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IN(CORPS)ORATING MARINE IDENTITY: EMBODIED RHETORICS IN UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RECRUIT TRAINING

A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE
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To Jacen,

whose life gave me the strength to find my wings and the courage to use them.

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Abstract

The United States Marine Corps exists within American popular consciousness as a famed fighting force renowned for its unapologetic and well-earned reputation. Its recruit training process, colloquially known as "boot camp," remains the longest in duration of all United States military service branches, while also retaining the reputation of being the most physically arduous, the most emotionally, mentally intense. USMC Recruit Training, which takes place at Marine Corps Recruit Depots San Diego and Parris Island, serves as both generative place and enculturation process for creating new Marines from civilian recruits. Recruit Training, writ large in American public consciousness, has proved rich material for research and examination by various scholarly disciplines. Researchers in the social sciences have investigated this process of enculturation and new identity formation; however, an analysis of boot camp as a physical and temporal space in which rhetoric assumes a powerful role in identification moulding remains largely missing from the body of discourse surrounding Marine Corps Recruit Training. This work addresses the scholarly gap by using Kenneth Burke's frameworks of Identification and his (Symbolic) Action/(Nonsymbolic) Motion binary to examine three specific moments of embodied and spoken rhetoric. These moments include the memorization and group recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed,* recruits standing in their first formation on The Yellow Footprints outside each Recruit Depot's receiving barracks, and the act of marching and running in formation while singing lyric based chants. Each of these, I argue, operate as physical and temporal spaces in which embodied rhetorics help enact the process of building within recruits the shared group identity of Marine.

Introduction

Within 21st century Western culture, the idea of the individual and of individual identity holds great value, often serving as a foundational phenomenon in our current Capitalist, consumer driven socioeconomic framework. As a social species, however, we operate in community, building alliances via familial ties, friendships, professional networks, and shared interests. The bonds that hold us to other individuals within communal groups develop when we share and see portions of ourselves with and within others. Rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke posits a theory of this identifying action through several of his works[1], establishing it as a foundational necessity for persuasion to occur between individuals. Scholars and professionals specializing in psychology, sociology, education, communication, business, and marketing have called upon and applied Burke's interpretation of identification to their respective fields[2].

Another community, notably smaller than the previously mentioned fields, that observably utilizes Burke's brand of identification is the United States Marine Corps. The end goal of the enculturation process each recruit undergoes is the creation of a new Marine from the raw, unrefined material of a civilian. Scholars situating themselves within psychology and sociology have investigated this process of enculturation and new identity formation, in particular regarding how the culture,

[1] Burke introduces and develops Identification and Consubtantiality across his *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941), *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), and *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966).

[2] See the following for a taste of Burke's appeal across the disciplines: Edward G. Belinski's *Kenneth Burke, Identificaiton, and Psychoanalytic Theory*, Van Maanen and E.H. Schein's "Toward a Theory of Organizational Socialization," Kris Rutten and Ronald Soetaert's "Attitudes Toward Education: Kenneth Burke and New Rhetoric," George Cheney's "The rhetoric of identification and the study of organizational communication," Bryan Crable's "Rhetoric, Anxiety, and Character Armor: Burke's Interactional Rhetoric of Identity," Samuel Head's "Teaching grounded audiences: Burke's identification in Facebook and composition," and Wei Yong-Kang's "Corporate image as collective ethos: A poststructuralist approach."

constraints, and events within the recruit training experience affect new member development; however, an analysis of the recruit training as a physical and temporal space in which rhetoric takes a powerful part in identification moulding remains largely missing from the body of discourse surrounding Marine Corps Recruit Training. I aim to mind and mine, address and enrich this gap in scholarship in the following work, utilizing Kenneth Burke's frameworks of Identification and his (Symbolic) Action/(Nonsymbolic) Motion binary to examine how three specific moments of embodied rhetoric assist in enacting the process of building within recruits the shared group identity of Marine. These rhetorical events include the memorization and group recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed,* the transitional moment of new recruits standing in their first formation with the help of The Yellow Footprints painted on the asphalt outside each Recruit Depot's receiving barracks, and the act of marching and running in formation while singing lyric based chants. Each of these, I argue, utilize Burke's phenomena of identification via embodied and spoken rhetorics, both individually and compounded collectively, and serve as a pivotal step in the generative process of creating new Marines.

Burke's Identification

Defining Terminology

Working in *A Rhetoric of Motives* to reclaim and "rediscover rhetorical elements that had become obscured" over time as "rhetoric as a term fell into disuse" as well as to "develop [rhetoric as subject] beyond [its] traditional bounds, Burke settles upon "identification" as both "key term" and focal point around which to orient his endeavor (A Rhetoric xiii). In this shift, he pivots from the "classical notion of clear

persuasive intent" deliberately crafted and delivered by a rhetor to identification as a more subtle, nuanced means of rhetoric, one built upon the human tendency toward life founded in community and the group-based interactions inherent therein (xiv).

As Burke holds that communal, human "existence is essentially rhetorical, a kind of continuous drama of identification, persuasion, and transformation," the focus upon the interpersonal and the communal lies at the heart of his new vein of thought (Rueckert 42). Identification, for him, describes "the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another," and it is this often subtle and even unconscious social lens focusing on identification instead of the traditional tack of purposeful persuasion which sets apart this new rhetoric from the old (A Rhetoric xiv, Rhetorics 62-3). For Burke, "it is through. . .identifications (sometimes overt and sometimes covert) that one persuades others to the attitude or action that one desires" (Rueckert 75). Identification is natural, normal, an expected part of human interaction, though not without its intrinsic perils to the individual. Danger or risk exist though perhaps not in the immediate corporeal sense. The hazard lies therefore in the chance of unethical attempts of manipulation or coercion being successful yet unseen by the individual due to the ability of the unremarkable, the normal to operate invisibly.

William Rueckert comments upon Burke's concerns regarding identification, stating that "[Burke] says that it is in the sociopolitical realm that we should really study [identification] because not only is politics impossible without rhetoric but all kinds of hidden, secret, and often dangerous identifications act as hidden persuaders in most of our sociopolitical life" (75). Zachary White finds resonance with Rueckert's discussion

of Burke regarding the known and unknown work that identification enacts, explaining that identification exists as a phenomenon and "force that allows physically separate individuals to make themselves an identity (consciously and unconsciously)" among themselves (White 3). It is telling that both scholars take time to point out the overt/conscious as well as the covert/unconscious power at work with identity. Here in the latter pairing, perhaps, lies the brunt of identification's power and, according to Rueckert, its danger. Obvious, visible tactics and moves by another can be more readily detected, examined, and deflected or countered. The covert/unconscious, not being readily apparent, acts upon us, influences us without our awareness, emanating from the notes of commonality mirrored by others, or perhaps more powerfully, the internal, reflexive acts of building connection between self and other that we work upon ourselves from within. Whether finding its source and catalyst in self or others, as we each involuntarily inhale and exhale throughout the day, so too does the power and work of identification occur for each person and within communal groups.

Such group identity arises through simple social interaction and communal participation, creating a sense of belonging among intergroup members that naturally includes persuasion (or at least the potentiality for such work) while also reaching beyond such specifically designed goals (White 3). More precisely, identification hinges upon one's identity and the identifying of one person with another. Burke claims that when individuals share "sympathetic attitudes" or find that their "interests are joined" with another person's, they "may identify" with that other person (The Rhetorical 268, A Rhetoric 21). Even if "their interests are not joined," identification can allow for one to be persuaded to believe so" (A Rhetoric 21). Ultimately, through identification with

another person, the an individual "is 'substantially one' with a person other than" themselves (*A Rhetoric* 21). Burke develops this concept of identifying to such a close extent with another by calling upon the idea of consubstantiation, an Eucharistian[3] doctrine of Christian theology in which "the substance of the bread coexists with the substance of the body of Christ" (Smith 96).

Much as Christianity posits the existence of the essence of Christ's body and blood residing alongside the actual physical bread and wine consumed in the sacrament, Burke states that identifying the self with another begets the same state for the identifier as they "remain unique" though being "both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another" (*A Rhetoric* 21). Consubstantiality and, through it, identification, Burke asserts, exists between people when they "may be identified in terms of some principle they share in common" while said identification "does not deny their distinctness" (21). Naturally, if consubstantiality is based upon a shared substance between disparate individuals, it follows that we must examine this idea of substance.

Relying upon to Aristotle, Burke lays the foundation of substance as related to and constituted by an intrinsic, eternal state of "being" or present tense existence (A Grammar 466). However, he does not posit this state of being as a static phenomenon, instead arguing "that it can be viewed as participation" based, directing readers to consider the fact that a person's substance "in the old philosophies, was an act; and a way of life is an *acting-together"* (Heath 167, *A Rhetoric* 21). In this "acting together", he asserts that people "have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes"

[3] A Christian sacramental ceremony in which the faithful partake of wine and unleavened bread to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.

(21). It is the sharing of these, he claims, "that make(s) them *consubstantial"* with each other (21). As people interact, we naturally discover and recognize aspects of our unique, individual identities (substance) that find resonance within other individuals we meet. The existence of these common threads of substance mirrored between us and others creates consubstantiality and, through that, identification.

Creating Space for A Group Identity in USMC Recruit Training

The purpose of shared identification, of crafting and instilling a group identity for and within fresh Marine Corps recruits at either of the Marine Corps Recruiting depots is *not* to acknowledge or ultimately understand individual difference. The United States Marine Corps instead seeks to create within prospective new members a freshly developed and ultimately entirely earned identity, a group identity with the Corps itself. This new identity, and the earning of it via completing of recruit training, arguably both does the work of new member enculturation and continues to shape a Marine's psyche and behavior through further training and into their service at subsequent duty stations. In this scenario, difference is not esteemed as part of a dialogic process between participant parties but is instead deemed a stumbling block to the work of crafting new Marines, an obstacle to be diminished and overcome.

Shifting Labels

Changes in language and self-referential terms begin this work. Thomas Ricks offers a unique, boots-on-the-ground vantage point into this function through his classic *Making The Corps*, a 1996 chronicle of one platoon of male recruits aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. As Ricks notes, this process of enculturation focuses heavily on the duo of "behavior and language" and forms "the bulk of [recruits'] boot

camp experience" (37). Indeed, the very label of "recruit" exemplifies how the Marine Corps uses language to take an individual who places personal preference and opinion above most else and mold within them a group identity designed to serve the Corps.

Though Ricks documents the intake and initial phases of recruits' first hours at the Marine Corps' Recruit Depot located on our nation's east coast, the process and approach unfolds identically on the opposite coast at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. In these first hours, the cultural power of the Corps regarding language and its use to shape how recruits view themselves and others immediately appears as recruits find that they have lost "the right to use the first person" when speaking (Ricks 40). The use of first names is also forbidden and is replaced by the simple, universal title of recruit. Each new recruit is now "Recruit-and-your-last-name" to themselves, the rest of their newly formed platoon, and all drill instructors they encounter (Ricks 40). Gone are each recruit's first names and the civilian identity that is tied to them. Marine hopefuls who arrive at recruit training as Matthew Smith, Tanya Anderson, or Miguel Hernandez immediately become Recruit Smith, Recruit Anderson, and Recruit Hernandez, respectively. All are labeled and referenced by their recruit status and position within the overarching system and body of the Marine Corps. This nominative trend continues until each earns the title of Marine at recruit training graduation, thirteen weeks later.

The use of prescriptive language to alter perceptions of identity primacy and focus from the individual to the collective is address by Michael Becker. In his "*We Make Marines:" Organizational Socialization and The Effects of "The Crucible" on the Values Orientation of Recruits During U.S. Marine Corps Training,"* Becker maps this

lexical move as a tool that "creates a sense of group" via the Corps' required naming conventions (346). The "Us vs. I" dichotomy Beck outlines here reflects the seeing of the self with the other, and the self as the other that we witness laid out in Burke's conception of group identity creation (346). This keystone of language shaping identity stands as a prime example of how the very basics of language use within Marine Corps recruit training gears incoming prospective members of the Corps to shift their identificational focal point from the self to the group. All recruits have first name and first-person speaking privileges removed. All are called recruit. All are treated identically. All bear the same universal label, gaining back their name and first-person privileges once they earn the title of Marine (Becker 346).

Becker expands upon the link between language, identity, and institutional focus and philosophy, explaining that "traditionally, Marines place the self-interest of the individual second to that of the institution known as the Corps or their unit" (346). It is not simply that the individual does not matter without reason within the Corps. Rather, this purposeful placing of parameters intentionally instructs and demonstrates that the Corps, the unit, the mission holds a place of primary importance. It stands as an example of not purposeless dehumanization but instead as a regimented process of instruction on a psyche oriented toward the sacrifice of self for a larger cause or purpose.

Once the period of instruction for this lesson finishes with the end of training, recruits, now having taken on the group identity involved in earning the title of Marine, gain the freedom to speak outside the third-person and reclaim their individuality via language. While changes in denomination for recruits during the boot camp experience

undoubtedly affect paradigmatic shifts regarding the self and one's place within the group, the twinned force of language use and its symbolic meaning with an embodied expression of the same effectively combine to develop the identification of the recruit with Corps in deeper, richer ways.

Group Identity via Embodied Symbolic Action

Burke also offers a useful lens regarding collective, communal participation which echoes and enhances his work on identification and consubstantiality. This lens does so via an approach to the body through his Motion/Action binary that separates the existence, movement of the corporeal form and its physiological processes inherent to life from purposeful, meaningful, communicative action performed by the thinking Self via the body ((Nonsymbolic) Motion/(Symbolic) Action). The body, according to Burke, is "in its nature. . .a sheerly physiological organism" and would "thus be in the realm of matter, for which our term is "motion" ("Nonsymbolic" 809). Bryan Crable notes that Burke's concept of Motion is painted in parallel with the natural, the purely biological, the animal, is "impersonal" and existing outside of human cognition or existence (124). Crable goes on to discuss how bookending this pairing, Burke posits the concept of "action," which "is rooted in motion but is qualitatively more than motion" (124). This polar opposite of motion pertains to purposeful human conduct or communicative modes existing and operating inside agreed upon community determined systems of meaning and context that make up any given "conventional, arbitrary symbol system" ("Nonsymbolic" 809). Action, in this binary, is broadly conceived and "involve[s] modes of behavior" that call upon "symbolicity" that exists as part of the contextual "tribal language" of the group (809). Examples of such action

include behaviors "as different as primitive speech, styles of music, painting, sculpture, dance, highly developed mathematical nomenclatures, traffic signals, road maps, or mere dreams" with the broad brush of community derived, determined, and inflected meaning and interpretation painting thematic cohesions between such varied and disparate fields ("Nonsymbolic" 809). This binary is enacted in separate but connected ways within each individual.

The prime actor of this pairing is "the body of the human individual," "the point at which the realms of the physiological (nonsymbolic) motion and symbolic action meet" (*Permanence and Change* 309). The human body constitutes the"Self," which Burke divides in two accordingly, depicting the biological, physiological facet of "Self" as grounded "in the realm of motion" and existing in a realm of immediately experienced sensation, "individuated" from all "like organisms" surrounding it ("Nonsymbolic" 813). On the mirrored end, Burke places Self "as a 'person,'" a "member of a community (Culture) characterized by motives in the realm of symbolic action" and "thus (not) differentiated" from others (813). This side of the pairing, "symbolic action, shapes the Self. . in modes of role, sociality," in "individual's relations to family, to groups, to ever- widening and partially conflicting organizations" (813-4). Action, then, can and does occur only within the bounds of community.

As symbolic action takes place in the realm of sociality, of community, Action performed by the body then serves as the locus for communal work, for cooperation, for the work of discovering consubstantiality and through it interpersonal identification between individuals. Deborah Hawhee confirms this in *Moving Bodies: Kenneth Burke at the Edges of Language*, as she explains that "nonsymbolic motion not only precedes

symbolic action, but its material movements also condition the possibility for symbolic action" (Hawhee 159). Consequently, communication, meaning, interpretation, and the building of one's identity in relation to others are only possible, only made manifest via the imposing on and utilizing of the physical body (Motion) by and for the purposes symbolic (Action). Therefore, necessarily, intrinsically all human cooperation, interaction, rhetoric, and all identity creation is embodied and cannot exist or be performed without the body.

For our purpose here, then, we can say that the work of Marine Corps Recruit Training, the establishing and developing of interpersonal identification in which recruits take on the communal, group identity of Marine, is an inherently embodied act. Such an assumption finds resonance and support in three specific rhetorically embodied acts during USMC Recruit Training: the memorization and recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed*, the inaugural act of recruits standing in their first formation on The Yellow Footprints found at each recruit depot, and the running and marching in formation with fellow recruits to lyric based cadences.

Moments and Places of Embodied Rhetoric

The Rifleman's Creed

One of the first and integral uses of collective symbolic action via language to occur to Marine recruits is the learning, memorization, and often regular group recitation of the *The Rifleman's Creed*. Penned by Marine Major General William H. Rupertus in 1941 following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor, *The Rifleman's Creed* defines clearly what it means to be a Marine, to be a rifleman first and foremost (Lyon 37, Sturkey 63). Pulled in its entirety from where it is printed in duplicate at the

beginning of the current USMC databook for recording a Marine's marksmanship scores, it reads:

The Rifleman's Creed

THIS IS MY RIFLE.
(1) There are many like it, but this one is mine. My rifle is my best friend. It is my life. I must master it as I must master my life. My rifle, without me, is useless. Without my rifle, I am useless. I must fire my rifle true. I must shoot straighter than my enemy who is trying to kill me. I must shoot him before he shoots me. I will...
(6) My rifle and myself know that what counts in this war is not the rounds we fire, the noise of our burst, nor the smoke we make. We know that it is the hits that count. We will hit...
(9) My rifle is human, even as I, because it is my life. Thus, I will learn it as a brother. I will learn its weaknesses, its strength, its parts, its accessories, its sights and its barrel. I will keep my rifle clean and ready, even as I am clean and ready. We will become part of each other. We will...
(13) Before God, I swear this creed. My rifle and myself are the defenders of my country. We are the masters of our enemy. We are the saviors of my life...
So be it, until victory is America's and there is no enemy, but peace!
(United States Marine Corps 1)

In his text, Rupertus links the Marine to his rifle as a friend, a reflection of self, a lifeline, a means of survival, and the source of salvation for the nation. As The Creed is crafted using a culturally contextualized, arbitrary symbol system, it resides firmly within Burke's realm of symbolic action, where the work of consubstantiality and identification take place; however, the way the text content and use are twinned during Marine recruit training grants The Creed greater effectiveness in building and enhancing the group identity of Marine within recruits. Recruits are not required only to memorize The Creed but also to recite it from memory, most often collectively in unison with their fellow platoon-mates with whom they live, eat, and train. While not necessarily a song, The Creed lends itself structurally and rhythmically to group recitation, comprising four discrete stanza-esque sections which end in short two to

three-word phrases composed of monosyllabic words (e.g I will; We will; We will hit; but peace). Structurally geared for group recitation and performance, as music is, The Creed carries with it the work enacted by communal song.

Steven Mithen expounds upon and in many ways establishes an evolutionary context for the power and purpose of group performance in his *The Singing Neanderthals* which traces the growth of language and social behavior over the arch of human development as a species. Here, Mithen comments how group behavior is a tricky thing since "each individual" can "begin a group activity in a different emotional state" causing each meeting of a group to be "ripe for conflict, defection, and free-riding," all behaviors destructive to group cohesion (215). Calling upon the idea that "'happy' people tend to be more cooperative," Mithen claims that the social practice of making music as a group would "help in such situations, as it will lead to the diminution of strong feelings of self" (215). Moreover, "those who make music together will mould their own minds and bodies into a shared emotional self," embody a "loss of self-identity" to some extent, and exhibit "a concomitant increase in the ability to cooperate with others" (215). Here we see enacted in Mithen, the work Burke posits regarding identification and symbolic action within communities.

Just as the psychological barriers between individuals begin to fade and blur during the participation of multiple recruits in the recitation of The Creed, an embodied text of symbolic action in both type and use à la Burke, the loss of self-identity Mithen describes provides an opportunity in recruit training for not just consubstantiality to be discovered and developed but for a very particular group identity to subtly sink into the

gaps left by cognitive self-negation. This group identity is of the Marine, encompassed at its core by the language of Rupertus's text.

The Creed links the Marine to their specific rifle as a "best friend" and equaling the Marine's life (United States Marine Corps line 1-2) usefulness and purpose (3), and a personified object inherent to the Marine's survival and intrinsic identity as a martially purposed servicemember who "must shoot straighter than my enemy who is trying to kill me" (3-4) and asserts that "I must shoot him before he shoots me. I will. . ." (4-5).

An interesting and telling set of shifts occurs between and throughout the stanzas, which bears inspection for our current line of inquiry regarding group identity. Where we see the individual referenced in the initial five lines by the singular personal pronoun of "I," Rupertus's creed shifts to the collective pronoun of "We" for the entirety of the second stanza. Here, Rupertus twins the Marine and their rifle in a collective identity who together shares an awareness that "know[s]. . .it is the hits [of their bullets on enemy bodies] that count," not just the firing of rounds nor their noise and smoke (6-8). Having thus paired the Marine and their specific rifle in shared identity, Rupertus continues the slippage between "I" and "We" through the final two stanzas shifting back and forth between the two as they are now synonymous. This intentional and desired goal of becoming one is described as taking shape through a "learn[ing]" process in which the Marine discovers their partner's "weaknesses," "strength[s]," and "parts," mirroring their own care and attention to their body in the care for and readiness of their rifle all so "we will become part of each other" (United States Marine Corps 10-12). The interchanging of pronouns continues, further wedding

one as substantively equal to the other, during the final lines of The Creed in which the Marine and rifle are "defenders of my country, just as "we are the masters of our enemy" and the collective "saviors of my life" (13-15). In his diction choices and use of personal pronouns within The Creed, Rupertus creates a communal identity between Marine and personal weapon that is purposed for and admittedly geared, without reticence or shame, toward an intentional, combat-oriented existence. Each Marine is to embody this identity, and the speaking of it together in unison calls upon, foregrounds cognitively the Marine identity as laid out by Rupertus.

To recite The Creed is not only to frame and claim the identity but also to embody that shared identity as group. To use this text, a collective participatory rite loaded with layers of specific cultural meaning, creates not just a combined identity of Marine and weapon but perhaps more importantly a cognitive paradigm in which the individual fades as the interpersonal identity of Marine is espoused, reaffirmed, shared, and seen mirrored between participating recruits with each communal recitation. As powerful as this undoubtedly is, Marine Corps Recruit Training incorporates more than group identification via texts in its process of creating new Marines. Utilizing non-verbal rhetorical moves to create Marine identity via control and influence of the body itself, of Burke's realm of corporeal Motion, Marine Corps Drill Instructors impose expectations for bodily carriage and action, each loaded with cultural symbolic meaning without spoken language being included. One particular and culturally significant instance of this is The Yellow Footprints.

The Yellow Footprints

At both of the Marine Corps' recruit depots, the same scenario[4] unfolds at each arrival of fresh recruits, most often late at night or in the wee hours of the morning. A drill instructor in superior physical shape and filling out each inch of his flawless, spotless uniform sporting creases pressed and starched to hyperbolic razor sharpness boards the utilitarian bus carrying Marine hopefuls. Glaring from under the wide brim tilted down over piercing eyes, the DI barks basic instructions for all recruits to respond loudly at all times, whether their responses be "Yes, Sir/Ma'am," "No, Sir/Ma'am," or "Aye, Sir/Ma'am." DIs then order the recruits to "Get off my bus, right now!" At this, the mad scramble begins, recruits rushing off the bus and onto the pavement outside on which there are painted pairs and pairs of yellow footprints in a regimented arrangement of rows and columns. Recruits rush about, finding a set of prints to, at least temporarily, call their own. These painted markers, in their row/column structure as well as individual position and orientation, are different from any set of prints created by a normal human stance. In both this distinct orientation and the recruits conforming their foot placement to match it lies the first instantiation of non-verbal rhetorical influence the Marine Corps exerts over the physical bodies of its recruits.

Fig. 1 Yellow Footprints aboard MCRD Parris Island by Pfc. Daniel Blatter

[4] For insightful and well documented depictions of USMC recruit training as well as the events surrounding The Yellow Footprints see Canaan Brumley's 2005 documentary *Ears Open. Eyeballs Click.*, The Discovery Channel's 2002 documentary *Making Marines*, and Moto Entertainment's *Black Friday: Dark Dawn* documentary series.

The footprints serve as foundation for what Marines call the "position of attention" and is the first thing recruits learn after their rushed exit from the bus (Marine Corps Drill 2.5). The current edition of the Marine Corps Drill and Ceremonies Manual details this stance and its execution as follows:

> The position of attention. . .is the basic military position from which most other drill movements are executed. There are no counts, however, there are seven steps in describing the position:
> 1. Smartly bring your left heel against the right.
> 2. Turn your feet out equally to form an angle of 45 degrees. Keep your heels on the same line and touching.
> 3. Your legs should be straight, but not stiff at the knees.
> 4. Keep your hips and shoulders level and your chest lifted.
> 5. Your arms should be straight, but not stiff at the elbows; thumbs along the trouser seams, palms facing inward toward your legs, and fingers joined in their natural curl.
> 6. Keep your head and body erect. Look straight ahead. Keep your mouth closed and your chin pulled in slightly.
> 7. Stand still and do not talk. (2.5)

The footprints, as seen in Figure 1[5], provide a template for this specific required foot placement, ensuring that bodily compliance is automatic and guaranteed to be achieved amid the jumble of nerves and sleeplessness purposefully compounded by the stress applied by loud, imposing Drill Instructors. Proper foot placement ensured, the rest of the requisite standards for standing at attention are then applied, from leg tension to hip, shoulder, and chest levels to arm, head, and hand placement, disposition, and posture. All told, the position of attention and the footprints that represent it constitute an enactment of Marine identity placed upon the physical body of recruits for specific

[5] Fig. 1. Yellow Footprints aboard MCRD Parris Island.; "Yellow footprints: The initial step into recruit training"; *TECOM Training and Education Command United States Marine Corps*; Marines.mil; 28 Sept. 2017; http://www.tecom.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/528580/yellow-footprints-the-initial-step-into-recruit-training/.

rhetorical effect. The footprints mark the first steps toward becoming a Marine, and it is interesting to note that these steps are entirely embodied and non-verbal. In this liminal and transitional space which the footprints both physically and metaphorically occupy, words are discarded in favor of Burkean symbolic bodily action that by structure, orientation, and cultural context starkly begin the removal of the civilian identity from the recruit and the creation of a distinct, new Marine identity to be shared between and among others. Burke maintains that the body, existing in the realm of Motion "is what it is," a physical form that operates as it was made to operate (Crable 127); therefore, the standing in a natural position would be an example of motion, an automatic and unthinking set of physical movements unconsciously chosen by a body to suit comfort and expediency in a given situation. The Yellow Footprints, in their unspoken physical prescriptiveness and layers of unspoken cultural meaning, lie in diametric opposition to a natural, Motion-esque stance. Due to well-known Corps tradition and lore since 1965, each recruit knows when they see the footprints that all Marines since the Vietnam War have stood in that way in that exact place (100 Years). Natural, unthinking posture is of Motion while standing on two simple patches of paint is entirely Symbolic Action. Due to the culturally determined meaning tied symbolically to those paint patches and the meaning inherent in conforming the body to their placement and their implied cultural corpus, the Marine

Fig. 2 Recruits stand on the Yellow Footprints aboard MCRD San Diego by Lcpl. Crystal Druery

Corps and its Marine identity are enacted and corporealized rhetorically the moment a recruit takes their place on a set of footprints. This fact is unspoken yet automatically acknowledged as each recruit knows their path to being a Marine begins right there. To stand in that place, to learn to hold the body in such a configuration is to learn to be a Marine, is to learn a simultaneously symbolic and functional pattern of bodily action that will mark them as possessing the Marine group identity from then on (see Fig. 2[6]). To stand this way, with such precision, detail, and bearing is to literally embody Marine identity corporeally, and in doing so connect themselves psychically to the tradition, legacy, and culture of the shared group identity of Marine. The Yellow Footprints, in their unspoken purpose and potency and enacting their work without words, can be seen as also creating a space and structure for additional identity development via embodied Symbolic Action. One further instance of this appears in the marching and running of recruits in formation while singing lyric-based cadence chants.

Running/Marching while Singing Lyric-Based Cadences

Were we to pay a visit to either of the Marine Corps' recruit depots, we would no doubt see drill instructors moving the recruits under the charge about in one of two ways, either by marching from place to place for basic transportation purposes or by running for physical conditioning purposes in a formation closely mirroring the one established by The Yellow Footprints of the receiving and intake phase. As these columns of recruits approach and pass us, we would quite likely hear them sing a specially formatted type of chant. These lyric-based chants, called cadences and sung

[6] Fig. 2. Recruits stand on the Yellow Footprints aboard MCRD San Diego; "Earning the Eagle, Globe and Anchor: A look at what makes up recruit training aboard the Depot"; *TECOM Training and Education Command United States Marine Corps*; Marines.mil; 28 Sept. 2017; http://www.tecom.marines.mil/News/News-Article-Display/Article/528171/earning-the-eagle-globe-and-anchor-a-look-at-what-makes-up-recruit-training-abo/.

during group running, marching, and physical training activities, are unique in content, use, and purpose. In his introduction to *Cadences of the U.S. Marine Corps,* Ryan Casey discusses the purpose and function of the modern cadence within military culture. "Cadences," he explains, "serve to synchronize marching and running, to lift spirits, share humor, and to impart military lore, tradition, and esprit de corps" (Casey 9). These examples of Symbolic Action however were not always lyric or narrative based and consisted in their initial, utilitarian substantiation as a vocal tool to rhythmically count out steps, ensuring uniform and synchronized troop movements. The old mold changed, however, in the waning days of World War II.

In May of 1944, a column of weary soldiers made their way back to their barracks after a hard stint of training in the field at Fort Slocum, home to the Provisional Training Center (PTC) on an island northeast of New York City (Johnson 20). According to Sandee Johnson, in her *Jody Call Handbook*, "a unique and new rhythmic chant was suddenly heard from somewhere back in the columns" (20). The chant soon spread throughout the troops, drastically changing their demeanor, motivation, and energy level. It was discovered that a Private Willie Duckworth, a black soldier on temporary assignment to PTC at Fort Slocum, had begun the chant on the march back to the barracks. Deciding the usual numeric counting of cadence would not do, Duckworth while charged with the responsibility of calling cadence stepped outside the old mold that William McNeil describes as he speaks of his experience with marching and drill in *Keeping Together in Time: Dance and Drill in Human History*.

Drafted into the United States Army just prior to World War II's beginning in 1941, McNeil soon learned the rigors and exhaustion of synchronized drill and

marching during basic training under the brutal Texas sun. He relates the experience of "hour after hour, moving in unison and by the numbers in response to shouted commands, sweating in the hot sun, and, every so often, counting out the cadence as we marched: Hut! Hup! Hip! Four!" (McNeil 1). Through McNeil's eyes, we see the regimented movement of the troops, counted out and verbally managed at intervals chosen by the noncommissioned officers charged with the recruits' training and transformation on the eve of war. These verbal markers, stark and entirely utilitarian, served the purpose of time or rhythm markers but little else.

A few short years later, Private Duckworth, improvisationally altered the pattern of accepted tradition and practice of verbal management for group movement as he began to sing out short, relevant, and at times humorous two-line verses, regularly followed by "Sound off! One, two, three, four! One-two, three-four!" (Johnson 20). Duckworth's fellow soldiers soon caught on, answering back in unison to his prompts at regular intervals (20). And so the Duckworth Chant was born. Due to its effectiveness in improving morale and troop motivation, the Duckworth Chant was eventually recorded and distributed to all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces (21). Duckworth style cadence chants were soon utilized in the teaching and conducting of close order and exhibitionary drill in the various military branches (Johnson 24). From a tired trek back to the barracks came the Duckworth Chant, now known more generically as the modern cadence call. The hallmark of Duckworth's improvisation and its current iteration of running and marching cadences in the Marine Corps lies in its paired facets of whole-group participatory verbal interactions twinned with the synchronized,

purposeful bodily movements of marching and running. First, let us look at the codified structure of cadences' verbal interaction and participation.

Ryan Casey briefly outlines the format of lyric-based chants as that of "cadence counts, led by a 'caller' and echoed by the shouted voices from the ranks" (9). This structure is a fine, basic description of the traditional communication form known as call-and-response, a staple of group social interactions of various types within African American culture. As Duckworth was African American, presumably raised within and certainly living as an adult within racially segregated America, it is likely that he drew on African American Vernacular English communication patterns, language structures, and systems of verbal social interaction. Geneva Smitherman, in *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America,* defines call-response as "spontaneous verbal and non-verbal interaction between speaker and listener in which all the speaker's statements ('calls') are punctuated by expressions ('responses') from the listener" (104). This call and response pattern ensures whole community focus and participation upon a given topic or group event at hand.

Eliza Young continues this work on call-response in *The African-American Oral Tradition in Selected Writings of Zora Neal Hurston Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker*. Young describes call-response as a cultural and communal tool, explaining how this mode of discourse "is primarily a participatory act whereby both the speaker and the listener engage in a unifying verbal exchange" (4). Young goes on to explain that the "verbal interaction between performer (or speaker) and the audience is a noteworthy characteristic of the call-response pattern" as it provides, via collective behavior, a means of social participation and belonging. Young gestures further toward this by

asserting that "the participants of the speech act [call-and-response] are equally important" parts of the pattern, of the social functions and following implications enacted by the pattern (4). Moreover, by both participating in their socially, contextually prescribed roles, performers and audience both succeed in "reaffirming each other as integral parts of a unified speech process" (Young 4). This "active participatory speech process" serves to bind and reaffirm connections between community members who are present and participate in the cultural practice (4). Here, in the structure and enactment of call-response, we see similar work performed as is done in the recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed*, the building of group identity through simultaneous performance of a text in such a way that blurs the lines between individuals by its collective enactment. The reciprocal and interdependent pattern inherent to call-response structures, however, allow for additional and reinforcing work toward group identity to occur via their required participatory patterns as such an iteration of Burke's Symbolic Action can only take place with both parties inhabiting their assigned role. Cadences only exist when both caller and respondents participate as they should; any subsequent faltering of either party brings the enacted text to an end. While the participatory nature of cadence is integral to its existence as an embodied form of Symbolic Action, its twinned existence with physical activity makes it all the more powerful as a tool for crafting Marine group identity in recruits.

In *Grooming, Gossip, and the Evolution of Language*, Robin Dunbar explains the power of combined song and culturally mediated collective bodily movement we see in the singing of lyric-based chants while running, a collective, rhythmic movement akin to dance. Dunbar reminds us, "it feels good to sing and dance" (146) and goes on

to explain that this type of coordinated group song and movement "generates euphoric highs as well as feelings of happiness and warmth" due to these activities' generation of "surges of opiates from the brain" (146). This pairing and amplification of shared group feelings of good will and cohesion finds resonance and development in the realm of collective gesture.

Marc Leman, in his "Music, Gesture, and the Formation of Embodied Meaning," remarks on gesture related to music as means of establishing and developing group identification. According to Leman, physical movement that is music-related plays a role "as a property of the mediation between mind and physical environment" that surrounds the music and the moment of experiencing music (129). With this in mind, "gestures appear as patterns that deploy or articulate" the mediation between the mind and the physical in the music-related movement experience (Leman 129). Gestures, according to Leman, can be said to "express this mediation" to the extent that "it can be said that gestures are neither purely physical, nor purely mental but are embodied by nature. They form part of a mediation process, and therefore exceed the. . .division between mind and matter" (129). Gesture is both and neither entirely of the mind or of the body but a combination, an amalgamation of both within the physically oriented musical experience, and here we see again Burke's Motion/Action binary at work. While Motion is necessary for gesture, it is the realm of Action, and its requisite symbol laden context, that makes gesture out of Motion. Gesture is not gesture unless it is symbolically laden, unless it has meaning for the one performing and those observing. Without social grounding, intentional cultural purpose and interpretation, a

movement remains in the realm of body, Motion as a possible muscle tic, spasm, or other involuntary, entirely physiological event.

Gesture plays upon the use of music in one particular way germane to our discussion of cadences, that of flow. Leman describes the experience of flow as "an experience in which the subject's skills are fully preoccupied with a task" (139). Flow is most likely to occur when one is "fully occupied [with the music task] rather than with the instrument, the environment, or yourself" (139). Flow, thus described, is a state of absorption in the moment, the experience and execution of movement and music, to the extent that conscious awareness of context, surroundings, and even the self fade from ongoing thought.

Along with this drop in focus on one's subjectivity comes the concept of "music-driven social interactions" in which "gesture appears as a mediator. . .or the vehicle through which a 'me-to-you' relationship is established in space and time, through musical engagement" (Leman 143). Leman goes on to specify that "the core mechanism for understanding social interactive gestures can be understood in terms of embodiment" or the "mirroring through which 'my' perception of 'your' movement is grasped in terms of the (overt or covert) deployment of 'my' own body movement in the environment, so that 'your' movement is corporeally understood as an action" (Leman 143). What Leman so adeptly portrays here is the soul and essence of the call-response structure of cadences that aids the work of collective identity creation within Marine Corps Recruit Training.

Embodying the same Symbolic Action, that of running/marching while singing cadence, between the 'Me's' and 'You's' of a platoon of recruits yields first an

understanding of the movement of "Me" progresses to yield an understanding of another's perceived motion as an instance or understanding of one's own movement. Via social interactive gesture, as we see in cadence performance, each recruit in a flow like state not only perceives but identifies one's self in the embodiment of movement from another recruit running with them. William McNeil echoes this reflecting on his basic training days, proposing the notion of "boundary loss" between individuals which leads to a "feeling they are one" between them (8). This loss of distinction between self and other is characterized by McNeill as a "blurring of self-awareness and the heightening of fellow-feeling with all who share in the dance" of synchronized movements such a running/marching to cadence (8). This feeling of oneness, this seeing of *Me* in *You* which sparks the process of becoming *We* is the work embodied Symbolic Action and Burkean inter-identification via consubstantiality offers and achieves in USMC recruit training.

Recruits learn lore, tradition, terminology, behavioral, culture, and, perhaps an important catch-all for the aforementioned, history through cadence content. In his book *One Bullet Away*, Marine Capt. Nathaniel Fick posits that "history. . .is the religion" of the Corps. Speaking of his experiences as an Officer of Marines, Fick relates how "past deeds [of Marines] are a young Marine's source of pride, inspiration to face danger, and reassurance that death in battle isn't consignment to oblivion. His buddies and all future Marines will keep the faith" (Fick 72). If history, and the larger context of such events (i.e. culture), serves as the common religion for service members, one can see how the cadences sung during the hours of marching and running done over the 13-week course of recruit training might serve as something akin to

hymns for Marine novitiates. Running and singing about past deeds, great battles, Marines of fame and acclaim, culturally accepted views of bravery, combat, pain and death can be an instantiation of worship via cultural texts embodied and absorbed as a group in the process of learning what it is to be a Marine during the very process of becoming Marines. Recruits, as they move to cadence, share, constitute, and embody Marine identity through Burke's Symbolic Action seen at work in both cadence content and the collective identity work of culturally recognized and purposeful physical movement. With the use of cadence in recruit training, Marine identity is created, learned, expressed, and strengthened at a measured speed of 180 beats per minute.

Conclusion

The work of each Marine Corps Recruit Depot centers upon the creation of basically trained Marines from each incoming group of hopeful civilian recruits. Inherent to this generative process lies the creating of space for and the filling of said space by the newly forged collective group identity of Marine. Kenneth Burke provides a useful lens for analyzing this (re)formative journey via his concepts of consubstantiality and identification, which focus on the shared bonds between group and individual that lie at the heart of the social existence humanity inhabits. Burke's (nonsymbolic) motion/(symbolic) action binary, when twinned with the foundational conception of shared group identity, allows us to see the creation of collective Marine identity as an inherently embodied process that takes place through the memorization and collective recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed,* the act of standing on The Yellow Footprints upon initial arrival at recruit training, and the participatory act of running and marching to lyric-based cadences.

The means of formation begin with the initial nonverbal and entirely corporeal transitional moment of shaping the civilian into a recruit via control of the body. The Yellow Footprints provide this moment, facilitating the initiatory imposition of Marine Corps standards, expectations, and identity upon each recruit through minutely prescribed bodily positioning, posture, and carriage in a color-coded space and place both functional and full of inherent symbolic meaning. Using this foundation, the group recitation of *The Rifleman's Creed* and recruits' running and marching to lyric-based cadences utilize shared, unified, synchronized collective action to twin the conceptual framework of shared identity with the actual embodiment of said collective identity through symbolic action. To say and do together what only Marine recruits say and do together simultaneously speaks to and embodies the active reality of shared Marine identity.

Using Burke's lenses of consubstantiality, identity, and (nonsymbolic) motion/(symbolic)action, we can see that the path to becoming a Marine exists as a process whose genesis, structure, and progression is aided and accomplished by intrinsically embodied rhetorics. These embodied rhetorical acts and moments exist as foundational to each recruit incorporating into their worldview a shared Marine identity designed to build unit cohesion, supply cultural meaning and context, provide an overarching institutional value system, and sustain the esprit de corps which the United States Marine Corps defends and treasures.

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