Black Hawk) surrender to President Andrew Jackson. After the Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced the Sauk Nation to relocate from their ancestral homelands to a U.S. reservation, Black Hawk peacefully led his tribe back to their homelands as a “peaceful means” to their survival. A resulting battle between the tribe and U.S. troops ended in numerous casualties and injuries for the tribe, while also being forced back to the reservation. Black Hawk chose to cast himself in the role of scapegoat through his surrender rhetoric (Black np). “Black Hawk, in order to save his nation from blame and outright conquest, paid the ultimate penance with his life; he scapegoated, and thereupon destroyed, himself through a rhetoric of suicide. Consequently, Black Hawk ‘rises no more,’ ‘his sun is setting,’ and ‘his heart is dead and no longer beats in his bosom’” (Black np). Through his actions Black Hawk is able to redirect the shame that is felt by his nation toward himself. In essence, he “victimized himself instead of his nation” (Black n.p). He enables the tribe to see him as the failure instead of its members as a whole. This allows Black Hawk to cull the member from the tribe.

As noted earlier, Burke bases his study of symbol systems on Christian theology due to his belief that it is a perfect model of a symbol system. Through this belief, Burke provides examples of mortification through the citing of biblical characters and the trials and tribulations
that they each individually shoulder in order to complete the cleansing process that allows them to become a member of Christ’s Kingdom. Most obvious among the references used by Burke is that of the sacrifice made by Christ in his death. The connection between mortification and theology is evident when Burke states,

    Sovereignty and subjection (the poles of governance) are brought together in the same figure (Christ as King and Christ as Servant respectively) and the contradiction between these principles is logically resolved by a narrative device, the notion of two advents whereby Christ could appear once as servant and the second time as king. Here is the idea of a ‘perfect’ victim to cancel (or ‘cover’) what was in effect the ‘perfect’ sin (its technical perfection residing in the fact that it was the first transgression of the first man against the first and foremost authority). (Rhetoric of Religion 191)

In this particular example, mortification is reached through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Christ’s crucifixion embodies self-sacrifice of the creator’s son in order to save the human race from eternal damnation. Upon this sacrifice, Christ ascends to heaven so as to become King. By using this example, Burke is able to show how the perfect character in the perfect model completes the perfect mortification. His use of Christ to explain mortification gives a concrete example, of which many are familiar, in order to further solidify the importance of understanding how mortification works in order to fulfill ritual purification.

    The second form of ritual purification is victimage. As Burke states, “Men who can unite on nothing else can unite on the basis of a foe shared by all” (Burke “The Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle” 239). The need to rid society of a foe, who is either specific to a group/community or is shared by society as a whole, leads to the realm of victimage. Of this point, Tonn, Endress, and Diamond argue that “Humans… are inherently tribal, which means that individuals protect their own kind, their own community, society, or cultures, against that which is alien” (p.266). Burke highlights society’s need to rectify division within its ranks. He contended that “People so dislike the idea of division, their dislike can easily be turned against the man or group who would so
much as name it, let alone proposing to act upon it” (Burke “The Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle” 245). Victimage allows for the creation of a scapegoat that serves as a depository of impurities in order to protect against entities that are alien to a particular society. Burke highlights this in *A Grammar of Motives*. He argued,

Thus the scapegoat represents the principle of division in that its persecutors would alienate from themselves to it their own uncleanliness. For one must remember that a scapegoat cannot be ‘curative’ except insofar as it represents the iniquities of those who would be cured by attacking it. In representing their iniquities, it performs the role of vicarious atonement (that is, unification, or merger, granted to those who have alienated their iniquities upon it, and so may be purified through its suffering).” (406)

Through this action the scapegoat takes on the sins of the impure, thus allowing them to be redeemed, while the scapegoat is forced to suffer the scarlet letter that has been placed on their back due to the allotment of impurities.

The scapegoating device forces an adjustment in symbols within the human language. Burke explains, “And insomuch as substitution is a prime resource of symbol systems, the conditions are set for catharsis by scapegoat (including the ‘natural’ invitation to ‘project’ upon the enemy any troublesome traits of our own we would like to negate)” (*Language as Symbolic Action* 18). Because we are members of a symbol-using society, scapegoating fulfills the human need to adjust symbols in order to protect the delicate order of the system from perceived or actual threats.

Ott and Aoki discuss the need to “expunge” the perceived evil from a targeted individual or group (276). In order to express the evil “within” there are three distinct stages associated with the scapegoat mechanism. Burke defined these three stages as,

…(1) an original state or merger, in that the inequities are shared by both the iniquitous and their chosen vessel; (2) a principle of division, in that the elements shared in common are being ritualistically alienated; (3) a new principle of
merger, this time in the unification of those whose purified identity is defined in dialectical opposition to the sacrificial offering.” (406)

These three stages allow for easy identification of the necessary means needed to identify perceived evil within a potential scapegoat. After the identification of these categories, society is enabled with the tools needed to cast their unwanted characteristics or negative attributes on the unfortunate being selected as the scapegoat.

An example of victimage can be seen in Hitler’s extermination of European Jewish communities.

The projective device of the scapegoat, coupled with the Hitlerite Doctrine of inborn racial superiority, provides its followers with a “‘positive’ view of life…In Hitler, as the groups prophet, such rebirth involved a symbolic change of lineage…He renounces this ‘ancestry’ in a “materialistic way by voting himself and the members of his lodge a different ‘blood stream’ from that of the Jews” (“The Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle” 244).

In this regard the victimage aspect of Guilt is realized through Hitler’s renouncing the lineage of the Jews thus turning them into the scapegoats for this situation.

After establishing the necessary elements that must be present in order for Guilt/Pollution and Purification to operate, the cycle progresses to its final stage. Redemption constitutes the completion of the Burkean Rebirth Cycle. Foss, Foss and Trapp define redemption as a “temporary rest or stasis that represents symbolic rebirth” (207).

Upon reaching the final stage of redemption, the necessary actions have been taken in order to cleanse the situation, group, or individual of their sins, and allows for the cycle to begin anew. This action is similar to that of a caterpillar emerging from a cocoon as a butterfly. Initially, the caterpillar is a worm like creature that is viewed negatively due to the perceptions of others. Upon the caterpillar’s entrance into the cocoon, he can shed these negative perceptions through the metamorphosis that takes place while in the cocoon. When the caterpillar emerges from the cocoon as a butterfly it has reached redemption and begins a new cycle.
Burke proposed two frames of redemption. The first, tragic redemption shows how the principle of guilt combines with the principles of perfection and substitution, both elements of symbol systems, in a way that the principle of victimage can be utilized. The intricate line of exposition might be summed up thus: If order, then guilt; if guilt, then need for redemption; but any such payment is victimage (*A Rhetoric of Religion* 450). From this definition, it can be discerned that through the tragic frame, the “guilty is removed from the rhetorical community through either scapegoating or mortification” (Borchers 158). Burke’s second form of redemption is that of comic enlightenment. Comic enlightenment or redemption is defined as “all individuals, at times, are guilty of foolish actions” (Borchers 158). Through this path, comic enlightenment allows society to retain the guilty as part of the collective whole. Society, thus, becomes guilty through this inclusion. Once the preferred course of redemption is solidified, the rebirth cycle is enabled to complete its cyclical journey. It is important to remember, however, “Unfortunately the redeemed state is brief, for there is always something wrong in the world, always a new source of guilt” (Carlson and Hocking).
Storytelling has always played a vital role in my family. We are not a large family. We all live within five minutes of one another, mostly on family land. Our physical proximity to one another provided vast opportunities for the development of a social closeness that is sometimes not found in larger families. Wilson and Mary Ruth Burks, my great grandparents, were both hardworking, proud, and fun loving individuals. This is probably why they were married for sixty-one years! They raised two sons, Stanley and Tommy. Mary Ruth, with her tall, stately figure and perfectly coiffed steel gray hair, was a commanding presence in any room she entered. Though “Nanny” could attract attention simply through her presence, it was her ability to tell stories that made her an incomparable force.

One of Nanny’s most impressive stories was that of the murder of her father, Stanley Joseph O’Rourke. Prior to Nanny’s birth, in 1916, her parents, Stanley and Betty O’Rourke, relocated their family from Rose Hill, Mississippi, which was located in the east central portion of the state, to Bogalusa, Louisiana. There were positions available with Great Southern Lumber Company in Bogalusa for skilled carpenters like “Papa O’Rourke.” Seeing as times were not that great for most rural southern families, the opportunity to work for a company that would provide honest wages for an honest days work, appealed greatly to the couple.
Fast-forward to 1919, my Nanny has now entered the picture. She is living the carefree life of a three year old. Like most little girls, she adores her father. One morning, however, her carefree life is turned upside down. That morning, her father was sitting in the local barbershop, when gunmen entered the business and shot him at point blank range for being a local union leader. Her father was immediately rushed seventy-five miles away to Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Mary Ruth remembered the panic of her mother rushing about and the fear on the faces of her older siblings. What had happened to her carefree world and where was her beloved father?

Later that week, the family made a trip to Charity Hospital. Walking through the clean, sterile environment she has her eyes focused on a single prize: seeing her Daddy. As they walked to his bed, he scooped her up and gave her a giant hug and kiss. He told her, “Don’t worry baby, Daddy is going to be alright!” Seeing her Daddy, and receiving the reassurance that he was going to be alright, was enough to set her little heart and mind at ease. Her carefree world was restored.

After visiting with Papa O’Rourke that afternoon, the family returned to Bogalusa with a positive outlook. The patriarch was on the mend and was expected to make a full recovery. Though the outlook was on the uptick, but the reality would be far different. A few days after the family’s trip, Papa O’Rourke, was dead. The family never received his body or knew where he was buried. His death, Nanny believed, was at the hands of Great Southern Lumber Company officials who were unhappy that the union leader was not killed during the first attempt on his life at the Barbershop.

Nanny’s perfect carefree world vanished on the day of his murder. Nanny, her mother, and her siblings would now face the difficult struggle of surviving the early twentieth century
without a paternal “breadwinner.” Instead of becoming bitter, the family pulled together and became strong. They embraced the importance of hard work, an innate toughness, and humor. But most of all, they embraced the importance of family.

The oral history that I share above was passed down from my great grandmother to my grandfather and his brother, and finally to all of the grandchildren and great grandchildren. This chronicling of events seeks to provide a context separate from the one established through newspaper and historical accounts of the event. After establishing the context from which I first (personally) learned about Bloody Bogalusa, I will now explore the historical context surrounding the event.

In 1902, Brothers Frank and Charles Goodyear of Buffalo, New York entered into a business partnership in order to manufacture hemlock lumber in Pennsylvania. After incorporation, the Goodyear Lumber Company flourished from the harvests and manufacture of hemlock lumber. The company held 100,000 acres of Pennsylvania timber and fifteen sawmills, while also being in control of woodworking, mining, and steam shipping services (Myrick 3). Following a pervasive lead set by such notable families as the Morgans, Mellons, and Rockfellers, in which these northern investors swooped in to feast on the meat of southern industry during the New South era, the Goodyears moved their lumber holdings south (Woodward 292).

The Piney Woods of southwest Mississippi and southeast Louisiana provided virgin territory for timber interests. Frank and Charles Goodyear, along with a group of investors, purchased a large holding of land in Washington Parish, Louisiana in 1906 (Norwood 597). After purchasing the land, Great Southern Lumber Company as the enterprise became known, set to work logging the forests and building a mill and town to support the timber operation. The
land, which was located on the Bogue Losa creek, a tributary of the Pearl River, lent its name to the new town accompanying the Lumber Mill (Myrick 13). On September 1, 1908, under the supervision of W.H. Sullivan, Great Southern Lumber opened the world’s largest sawmill (“The Largest Lumber Mill in the World Begins Operations” 15). The mill employed thirteen thousand skilled laborers in various occupations associated with the timber industry (“What Ten Years of Vision and Progress Have Done for Bogalusa, LA” 19).

During the vast majority of Great Southern Lumber Company’s early existence, the mill did not experience discontent amongst the workers, at least not any publicly noted or recorded. In 1919, however, Great Southern Lumber Company experienced its first taste of unrest. The unrest came on the heels of a nationwide summer of violence and lynching of black individuals called “Red Summer.” After a crescendo of attacks on black citizens across the United States during the spring of that year, “Red Summer” reached a climax on a hot May night in Charleston, South Carolina.

On the night of May 10, 1919, a group of white sailors descended upon a pool hall where they killed a black patron for supposedly cheating the group out of a fifth of whiskey (McWhirter 41 & Whitaker 51). The action of the sailors resulted in an outbreak of mob violence in the black portion of town where the pool hall was located. It was not long before loads of sailors from the local Navy yard arrived to counter the black mob. These sailors, armed with brickbats and guns stolen from a shooting gallery, killed two blacks and injured seventeen more (Whitaker 51). This was the worst violence seen in Charleston since the Civil War.

The events in Charleston signified a major shift in race relations that would take place during the summer of 1919. Lynchings, burnings of live persons, and beatings became a common response by white Americans to perceived slights or wrongdoings by blacks across the
Following the return of soldiers from World War I, and the mass migration to industrial hubs by black workers, the United States witnessed an uptick in racially motivated hate crimes. The migration of the workers forced a shortage of jobs for returning white veterans. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Chicago, Illinois, where whites clashed with blacks over organized labor, living conditions, and claimed “turf” within the city. Violence between local gangs and blacks became prevalent within the city. The Pullman Car Strike in which transit workers walked off the job after a contract dispute crippled the city. Due to the strike, workers were forced to walk to work in the packing plants. This posed a problem for black workers who refused to walk to work due to the previous violence between blacks and gangs. The city became overrun with vigilantism and riots. It took militia intervention to quell the violence (McWhirter 114-147).

Though 1919 saw great violence between blacks and whites, there were some areas in which bi-racial alliances were formed. One of these locations was New Orleans, Louisiana, seventy-five miles of Bogalusa. New Orleans, at the time, served as major hub of industry for the region. Due to the city’s involvement with multiple industries, it was naturally a home to a robust labor movement. Unions of dockworkers, longshoremen, brewers, and cotton workers were prevalent within New Orleans. One of the city’s most noted labor unions was that of the dockworkers or longshoreman, given New Orleans’ long-time connection to maritime commerce. As a segregated city, initially there was not cooperation amongst the dockworkers and longshoreman in terms of race. It was not until black folks were specifically targeted with suppression that work-sharing agreements could be made (Rosenberg 22). The labor unions were split into black and white local chapters. These local chapters would then come together for actions such as the 1907 Longshoreman strike, when longshoreman walked off the job due to
a wage dispute. Split local chapters allowed an arrangement that was agreeable to both whites and blacks. Whites were not forced to share a union with black members, but benefitted from an alliance that could be called upon when labor issues arose, and blacks could operate local chapters that could cater to their specific needs, while utilizing the strengths of their white counterparts if needed (Rosenberg 72).

In order to safeguard against racial unrest associated with labor struggles and racial issues, the citizens of Bogalusa took measures to protect the town. It was in this vein that the pro-business Self Preservation and Loyalty League (SPLL) formed. This civic organization consisted of “two hundred tax-paying citizens who are non-union members and non-employees of Great Southern Lumber Company…” (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2). Bogalusa’s vigilante SPLL allowed the merchants and professionals of the town an outlet to protect their properties and livelihoods against labor (Norwood 1). The organization’s most prominent actions did not occur until November of 1919.

On November 21, 1919, members of the SPLL issued a warrant for Sol Dacus’s arrest. Dacus, in his mid-fifties, was the leader for the local black union of timber workers of Great Southern Lumber Company (McWhirter 243). The black union formed virtually at the same time as the white workers; both groups sought “better working conditions, less hours, and an advance in pay” (“Mob Victim Sues for $102, 360” 1). This arrest warrant was issued on the grounds that he was a “dangerous and suspicious character” (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2). Members of the SPLL and city police officers spent that night turning Bogalusa’s black quarters upside down in the hopes of locating Dacus. The mob ransacked the Dacus home, demolishing the family’s personal belongings and firing shots into the house. One of these
bullets narrowly missed Mrs. Dacus. An article in the renowned paragon of the black press, the

*Chicago Defender*, stated

> “When Dacus heard that the mob was coming after him, he did not return, but sought refuge behind a clump of bushes near his house to watch the advance of the raiders. The crowd had now increased to and more than 100 men circled Dacus’s home. After a thorough but futile search, the mob set fire to the house and left a notice, giving Dacus a warning to leave the town at once.” (“Mob Victim Sues for $102,360” 1)

Coinciding with Dacus’s arrest warrant, and subsequent search for the black union leader, the SPLL raided a passenger train prior to its arrival in Bogalusa on the night of November 21, 1919. On this particular night, approximately 500 SPLL members searched the train for Dacus (McWhirter 243). Though Dacus was the desired target of this raid, the organization also took this opportunity to search the train for union sympathizers. The search for Dacus potentially gave the SPLL the ability to deny entrance to potential “Radicals” or “Undesirables” to Bogalusa. The admittance of “Radicals” or “Undesirables” posed as great of a threat to the city of Bogalusa as Dacus did to the SPLL. A thorough search of the train, however, produced neither Dacus nor any other “undesirables” (“Legion Members and Labor Chiefs In Bloody Battle” 1).

Upon Dacus’ harried flight from his home, he met two union carpenters, with whom he was acquainted through union associations, who were hunting in the swamps near town. Stanley J. O’Rourke, Great Lumber carpenter and secretary/treasurer of the Allied Trade Council of Bogalusa (the local white union) and J.P. Bouchillon, Great Lumber carpenter, led Dacus down Columbia Street, one of the main thoroughfares of Bogalusa, on the morning of November 22, 1919. By direction of L.E. “Lem” Williams, the President of the Allied Trade Council of Bogalusa and editor of the local labor paper *Free Press*, the two union men, armed with shotguns in order to ensure Dacus’ protection, led the black leader down the street (“Battle Climax of
There are conflicting reports about whether Williams hid Dacus during the previous night’s raid. The Union members’ parade of the black union leader down Columbia Street led to Williams’ automotive garage and was designed to send a message to merchants and other members of the SPLL (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2). That message was that the union would protect its members, regardless of color, from senseless acts of violence implemented by the SPLL.

The leading of Dacus down Columbia Street did indeed send a message to members of the SPLL. Members notified Chief of Police T.A. Magee. Chief Magee, upon this notification, issued warrants for the arrests of O’Rourke, Bouchillon, and another one for Dacus. The warrants for the two union men were issued on the grounds of disturbing the peace.

Shortly after arriving at Williams’ garage, the union members were surrounded by a mob of SPLL members. Local police blasted a siren used to signify to the SPLL that they should assemble at city hall in order to protect the town (“Radicals Invite Fight; 3 Killed” 1). Approximately forty-five members, many of whom were ex-military, arrived for duty (“Legion Members and Labor Chiefs In Bloody Battle” 1). Jules Leblanc, a special officer of the SPLL and former Army captain, accompanied the mob to Williams’ garage (“Loyalty Leaguers Kill 3 Union Men” 1).

The armed group arrived at Williams’ garage, which sat 150 feet behind a gate that led to the street, and prepared to serve the warrants to Dacus, O’Rourke, and Bouchillon (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2). There are conflicting reports, however, about how the altercation between the union members and the SPLL commenced. One report claimed that after requesting that Williams come out of his garage and surrender the men, Williams yelled, “If you want me come and get me,” as one of the men in the garage fired on the SPLL (“Radicals Invite Fight; 3
Killed” 1). Another report claimed that the SPLL did not even make it into the gates of Williams’ garage before the group was fired upon (“3 White Men Killed Protecting Negro” B2). A report by the Atlanta Constitution claimed that upon the SPLL’s arrival, Thomas Gaines, a union carpenter, was spotted near the garage with a shotgun and order by Chief of Police W.C. Magee to drop his gun. Gaines replied, “Come and get it,” then warned the others in the garage of the dangerous group outside the garage (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2). The Nashville Tennessean reported the same scenario, only after Gaines was warned to drop his weapon, an armed Williams emerged from his garage (1). Magee and Leblanc warned Williams to also drop his weapon and surrender Dacus. Williams’ answer was a shot intended for Magee, but instead grazed the arm of Leblanc (“Bogalusa Quiet After Battle In Which Three Die” 1). The New York Times went as far as to say that the SPLL met the men on the street and forced them to retreat to the garage. Upon this retreat the SPLL demanded that the men surrender Dacus. This, the New York Times reported, resulted in the SPLL being fired on by someone in or near the garage (“Loyalty Leaguers Kill 3 Union Men” 1).

One thing that can be agreed upon is that this interaction resulted in the shooting of Lem Williams. The labor leader received a life ending shot while raising his shotgun to his shoulder, standing in the doorway of his garage (“Legion Members and Labor Chiefs in Bloody Battle” 1). As Williams slumped in the doorway of the garage, the bloody battle between the union men and the SPLL ignited.

In the end, Williams, Bouchillon, and Gaines were killed immediately in the battle. Dacus fled the scene and was not captured by officials. James Williams, the brother of Lem Williams, was arrested and charged with shooting with the intent to kill.
The historical accounts provided by the newspaper articles offer a counter narrative to my personal narrative of my great, great grandfather’s murder. During the battle, O’Rourke was shot three times. His injuries included gun shot wounds to his left hand, right arm, and right lung (“Radicals Invite Fight” 1). As my personal narrative indicated, he was treated at the Bogalusa Hospital, where he was then transferred to a New Orleans facility when the attendants in Bogalusa could do no more for his injuries. O’Rourke posted bond of $2,000 during his stay in the hospital in response to the warrant for his arrest (“Bogalusa Smarts Under Notoriety Brought By Riot” 1). On November 28, 1919, five days after the encounter, O’Rourke died from the wounds he incurred during the fight between the union men and the SPLL (“Union Leader is Dead” 9).

Immediately following the murders of the union leaders, William L. Donnels, general organizer of the New Orleans Chapter of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, a labor union dedicated to the advancement of wages, restriction of working hours, and benefits of both white and black workers, took action requesting an investigation of the murders of the three union men. Donnels sent copies of this request to Samuel Gompers, founder of the American Federation of Labor, a federation of labor unions, and U.S. Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson (“3 White Men Killed Protecting Negro” B2).

Following the battle at the garage, the Governor of Louisiana, Ruffin G. Pleasant, requested that troops be sent in to protect the town and hopefully ward off any further uprisings. Five officers and one hundred enlisted army men arrived from Fort Morgan near Mobile, Alabama (“U.S. Soldiers Sent to Louisiana Town” 4). The men did not encounter any unrest from union members (“Bogalusa is Quiet” 1). In the days following the battle, the only unrest came from members of the American Legion. The American Legion constituted an organization
of those honorably discharged from the U.S. military having served at least one day of active duty. Thirteen members of the organization escorted Ed O’Brien, a sawyer and union member, out of town on the grounds that he was a radical, due to supposed remarks he made approving of the shooting of American soldiers at an Armistice Day Parade in Centralia, Washington (“Legion Members and Labor Chiefs in Bloody Battle” 1).

The widows of the union leaders who were murder by the SPLL each filed civil suits against Great Southern Lumber seeking damages for $50,000 each. It was the common consensus that the “company agents had deliberately murdered their husbands, the sole support of their children, because the men were union leaders” (Norwood 622). O’Rourke and Bouchillon’s widows each settled outside of court for $2,500 each. Williams’ widow later filed suit in federal court against Great Southern Lumber. The suit sought to “recover damages for the alleged unlawful killing of her husband.” The Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the judgment and remanded the case for a new trial. In their ruling, the Supreme Court of the United States Ruled in favor of Great Southern Lumber Company (Williams v. Great Southern Lumber). The court ruled “the posse” of SPLL members “was not a mob but a legitimate police force” (Norwood 623).

Although my great, great grandmother did not receive the $50,000 worth of damages she originally sought, the $2,500 she did receive was enough money to move her family back to Rose Hill, MS. She would raise her children on her own, never taking another husband. My Nanny would never again feel the arms of her beloved father. He would not be there to give her away on her wedding day. Her children would never get to meet him. Our family was stripped of his presence due to the senseless acts of a bigoted group of cowards.
CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

Burke’s rebirth cycle provides the theoretical framework for my analysis of the events that constitute the Bloody Bogalusa drama. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the rebirth cycle consists of three stages: Guilt/Pollution, Purification, and Redemption. In order to fully articulate the ways in which the Burkean rebirth cycle applies to this drama, I will employ the use of a pentadic ratio. After thorough textual analysis, it became evident that the Agent: Act ratio best defined the events that transpired in each stage of the rebirth cycle. Thus, my critical analysis is driven by this specific ratio.

Overall, there are several Agent: Act ratios that drive this drama. Each of these ratios provides a different aspect that contributes to the overall makeup of the events. The three stages of Burke’s rebirth cycle provide specific Agent: Act ratios that facilitate the events to operate within the realm of this particular rhetorical device. In the guilt/pollution stage, it is evident that Agent: Act ratios appeared through the walk that took place down Columbia Street. The Purification stage provided Agent: Act ratios through the victimage of those involved with the battle that takes place at Williams’ garage. Finally, the Agent: Act Ratio is seen through the military occupation of Bogalusa and the Supreme Court case. In order to best understand the
connection between Bloody Bogalusa and Burke’s rebirth cycle, I will first examine the
Guilt/Pollution stage.

Guilt and Pollution in Great Southern’s Order

In order for the Guilt/Pollution stage of the rebirth cycle to commence, there must first be a triggering event that occurs in order to signify a threat to the party at the height of the hierarchy. The results of guilt/pollution can be seen as causing challenges to relationships, changes in power, and appropriateness of behaviors to change (Rybacki & Rybacki 72). In the case of Bloody Bogalusa, pollution is first seen by the walk of Dacus, the leader of the black union, down Columbia Street by O’Rourke and Bouchillon, two white, union carpenters. The two union carpenters adopt the role of agent, while their ceremonial walk constitutes action. Even though O’Rourke and Bouchillon are the most obvious agents in the Agent: Act ratio, I will also discuss, a less apparent agent. This agent is Dacus and his action of walking down the street.

On the morning of November 22, O’Rourke and Bouchillon, each armed with shotguns, led Dacus down one of the main thoroughfares of Bogalusa. The processional was en route to the garage of Lem Williams. The march through town was meant to prove a point: no one would harm a member of the labor unions, regardless of color.

The New York Times reported on November 23, 1919, “the negro emerged from his hiding place and walked boldly down the principle street of town.” Dacus’ emergence and subsequent walk produced a powerful image of a marginalized individual being placed in a role of importance. The article went on to state, “On either side of him was an armed white man, one was O’Rourke, a leader in labor union circles, and the other a union sympathizer, whose identity
has not been ascertained” (1). In this instance, an image of solidarity was produced that subsequently provided two avenues upon which to examine the Agent: Act ratio.

In this moment, there were two Agent: Act ratios that emerged. When first examining this momentous walk, it is quite easy to label O’Rourke and Bouchillon as the agents. As agents, their actions promoted the safety of Dacus. Prior to this walk, Dacus hid in the nearby swamps after he fled from a mob of SPLL members attempting to force him from his home. Through the action of an armed escort, the agents presented a threat to the local hierarchy. A supposed black felon, the lowliest in the hierarchy of Bogalusa, was given protection to walk through town in order to reach safety.

Burke’s use of theology provides a parallel for explanation of the Agent: Act ratio with regard to O’Rourke and Bouchillon protecting Dacus during their walk down Columbia Street. In order to best understand this connection, I introduce the parable of the lost sheep. The parable reads,

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent. (New International Version, Luke. 15. 1-7)

As agents, O’Rourke and Bouchillon, represent the shepherd in the parable. Dacus is subsequently cast as the sheep. After the sheep is forced from the symbolic flock, the agents must take actions to reunite the lost sheep. Though the union men’s discovery of their symbolic lamb differs from that of the shepard in the parable, they must still complete the symbolic return. The symbolic return to the flock is seen through their walk down Columbia Street.
As the parable stated, “And when he finds it he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’” The agents in their walk down Columbia Street symbolically placed Dacus on their shoulders through the action of their armed guarding. They showed that Dacus is of great importance to the labor movement, or flock, and thus they give him a place of honor in their walk. He was protected from anyone who wanted to harm him. Just as the shepherd called upon his friends and neighbors to join in celebrating the return of his lost sheep, so too did the agents. This is materialized through the newspaper accounts documenting O’Rourke’s challenges for anyone to try to take Dacus away from them.

Stepping away from O’Rourke and Bouchillon’s role as agents, I will now examine an alternate Agent: Act ratio that is less apparent, yet equally as important. As the New York Times article on November 23, 1919 stated, “This morning, to the surprise of the loyalty league men, the negro emerged from his hiding place and walked boldly down the principal street of the town.” (“Loyalty Leaguers Kill 3 Union Men.” 1) In order for this action to have occurred, it would necessitate freewill on the part of Dacus. If Dacus was operating under his own recognizance, it is only natural to designate the role of agent to the black leader. The action of walking down the street can thus be seen as an empowering act. Dacus, as a black man in the Jim Crow South, was at the bottom of the social hierarchy. O’Rourke and Bouchillon, as white men, subsequently were of higher hierarchical significance.

How does all of this fit into the pollution stage? As stated earlier, pollution required that there be a threat to the designated order or hierarchy. In a time where segregation and Jim Crow laws were the norm, a negro walking “boldly down the principal street of town,” was a sure-fire way to ruffle the feathers of not only those who were opposed to an open shop, but also those
who were of prominent economic and social positions within the town ("Loyalty Leaguers Kill 3 Union Men" 1). The follow-through of this action had an additional result. O’Rourke, Bouchillon, and Dacus’ march completed the pollution stage. Order was destroyed. In this instance the labor and racial hierarchy was threatened. This threat would force the agents of Great Southern Lumber Company and local business leaders to act in order to rectify the pollution that occurred, and to protect their positions within the hierarchy of the town.

It is important at this time to recognize the complex race issues that are at play within this analysis. Even though race is not the focus of this analysis, it is virtually impossible to not acknowledge the possibility of the white union members using the black members as a tool that enabled them to reach their unionization goals. Instead of viewing these men as their equals, the white leaders could have simply been using the blacks to bolster their probability of attaining desired benefits within Great Southern Lumber Company.

**Purification of Great Southern Lumber Company**

O’Rourke, Bouchillon, and Dacus’ walk down Columbia Street, forced Great Southern Lumber Company to respond in order for the pollution that occurred to be corrected. The presence of Guilt/Pollution led to the need for order to be restored through the means of purification. Burke outlined two options for completing ritual purification: victimage and mortification. In the case of Bloody Bogalusa, the SPLL, acting in the role of agent, employed the use of victimage in order to eradicate the town and lumber company of the labor leaders. I, however, would also like to argue that the Agent: Act ratio represented by the SPLL and the attack made by their mob, is part of a larger Agent: Act ratio in which Great Southern Lumber Company represented the agent and the attack represents action.
Victimage allowed for the creation of a scapegoat that served as a depository of impurities to protect against entities that are alien to a particular society. There were three scapegoats that played separate roles within the purification process. Dacus, the labor leaders, and the SPLL each are harnessed with different sins. These scapegoats are needed in order to cleanse the town and company of the perceived dangers. Burke highlights society’s need to rectify division within its ranks by arguing, “People so dislike the idea of division, their dislike can easily be turned against the man or group who would so much as name it, let alone proposing to act upon it” (“The Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle” 245).

As we can see, it was in the best interest of Great Southern Lumber Company and the local business leaders to eliminate the possibility of continued support for a biracial union. Instead of eliminating the workers by firing them from their jobs, Great Southern Lumber, allowed the SPLL to take care of their dirty work. All the company had to do was sit back and watch the local business leaders eliminate two of their scapegoats.

Bogalusa, a relatively quiet town, was built for the sheer purpose of convenience for Great Southern Lumber Company. By building the town, Great Southern Lumber Company provided all the necessary accoutrement its workers would need in order to live and work near their employer. In a sense, through the building of this town, Great Southern Lumber served a patriarchal role that allowed the company to control the atmosphere of the town through their post atop the summit of the hierarchy. From this perch, Great Southern Lumber Company fabricated a scapegoat that was employed to rid the Company and the town of Bogalusa of the agitators that caused pollution. This scapegoat was the SPLL.

The *New Orleans Times Picayune*, on November 25, 1919, shared an interview with an anonymous SPLL member that provided the origins of the SPLL. The
anonymous cited that the league “was formed as a last resort to save the city from a condition closely bordering on anarchy. Malcontents had practically taken possession of the town.” (“Bogalusa Finds Open Shop Fight Source of Strife” 1). The presence of these less than desirable individuals forced citizens to action to protect the town and their livelihoods. The organization was spearheaded by, “men who have seen service…those men volunteered to answer any call when they might be needed to preserve order. They are a sort of vigilance committee, but have authorized police power (“Bogalusa Finds Open Shop Fight Source of Strife” 4). This group, though not directly associated with Great Southern Lumber Company, had a bearing on the company’s actions during Bloody Bogalusa.

Officials with Great Southern Lumber Company were quick to point out that this vigilante group had nothing to do with the company. W.H. Sullivan, President of Great Southern Lumber Company, stated,

he failed to see the justice in constantly referring to the lumber company in connection…the first requirement for membership in which is that the applicant shall be in no way connected with this company. The warrants issued for the men who were to be apprehended were issued because of an occurrence that took place outside of mill property, and the men who went there to serve them were officers of the law, sworn in by the sheriff and mayor. (“Bogalusa Finds Open Shop Fight Source of Strife” 1)

When making this statement, Mr. Sullivan, made one huge blunder that points directly to Great Southern Lumber Company being the agent in this particular Agent: Act ratio. W.H. Sullivan was the mayor of Bogalusa (“U.S. Soldiers Sent To Louisiana Town” 4). As he stated, law enforcement and the mayor swore in the members of the loyalty league that were allowed to form. Following this piece of information, Great Southern Lumber Company gave the go-ahead for these men to assemble to purge the company and community of the union members they
deemed agitators, due to the fact that the president of the company and the mayor were the same person.

Seeing that Great Southern Lumber Company created a scapegoat, all that was left for the company to do was to sit back and let the mob take down the union members, and await the symbolic purification. Their scapegoat was ready to take the fall. The SPLL members, however, did not see themselves as the scapegoat. In order for symbolic purification to occur, I will now focus on the SPLL’s role as agent in the Agent: Act ratio.

The mob formed by the SPLL was organized of members who were merchants and other business leaders of the town. In order to be a member of the SPLL one could not be an employee of Great Southern Lumber Company. Though this may have been the case, one needs to step back and observe the bigger picture surrounding the organization. Bogalusa was established solely for the purpose of serving Great Southern Lumber. The town predominantly consisted of workers of the lumber company. The money that came through the merchant’s and businessman’s shops came directly from Great Southern Lumber with only one stop: the hands of Great Southern’s workers. Even though the merchants may have been independent businesses, they were still controlled by Great Southern Lumber Company. This is evidenced through a newspaper article that stated, “The company officials declared during the month of May last a number of the prominent business men of the city had met and passed resolutions offering their co-operation in case labor dissensions got beyond the control of the authorities” (“Bogalusa Finds Open Shop Fight Source of Strife” 4). These merchants planned to take action in order to suppress the labor movement long before the fateful day in November.

If the workers were unhappy, two outcomes were probable for the business community. The first is that workers could strike. A strike would naturally result in loss of paychecks for the
employees. The loss of these pay checks would lead to decreased profits for the businesses. The second outcome pertains to the businesses support of the workers. If the businesses were to support the labor union, they ran the risk of being blacklisted by the company. As a business in a town that was built for one specific company, the businesses could not run the risk of upsetting Great Southern Lumber.

With all of this being said, even though these individuals were not on Great Southern Lumber Company’s payroll, their livelihoods were directly affected by the success of the company. Though the SPLL represents an Agent: Act ratio, they were operating in the best interests of Great Southern Lumber.

The walk made the previous day was the last straw. As a mock law enforcement entity, the SPLL, as agent, began the action of purifying the misbehavior of the union members committed that morning as call to take action in the form of organizing their members. These members, combined with such notable law enforcement personnel as Chief of Police W.C. Magee, descended upon the union men on the heels of their arrival at Williams’ garage.

At this point, Dacus and the union men became the most obvious scapegoats to pin that morning’s disturbance. Several newspapers provided accounts of the SPLL’s attack on the union men. For instance, The New York Times, on November 23, 1919, stated,

Rallying their force quickly, the Loyalty Leaguers forced the three to retreat to an automobile garage. When called upon to surrender the negro the men in the garage refused, and the firing began. The besieged drew first blood. Leblanc was shot through the arm. That only increase the zeal of the besiegers whose numbers constantly increased. (“Loyalty Leaguers Kill 3 Union Men” 1)

From this account, a startling pattern emerged. The agents are depicted as righteous public servants on a mission to purge their town, and ultimately Great Southern Lumber Company, of an almost feral foe. The SPLL is subsequently placed in a position of power. This is shown by the SPLL’s supposed “forced retreat” of the union men. Forcing a retreat led to the blame for
the bloody battle being placed squarely on the shoulders of the union men who drew the first
blood during the skirmish.

Additional accounts of from the day echoed the justification of the actions taken by the
SPLL. On November 23, 1919, the *Atlanta Constitution*, reported,

The chief of police had sworn in forty-five special officers and they quickly
formed to make the arrest. W.C. Magee and Jules Leblanc, with warrants for
O’Rourke, Bouchillon, and Dacus, started toward the building, but just as they
entered a gate leading to the garage they were fired upon. Leblanc was hit in the
arm…Williams, the labor leader, then stepped into the doorway. Officers say he
refused to give up the men and made an attempt to carry his shotgun to his
shoulder. He was instantly shot to death…The garage was rushed by the
determined officers and only the body of Gaines, with a pistol with discharged
cartridges in it and a shotgun at his side, and James Williams were found.
Bouchillon fell in the center of the garage.” (“Legion Members and Labor Chiefs
in Bloody Battle” 1)

In this instance, the SPLL’s ethos is bolstered through the presence of Chief of Police W.C.
Magee and Jules Leblanc, an SPLL leader who was a former U.S. Army Captain. The agents
embrace a larger sense of legitimacy in their actions due to the support they have from law
enforcement. They now had the force of institutionalized power to substantiate the actions that
were taken as agents in order to suppress the organization of labor. The scapegoats are
specifically named at this point: O’Rourke, Bouchillon, Dacus, Williams, and Gaines, J.
Williams.

The drama continued with a separate account of the events that took place on November
22, 1919. In *The Atlanta Constitution* the agents’ actions on November 24, 1919, are further
chronicled. The paper stated,

The desperate and determined battle then began with Williams dropping dead in
his tracks from a quick volley by the special policeman. The policemen said that
Bouchillon was killed at the window when his pump-gun jammed as he was
attempting to shoot. Gaines, they said, fired through the garage door first with a
pistol and later with a shotgun. His body was found in the middle of the garage.
Dacus and an unknown number of white men made a dash for the woods and
escaped. O’Rourke and James Williams climbed out a window police officials
said, and made a break for safety, but O’Rourke fell with buckshot wounds in his
breast and Williams threw up his hands. Officers said a shotgun was found by
O’Rourke. (“Battle Climax of Long Trouble” 2)

In this instance, the results of the actions taken by the SPLL were brought to fruition. The article
chronicled each of the casualties and injuries sustained by the union men. Success is the ultimate
result of this article. The SPLL took it upon themselves to protect the town and their livelihoods,
by descending upon the union men who were seen as disrupting order. By killing and injuring
these men, the SPLL successfully eliminated the source of disruption. Each of these articles
showed the SPLL in the role of the agent, taking actions to defeat the union men.

The SPLL, adopting role of agent, forced the elimination of those responsible for
guilt/pollution through the action of firing on the labor leaders and Dacus. The league descended
upon the garage with the intent to kill. A mob of fifty armed men does not set out to negotiate
with five men. When Williams did not hand-over Dacus after the first request made by Leblanc,
the mob fired on the labor members. The five men did not stand a chance against the mob. This
action eliminated the leaders of both unions.

Great Southern Lumber Company was a silent agent in this interaction. This was a very
smart decision on their part. By allowing the SPLL to take up arms against the union leaders, the
company’s threat of biracial unionization and open shop was eliminated without anyone at the
company committing the lethal act. When it came time for blame to be placed for the deaths of
labor leaders, the company was able to point to the SPLL. Their hands were clean. Purification
is reached through the deaths of Williams, Bouchillion, and Gaines, along with the flee of Dacus,
and the arrest of one labor member. These individuals who served as scapegoats enabled the
Company and SPLL to rid the drama of those responsible for guilt/pollution.
Redemption of Great Southern Lumber Company

Redemption resulted in a “temporary rest or stasis that represents a symbolic rebirth” (Foss, Foss, & Trapp 209). Bloody Bogalusa’s events culminated in a multi-faceted Redemption stage. The most obvious means of restoring Great Southern Lumber Company to a fully functioning and harmonious source of industry, required the assurance that no more employees created any uprising in support of the fallen labor leaders. A call for troops to Bogalusa sought to create this assurance.

On the night of November 25, 1919, five officers and one hundred soldiers were dispatched from Fort Morgan, near Mobile, Alabama to assist in securing Bogalusa (“U.S. Soldiers Sent to Louisiana” 4). The troops saw no action following the uprising that took place days earlier. In this instance, once again, Great Southern Lumber Company did not serve as the agent. According to newspaper accounts, concerned citizens lobbied Governor Ruffin G. Pleasant to request special protection to be sent to the town (“U.S. Troops On Way to Bogalusa to Keep Order” 1 & “U.S. Soldiers Sent to Louisiana Town” 4) Ruffin’s action of sending troops to Bogalusa, though not a direct action of the company, benefitted Great Southern in the sense that it created institutionalized fear amongst the company’s employees. By having the troops stationed about town, an atmosphere of oppression and fear existed within the town through the use of institutionalized power. In essence, the town of Bogalusa became a military state. Being under military rule suppressed the workers’ ability to organize further and to instigate another uprising. How could organization occur when the town was under the ever-watchful eye of U.S. troops who were authorized to fire upon radicals?

The presence of the troops after the events of Bloody Bogalusa served as a temporary source of redemption. Bogalusa’s occupation by federally mandated troops was not a restoration
that could be feasibly maintained. These troops would one day have to return to Fort Morgan. The company allowed the presence of the troops to strike fear and intimidation within its workers. By having workers who were intimidated, the company would not have to worry about the workers reorganizing their labor movement. This imposed intimidation allowed Great Southern Lumber to begin to restore order amongst its workers, and return to a state in which the operations of the company that enhanced productivity. For this time immediately following the events of Bloody Bogalusa, Great Southern Lumber was on the road to a rebirth. No longer were they a company who did not have control of its workers. Instead, Great Southern Lumber was a company at the forefront of squelching labor unrest in order to maintain the order necessary to run the world’s largest lumber mill.

As we saw from previous events, Great Southern Lumber invoked actions that created a temporary redemption of the company. Though this worked in the immediate time following the events of Bloody Bogalusa, the lumber company faced a subsequent issue that forced the drama to continue. Lena A. Williams, widow of labor leader L.E “Lem” Williams, filed a suit on behalf of her minor children, charging Great Southern Lumber Company with the unlawful killing of her husband (Williams v. Great Southern Lumber Co). This court case forced Great Southern Lumber Company to address the role it played in the death of at least one of the labor leaders.

Great Southern Lumber Company used the Supreme Court case as a source of ultimate redemption. In the previous stage, I identified the union members, Dacus, and the SPLL as scapegoats used by Great Southern Lumber Company. The identification of these individuals as scapegoats also played a crucial role in the redemption stage of Bloody Bogalusa. Great Southern Lumber, through the use of the Supreme Court, deposited the guilt associated with the
uprising squarely on the backs of the scapegoats so as to restore order to the Company. This was accomplished through the use of the tragic frame.

In the case of redemption, the Agent: Act ratio appeared through the Supreme Court of the United States’ ruling in Great Southern Lumber Company’s favor. Citing two specific errors, the Supreme Court reversed the decision of the lower court. These two errors included 1) exclusion of evidence showing threatening language used by O’Rourke and Bouchillon that “prevented the Company from presenting its full and complete defense to the jury, and 2) the plaintiff was allowed to testify of hearing a person who could not be confirmed to be part of the party say that the posse “had come to kill Lem Williams, and they had killed him” (Williams V. Great Southern Lumber Company).

In both of these instances Great Southern Lumber Company was absolved of the violent actions that were taken in order to squelch unionization of their workers. The Supreme Court, in the role of agent, took action to bestow guilt upon Great Southern Lumber Company’s scapegoats in order to complete redemption. The opinion of the court stated,

A crucial issue in the case was whether the party that killed Williams was a mob, acting concert with the Company, which had gone to his office for the purpose of killing him; or whether it was a bona fide posse of peace officers sent by the Chief of Police and the Commissioner of Public Safety to aid the officer in making the arrests. On this issue it was of prime importance to the Company to show the reason which the Chief of Police and the Commissioner of Public Safety had for sending the posse of voluntary police to assist in making the arrest, and not leave the bona fide nature of the posse—which was directly brought in issue—to depend merely upon the expression of their opinion was based. This was emphasized by the facts upon which that opinion was based. (Williams v. Great Southern Lumber Co)

Through the Court’s reasoning, it became evident that the justices were willing to pass the responsibility of the attack off to the SPLL. This decision disregards the close associations the group had with Great Southern Lumber Company. The scapegoat that Great Southern created
during the purification stage served its ultimate purpose: to absolve the company of any guilt associated with the murders.

The court continued its utilization of Great Southern’s scapegoats by addressing O’Rourke and Bouchillon when it stated,

This was emphasized by the fact that while the district judge did not permit evidence of the threatening language used by O’Rourke and Bouchillon to go to the jury, he charged then that a citizen carrying arms publicly on the street committed no offense and was not subject to arrest; thus leaving the jury to infer that the conduct of O’Rourke and Bouchillon, unaccompanied by any evidence of threatening language, was entirely lawful, and not a justification for issuing the warrants against them or sending the posse of voluntary police to assist in the arrests. The exclusion of evidence as to the threatening language obviously prevented the Company from presenting its full and complete defense to the jury. (Williams v. Great Southern Lumber Co)

The Supreme Court showed that the company was not at fault due to the fact that O’Rourke and Bouchillon used inflammatory language during their walk down Columbia Street. Though they were employees of the company, they brought on the wrath of the SPLL, and there was nothing the company could do to protect them. In other words, they were asking for it and got what they had coming to them.

From the above-mentioned reasons, we see a correlation to the tragic frame. Borchers’ definition which stated, “tragic redemption, the guilty is removed from the rhetorical community through either scapegoating or mortification” gave merit to the citations of the court. The scapegoats that were cited were removed from the rhetorical community of Great Southern Lumber Company. This was accomplished by the killing of the union leaders and the dismissal of their family’s claims, and also by the disassociation of the SPLL to the company.

The victory received by Great Southern Lumber Company through the Supreme Court case allowed the mill to finally put to rest the turmoil of Bloody Bogalusa. This ruling answered the lingering questions surrounding the company’s involvement in the murders of the labor
leaders. Using the ethos provided by the Supreme Court ruling, the lumber company gained the ability to substantiate its innocence. When innocence was established, there would no longer be a need to acknowledge the accusations made by disgruntled families of the union leaders. Great Southern Lumber Company could once again return to the days in which the workers blindly followed the company line and did not question their working conditions.

Having reached the end point in the redemption stage, Great Southern Lumber Company was able to recognize that their sins had been washed clean. The lumber company could begin anew. They would once again be able to focus solely on the harvesting and production of lumber. No longer would they be forced to acknowledge the disruption that took place in November of 1919.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS

After examining the events of Bloody Bogalusa, I hope to have shed light on the ways in which this rhetorical drama operated. Throughout this thesis I explored and analyzed the various events that constituted Bloody Bogalusa through Kenneth Burke’s Rebirth Cycle. Through the use of the Agent: Act ratio, I established that the rhetorical frameworks of Guilt/Pollution, Purification, and Redemption allowed this particular drama to play out in 1919.

What implications does this thesis offer for the use of Burke’s rebirth cycle? This thesis provided another example of the longevity and usefulness of this theoretical framework in regards to redemption. Each of the stages is clearly seen through the Agent: Act Ratios that I provided. These stages all prove that they are dependent on the interactions of these ratios in order to reach redemption. Without these interactions, redemption would be nearly impossible. The Burkean rebirth cycle proved that in situations that require a scapegoat in order to rectify a triggering situation, this particular cycle could be utilized in order to best explain how the events correspond in order to provide redemption. Though this is an older theoretical framework, I feel that it is still relevant to today’s scholarship. It provided a foundational framework that allowed
me to understand and make sense of the individual elements that had to synchronize in order for
redemption to occur. From this understanding, this framework brought to light additional
frameworks that could be employed in order to further understand the event.

The most obvious of these frameworks would be that of narrative criticism, which as
defined by Walter Fisher challenges “the notions that human communication-if it is to be
considered rhetorical-must be an argumentative form, that reason is to be attributed only to
discourse marked by evaluation of rhetorical communication must be rational standards taken
essentially from informal and formal logic” (Fisher 291). Following this form of criticism, a
critic could further their understanding of the narratives that are employed to recall Bloody
Bogalusa. It could also lend a hand in understanding how Bloody Bogalusa fits into the larger
narrative of the Red Summer of 1919. As noted in the historical context, Bloody Bogalusa was
part of Red Summer. Bloody Bogalusa, unique to most events that took place during Red
Summer, provided an example of biracial unity. Through the use of narrative criticism, the
events of this drama would provide a critique that would benefit the larger body of literature
pertaining to the study of this distinct time period and drama. Instead of focusing solely on the
racial discord that occurred during this specific period, Bloody Bogalusa provided an example in
which whites risked, and lost, their lives in order to protect their black brethren. This event
provided a challenge to the conventional narrative that has been assigned to this time period, and
allowed for an expansion in understanding of race relations during this period.

My analysis blended the use of textual analyses and a personal narrative. The personal
narrative that was passed down from my Great Grandmother made me acutely aware of agents
that were less apparent than those that would not have been as apparent through a purely textual
analysis. The agents that I was concerned about were those who were not viewed as possessing
great deals of power. I was interested in those that were oppressed by Great Southern Lumber Company and how the company went about eliminating those individuals so as to restore order to their business. By employing the use of my personal narrative, I was able to look at the texts from an alternate framework that would not have been contained in the textual analysis.

What does this implication mean for future research? This implied that rhetorical messages that are produced by those in positions of power shape the memory of a historical event. By using textual analysis and personal narratives, a critique is created that provided a broader picture in which to analyze an event. It provided a larger degree of balance that simply is not provided solely through textual analysis alone. These messages of those in power, which are in control of information that is provided to create historical accounts of an event, however, failed to report both sides of the story. Consequently, the resulting depiction, is skewed, and resulted in an imbalanced view of the event. I will not go as far as to say that it results in an inaccurate depiction of the event, but rather a one sided depiction that ultimately produced great difficulties for those on the less powerful side of the hierarchy.

The Agent: Act ratio enabled multiple individuals and actions to work together in order to fulfill the Guilt/Pollution and Purification stages while ultimately reaching redemption. Through this analysis, it was noted that those at the pinnacle of the hierarchy benefitted from the Agent: Act ratios produce by those at lower levels of the hierarchy. The benefits of these ratios enabled those in the positions of power to keep a shining, upstanding façade after the bloody events that transpired on November 22, 1919. By keeping the sterling façade, Great Southern Lumber Company was able to return to work as usual after they received the Supreme Court Ruling in their favor, and brushed off the events that occurred as results of disgruntled towns people who
clashed with Great Southern Lumber Company employees. Through this vein, the company was absolved of all guilt and responsibility associated with the murders of the union members.

To me, this is disturbing, and led to an implication that I felt offered an avenue for future research. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, New Orleans was home to flourishing bi-racial unions. The local chapters of the various unions within this city found a way to work together and have a sense of unity between their members. These unions went through times of strife in order to reach this state of unity. Looking at the way Great Southern Lumber Company handled their only bi-racial union drama, it proved necessary to expand the body of texts to include other attempts at bi-racial unionization by other industries within the region. Pulling news articles, much in the way I constructed the textual analysis for this critique, from the dates surrounding the initial proposal of the unions through unionization and their subsequent establishment, a critic could establish a large body of texts to analyze. Utilizing the unions found in the city of New Orleans, but also expanding the scope to other unions such as mill workers, timber workers, and miners, who were employed in surrounding states, would allow for a larger scope upon which to view bi-racial unionization in the region.

Finally, I would like to recognize the impact that the personal, family narratives of the families of Dacus, and other black union members, could play on the Bloody Bogalusa drama. The narratives of these families allow for yet another interpretation of the events that surround this drama. By using these narratives, a critic can begin to tackle the difficult issues that race presents in this drama.

As I walked outside of my house in Hattiesburg, MS, the location where I edited this thesis, I noticed that familiar putrid aroma hanging heavily in the air after a severe weather system passed through our area. Unlike every other time I have noticed the smell, I took a
moment to recognize the significance behind it. No longer was it a smell that made me want to run and hide. Instead, it was a symbol of solidarity, progressivism, and perseverance. It served as a reminder that my great, great grandfather died protecting a cause that lobbied for the inclusion of every worker, regardless of race, in a time where this was not a popular action to support. Though he was taken from our family in a vicious manner, we can be proud in the fact that he died trying to bring a better way of life to the workers of Great Southern Lumber Company.
WORKS CITED


