

Power: Interpersonal, Organizational, and Global Dimensions

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TOPIC: Charisma. Video of reputedly charismatic leaders' speeches:

John F. Kennedy – inaugural address

JFK's inaugural address, considered one of the most memorable speeches in recent American history. Youth, religion, wealth – factors working against him at the time; WWII hero, awarded purple heart and navy and marine corps medal. US representative, senator, and Pulitzer prize winner. Transcript of speech and sound file: <http://www.jfklibrary.org/j012061.htm>

Martin Luther King - “I have a dream” speech, civil rights rally, The Mall, Washington D.C. lobbying for a federal law protecting civil rights, seeking administrative/ legal mechanism to eradicate racially discriminatory practices in organized settings, e.g. workplaces, restaurants, etc.

Summer of 1963, massive civil rights march in DC

MLK gives speech on steps of Lincoln Memorial

Introduced as “moral leader of the nation”

Advocated passive resistance

Nobel Peace Prize legitimized his image as key spokesman for racial equality and peaceful resistance to oppression. Transcript of speech and sound file:

http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/popular_requests/

Adolf Hitler

Techniques of propaganda – use democratic processes (e.g. elections and support for government)

Territorial demands ignited WWII; racial theories of the supremacy of the Aryan race, sought to eradicate non-Aryans, e.g. Jews, homosexuals, gypsies, as well as socialists and communists.

Nazi rally in Nuremberg – preferred evening addresses because “in the darkness the dominant will can seize control of the weaker”

Meticulously practiced his speeches

What students notice about the speeches:

- vivid imagery
- promotion as moral leadership
- delivery of speech, contagious energy
- use archetypal images specific to culture

e.g. Hitler had mastery of German – significant since German language was spoken throughout all the various German states, uniting them (vs. France who had to *impose* single language)

- fissures of nations often on the fault lines of language, e.g. Belgium;
- national fissures occur perhaps because these national/linguistic images that are taken for granted

Both JFK's and MLK's speeches are notably non-partisan, not nationalistic: idealistic notion that the whole world will come together and live in peace. Offer a broad encompassing vision in which differences can be resolved in harmony (King) or as a mission towards, if not itself, peace(ful).

MLK is very explicit that black and white will live together. He identifies with peaceful resistance – that he's not going to engage in arms though he has mobilized an entire nation. In 1963 (when speech was given), it had been nine years since Brown vs. Board of Education but the South was still segregated. But MLK had an immediate political opponent: Malcolm X and the burgeoning aggressive separatist movement, which was antithetical to MLK's goal of a *united* America (same with JFK).

JFK's enemy was the Soviet Union – his message was that America is a formidable enemy but also that we don't want to have to fight; we can pursue betterment of mankind if we join together.

What distinguishes these speeches:

- oratorical skill
- rhetorical style, writing of speech
- evocation of shared images
- ability to mobilize without giving a recipe, so people believe in them and follow

People want to *feel good* – they don't want to feel good by necessarily hearing good things. Both MLK and JFK listed negative things (e.g. we have to fight).

Every extraordinary leader names what is wrong and says he/she will remedy it.

What did each leader say was the problem? What does the leader offer? What was the fear, distress? (Erikson's analysis from last class...) could be life threatening, identity, or existential dread

- JFK addressed existential dread, the fear of nuclear war: JFK said it was the misuse of science and the denial of basic human rights. An entire generation was raised in fear (e.g. drills to hide under desks) – JFK offers diagnosis for a way out: we have taken science, the hateful atom, but now have to turn it into the savior if we *work together* – explore heavens, eradicate poverty and tyranny – and *he* will lead us there
- MLK said inequality was the problem and offers a way out to the threats to your life as blacks and to us as Americans: peaceful resistance and brotherhood Hitler comes along during the time of cultural freedom coupled with economic debacle and says he will fix it

But either names or focuses on a particular enemy – responsibility is diffuse. Hitler, on the other hand, named the Jews, socialists, homosexuals – these deviant populations brought ill fate to Germany. There is a **difference between naming an enemy vs. we haven't lived up to our standards. We can do better.**

- **Definitions: Nation** – a people understood to have shared characteristics, cultural if not genetic (e.g. Eastern Europe, Africa)
- **State** – a *government* has been created over territory and possibly multiple nations

(Iraq – we often hear “nation building” – perhaps “state” has negative connotation in certain political circles. It is conceptually at the center of left/progressive writing. Conjures up power

rather than morality??)