Visual Rhetoric as Analytical Strategy: The Case of the U.S. Anti-Abortion Campaign to "Save Black Babies"

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In February 2010, a series of 80 billboards sprang across the state of Georgia. Sponsored by the anti-abortion organizations Georgia Right to Life and the Radiance Foundation who spent approximately $20,000 on the campaign, the billboards featured a close-up photo of the face of an African American infant. The following text accompanied the image: “Black Children are an Endangered Species.” (See Figure 2.) The billboards caused an immediate outrage among many within the African American community and captured the attention of the national media, including CNN, ABC News, the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*. An impromptu coalition of Atlanta-based organizations was formed to lobby CBS Outdoors, which owns the billboard sites, to have the ads taken down. Led by the group SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, this coalition of reproductive justice organizations, African American civil rights organizations, and African American religious leaders were successful in getting these ads down, but little did they know that Atlanta was just the beginning (SisterSong 2010).

For the next two years, similar billboard ads emerged in other major cities such as New York, Chicago and Oakland, CA and across several states, including Texas, Wisconsin, Missouri, Florida, and Tennessee. Sponsored by a number of organizations such as the Radiance Foundation, Life Always, Issues4Life Foundation, and Pro-Life Wisconsin, these ads appeared mainly in regions with large African American populations, and expanded upon the theme of the original Atlanta ad. All of the ads featured photographic images of African American infants or small children, and included a variety of provocative captions, such as “The Most Dangerous Place for an African American in in the Womb” and “Black & Beautiful.” Aa example of shrewd targeted advertising, one billboard in Chicago featured the likeness of President Barack Obama with text that ominously stated, “Every 21 Minutes, Our Next Possible Leader is Aborted.”

This newer campaign has left many people—health advocates, scholars and activists alike—scratching their heads in bewilderment and, at times, seething in indeterminable anger (SisterSong 2010). It was clear who the intended audience was and that the boards were meant to be provocative, but it was not so clear what other purpose the ads served. A possible clue to unlocking the mystery were the website addresses included in the ads—toomanyaborted.com and thatsabortion.com, which are maintained by the Radiance Foundation and Life Always, respectfully.

Upon a quick inspection of these websites and the other sites that were hyperlinked to them, it becomes clear that these billboard ads are part of a larger campaign to “save black babies,” a campaign devised by a network of anti-abortion organizations and activists, including several that have been

created by and for African Americans. Citing the high abortion rates among African Americans and the location of family planning clinics, particularly Planned Parenthood clinics, in communities of color, these organizations argue that that abortion is a form of black genocide and that the "abortion industry" is deliberately targeting African Americans (Enouen 2012). The campaign also includes other websites such as blackgenocide.org, protectingblacklife.org and klanparenthood.com and a film entitled *Maafa 21: Black Genocide in the 21st Century* (2009). Produced and distributed by the Texas-based anti-abortion organization Life Dynamics, the film claims to expose the centuries-long conspiracy to eliminate the African American population though abortion and family planning; it was a scheme devised by the social, political and economic elite in the United States. *Maafa 21* has enjoyed public screenings on the campuses of several historically Black colleges and universities and at African American community centers and Churches.

It became clear that something new was emerging. First of all, this campaign is not being driven by the anti-abortion organizations, such as the National Right to Life Committee and the American Life League, that normally make the national headlines. It is being driven by a network of organizations that included lesser known (majority white) anti-abortion organizations that have African American outreach programs such as Life Dynamics (Texas), Priests for Life (New York) and the Life Issues Institute (Ohio) and anti-abortion organizations founded and led by African Americans, including the Radiance Foundation (Virginia), LEARN Northeast (Life Education and Resource Network) (New Jersey), and the National Black Pro-Life Union (District of Columbia). These groups often work together and reference each other on their websites and publications. Some pundits have suggested that this reflects the growing numbers of African Americans who have becoming actively involved in the anti-abortion movement—movement that has historically struggled to gain members from communities of color (Caulfield 2011). Given the key players in and the intended audience of this particular campaign, it makes one wonder how this movement has tailored its traditional anti-abortion message for African Americans and how this campaign taps into the collective cultural meanings and assumptions of its intended audience.

Although visual imagery has historically played a role in anti-abortion politics and activism, such as the use of 3-D sonogram images of fetuses in abortion counseling pamphlets, this newer campaign has taken on a decidedly visual nature (Boucher 2004, Condit 1990, Petchesky 1987). Part of this can be attributed to the fact that the main person behind the ad campaign, Ryan Bomberger, worked in advertising before founding the Radiance Foundation (Radiance Foundation 2013). It could also be an

indication of the increasing role and importance of visual communication in politics. We live in an increasingly digitally mediated world that spans film, television, video, the web, social media, and smartphone and tablet apps, and much of the information that we receive and process is now visual in nature. It should, then, be no surprise that political communication has become more visual.

Scholars have shown how social movements use images and symbols to draw attention to and support for their political causes and to make claims about the particular social problem they wish to solve. For example, sociologists Rohlinger and Klein (2012) write:

> Images are a powerful tool in a social movement's arsenal. A single image can capture the hearts and minds of the broader public and come to symbolize a movement….Images of environmental activists chained to bulldozers; young civil rights activists being blasted with water from high-powered hoses…the "tiny feet" of a 10-week-old fetus waved on the signs of prolife activists; and a coat hanger, the symbol of dangerous back-alley abortions, held solemnly by pro-choice activists all have come to represent their respective causes. These iconic images, however, are rarely spontaneous. Activists carefully craft symbols and situations that conform to the standards of news media and, hopefully, capture the imagination of a broader public, who will actively support their cause (172-3).

Rohlinger and Klein (2012) were specifically examining how the mainstream media uses visuals—or "visual landscapes"—to report on and represent the abortion issue. They found that these news sources tend to use the same imagery repeatedly to the point that these images had become homogenized. While it is important analyze the kind of visuals that the news media uses to report on political issues and the frequency of that use, it is equally important to try to understand the meaning conveyed in these visuals. We, scholars of politics, need to go beyond this and explore the ways in which visual imagery is a form of discursive, rhetorical practice. We need to see how visual rhetoric creating and communicates meaning for the speaker/writer (or rhetor) and the intended audience. As Meyers argues, "Discourse is not simply a linguistic practice; it refers to and constructs knowledge about a particular topic. The analysis of discourse examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but also the relationship between representation, meaning and power, and the construction of identities and subjectivities (2004, pp. 100-101)." Controlling the rhetoric, whether verbally or visually, of a political or policy issue grants the actor the power to define the terms and boundaries of the discourse, that is, to define what the legitimate perspectives and positions are.

My previous research has focused on narrative, specifically how groups construct political reality through the stories that they tell and how stories influence the making of public policy (Price 2010, 2011). However, this current project has forced me to consider the use of visual imagery in politics, but it has not been that clear how to go about doing that kind of analysis. I have had difficulty trying to develop a language, or theory, to talk and think about visual politics and visual rhetoric as well as trying to develop a methodology for analyzing visual rhetoric. It became clear that I would have to develop my own analytical strategy. This has resulted in the consulting a wide range of scholarly literature: classical rhetoric, visual studies in sociology, communication and organizational studies, (visual) semiotics and research on political cartoons, graphic novels and comic strips. This paper is a result of that exploration. Drawing upon my research on the "abortion is black genocide" campaign, it discusses the concept of visual rhetoric: What is it? Is it similar to verbal rhetoric? What can we learn from this type of analysis? It also explores the ways in which researchers can systematically analyze visual rhetoric in political and policy discourse.

What is Visual Rhetoric?

According to Corbett and Connors (1999), rhetoric is "the art or the discipline that deals with the use of discourse, either spoken or written, to inform or persuade or motivate an audience, whether that audience is made up of one person or a group of persons (p. 1)." Simply put, rhetoric is persuasive speech or writing. Notice that this definition focuses solely on *verbal* forms of rhetoric; however, rhetoric can also take on *visual* forms. But, what is visual rhetoric?

Visual rhetoric can have a variety of meanings. It can refer to the visual objects or artifacts that a rhetor generates for communication. It also can refer to the theoretical and empirical study of visual data; that is, it is the analysis of the symbolic and communicative aspects of visual artifacts that goes beyond pure aesthetics (Foss 2004). For the purposes of this project, I define rhetoric as persuasive discourse that communicates primarily through visual means and tends to be more symbolic, rather than literal, in nature. Even this working definition seems somewhat lacking. It still leaves one wondering whether visual rhetoric is patently different from verbal rhetoric and whether it shares elements with its verbal counterpart.

Some scholars of rhetoric have argued that the two are fundamentally different. It has generally been understood that verbal communication (i.e. language) has syntax, whereas visual communication (i.e. images) does not. Moreover, language is propositional in nature and can make claims about reality;

images are merely presentational and are “uninflected representation” (Messaris 2009). From these presuppositions, we are to conclude that language can make arguments; images cannot. Images can only convey or evoke emotions because of their presumed symbolic qualities, and they cannot tell stories because of their lack of syntax. But is that the case?

Verbal rhetoric can evoke emotions and has symbolic elements, such as metaphor and synecdoche. In fact, cognitive researchers have shown that all of our language is symbolic in nature (Lakoff and Johnson 2008). We speak in metaphor in everyday conversation. For instance, we often ascribe human qualities to inanimate objects, such as speaking of chairs and tables as having *legs*, and we ascribe directions to our emotional and mental states, such as saying that ones’ mood is *down*. It may not be the case that visuals do not have syntax or are able to tell stories; they just have a different syntax. It is probably more apt to say that visual materials—political cartoons, advertisements, flyers or photographs—are incomplete narratives that require that audience to piece the story together (Danjoux 2013). We just need to understand *how* visual materials convey meaning and stories and to develop ways to analyze visual materials.

As I mentioned earlier, I consulted a variety of scholarly literature—classical rhetoric (Corbett and Connors 1990, Crowley and Hawhee 2011, Ericsson 2003), visual semiotics and rhetoric (Foss 1995, 2004, Grady 2007, Messaris 2009), the rhetoric of abortion politics (Condit 1990, Gregory 2012, Luker 1985, Rohlinger 2006), the visual rhetoric of political cartoons (Danjoux 2013, Morris 1993) and the narrative structure of comics (Postema 2013)—in order to develop a strategy to systematically analyze visual materials. As Table 1 shows, there are many elements to consider while doing this kind of analysis. Some of these elements are similar to verbal forms of rhetoric, while others are distinctly different. Many tropes and modes of persuasion that apply to verbal rhetoric can also be applied to visual rhetoric. For example, the tropes of metaphor, hyperbole, synecdoche/metonymy,[1] and allusion can be easily conveyed visually. For some arguments, these tropes may even be better conveyed visually rather than verbally. In regard to the modes of persuasion, it is too facile to think that images can only appeal

[1] These tropes are closely related. At times, it can be difficult to differentiate the two (Corbett and Corbett 1999). Synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole, such as sail for ship and silver for money. Metonymy is when one substitutes some attribute of an object to represent that object, such as crown for royalty or brass for military officers. Following the lead of Rasmussen (2012), I use the term synecdoche to cover both tropes too lessen confusion.

to emotions (pathos), but it could also be possible that visual rhetoric can appeal to reason (logo) and the rhetor's ethics or character (ethos).[2]

Undoubtedly, there are analytical strategies that are unique to visual materials. First, analyzing the physical aspects of images (e.g. photos, drawings, symbols, etc.) is an important element. These physical aspects can include the colors that are used. Colors have cultural associations, but we must keep in mind that color associations differ across societies and even across social groups within a society. In the United States (and some other Western societies), the color blue is associated with a number of things. In terms of gender, it is associated with baby boys, hence the persistent colored-coded marketing of baby clothing and accessories for boys (blue) and girls (pink). Blue is often associated with certain emotions and states of being, including peace, calmness, sadness, depression, trust, loyalty and wisdom. Blue also connotes specific physical elements such as water, the ocean and the sky. The surrounding elements can help one decipher the meaning conveyed by the colors used in a visual artifact. Second, it is important to determine the relationship between the images and any accompanying text, including whether the text is the headline or in captions. Does the image need the text in order to tell its story or make its argument? Additionally, it may be beneficial to address the physical characteristics of the text, such as the color, and size and type of font used. Last, there is the issue of juxtaposition; the ways in which these various elements are placed on the plane (e.g. the page or computer screen) in relation to each other considering how these various elements are juxtaposed to one another (Foss 1995, Grady 2008, Morris 1993).

Additionally, kairos is a useful rhetorical concept to take into consideration. In classical rhetoric, time is considered an important component. However, it is the "time" in terms of how we normally think of time, that is, chronological, objective time (or *chronos*): the time of day, yesterday, today and tomorrow. It is "time" that is interpretive, subjective, which is called *kairos,* i.e. the rhetorical situation (Crowley and Hawhee 2011, Ericsson 2003). Kairos is *not* about duration, but about a certain kind of time, which is temporal, spatial and opportune. It is about seizing the right rhetorical moment; a speaker or writer must apprehend and assess kairos in order to address his or her audience effectively. In regard

[2] According to classical rhetorical theory, there are three modes of persuasion: 1) the appeal to reason (logos); 2) the appeal to ethics (ethos); and 3) the appeal to emotions (pathos) (Corbett and Connors 1999). The first appeal, reason/logos, relies on rational argument that employs either deductive or inductive logic, whereas the second appeal, ethical/ethos, relies of the strength of the character or personality of the speaker. When using ethical appeal, the audience must be convinced of the speaker's sound sense, high moral character and benevolence in order to be convinced of the speaker's argument. The last appeal, emotional/pathos, appeals to the emotions of the audience, which means that it is important for the speaker to be aware of the temper of the audience.

to analysis, this means considering the historical, political and social context from which the artifact emerged. It also means considering the values and interests of the potential audience and the rhetor; gauging power dynamics among groups; and understanding who is making what argument and why.

Once these individual elements are sorted through, there are overall issues questions to consider: What is the narrative or argument here? What emotions are evoked by this image or photo, or by these words? These, and possibly other questions, can help one determine the function, or purpose, of the artifact in question; this includes both intentional and unintentional meanings. We must keep in mind that a rhetor cannot completely control how audiences might interpret his or her visual artifact.

The remainder of this paper illustrates how I used these various elements to analyze the visual rhetoric of this anti-abortion campaign. For this project, I collected documents (data) from a variety of sources, including billboard images, websites, brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, reports, press releases, and films/videos, from nine pro-life/anti-abortion organizations, such as the Radiance Foundation, the National Black Pro-life Union, and the African American Outreach Program of Priests for Life. To provide some social and political context to this discourse, I analyzed news articles from the mainstream national press and the African American press, focusing on the period from 1987 to 2012.[3]

The Visual Rhetoric of the Politics of Outrage

Since its inception, the anti-abortion movement has argued that too many abortions are being performed in the United States. However, this rhetoric has become racialized; that is, that there are too many abortions being performed on *black* babies (fetuses). This, these groups claim, is supported by the fact that African American women have disproportionately higher rates of abortion than their white counterparts. In fact, this makes abortion the leading cause of death African Americans—higher than the usual suspects of HIV/AIDS, diabetes, heart disease and violent crimes (Davis 2001, Enouen 2012).

This is a tailor-made, rhetorical campaign that is intended to spark outrage among African Americans (Price 2013). It exploits racial tropes that resonant with this specific community, such as fears of racial extinction and conspiracies involving the Ku Klux Klan. The visual and verbal rhetoric of the

[3] I obtained the news article sample through searches of the two specialized ProQuest databases, Ethnic News Watch and Core National Newspapers. I used various combinations of the following keywords: black, African American, abortion, genocide and billboards. This resulted in an overall sample of 63 news articles (31 publications represented), spanning the years of 1989 to 2012 with the majority of the news articles coming from the African American press.

billboard ads and brochures grabs the attention of the reader, even if she or he may not be sure what the billboard or brochure is about. The billboards and brochures might elicit curiosity, confusion or even anger amongst its intended audience, but the inclusion of the addresses of the associated websites might encourage even the casual bystander to go online for more information. Once on the websites, the reader is bombarded with the full argument.

The politics of outrage is an emotionally-charged discourse that is imbued with metaphor, hyperbole, and synecdoche/metonym and is populated with victims *and* villains (Price 2013). Its intended goal is to spur strong, negative emotions in order to possibly change people's positions on a political or social issue and to subsequently mobilize people for action. In this particular discourse, the politics of outrage is comprised of three related components: anxiety, betrayal, and mistrust (Figure 1). The first step is to create a sense of racialized anxiety about a set of social conditions. The goal is to create anxiety within a community, to create a sense of urgency or extreme apprehension, fear of danger, whether real or imagined. Hyperbolic, alarmist, metaphorical language is the norm when cultivating anxiety. Examples include the frequent use of the terms (black) genocide and racial extermination and the claim that abortion is the leading cause of death among African Americans (Price 2013).

Second, one must convincingly create villains who are responsible for creating, exacerbating or capitalizing on the perceived problem; this is done by creating (or exploiting an existing) mistrust of specific institutions or groups of people and by fostering a sense of being betrayed by members of one's own community. These last two components (mistrust and betrayal) rely heavily on ceremonial discourse. While ceremonial discourse is normally associated with speeches at formal cultural rituals, such as graduations, funerals, weddings and festivals, it includes any speech used to praise or censure an individual, a group, an institution, or a nation (Corbett and Connors 1999).[4]

According to the film *Maafa 21*, this genocide is being orchestrated by a "family planning cartel" comprised of "individual elitists," such as Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffet," liberal social engineers" who control the Democratic Party, "wealthy elitists" who control the Republican Party, the media, and the academic community. Moreover, a fair amount of time and energy is spent speculating on the political positions of African American leaders and organizations on abortion and reproductive

[4] Judicial and deliberative are the other two types of discourses in classical rhetoric. In judicial discourse, which is often associated with courtroom cases, the rhetor makes an argument based on the facts of the case (evidence). Deliberative discourse is used to spur an audience into action (Corbett and Connor 1999).

rights, as both sides attempt to lay claim to the political and historical legacies of these icons, or to distance themselves from said icons, if needed (Bomberger 2013). Are they sufficiently "pro-life"? Do they support reproductive rights? Depending on who's telling the story, an African American leader who publicly supports abortion and reproductive rights is either a champion of women's rights (including African American women) or a "race traitor" who sanctions the termination of "innocent black babies" (or, at best, a "pawn" who has been "duped" by the abortion industry). This polarization has resulted in the creation of two categories of African Americans: the good ones vs. the bad ones (Price 2013). The next three subsections discuss several examples to show how visual rhetoric is used to propel this politics of outrage; the examples focus on two of the components—racialized anxiety and mistrust.

African American Children Are an Endangered Species Billboard

The first image (Figure 2) is the original billboard that surfaced in the Atlanta metropolitan area during the summer of 2010. Three things stand out: the color scheme, the text (caption), and the photo of the infant. The stark black-and-white color scheme sets an uneasy, somber mood, and is meant to seize the attention of its audience. The color black has many negative associations, including death, grief, evil and darkness. The only pop of color is on the words "Endangered Species," which is highlighted in yellow. Although the color yellow has some positive associations, such as hope, optimism and youth, it is also associated with caution, danger and cowardice. We get the sense that we are being warned about something.

The accompanying caption is a prime example of the type of hyperbolic language used in this campaign; it creates a sense of the racialized anxiety, particularly the highlighted words "Endangered Species." "Endangered Species" conjures associations with environmental campaigns to save animals such as the bald eagle, black rhino or giant panda. This phrase also alludes to earlier discourses, particularly in the late-1980s, about African American men being endangered species; the argument is that the well-being and lives of African American men are at risk because a number of social and economic ills, such as their higher rates of incarcerate, lower rates of attending and completing college, and likelihood to die violently or from health conditions such as hypertension and heart disease (Gibbs 1988, Parham and McDavis 1987). The term connotes extinction, and it alludes to the idea of genocide without using the actual word. Furthermore, the inclusion of the website address, toomanyaborted.com, is the only indication of why African American children are endangered. The website address is the link crucial link that shows the relationship between the main text and the

accompanying image; it completes the argument. The latter two items do not make much sense without the web address.

The image is a photo of an African American infant (probably around 6 months old), who is photographed in an extreme facial close-up; the image fills up half of the billboard space (the right-hand side). Note that it is not the usual photo of a fetus *in utero* which has become an iconic symbol of the anti-abortion movement (Condit 1990). There can be many reasons why this campaign chose the photo of an actual infant child instead of an *in utero* fetus. First, it is difficult to convey race with a fetus *in utero*. With a photo of an infant, we can see the markers of race. In this specific photo, the infant's skin color and the facial features mark him/her as African American. Second, an infant child is a symbol of sweet, unadulterated innocence. This innocence is reinforced by the large child-like eyes of the infant and the white light that falls upon his/her face. Third, infants can make facial expressions which can be construed as emotions. In this case, the infant is gazing directly into the camera with his/her eyes wide open and mouth agape. It is as though the infant is staring directly at the audience and is pleading for his/her life. In the end, it is easier for us, the audience, to identify with the infant, as we can easily see it as a living, breathing human being. It is not an abstraction. The baby is us; we are the baby. This metonymic association has traditionally been exclusively reserved for fetuses *in utero* (Condit 1990). It has now moved to living infants.

Protecting Black Life Interactive Map

The second set of images (Figure 3) is from an interactive, online map that was created by Protecting Black Life, an outreach program for the anti-abortion group Life Issues Institute, Inc. (Cincinnati, Ohio). Created though Google Maps, this map visually illustrates the organization's argument that the abortion industry (i.e. Planned Parenthood) is deliberately targeting communities of color across the United States, specifically African Americans and Latinas\os. Using U.S. Census tract data,[5] the map graphically shows where the targeted neighborhoods are and provides specific information for these neighborhoods, including the percentage of African Americans and Latinos in the area, and the number

[5] This map uses census tracts to represent neighborhoods. By definition, a census tract is a small, relatively permanent statistical subdivision of a county that is determined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Census tracts are relatively stable over time and average about 4,000 people. Census tracts must have a minimum population of 1,200 people and cannot exceed 8,000 (U.S. Census Bureau c2013). Census tract data is used to determine the number of U.S. Congressional seats for each state and the level spending for federal programs and services.

and proximity of Planned Parenthood clinics in or near the neighborhoods. As Protecting Black Life (2013) argues:

> 2010 Census results reveal that Planned Parenthood is targeting minority neighborhoods. It has located 79% of its surgical abortion facilities within walking distance of African American or Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods. Planned Parenthood located 62% of its abortion facilities within 2 miles of African American neighborhoods, and 64% near Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods, thus establishing them as "targeted neighborhoods." Sadly, Black women are three times more likely to have an abortion than white women, and Hispanic or Latino [sic] women are nearly twice as likely.

Incidentally, this website defines a "targeted minority neighborhood" as a neighborhood with a population that is at least 50% minority (non-white) and that has an ethnic make-up that is close to the national population percentages for African Americans and Latinos, 12.6% and 16.3%, respectfully. The implication is that the larger the percentage of minorities in a "targeted neighborhood" becomes, the more concerned we should be.

Through a series of clicks, a visitor can see which communities are targeted, and perhaps even discover that she or he actually lives in one of these neighborhoods. Figure 3 is an example of what appears when one performs the series of clicks to get to a neighborhood. It is a screenshot of one of the allegedly targeted neighborhoods in central San Diego. As we can see, the graphic depicts a cluster of census tracts within this area.[6] The census tracts with high concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities are indicated by color: blue for African Americans, red for Latinas/os, and brown if a tract has both. The Planned Parenthood clinic in question is indicated by a yellow dot. The other non-minority census tracts (neighborhoods) are left white. While the actual percentages of the minority populations in the minority areas are indicated on the map, the percentages for the non-minority (white) census tracts (neighborhoods) are not provided. It is not clear if we are to assume that there are no people of color in these (white) neighborhoods, or perhaps these numbers were left out because they might complicate the organization's overall argument.

A circle is superimposed over the census tracts to indicate the two mile radius surrounding the Planned Parenthood clinic in question. The area enclosed within in the circle is the visual representation

[6] This is the census tract that is closest to the neighborhood in which I live in San Diego.

of “walking distance” from the clinic. Explaining the significance of having Planned Parenthood clinics within walking distance, the Life Issues Institute states:

> It is…likely that Planned Parenthood prefers to be in the daily traveling vicinity of a minority neighborhood, but not in the middle of one. This allows for a familiar but “professional” distance. As a type of “community center,” they can provide birth control to the surrounding neighborhoods and build relationships with the women. Then, when the birth control fails, as it has for 54% of women who have abortions, Planned Parenthood is perfectly positioned to provide abortions to these women in crisis, solving their “problem” for a nice profit (Enouen 2012, p. 3).

In sum, the argument is that Planned Parenthood is coercing African American women into obtaining abortions by making the process easier for them by conveniently locating its clinics in Black communities. Note the use of the word “targeted” in the first excerpt. The clinics are not simply “located” in these neighborhoods—that would only suggest benign intent. The term “targeted,” on the other hand, suggests an act that is that is intentional and malignant, which, in turn, suggest that plotting and scheming are involved. The term “targeted neighborhood” connotes a neighborhood that is under siege, as though it is enduring warfare. Simply put, the African American community is under attack. The implication is that if African Americans are not careful, they may unwittingly contribute to their own extinction by obtaining abortions or using any of the services provided by Planned Parenthood while also filling Planned Parenthood’s coffers.

Persuasive cartography has been used in many forms, including advertising, teaching, theology, politics and propaganda. The rhetorical use of persuasive maps is not a new political practice. Geographer Christina Dando, for example, has shown how the early women’ rights movement used shaded maps of the United States, known as suffrage maps, to argue for women’s right to vote (2010). With the shaded areas representing the states that had granted women the right to vote, whether fully or partially, the suffragists used these maps to reflect the moral landscape of the nation, and to shame the unshaded states into granting the right to women. These maps were also meant to specially persuade men, who were more socialized toward maps than women at the time. Similar maps were used to argue for the abolition of slavery and the prohibition of alcohol.

In general, the American public has been socialized to trust maps and to see them as authoritative artifacts (Dando 2010). Maps are perceived to be scientific, objective, and truthful; that is,

they are a true reflection of reality. Additionally, U.S. Census data is viewed as objective, scientific fact. After all, numbers ("hard data") don't lie. When used together, these artifacts give the audience the impression of factual, indisputable data. However, Dando warns us that persuasive maps manipulate the message through distortion, selection/omission, use of symbols and color, choice of projection, text and title. Persuasive maps are not about the truth, but about successful communication to a public (Dando 2010).

It may not matter that census tracts might not be the best way to represent neighborhoods, as they are larger in population size than and do not have the cultural and social cohesiveness that we normally associate with neighborhoods. It also may not matter that some of the data included on the map might be ambiguous and somewhat confusing. Without streets and other physical markers to guide the reader, census tract maps are confusing abstractions that render cities and neighborhoods unrecognizable. Nonetheless, the point is that visitors to this website virtually "walk" through these neighborhoods and feel the emotional impact of that process. The act of walking through is in itself the embodiment of the argument.

Klan Parenthood

The last set of images (Figure 4) are from a brochure and its companion website Klanparenthood.com. Both were created by the Texas-based anti-abortion group Life Dynamics. Both artifacts cast doubt upon and ultimately discredit Planned Parenthood. This includes questioning the origins of the organization in addition to its present-day activities (i.e. deliberately locating its clinics in communitites of color), and has meant linking Planned Parenthood to individuals and organizations of dubious reputation, including Margaret Sanger, who is generally considered a founding mother of the birth control movement in the United States, and the Ku Klux Klan. The brochure and the website provide a counter-narrative to the pro-choice narratives that casts Sanger as a brave, unwavering champion of women's reproductive freedom who risked jail time for her beliefs, as activist who saw birth control as the means for women to make their own choices about their fertility and, ultimately, to maintain control over their lives (Joffe and Parker 2012). Instead, the brohure questions whether Sanger's motives were truly noble by linking her to the Ku Klux Klan, including the claim that she gave speeches at KKK gatherings, and the eugenics movement.

The brochure and the website include an image of a white, hooded person in a white lab coat. It is a visual allusion that is an amalgamation of iconic symbols that represent two very distinct,

recognizable groups: The KKK and the medical establishment (Planned Parenthood). The accompanying text in the brochure and the website reinforces this amalgamation with its references to lynching, e.g. "In the New Klan, Lynching is for Amateurs." The overall implication is that the two institutions are one in the same; they just use different tactics. Planned Parenthood is guilty of genocide by association.

The image, as it appears in the brochure, includes many interesting elements that add to the argument about the untrustworthiness of Planned Parenthood. The hooded doctor holds a butcher's knife in one hand and a lit cigarette in another. There are scissors in his chest pocket, and a cat (as far as I can tell) is in his lower pocket. (We infer that the doctor is a man because of his necktie.) The pair of scissors may refer to later term abortions, or partial birth abortions (PBA) as they have also been called, particularly by anti-abortion politicians. According to abortion opponents, during later-term abortion procedures, a doctor "partially" delivers a baby and then brutally stabs the baby in the back of its neck in order to kill it (Esacove 2004). For abortion opponents, this particular procedure represents the barbaric nature of abortions in general.[7] Collectively, all of these elements allude to the "back alley abortions" that took place before abortion was legalized in the United States in 1973, and signify the alleged lack of professionalism, hygiene and scruples, at best, of abortion doctors as personified by Planned Parenthood; at worst, it represents barbarism.

The KKK arouses deep, intense emotions among African Americans, as it represents the long, ugly history of contentions race relations, racism, lynchings and terrorism in the United States. Just mentioning a any possible connection to the KKK can cast doubt and suspicion on an organization. Moreover, rumors have historically played a significant role within the African American community, especially those involving the KKK (Turner 1997, 1993). For instance, rumors have persisted that the KKK was responsible in some way for the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy, and Robert F. Kennedy and for the Atlanta Child murders that occurred between 1979 and 1981. It has also been rumored that the KKK has owned various fast food chains, such as Church's Chicken and Popeye's Chicken, in order to sterilize the African American community through the contamination of the food, and that it has been the manufacturer and distributor of menthol cigarettes in order to give African Americans cancer (Turner 1997, 1993). Recounting a casual conversation with a student of hers, folklorist Turner writes, "When confronted with evidence that Church's Fried Chicken was not owned by

[7] Most physicians and other health providers, on the other hand, dislike the "partial-birth abortion" term, as they believe that it is a misnomer and sensationalistic (Esacove 2004). They assert that it is not a medical term, but merely a political term that was coined by supporters of the ban to inflame emotions. It is not possible to "partially" deliver a child, nor are scissors utilized by physicians in later-term abortion procedures.

the Ku Klux Klan and was not contaminating the chicken so that male eaters would be sterilized, a bright young African American female college junior responded, 'Well, it's the kind of thing they would do if they could.' No organization, legitimate or otherwise, has earned the mistrust of African Americans more deservedly than the KKK (1993, p. 57)." We must keep in mind that a narrative only needs a modicum of truth or plausibility in order to resonant with audiences. Any new facts are interpreted and evaluated through the lens of the existing values, beliefs and experiences of the audience.

While the connection to the KKK is made explicitly, the brochure only alludes to eugenics. For instance, the caption "To Create a Race of Thoroughbreds" appears at the bottom of one of the panels of the brochure, beneath a photo of Sanger. The caption was in fact a motto of Sanger's organization, the American Birth Control League, and is not an exaggerated claim. In effect, Life Dynamics is using Sanger's own words to damn her as well as the entire birth control movement. The narrative in this brochure requires the audience to already be somewhat knowledgeable about eugenics, a long-discredited pseudo-science based in social Darwinism that argued that some social groups were physically, mentally and intellectually superior to other groups because of their biological composition. According to social Darwinism, genetically superior groups (read white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class/wealthy, mentally- and physically-able, and Christian) should be encouraged to reproduce, while the inferior groups (read racial and ethnic minorities, the poor, the mentally ill, people with disabilities, and criminals) should be strongly discouraged. In case the audience is not familiar with this history, the hyperbolic phrases "since 1973, over 25% of the black population has been exterminated by abortion " and "a black baby is now three times as likely to be killed in the womb than a white baby" provides clues into the negative history of eugenics.

This strategy also exploits the African American community's collective distrust of medical and public health institutions. While conventional wisdom traces this fear directly to the infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study (1932-1972) in which poor Southern African American men were subjected to medical experimentation without their full, informed consent, scholars have argued that this fear and distrust has even deeper roots (Gamble 1997). It has been documented that slaves were used for grueling medical experiments during the antebellum period. After emancipation, folktales about night doctors, KKK doctors and student doctors flourished within the African American community. These tales argued that these doctors would kidnap African Americans at night in order to kill them and to perform experiments on their cadavers. There is no evidence to corroborate these tales, and it is thought that some of these rumors were deliberately spread by whites to instill fear with the community (Turner

1993). Even to this day, several studies have shown that significant percentages of African Americans believe that the U.S. government is withholding information about HIV/AIDS and that there is some truth to the argument that HIV/AIDS was created in a laboratory as a form of germ warfare against African Americans (Bird and Bogart 2005). Moreover, studies have shown that there are some African Americans who believe that birth control and family planning are part of a plot to eliminate African Americans (Bird and Bogart 2005). In other words, this is an audience that is already primed to mistrust medical institutions.

Rhetorically speaking, Planned Parenthood serves as a representation of the entire abortion/family planning industry; it is a classic example of synecdoche, which is a rhetorical trope in which a part represents the whole. As Rasmussen argues, "Policy actors utilize synecdoche by choosing a part or instance of an issue to focus decision making, make the abstract more tangible, or define the policy problem for others....Once the synecdoche is in place, social groups' underlying value and belief differences are expressed via disparate meanings given to that symbol. Larger issues and value differences are thus incompletely engaged as broader debate is replaced by a narrow conflict over one symbol (2012, p. 294)." Planned Parenthood is the perfect foil. It has a large network of clinics and has strong name recognition. It is a recognizable brand, whereas public and private clinics, hospitals and other networks of clinics, which are all potential sites of abortion services, do not have the same level of brand recognition.

Conclusion

With its use on hyperbole, synecdoche and ceremonial discourse, this campaign relies on pathos (emotional appeal) to make its argument, and each of these images serves a specific function in this appeal. The endangered species billboards and the Klan Parenthood brochure tell incomplete stories and depend upon the audience to complete the stories. We are encouraged to identify with the child in the former and to question the motives of Planned Parenthood in the latter. All of this is contingent upon the audience being already primed for this message. Even among those who are not already primed, the billboards and brochure may spur enough curiosity for bystanders that they will check out the companion websites, where they can get more details. The interactive map, on the other hand, does not function on its own, as it is the most dependent upon written text than the other visuals. An individual must read the other documents produced by the sponsoring organization in order to get the full argument. The function of the interactive map is to physically embody the argument so that the audience gets a visceral reaction, which is an emotive response.

With the exception of the interactive map with its nonspecific appeals to visitors to contact their elected representatives, it is not clear whether these organizations actually want the audience to do anything politically in response; however, this does not mean that anti-abortion movement has been politically dormant. In fact, the campaign to discredit Planned Parenthood has translated into political and policy actions. Law makers at the federal level and in a few states, including Georgia (2010) Arizona (2011), Florida (2013), New Jersey (2012), Mississippi (2010) and Idaho (2010), have introduced legislation that would further criminalized abortion on the basis of race (Baker 2012, Jesudason 2011, U.S. Congress 2011). Any woman seeking an abortion on a fetus of color or any doctor who performs an abortion on a fetus of color could potentially be fined and/or imprisoned for such acts under these "anti-race-selection" abortion bills. Policymakers at the national and state levels have moved to defund Planned Parenthood; some states have been successful at this (Bassett 2013, Goldberg 2012, NWLC c2012). Perhaps the goal is not to encourage action per se, but to create a political climate in which the public is not likely to protest policies that restrict Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers.

Although this paper focuses on the rhetors and the messages that are conveyed in this campaign, it would be beneficial to focus on the intended and other secondary audiences, and the meaning that they extrapolate from these messages. What has been the impact of this campaign on the general public and the African American community? Some individuals have done assessments of the impact of this campaign. For example, an African American filmmaker recorded the reactions of African Americans when the billboards surfaced in Oakland. While these assessments are informative, it would be beneficial to have more systematic studies of the impact of these billboards. For example, focus groups in which African Americans are asked to discuss their reactions to the ads could provide us insight into how these ads resonant or don't for this group. Of course, the focus groups do not have to be limited to African Americans; we could record the reactions of various racial and ethnic groups to these ads. There is much potential for further research studies on this topic.

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Table 1. Visual Rhetoric Analytical Schema

Specific Elements of Artifact	Kairos/Context	Type of Appeal	Rhetorical Tropes
Text	Speaker/Writer	Logos (reason)	Metaphor
Font	Audience	Ethos (ethics)	Synecdoche/Metonymy
Color	Function of Artifact	Pathos (emotion)	Hyperbole
Images/Photos	History		Allusion
Juxtaposition	Political Climate		
Sound and Music	Social Climate		
	Cultural Climate		
	Values and Interests		

Figure 1. The Politics of Outrage.

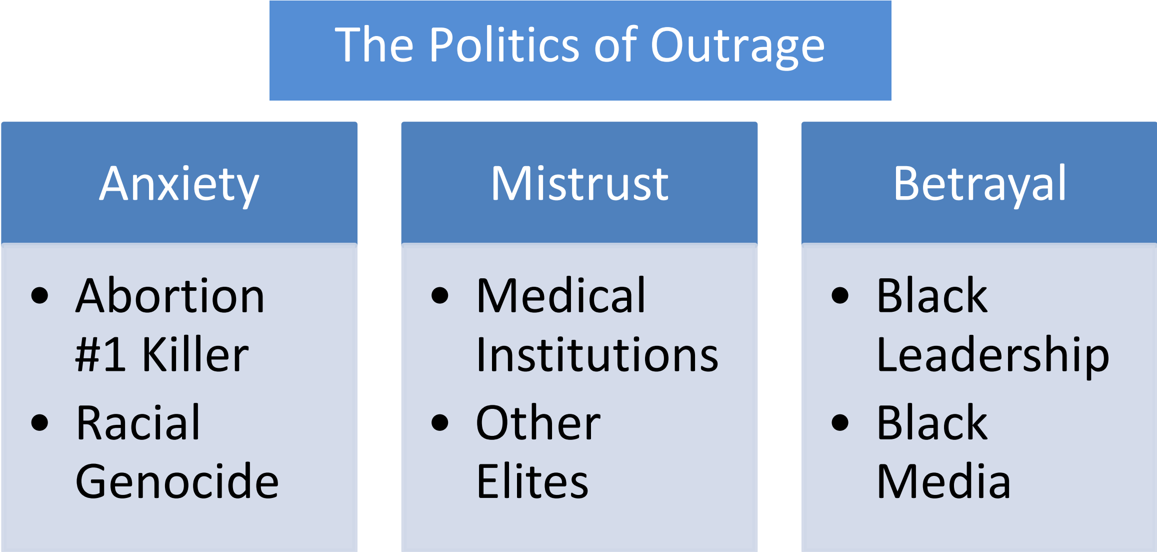
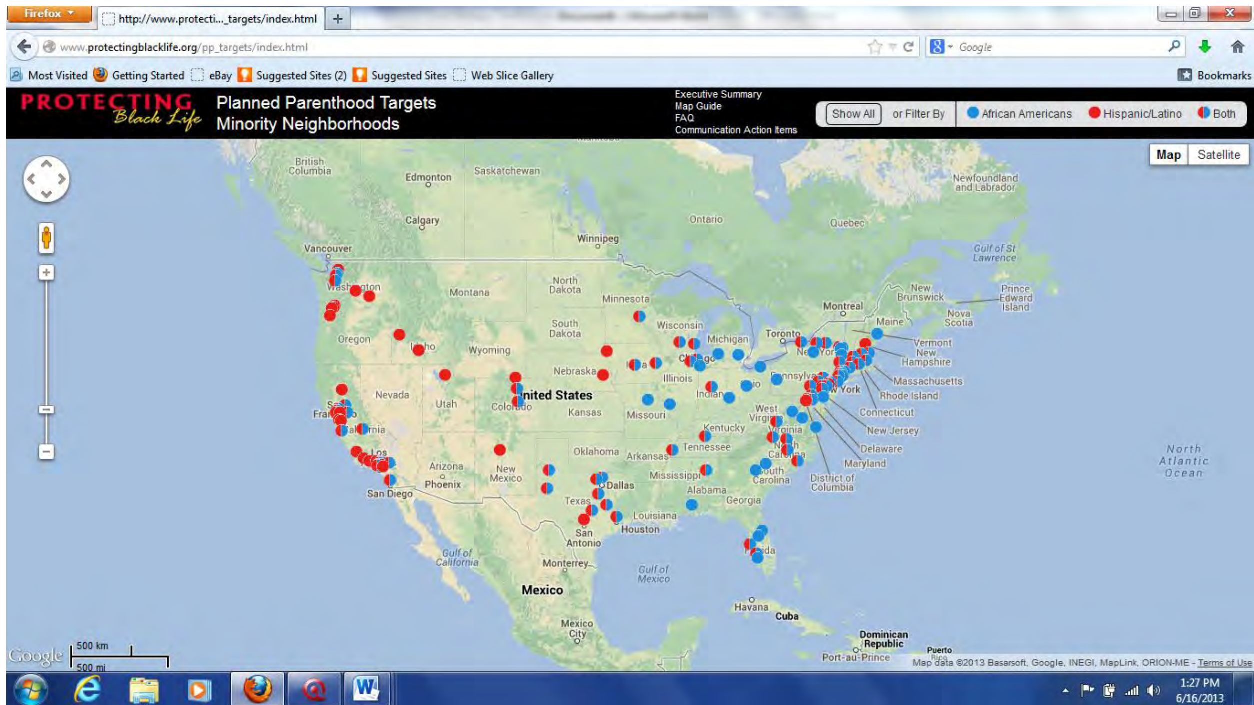


Figure 2. Billboard Advertisement Atlanta 2012.

Figure 3. Screenshots of Interactive Map from the Protecting Black Life Website.



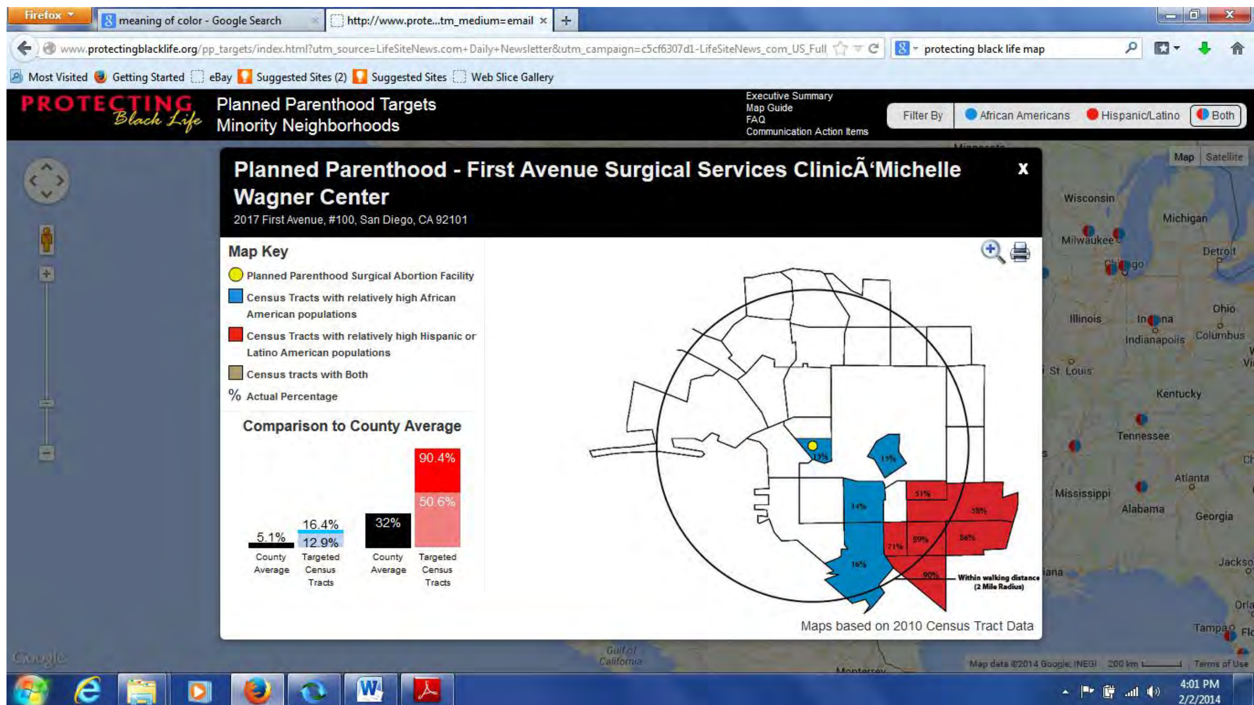
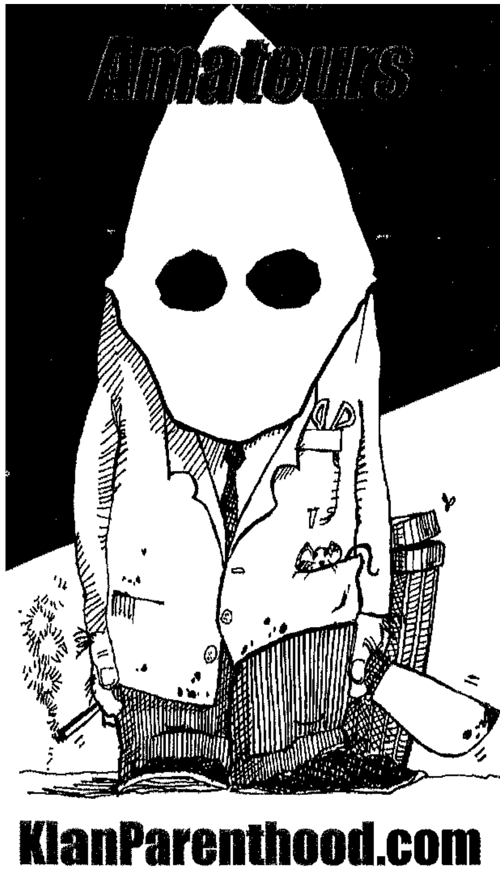


Figure 4. Images of Klan Parenthood Brochure and Website (Life Dynamics, Inc.).



Top Caption Says: "In the *New* Klan, Lynching is for Amateurs."