

“Alfred Hitchcock Presents; ‘Propaganda’”:

A Rhetorical Study of Alfred Hitchcock’s World War II Propaganda Films

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This Project is Dedicated to My Parents---

Randy Brown, Mechanic

Robin Brown, Homeschool Mom

---the Smartest People I Know.

## Abstract

Alfred Hitchcock is a well known filmmaker whose work has been often studied by English, communication, and film scholars. However, those examining Hitchcock seem to have pet favorites of films they deem worthy of study. This thesis examines the lesser-known propaganda films of Alfred Hitchcock made for the British Ministry of Information in 1944. Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache each tell a story of intrigue and adventure in French territory during the German occupation and Vichy government of World War II. However, after the MOI waited almost the entire war to have propaganda made by Alfred Hitchcock, the films were not circulated to the extent expected (Aventure Malgache was never released at all). In this paper, the Narrative Paradigm proposed by Walter Fisher is used to rhetorically analyze the films. Using Fisher's concepts of coherence and fidelity, as well as an investigation into the themes and values of the films, the narratives are critiqued for clues as to the MOI's less than enthusiastic reaction.

Key Words: Alfred Hitchcock, Rhetorical Criticism, Narrative Paradigm, Rhetoric of Film, Propaganda, British Ministry of Information

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*Solo Deo Gloria*

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

Alfred Hitchcock is noted by many to be one of the most popular and influential moviemakers of his time. Many describe his phenomenal works by using such words as suspense, mystery, intrigue, irony, and fear. The work of Hitchcock often transcends the realm of entertainment and takes the viewer somewhere deeper, whether that level is intense self-analysis or a fresh perspective on the ordinary. What many Hitchcock fans still do not realize, however, is that Sir Alfred was directly involved in projects outside the strictly-for-entertainment business. During World War II, Alfred Hitchcock was called upon by the government of his native country to contribute to the Ministry of Information's propaganda efforts, specifically that which was used to bolster the French Resistance to German occupation. The short films that resulted from this call to action were Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache (translated Madagascar Landing), works that can also be described by such words as suspense, mystery, intrigue, irony, and fear. The purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to examine and describe the rhetorical strategies utilized by Alfred Hitchcock in Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache. Rhetorical strategies are defined as the methods employed by the creator to convey a particular message. This project is here introduced through a development of the research question, brief mention of past literature, the methodological approach of this study, and background information on the context.

The primary interest of this study is to take a closer rhetorical look at Alfred Hitchcock's filmmaking. The lens of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm was used to analyze and critique the narratives of the two propaganda films and the overarching question asked whether the stories' success at creating coherence and fidelity was related to the strength of the films and

whether the overall quality of the stories may have had an impact on the British Ministry of Information's less than enthusiastic reception.

Alfred Hitchcock has long been one of the most influential directors in film history. Not only did he carry an impact in his time, his artisanship is still emulated today. Many compare the work of current director M. Night Shyamalan to that of Hitchcock and Shyamalan's respect for Hitchcock's work leads many to believe that he patterns his films after the same sense of suspense-making (Holden). Studies have even been done that link his influence from beyond the film world to other forms of artistic expression, such as the literature of Paul Auster in The New York Trilogy (Golden).

This study is significant in the communication discipline because it expands an oft-studied body of work (Alfred Hitchcock films) to a new analysis. While many communication scholars have examined Hitchcock's work from a film criticism or even literary perspective, little to no work has been done from a primarily rhetorical perspective. Further, this study contributes to the communication discipline through a further analysis of historically significant propaganda work by an historically significant filmmaker. The definition of propaganda that will provide basic understanding in this study is quoted by Jacques Ellul in the Preface of his book, Propaganda. Ellul cites the definition given by the Institute for Propaganda Analysis: "Propaganda is the expression of opinions or actions carried out deliberately by individuals or groups with a view to influencing the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for predetermined ends and through psychological manipulations" (qtd. in Ellul xi-xii).

Literature up to this point has focused primarily on the film criticism of various Hitchcock works as well as the life of Hitchcock as a filmmaker. Some representative works in the field of Hitchcock study are the film criticisms done by Peter J. Dellolio, Sheldon Hall, and

Clifford T. Manlove as well as some research on Hitchcock personally done by Rick Worland in addition to an article by David W. Galenson and Joshua Kotin. In “Hitchcock and Kafka: Expressionist Themes in *Strangers on a Train*,” Dellolio examines the visual imagery in one of Hitchcock’s murder-centered suspense classics and deduces some of the expressionist themes and methods (Dellolio). In “Dial M for Murder,” an article for Film History, Hall performs a complete analysis on another Hitchcock film from a contextual perspective and in comparison to a more recent film (Hall). In a 2007 article for Cinema Journal, Manlove critiques the use of a particular filming style utilizing the “gaze” in Hitchcock’s work, among others’ (Manlove).

In examination of Hitchcock as an individual and filmmaker, Rick Worland covers his involvement in the creative process from book to movie in a historical tracing of the movie Suspicion (Worland). Galenson and Kotin look at Hitchcock’s career peak in relation to his age and particular brand of filmmaking genius. Hitchcock is shown to have success later in life and to be a more experimental artist (Galenson and Kotin). A more extensive survey of the literature will be included in a separate chapter.

The films that were used in this study were made by Alfred Hitchcock in response to the request of the British Ministry of Information during World War II. They are specifically fascinating as short films and as direct propaganda by such an influential filmmaker. The methodology applied was a rhetorical analysis utilizing concepts inherent in Walter Fisher’s Narrative Paradigm. Each of the films was critiqued according to the theory and then they were compared to each other. Through the comparison, commonalities and disparities are proposed. Because movies function as narratives and because both of the films are told through stories related by the characters, Narrative Paradigm, incorporating the concepts of coherence and

fidelity (which will be further explained in the Literature Review and Methodology) is an appropriate method.

In order to understand the significance of the films and their place in a particular context, some background must be offered. As these films were made to bolster the morale and send a message about and to members of the French Resistance, a brief history is necessary. During World War II, France was defeated early on by Nazi Germany. Coming amidst an already-increasing doubt of the sanctity and reliability of the British as an ally to the French, the German invasion in the summer of 1940 was met with a mixed reception (Northwest Historical Association). In June, knowing that they would soon be defeated, the French government sought peace and thus the German government took direct control of the northern part of France. By mid-June, the British aid in France was retreating and the Germans had “triumphantly” marched on France’s capital. The French people resisted very little to the initial occupation by Germany, accepting the terms of an armistice offered by Adolf Hitler himself (Kedward 3). Relations between the French and British became even more strained and the British launched strategic moves to weaken the French forces as they became controlled by Germany (4).

The French Resistance began to form in November of the same year, as disillusionment with the true intentions of the government began to set in (46). The Resistance took shape through a slow and steady process and did not involve great demonstrations or violence but rather “membership in the resistance most often meant the continuation of one’s normal life” (Northwest Historical Association). A large part of the Resistance was played out through publications communicating the Resistance’s existence and goals. The press had long been a source of heavy influence in France, and many major newspapers chose to disband rather than print “Nazi-approved” literature (Kyte 101). The Resistance press began to rear its head after

some of the initial violence and excitement had cleared. The information, like the Resistance itself, was made up of publications from many ideological perspectives (102). Indeed, the only unifying factor for many of the members of the Resistance was the opposition to German occupation. The movement would ultimately play a role in the outcome of the war (Houlihan).

British propaganda played a significant role in the Allied war effort. According to Vernon Stumpf, Britain's World War II propaganda film corpus was "probably the largest campaign for men's minds through the medium of film ever mounted" and was "considerably more impressive than the work of the German Propaganda Ministry during the war" (Stumpf 8). The British Ministry of Information (MOI) was the primary organization responsible for the official films, numbering over one thousand, which were produced by the people of Great Britain in the early 1940s (Stumpf 8). It was the MOI that requested Alfred Hitchcock's involvement in the movement, with the British government specifically requesting his return from Hollywood (Gustainis and DeSilva 80-1).

Through a basic summary of the research approach and questions to be answered and a brief introduction to the literature and methodology, as well as information on the context of the films, a foundation for this thesis has been offered. As the next pages progress through a Literature Review, Methodology, Results, and Recommendations for Future Research, the films will be examined.

## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

In order to properly place a study of rhetorical criticism using Fisher's Narrative Paradigm on Alfred Hitchcock films, there are a couple of areas of research that must be surveyed. In this Literature Review, first research on Alfred Hitchcock is reviewed and explained, indicating trends within the field of study and showing Hitchcock to be worth note by scholars. Second, a history and past uses of the Narrative Paradigm are explained to give rationale to the usage of the theory in this rhetorical criticism.

### **Research on Alfred Hitchcock**

In order to construct a basis for the study of Alfred Hitchcock films from a rhetorical perspective, it is important to first determine what other perspectives have been applied to his works. Beginning with the dissertations and theses completed on the topic and ending with the development of Hitchcock study in academic journals of various fields, this section of the Literature Review briefly outlines the diverse areas of study that have concerned themselves with Hitchcock already.

No major degree work has been done on the rhetorical aspects of Hitchcock or his films to date, which is the direction this study will ultimately pursue. However, the sheer amount of journal articles that have been published about him show that many scholars find Hitchcock and his films worthy of study. In order to place rhetorical approaches in a research context, the various works that have been done on Hitchcock will be surveyed here. In a search of the term "Alfred Hitchcock" in ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database, 53 articles returned as hits. Of these 53 articles, 47 of them revealed themselves to be actual works on Hitchcock himself (the other 6 were merely works that did not focus on Hitchcock but rather referenced him vaguely in the abstract or the opening paragraphs). These 47 articles (primarily dissertations)

ultimately broke down into five major areas, with many of the areas being capable of further division. These areas were determined by the type of degree that the piece was written to obtain. These five major areas included: twenty-two for degrees in English language or literature, nineteen for degrees in mass media or film studies, three related to the discipline of communication (broadly defined), two written in the Spanish language, and one from an art history perspective.

### *Mass Media or Film Studies*

Before beginning the review of dissertations in this area, a brief description of Laura Mulvey's perspective on the "gaze" in film would be useful, as many of these studies will build on this concept. In her 1975 article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," Mulvey demonstrated the "phallogentrism" of film through the male gaze she "takes as starting point the way film reflects, reveals and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle" (Mulvey 6). She asserts that primarily, woman is the image and man is the bearer of the look (11). Many feminist film criticisms have drawn on this initial study.

It is logical to begin with studies that have been done in the area of mass media and film studies since the topic of the study is film. Of the nineteen dissertations dealing with Hitchcock's films, four general categories emerged. Seven studies were done on aspects relating to Hitchcock in particular, four were done on theoretical applications applied primarily to Hitchcock films, seven were done on more general premises applied to the work of Hitchcock among others, and one was on the influence of Hitchcock on the work of Brian DePalma.

The films of Hitchcock in particular are of great interest to film scholars. In an analysis that utilized six films from Hitchcock's greatest era of popularity (1940-1963), Ann Adele West

constructed a work on the genre conventions and cultural references that Hitchcock drew on in his filmmaking. This analysis was worked out through identification of Hitchcock's aims for his films and how the aspects of genre and culture played into this. Donald McNamara looked specifically at the psychoanalytic films that Hitchcock made in a dissertation that sought to deal with the common problem of interpretation that tends to leave out an interplay of intentional versus unintentional discourse in film. As he examined Spellbound, Psycho, and Marnie, McNamara revealed the development of certain themes in Hitchcock's work.

Michele Piso analyzed Hitchcock's filmmaking from a fresh perspective, claiming Hitchcock's work as philosophic and cultural commentary on drastic issues stemming from the work of Marx, Jameson, and others. In an analysis of Psycho, Marnie, and The Birds that steered clear of the common tendency to reduce the films to productions of voyeurism, fetishism, and other such concepts, Piso proposed an interpretation of the movies that includes commentary on the ideas of alienation, class discourse, and the lack of mystery in a bureaucratized society.

Leslie Abramson looked at Hitchcock's individual creation and development of his own approach to authorship. Abramson's premise was that the characters and settings of Hitchcock's films can be demonstrated to be analogous to his views of authorship in film production. Through a chronological analysis of film, Abramson explored how Hitchcock portrays the roles each figure plays in the production process.

Shannon Mader wrote a dissertation for the University of Southern California that extensively examined Hitchcock and his work. According to Mader, many film critics have ignored the nature of Hitchcock's films as melodramas in favor of viewing them as ironic works that undermined their melodramatic basis. It was Mader's overarching hypothesis that there are obvious elements to Hitchcock's film work that many of these critics have overlooked that cast

them as simple melodramas, as many of the other films of the time period. He traced the development of ironic view in Hitchcock's work alongside the development of the definition of irony in literary criticism.

Elisabeth Weis believed that the study of aural style (sound effects, music, and dialogue) in film was a greatly overlooked but hugely important aspect of film study. In asserting her position, Weis utilized Hitchcock's aural style as a type of case study based on his role as an innovator in this area. Weis specifically looked at Blackmail, Murder, The Secret Agent, The Birds, The Man Who Knew Too Much (original British version), and Rear Window. Sam Paul Simone used evidence from four of Hitchcock's World War II era films to construct an explanation of the director's ideology. According to this 1982 analysis of Foreign Correspondent, Saboteur, Lifeboat, and Notorious, Hitchcock adhered to a democratic political ideology and, in Simone's estimation, portrayed this viewpoint in his filmmaking. Simone also proposed that Hitchcock used his films to undermine the ideology of Nazi Germany.

Hitchcock's work is popular for use in illustrating film issues. This is evidenced in the four works that use his films to demonstrate theory. Using Hitchcock's North by Northwest, Jethro Sims expounded on the filmmaking process in his dissertation for the University of Texas at Austin. The issue that Sims dealt with is the question of authorship in Hollywood movies and he examined the question based on the creative relationship between Ernest Lehman (screenwriter) and Alfred Hitchcock (director) as they worked on the film.

A thesis by Linda McGinty for the University of Houston-Clear Lake used Hitchcock's Strangers on a Train to help demonstrate a new film criticism theory. McGinty constructed a reader-response theory applied to film based on the Cooperative Principle, titling the new construct "Filmic Conditions." Ayako Saito performed a film criticism of three of Hitchcock's

works in a dissertation for the University of California. The goal of the dissertation was to reevaluate and reinterpret the issue of emotions in both film criticism and theory. Saito examined Vertigo, North by Northwest, and Psycho in a chapter of analysis dedicated to illustrating affective logic in film.

An area not often studied is the silent work of Hitchcock. In a dissertation overturning many commonly-held beliefs about visual experience in narrative, Jessica Brent looked at a scene in Hitchcock's The Lodger as well as referenced strategies in many of his other works. Brent's basic idea centered around visual surfaces and how they can create anxiety in the viewer for resolution.

Hitchcock has also been used in conjunction with other subjects of research. Edward Sikov attempted to disprove the claim that the period after World War II in America was marked by a decline in the American film comedy. Through analysis of the works of Hitchcock as well as many other directors of the time, Sikov showed that they were able to create comedies that were reflective of the cultural tensions of the era and managed to mock the problems from the directors' points of view. Alan Rogers attempted to explicate the concept of the contemporary horror film through a number of means in his 1990 work honored by the Council for National Academic Awards (United Kingdom). In the midst of an analysis spanning the roots of gothic fiction to the horror films of the 1980s, Hitchcock's Psycho was considered in the context of the original Gothic concept and in its drawing together of conventions from both the horror and thriller film genres.

Joseph McElhaney referred to Hitchcock and specifically his film Marnie in a work dedicated to examining several filmmakers who span the time between classical cinema and major changes. McElhaney called Marnie a failure in its attempts to incorporate modern movie

making. The basic idea behind the look at all of the films in the dissertation was that the filmmakers were not yet able to align themselves with the modern cinema and portrayed their classical roots in precisely the actions they were attempting to modernize.

Laura Vazquez wrote of Hitchcock in film criticism from a feminist perspective. Using his Stage Fright as an example, she analyzed various narrative films made by male directors and contrasted them to female autobiographical works. Vazquez examined narrative films in which a female protagonist is on a quest for knowledge and in which the director utilizes an active female gaze and suggested possible ways the female may use the gaze as well as narrative interpretations. In a master's level work on the use of stairs in film, Dan Babineau included an entire chapter on Alfred Hitchcock's use of stairs in his works. Building on the concepts of staircases as representing power and including many layers of meaning, Babineau described Hitchcock's apparent obsession with staircases (the first scene of his first film and the last scene of his last featured stairs). Hitchcock's playful comment that he preferred stairs because they are "photogenic" was placed in contrast to the role that staircases often played in creating suspense or advancing the plot in his films.

Doug Tomlinson constructed a relationship between the art of performance and directorial strategy in filmmaking. He looked at three directors who had very divergent approaches, one of whom was Alfred Hitchcock. His view on Hitchcock was that the director enjoyed using extra-performance strategies and highly choreographed movements in his filmmaking. In 2006, Carol Tomlinson included Hitchcock films in a thesis on the horror film. Based on inspiration by previous experience with Hitchcock, Tomlinson sought to analyze common elements that make a horror film disturbing and also what causes one to remain prevalent in audience conversation.

Finally in film, Hitchcock is shown to have an impact on other filmmakers. In a thesis on Brian DePalma's filmmaking for Northwestern University, Laurence Knapp included a chapter on Alfred Hitchcock. His inclusion of Hitchcock is based on an assertion that DePalma used the popularity and style of Hitchcock films as basis for some of his filmmaking strategies, especially through the 1970s.

### *Communication Discipline*

Moving next to the area of communication studies (broadly), there were three articles found. In a 1977 dissertation for Northwestern University, Gorham Kindem attempted to construct a semiotic approach to visual communication in film. In doing so, Kindem employed a semiotic analysis of several Alfred Hitchcock films that appeared in color. Ellen Vincer did a thesis for the University of Guelph examining the effects of lying on the human agent performing the language-game or deception. The agent was constructed as an individual and as a member of a larger community, and Vincer used three of Hitchcock's films to demonstrate her primary argument. The rationale for choosing the films was the central theme of deceit in many Hitchcock works. Christopher Dumas mentioned Hitchcock in several aspects in his dissertation on Brian DePalma for Indiana University. Calling Hitchcock essentially the father of film studies (with an ironic tone), Dumas looked specifically at several of DePalma's films that mirror Hitchcockian structures (Sisters, Obsession, Dressed to Kill, Body Double, and Raising Cain). According to Dumas, each film relates to a specific Hitchcock film and is similarly theoretically based.

### *The Unexpected*

Three somewhat unexpected studies included two in Spanish and one in art history. Allison Sauls did an art-perspective directed dissertation on the whole of Alfred Hitchcock's

approach, looking specifically at Vertigo, which she referred to as a masterpiece. Hitchcock was traced through the artistic and intellectual evolution that is concurrent with the development of his film work and was portrayed as an unconventional trailblazer with lasting cultural significance.

In Spanish, two dissertations looked at fascinating aspects. While much work has been done on the cinematic work of Alfred Hitchcock, Jose Luis Castro de Paz chose to approach another side of the director, examining the television series Alfred Hitchcock Presents. De Paz placed the television show within its particular historical and technological context and argued for its importance as well as Hitchcock's influence as a key figure in this time. He also looked at the directional changes of film and television during the run of the series. Also, Isabel de Azcarraga Alonso included The Birds in a study on the metaphoric intent of film. Along with two other films, the opening scene was examined as an audiovisual metaphor explicitly stated by the filmmaker as well as looked at in interaction with the entire film.

#### *English Language and Literature*

Dissertations on Alfred Hitchcock and his filmmaking are abundant in the area of English language and literature studies. Of the 19 results that returned on ProQuest, two were written solely on the work of Hitchcock himself, two constructed a form of analysis using a Hitchcock film that is then applied to other texts, eight were on concepts that were illustrated through the work of Hitchcock alongside other filmmakers, and ten were on concepts illustrated through films and other means.

First, a look at the two dissertations written primarily about Hitchcock's work. In 1980, Thomas Hemmeter sought to consolidate the prevailing views on Hitchcock's films into an approach based on the style of Hitchcock. It was his assertion that the entertainment value of

Hitchcock cinema seems juxtaposed in relation to the complexity that appeals to many Hitchcock scholars. He asserted in his dissertation for Case Western Reserve University that a critical approach that considers a stylistic analysis of Hitchcock's work is the most effective. Later, in 1984, Alexander Doty took another angle. It was his opinion that Alfred Hitchcock's work in the 1940s had been too greatly ignored by critics and needed to be explored. Doty's attempt to remedy this neglectful situation took the form of a dissertation on five of Hitchcock's films. These five films were Rebecca, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Notorious, Spellbound, and Suspicion. In addition to analyzing the films, Doty also used the films to explicate themes such as the American studio system and the use of Freudian concepts in moviemaking.

There were two particular dissertations that utilized the film work of Alfred Hitchcock to construct a theory for criticism of other texts. Victor George Kytasty used Hitchcock's North by Northwest to demonstrate an approach to literature delineated in his dissertation for the University of California at San Diego. He identified themes relating to identity, investment, and involvement and constructed them into a theory applied to texts. In a dissertation on narratives from the 1950s and the overarching metaphor of containment therein, Andrea Sanders used Hitchcock's Rear Window to construct the background for the rest of the study. The metaphor of containment was constructed through a three part process which includes segregation, integration, and infiltration. Sanders used the story of Rear Window to construct a methodology which is then applied to several other texts.

Of the eight projects that analyzed Hitchcock's films as well as films by other directors, four distinct categories were found. Two compared Hitchcock's work with that of one other primary filmmaker, two examined film strategies illustrated through the films of Hitchcock along

with others, two were particularly interested in feminist concerns related to women's role, and two were used to illustrate broader concepts based on many diverse film works.

Susan Kurbis compared Hitchcock with the film work of Douglas Sirk in a 2003 thesis for the University of Manitoba. Kurbis looked specifically at Marnie and The Birds with Sirk's melodramatic films. She contrasted the use of body, scene, and music in the films as well as the use of irony and approach to emotionalism. She concluded that although the two films of Hitchcock's can be classified as melodramas, he is not as pure in the genre as Sirk. Ryan McBride's 2006 thesis for the University of Manitoba compared the filmmaking strategies of Alfred Hitchcock and Fritz Lang. While McBride stated that the men had very similar styles and influence on each other, his comparison of four distinct murder scenes served to point out the discrepancies between the directors. He also contributed to the field of work on Alfred Hitchcock through an analysis of the use of staircases in his and Lang's films.

Two dissertations on film strategies included Hitchcock. In 1997, James Hurley used two of Hitchcock's films to demonstrate new proposals for gaze theory. Along with a work by Michael Powell, Hurley examined Psycho and Rear Window for their unique quality of showing the process of gazing. Gaze is an often studied concept in feminist, Marxist, and psychoanalytic theories, and Hurley hoped in this dissertation to offer new models for the gaze in film.

According to Hurley, the gaze in the movies he chose is unconventional in its use and in the manipulation of the audience. Alanna Thain's 2005 thesis for Duke University examined four films for their incorporation of the body in film. One of these films was Hitchcock's Vertigo. Using the concept of immediation, Thain claimed to propose an alternative to the dominating themes of analysis. Vertigo was of special interest because of various elements, including the use of a body double.

Feminist criticisms are an oft studied aspect of many disciplines, and Hitchcock is believed by many to have created many works fascinating to the study of women's roles. H. McIntyre included Rear Window alongside two other films in a master's thesis that sought to reinterpret the films' use of the female body in regards to spectatorship. Her analyses come from the perspective that too much attention has been previously paid to determining the films' attempts to appeal to the male viewer through ownership of a woman to view. Tiffany Gilbert included two major works by Alfred Hitchcock (Rear Window and Vertigo) in her dissertation for the University of Virginia that examines the concept of diva and its impact on film. Gilbert looked at how the previous image combines with the actress's performance in each film. She also examined how the diva's presence impacts the film's reception.

Finally, within the realm of work that examined Hitchcock alongside other filmmakers are two dissertations on broader concepts illustrated through film. Steven Brzezinski, in a dissertation for Duke University on the cross-sectioning of American and British culture in the first half of the twentieth century, included a chapter on Alfred Hitchcock. Specifically, Brzezinski examined Hitchcock's two versions of The Man Who Knew Too Much. The first, created in the 1930s, portrayed a British couple as the main characters; the 1956 remake of the film featured an American couple. These films were of especial interest to Brzezinski as he paints the corporate picture between the two nations. Selim Eyuboglu classified Alfred Hitchcock's Blackmail within the realm of modernism (provisionally) in a dissertation examining four films. Eyuboglu's work was to analyze films based on perspectives in modernism, late-modernism, postmodernism, and film theory. A chapter each is devoted to the four films, with Hitchcock's Blackmail shown to ironically parody modernism while following in the tradition.

Among the seven studies that illustrated concepts using films as well as other means, three categories were found. Two were literary criticisms that compared Hitchcock to verbal texts, two were on narrative constructs that looked at Hitchcock in parallel with other texts, and three were on miscellaneous phenomena.

In a literary dissertation for Brown University, Carol Kent compared the work of Hitchcock with that of Flannery O'Connor. Although the two creators are working with drastically different media, Kent drew a parallel in the way that each author makes the most out of genre restrictions. The primary similarity is what Kent called generic doubling, a mixing and ironic take to genre. In the chapter devoted primarily to Hitchcock, Kent analyzed Mr. and Mr. Smith, Shadow of a Doubt, and Psycho. Hitchcock uses a form of doubling in the films to be examined in this study, as espionage and propaganda mesh. In a 2003 literary analysis of La Regenta by Leopoldo Alas y Ureña, Carol Anne Tinkham included a comparison to Hitchcock's Vertigo to provide an explanation for certain aspects of the novel. In a section on art as a game and that examines decadence in novelization, Tinkham drew parallels between the two texts.

In a work detailing the conception of postmodern narratives of serial killers, Philip Simpson referred to Alfred Hitchcock's Shadow of a Doubt from 1943 as a turning point or pivotal moment in the accepted transition from modernism to postmodernism as the prevailing philosophy. Simpson's enormous project sought to detail many aspects of postmodernism's approach to serial killers, specifically during the 1980s and 90s. Alina Luna examined *Psycho* as well as three written texts in an analysis of the representation of the mother for a 2002 dissertation. The focus of the work was on the perversion of the maternal instinct and the adverse effects on the child, and the Bates family of Psycho provided ample ground for discussion as the son's mind is taken over by his dead mother's voice.

There have been dissertations examining miscellaneous phenomena in Hitchcock's work as well. In a dissertation on fetishes and object collections in relation to views on women, Ami Regier mentioned Hitchcock's Rebecca. The reference was minor as the section is on Desperately Seeking Susan by Susan Seidelman, which portrays a "collecting" plot that is a revision of the Hitchcock film about a late wife's impact on those still alive. In a dissertation from a feminist perspective for Princeton University, Karen Beckman chose to use a Hitchcock film as part of her inquiry into the phenomenon of the vanishing woman in popular culture. After setting up a context of theory as well as through an analysis of magician's acts and Freudian analysis, Beckman critiqued Hitchcock's The Lady Vanishes alongside a film by Veit Harlan (Verwehte Spuren) to showcase the ideologies represented. In a dissertation on the American approach to reading during the Cold War years, a Hitchcock film is considered. The several works that were mentioned in this dissertation are chosen for their reflection of or challenge to the prevailing views on reading in America. A chapter of the work was dedicated to Rope in particular and how it may be used to portray "reading guidance."

Randall Spinks examined Vertigo alongside Herman Melville's Moby Dick in a 1993 dissertation based on poststructuralism and the concept of the Political Unconscious. According to Spinks, both Hitchcock and Melville participate in but also appear to challenge popular cultural works of their respective times. He analyzed Vertigo as a text that is a commentary on America's preoccupation with power and freedom. In a dissertation from a feminist perspective on the effect of language and femininity in film, Ellen Kreger examined Marnie among several other film works. The chapter that includes Marnie specifically looked at the hysteric nature of the primary female character. The films were considered in view of their relationship to the traditional view of gender subjectivity.

Jonathan Austad did an analysis of the work of Hitchcock compared to that of Hemingway in 2008 for the Florida State University. Austad found that both men portrayed values in their art that were greatly divergent from their more conservative backgrounds. Hitchcock and Hemingway both attempted to reconcile traits of the modern world with the traditional values commonly accepted and, according to Austad, found the traditional values lacking in explanation of contemporary society. Austad found that each artist dealt with this dichotomy in a similar way through their respective art forms.

#### *Academic Journal Articles*

Beyond the graduate work done on Alfred Hitchcock, there have been a large number of articles published in the communication discipline about his work as well. Themes include the process of his films (specifically book to film), influences on Hitchcock as well as his influence on others artistically, comparisons, film techniques and themes, and general analyses. A search on the Communication & Mass Media Complete (CMMC) database search yielded articles in primarily film journals.

Of greatest interest is the one article that has been published about the films that will be used in this study. In a 1997 article for Film & History, Justin Gustainis and Deborah DeSilva cast a light on the often-forgotten World War II propaganda films of Alfred Hitchcock. In the article, Gustainis and DeSilva examined the use of the propaganda strategy of archetype to portray Hitchcock's goals in the films and made allusions to the Hollywood film work of Hitchcock at the time (which were propaganda in nature but still maintained the primary purpose of entertainment). This article will be referenced in greater detail later.

In a work that described an early instance of Hitchcock's novel-turned-film projects, Paula Cohen described the differences and similarities between Joseph Conrad's book The Secret

Agent and Alfred Hitchcock's Sabotage. While the latter was created as a film version of the former, many differences and literal representations of metaphorical allusions create an ideological message entirely unlike the original written work, as Cohen asserted in the article for Literature Film Quarterly. Michael Anderegg later examined Hitchcock's adaptation of Conrad's The Secret Agent in a 1975 article. He focused on the specific relationship between the novel and the film it inspired (Sabotage) while allowing implications about film adaptation to emerge. Thomas M. Leitch focused on one aspect of Hitchcock's adaptation of Joseph Conrad's The Secret Agent into Sabotage in a 1986 article for the Literature Film Quarterly. In his analysis of the two pieces, Leitch portrayed Hitchcock's fascination with murderous individuals' being victims of their own impulses.

Stuart McDougal analyzed Hitchcock's adaptation of The Thirty-Nine Steps into film as far back as the 1970s for the Literature Film Quarterly. Specifically, McDougal pointed out how Hitchcock simplified the plot while adding humor, sexuality, and suspense (Hitchcock trademarks). Jocelyn Camp took a literary approach to Hitchcock's films when she compared The Thirty-Nine Steps by John Buchan with the Hitchcock film by the same name as well as the later North by Northwest. Camp pointed out that Hitchcock often chose to recreate books by lesser authors into film and created pieces more significant and complex than the original works.

Amy Lawrence focused on James Stewart, an actor who collaborated with Alfred Hitchcock on multiple occasions, in a 1997 article that critically examined his role in Rope. According to Lawrence, James Stewart's persona as an actor and "war hero" had great bearing on the transition from play to film that was the post-war Rope. In 2007 Lawrence studied I Confess, considered by many to be one of Hitchcock's failures as a filmmaker, in an article for Film History. While the plotline of the film leaves something to be desired, Lawrence offered a

perspective based on the process from the original play to the final film released to theaters, heavily involving the Production Code Administration and the Roman Catholic Church, which revealed an explanation as to the film's weak points.

The influences on Hitchcock are often a fascination of those studying his films. James Bade traced an often-alluded to chain of influence back to the German filmmaker Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau in an article for the Quarterly Review of Film & Video in 2006. While many had previously mentioned the influence of Murnau's "subjective camera" on specific instances in Hitchcock's films, Bade chose to show the development of its use through representative films encompassing the entirety of Hitchcock's work.

Dennis Perry considered Edgar Allan Poe one of Hitchcock's greatest influences. In "Imps of the Perverse: Discovering the Poe/Hitchcock Connection," he proposed what he considered to be a preliminary work delineating the conscious and subconscious similarities between the works of the two masters, specifically Poe's impact on Hitchcock's Vertigo. Stemming from a clear declaration of Poe's influence by Hitchcock himself, Perry made a strong case. DeLoy Simper analyzed the connection between Edgar Allen Poe and Alfred Hitchcock in 1975 for Literature Film Quarterly. Instead of focusing on Poe's influence through specific connections, Simper chose instead to portray the two artists as having similar attitudes towards the creation of their respective arts. Simper based this on an interview with Alfred Hitchcock as compared to Poe's essay "The Philosophy of Composition."

The mystery of influence on Hitchcock was further examined by Murray Pomerance in 2006's "Hitchcock Quotes." Juxtaposing Hitchcock's claim that he did not view many films with what is generally known about his actual viewing habits, Pomerance proposed links between five of Hitchcock's films with previous works. Pomerance suggested that Hitchcock

allowed himself to “quote” from an earlier film that the audience would have been familiar with in order to develop another layer of understanding.

Many works have been written examining Alfred Hitchcock’s influence on other filmmakers. One such a work is Aner Preminger’s 2007 article for the Literature Film Quarterly. Preminger depicted the influence of Hitchcock’s Vertigo on various films by Francois Truffaut. The approach was based on Harold Bloom’s theory of literary influence and included evidence from the films as well as the words of both filmmakers.

Hitchcock has had great influence on scholars as well. In an endeavor to portray a way to analyze the film work of French filmmaker Francois Ozon, Mark Hain proposed a criticism he deems “Hitchcockian.” This criticism is based on the sexual (homosexual, bisexual) undertones considered by many to be integral parts of psychotic acts in Hitchcock’s films and finds its basis in “basic Freud.” Additionally, Jan Baetens used a crucial scene from North by Northwest to illustrate a point about our constructions of “screens” as viewers. Baetens based her hypothesis on the main points she draws from this example in Hitchcock.

Sometimes Hitchcock and his work are studied in conjunction with other works and other filmmakers or authors. Lumping Psycho with The Fly and The Bad Seed, Cyndy Hendershot examined the termed “Cold War Horror Film” and its relation to the themes of taboo and transgression that linked Communism with film villains in the prevailing American psyche. The erotic was highlighted as the socially taboo behavior prevalent in these films. Psycho, probably Hitchcock’s most famous film, has been critiqued extensively as well as revered and, ultimately, remade.

Thomas Harris compared Alfred Hitchcock’s work (specifically Rear Window) with a similar work by Michelangelo Antonioni (Blow-Up). According to Harris, both films represent

the filmmaker's creation of "pure cinema" that portrayed the nature of the visual in filmmaking. Harris found contrast in the men's approaches, whether direct (Hitchcock) or indirect (Antonioni).

Psycho has also been directly copied by another filmmaker. Literature Film Quarterly published a tongue-in-cheek listing by Thomas Leitch of the differences between Hitchcock's Psycho and Gus Van Sant's 1998 remake in 2000. Thomas Leitch spoke of the comparison and contrast between the original and the 1998 remake more specifically in "Hitchcock Without Hitchcock," a 2003 article for Literature Film Quarterly. Hitchcock was also included, along with three other infamous filmmakers, in Maria Elena de las Carreras Kuntz's 2002 article depicting the role of Catholicism in the portrayal of the human condition in cinema of the studio period.

Barbara Bannon examined Hitchcock's use of "double" in "Double, Double: Toil and Trouble" for Literature Film Quarterly. Comparing Hitchcock with Shakespeare and Plautus, Bannon asserted that Hitchcock is more comparable to the latter because of the direction that popular psychology was taking. Instead of focusing on the more obvious "doubles" in Hitchcock, Bannon based her analysis on Shadow of a Doubt, Strangers on a Train, and North by Northwest, films she claimed contained "latent doubles."

Hitchcock has been often stated to be well aware of and capable of using common literary devices. This is the premise that may be the basis for Mike Digou's 2003 article for the Literature Film Quarterly. There, Digou analyzed Hitchcock's use of a device known as a "MacGuffin" (an object the hero is pursuing that we never fully understand the contents of) and how David Mamet mimicked Hitchcock's use of the MacGuffin in his works. Much dispute has grown out of a concern of the ambiguous meaning of the birds in the Hitchcock film named for

them. Christopher Morris challenged a new view of their representation in 2000 when he sought to show the birds to be a loosely defined “MacGuffin” for Hitchcock (perhaps more correctly for Daphne Du Maurier, the author of the short story the film is based on). His paper examined the title, credits, and the situation of the film that starts the action in order to determine this plausibility. Morris drew metaphors from the film based on these instances that support a view of the birds as MacGuffin.

Vertigo is one of Hitchcock’s most analyzed films. One analyst is Royal Brown, who analyzed the film in terms of its relation to the Greek hero Orpheus. Brown drew parallels between the fight and plight of Scottie (the hero of Vertigo) and the mythic Orpheus. In the analysis, Brown also drew many other symbolisms embedded within the film, specifically restraint metaphors. Royal Brown was not the only one to note Vertigo’s similarities with the Orphic love story. Walter Poznar also analyzed the film in terms of Orpheus in 1989, focusing on the definitions of love portrayed in the film through this perceptive.

In 2007, Marc Strauss examined a lesser-noticed but significantly poignant aspect of Hitchcock’s film: his use of visual art. By looking at central pieces of art integral to several film’s plots, Strauss demonstrated that Hitchcock’s use of art to advance and manipulate plot was just as genius as his use of music and other means.

Following the early nineties’ seeming resurrection of interest in Hitchcock’s work, Edward Recchia analyzed Psycho, perhaps Hitchcock’s most notorious work and one that has been studied or referenced often in literature. Recchia proposed that the truest sense of fear and dramatic effect that Hitchcock created in Psycho stems from the film’s ability to force the viewer to “play a role.” Through self-reflexivity forced by the techniques Recchia pointed out, Psycho forces the audience to reexamine their own viewpoint.

While Psycho is the most outstanding depiction of the possible problems in relationships between mothers and their children, the concept of the mother (and the negative mother) is not foreign to many of Hitchcock's films. Bernard F. Dick chose to focus on these "terrible mothers" in 2000 in an article published by Literature Film Quarterly. He examined the mothers and mother figures in Psycho, Marnie, and The Birds, as well as the portrayal of other female characters.

Feminist approaches to Hitchcock's work are also not uncommon. Through an analysis of Hitchcock's relationship with fashion, John Fawell challenged the prevailing view that Hitchcock was misogynistic toward women. Fawell argued against many of the claims Donald Spoto made in his biography of Hitchcock, claiming often that certain episodes were misinterpreted or overemphasized. Fawell specifically used the relationship with Grace Kelly to show Hitchcock's admiration rather than denigration of women.

In a 1980 article documenting a shift in film criticism to a more phenomenological approach, J. P. Telotte chose to use Psycho to demonstrate the audience approach to horror film as a genre. Telotte claimed that successful or effective horror films work as Psycho, using visual perception to manipulate the audience. As appears common in the genre, authors cannot seem to avoid mentioning Hitchcock's Psycho as the quintessential horror film. J. P. Telotte continued in this trend in 1982 by mentioning Psycho as a comparative element in "Through a Pumpkin's Eye," an article focusing primarily on John Carpenter's Halloween.

There have been multiple general film analyses published. According to Lesley Brill, many (including Hitchcock) deem The Lodger to be the first "Hitchcockian" film. Despite the film's importance as Hitchcock's first of many things that would become signature, Brill claimed that not enough critical attention had been paid the film. In an article for Literature Film

Quarterly, Brill undertook to do justice to the film, analyzing its structure, symbolism, and other elements of complexity that foreshadow Hitchcock's greatness.

Saboteur, one of the films that even Hitchcock himself was displeased with, is nevertheless an example of Hitchcock's ability to portray important issues of the time in sometimes subtle ways. According to Marshall Deutelbaum in his 1984 article for the Literature Film Quarterly, the visual imagery in Saboteur addresses indirectly the necessity of Americans to see beyond appearances. Through an analysis of the references to perception and the actual images on screen and how they hint at the film's plot, Deutelbaum showed the analogous power of Hitchcock's film.

In a 1990 article for the Journal of Popular Film & Television, John Beebe performed a Jungian-type analysis of the 1946 Hitchcock film Notorious. Drawing on knowledge of the socio-political context of the film and the circumstances (both personal and professional) surrounding the collaboration of Alfred Hitchcock and Ben Hecht to create the film, Beebe described parallels between the film's plot and the work of C. G. Jung. Using this knowledge as a basis, Beebe extricated a metaphor within the film's symbolism for the attitude of the Western world post-World War II.

Freud and Hitchcock are often said to have much in common, especially in the area of Oedipal complexes. In 1991, the Literature Film Quarterly published a study done by Paul Gordon applying the work of Sigmund Freud to the main character ("Uncle Charles") of Hitchcock's Shadow of a Doubt. Gordon suggested that Charles' obsession with murdering widows stemmed from an obsession with mother figures and that most of the Oedipal connections are representative rather than literal in the film. Gordon also emphasized a break from the traditional view of Charles and his niece Charlie as parallel characters.

According to Mark Osteen in his 2000 article for Literature Film Quarterly, Sabotage was not a commercial success because of Hitchcock's own sabotage of his audience. Through an analysis of the film, Osteen claimed that Hitchcock's dual aim to satisfy and challenge his audience succeeded merely in frustrating them, making Sabotage an artistic but not a box office success. Peter Dellolio traced the impact of expressionist concepts on Hitchcock's Strangers on a Train in a 2003 article for Literature Film Quarterly. Dellolio stated that, although Hitchcock could not be seen as an expressionist filmmaker nor most of his films as examples of expressionist film, many exhibit the aesthetic thinking process inherent in expressionism.

Despite Hitchcock's (and many Hitchcock scholars') virtual indifference to the 1954 film Dial M for Murder, Sheldon Hall believed it to be worth greater note. This was exemplified by his 2004 article for Film History describing and analyzing the film. Hall portrayed multiple aspects of the film's construction as explanation for the general enjoyment that most viewers were said to feel. In a fairly recent (2008) article for the Canadian Journal of Communication, Gary McCarron took an approach to Hitchcock's work that was grounded in philosophical questions of morality and ethics. Through an analysis of key events in Hitchcock's first sound film, Blackmail, McCarron examined the element of moral agency in the filmmaker's world.

While much work has been done examining Hitchcock and utilizing Hitchcock's structures to illustrate various themes, very little has been done in the communication discipline (outside of film studies) and literally none has been done from a distinctly rhetorical perspective. Through a survey of dissertations and theses as well as journal articles in various disciplines, it has been shown that Hitchcock is a legitimate and worthy area of study. Further, because there have not been any studies done on Hitchcock's work from a specifically rhetorical perspective, a study that takes this approach would be beneficial.

## Development and Use of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm

In the article "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument," Fisher proposes a way of viewing human communication as happening through stories, with human beings viewed as *homo narrans* or story-telling creatures (Fisher, "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm" 6f.). The paradigm is based on five presuppositions: that humans are storytellers, that decisions are based on "good reasons," that the production of "good reasons" is governed by multiple forces, that rationality is determined by our narrative nature, and that the world is a set of stories that we must choose from (7-8). Under the fourth presupposition, rationality is determined in a story through narrative probability or coherence and narrative fidelity (8).

In 1985, Fisher followed up his initial proposal with an article answering a number of questions that had been posed to his theory. As part of a clarification of the place the Narrative Paradigm has amid other theories, Fisher spells out in more detail his concept of narrative rationality (Fisher, "Elaboration" 349-50). He says of narrative probability that it refers to whether or not a story is coherent or "free from contradictions" (349). Narrative fidelity refers to the truth or logic of the story, although it is not tied irrevocably to clear cut conclusions but rather can include "good reasons" and values that are based on many factors (350). Fisher further clarifies the use of the paradigm in analysis as a way of determining a text's "good reasons" (357). In a demonstration, Fisher focuses on themes, values, and behaviors of the storytellers (358f).

After facing criticism in the communication field and responding with clarifications, Fisher published his pivotal book Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action in 1987. This book includes some of Fisher's previously published

contribution to the dialogue as well as some additional background, context, and research for his proposed view of human communication. Fisher says of the paradigm that it is a “philosophical statement that is meant to offer an approach to interpretation and assessment of human communication” (xii). In his book, he places his conception within the historical context of multiple approaches to human communication, showing how the view of humans as storytellers really utilizes the strengths of many views.

Fisher goes further, however, broadening the view of what is acceptable to a consumer of communication through his concepts of probability and fidelity. In considering what makes something meet the standards of narrative fidelity, Fisher states that “good reasons” are “those elements that provide warrants for accepting or adhering to the advice fostered by any form of communication that can be considered rhetorical” (107). He also offers several examples in his book of how the Paradigm may be employed to study different communication occurrences.

In 1995, E. James Baesler proposed an empirical method for studying the persuasive quality of oral and written narratives through Fisher’s Narrative Paradigm. The measure involves using different numerical scores applied to the more specific aspects of coherence and fidelity Fisher had proposed (Baesler 97). For coherence, Baesler examined structural, material, and characterological coherence as separate values (98). For fidelity, he sought to determine factual values, relevance, consistency, consequence, and transcendental qualities (98). It was in the second version of his scale that he was able to have some measure of reliability. While this scale will not be used in this thesis project, the writing and publishing of an article such as this lends a hint to the importance of the theory for research in the communication field.

Fisher’s Paradigm has been used in multiple areas in the field of communication, showing its strength as a theoretical lens. One of the earliest uses was a 1987 article for

Communication Quarterly written by Thomas Hollihan and Patricia Riley utilizing the Paradigm (as well as dramatism) to critique the narrative of a parental support group. The researchers were able to determine themes and implications from what are known as “Toughlove” stories through analysis of stories told in meetings (23f). In 1988 and 1989, Larry Smith used the Narrative Paradigm to examine the different themes of network coverage of Presidential nomination conventions and the disparate party platforms, respectively. Smith was able to use the approach to show that although each narrative structure was unique, they still were consistent given Fisher’s internal consistency standards, especially when specific intended audiences were considered. Smith also shows the strength of the Paradigm in analyzing political messages and campaign structure, as well as hitting on the concept of an “overall” narrative through a series of smaller ones (Smith “Coverage” and “Platforms”).

The Narrative Paradigm has been useful in more electronic media studies than just television news coverage. In a 1991 approach from a more educational and pragmatic perspective, Robert Schrag used the Narrative Paradigm to showcase some pedagogical concerns with children’s television. Schrag links our ability to discern stories with experiences in early life (315) and therefore proposes that teachers take control over what these first experiences or “first stories” may consist of (320).

This approach has also been used in multiple studies that go beyond a rhetorical approach and look at more literal human communication in the form of interaction. Christina Beck performed a study using the Narrative Paradigm to conversation practices by analyzing a transcript of a face to face communication interaction (Beck 5). She found that narratives and narrative rationality impact conversation participation and responses (21). Much more recently, Marnel Niles used the Paradigm to examine friendship groups of African-American females

(Niles 1). Interactions at “get-togethers” were recorded and the stories told were evaluated (11-12). Niles found the Narrative Paradigm to be useful in examining the stories and discovering reasons for the safe nature of the friendship groups and also demonstrated the utility of the Paradigm in examining fidelity and coherence within a distinct culture’s parameters (27). Further examining a marginalized group using the Narrative Paradigm, Jessica Prody analyzed the narratives of Terry Tempest Williams’ story, “Clan of One-Breasted Women” (Prody 1). Prody examined the various histories placed side by side in the work and found that Fisher’s theory does allow for truly universal access to argument (20).

This section of the Literature Review has provided a brief history and defense of the Narrative Paradigm for use in this study of film. Through the description of the terms and the various uses that Fisher’s ideas have been used for, the theory is shown to be a valid form of study for rhetorical criticism.

### **Conclusion**

This Literature Review examined two of the major concerns for this project: literature published on Alfred Hitchcock and literature by and about Walter Fisher and his Narrative Paradigm. Through a brief survey of the types of research done in each area, this study is given a scholarly and theoretical context.

### Chapter 3 – Methodology

During World War II, Alfred Hitchcock was called upon by the government of his native country to contribute to the Ministry of Information's propaganda efforts, specifically that which was used to bolster the French Resistance to German occupation. The short films that resulted from this call to action were Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache (translated Madagascar Landing), works that can also be described by such words as suspense, mystery, intrigue, irony, and fear. The purpose of this rhetorical analysis is to examine and describe the rhetorical strategies utilized by Alfred Hitchcock in Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache.

Scholars in the film world have much to say about Alfred Hitchcock. The entry about him in The Encyclopedia of Film refers to him as “the acknowledged master of the thriller genre he virtually invented” (Pallot 261) and states that he is best remembered for his “masterfully orchestrated suspense” (262). So as a filmmaker with obvious talent and obvious goals, how can we determine what he had to say about the French Resistance? First, a brief definition of rhetorical criticism will be given. After that, an identification of the research material will be offered. Following that, a basic development of the concept of the Narrative Paradigm will be delineated as well as its application to the films in question. Based on the research for the literature review, no major degree work has yet been done on the rhetorical aspects (at least, not by that name) of Hitchcock's films, which is the approach this study takes.

#### **Definition of Rhetorical Criticism**

Just as the concept of rhetoric has many and varying definitions, so too does the definition of rhetorical criticism. Depending on the focus of the criticism, different aspects of rhetoric may be focused on and, therefore, the definition of rhetorical criticism may vary. There are two main definitions that will be incorporated in this study.

Andrews, Leff, and Terrill define criticism and develop an approach to rhetorical criticism based on it. In what they refer to as a succinct definition of criticism, they call it “the systematic process of illuminating and evaluating products of human activity” (Andrews et. al. 6). A criticism of rhetoric, or rhetorical criticism, would focus on “human efforts to influence human thought and action” (6). Sonja Foss, in the fourth edition of her textbook on approaches to rhetorical criticism, identifies the process as a “qualitative research method that is designed for the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts for the purpose of understanding rhetorical processes” (Foss 6).

Based on these definitions of rhetorical criticism (despite their coming from opposite sides of the field as far as philosophical basis), the primary approach of this study is to examine the rhetorical strategies used by Alfred Hitchcock in these two short films. Synthesizing the two definitions into one, the approach is defined by rhetorical criticism as “the systematic process of investigation, explaining, and evaluating symbolic acts and artifacts used to influence human thought and action.” Hitchcock’s methods of influence and audience impact are examined utilizing Walter Fisher’s Narrative Paradigm, which will be described in further detail below.

### **Rhetorical Texts**

For this study, two films distributed by the British Ministry of Information (MOI) and directed by Alfred Hitchcock are examined. In Bon Voyage, a young British airman is relating the story of his recent escape from a POW camp to Free French officers. He speaks with respect of his comrade in the escape, whom he believes to be a Polish officer. After his recounting of the tale, the Free French officers reveal the truth about the supposed Polish officer and retell the airman’s own story from a new perspective. Aventure Malgache is also developed as narratives told by principal characters. This time it is an actor in a dressing room telling the story to fellow

players. He reveals his previous work as a lawyer in Madagascar and a tale that involves deception and secrecy as well as betrayal as he recounts his work for the Resistance. These two films are available on DVD from the British Film Institute through Milestone Film & Video.

In the infamous interviews with Francois Truffaut, Hitchcock stated that he made the films because, although he was overweight and unfit for military service, he “knew that if [he] did nothing, [he would] regret it” (159). At the request of Sidney Bernstein at the British Ministry of Information, Hitchcock returned from the United States to London in 1944. Hitchcock refers to the films as his “little” contributions that were made with the goal of circulation “in parts of France where the Germans were losing ground in order to help the French people appreciate the role of the Resistance” (160). According to Hitchcock, there were a lot of disagreements among the French officers working as advisors on Bon Voyage. This became the theme of Aventure Malgache, which Hitchcock states that there was “some disagreement about it” and they decided not release it (160).

In their analysis of the work, Gustainis and DeSilva offer rationale for the study of these films. The first reason they propose the films’ significance is that they were made at a strong point in Alfred Hitchcock’s career. They place them on a timeline in the context of such strong films as Lifeboat and Notorious. Hitchcock was a filmmaker who had, according to some film scholars, a certain knack for increasing in success after periods of decline rather than losing his career altogether. Peter Bogdanovich sheds greater light on Hitchcock’s popularity in the 1940s in this context by stating that he had “abandoned England for Hollywood...[and] his work kept getting better, and more popular than ever” (473). While some critics even at this time deemed him a “crafty entertainer” (473), he was still popular among viewers.

Second, Gustainis and DeSilva propose that these short films are significant because they are the only works that Hitchcock did that were deliberate and express propaganda. While Hitchcock was in the United States at the beginning of World War II, he had made three films that dealt specifically with the war although they were for entertainment purposes. These films were Foreign Correspondent, Saboteur, and Lifeboat (80). According to a biography of Alfred Hitchcock, the central thesis of Lifeboat, for example, was that “the cause of democracy was doomed unless the Allies... abandoned petty disagreements” (Spoto 283). While these films show Hitchcock’s attitude towards the war action, it was not until he made the films for the British Ministry of Information being studied here that he was directly involved.

The third and final reason that these scholars use to rationalize the study of Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache is the question of their release. Bon Voyage was released (although not widely circulated) and Aventure Malgache was never released at all. While some may claim this makes the artifacts less worthy of study, as they reached a limited audience, this makes the works all the more intriguing and begs the question, “why?” (Gustainis and DeSilva 81). Further, the films are of interest to the study of Hitchcock as there are trademark elements of his work that can be found in the stories, even though the primary purpose was not entertainment or suspense. They may exhibit a sample of what David Thomson called Hitchcock’s “storytelling flair” (Thomson 341) and his suspense that “works through deliberately withheld knowledge” (342). These reasons help to warrant these particular films for study.

### **Analysis Process**

The primary interest of this study is to take a closer rhetorical look at Alfred Hitchcock’s propaganda. Specifically, what story is told and likely to be accepted by the possible audience? In order to determine a possible rhetorical strategy utilized by Alfred Hitchcock, the films were

viewed multiple times so that no important elements were missed. Each film was viewed several times independently, with charted notes taken under each element of narrative structure. The films were also viewed sequentially in order to interpret connections and comparisons between each one. This assisted in determining common themes not limited to one film. A noted hindrance was that the films were produced in the French language and included English subtitles, which were depended on for verbal analysis of action.

### **Description of Narrative Paradigm**

Because movies function as narratives and because both of the films are told through stories related by the characters, the rhetorical criticism of these artifacts will come from the perspective of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm broadly applied. As outlined in the literature review, the paradigm is based on five presuppositions: that humans are storytellers, that decisions are based on "good reasons," that the production of "good reasons" is governed by multiple forces, that rationality is determined by our narrative nature, and that the world is a set of stories that we must choose from (Fisher, Human Communication 64-5). Under the fourth presupposition, rationality is determined in a story through narrative probability or coherence and narrative fidelity (64).

Narrative probability (or coherence) refers to whether or not a story is coherent or "free from contradictions" (88). Narrative fidelity refers to the truth or logic of the story, although it is not tied irrevocably to clear cut conclusions but rather can include "good reasons" and values that are based on many factors (88). Fisher further clarifies the use of the paradigm in analysis as a way of determining a text's "good reasons" (105f). In a demonstration, Fisher focuses on themes, values, and behaviors of the storytellers (180f) and how they impact an audience's reaction. This is a basic framework for the approach in this study.

## **Defense of Narrative Paradigm**

Since Fisher's proposal of the Narrative view of human beings in the early 1980s, the Paradigm has become an accepted and widely used theory and approach to rhetorical criticism. For example, Sonja Foss includes a chapter in her Rhetorical Criticism textbook dedicated to narrative analysis of rhetorical artifacts which includes a mention of Fisher's paradigm as a plausible means of critique (albeit deferential to the more traditional approach to narrative analysis), and Em Griffin extensively covers the theory for beginning students of communication studies in his A First Look at Communication Theory, which has made it to its seventh edition.

In addition to the general acceptance of Narrative Paradigm by educators in the discipline, there have been many published articles that utilize the method. The following information serves as a brief representation of the Literature Review section dedicated to the theory as well as further examples of the Paradigm's legitimacy: It has been used to cover film (Sreenivas, two in 2007), movements (Owens), news media (Caldiero), reality television (Eaves and Savoie; Page), books (Wood), communication competence (Query and Wright), campaigns (Brinson and Brown; Smith in 1988 and 1989; Gring-Pemble); artificial intelligence (Opt), and support groups (Hollihan and Riley), among many other studies. It withstood the many initial challenges of contemporary scholars and has emerged a solid communication and rhetorical theory.

## **Narrative Paradigm Applied**

The stories of the films were examined using this approach as the context assists in revealing elements of "good reasons," narrative coherence, and narrative fidelity. How the narratives are told within the films was also examined for these concepts and hopefully a greater understanding reached. Fisher offers an example of one way to use the lens through examining

themes, values, and behaviors of the storytellers (Fisher, “Elaboration” 358f). Specifically, how do the concepts of coherence and fidelity lead into an audience’s potential acceptance (or rejection) of “good reasons”?

### **Conclusion**

A brief definition of rhetorical criticism, an identification of the research material, the analysis process, a basic development and defense of the Narrative Paradigm, and its application to the films in question have been discussed in this methodology. Throughout this section, a proposed process for identifying key elements of “good” narratives in Hitchcock’s films has been set forth.

## Chapter 4 – Results (Analysis) and Discussion

**Bon Voyage**

Many of us have imagined ourselves attempting a daring escape from the oh-so-present clutches of the enemy. We may envision ourselves being rescued by someone stronger or we may spend a great deal of effort visualizing our own acts of courage and bravery. What most of us probably do not do is imagine what it would be like if we found out our escape was really a plan created by the very enemy we are running from. This is exactly what happened to RAF Sergeant John Dougall in Alfred Hitchcock's Bon Voyage. Through this and various aspects of the stories told in the film, the narrative's cohesion and believability is affected. This section begins with a quick description of the film's plot and ends with an analysis of the film's contradicting and overriding narratives. Let the voyage begin!

*Summary of Film*

The story opens in London with RAF Sergeant John Dougall being questioned by a French intelligence officer (colonel) about his recent escape. They are in conference in the colonel's office and another man is present. Dougall begins to tell his account, stating that his comrade Godowski "set it all up." The colonel expresses surprise that the escape went off without any mishap. Dougall states that it was "too good to be true" and launches into his narrative.

After leaving Reims, the two men (Dougall and Godowski) are shown jumping off the cart and carrying a written message. Godowski reads the note, which sends him to the Café du Commerce to meet help (Dougall cannot go because his Scottish accent is too obvious). The next shot shows Godowski coming back to meet Dougall. He is nursing a wound on his arm which he states came from someone attacking him after he left the café. Godowski claims to

have killed the man, a Vichy (meaning a member of the French government under Nazi control) spy, which causes the men to decide they must go back to take care of the body.

When the two men reach the wine cellar where the encounter had occurred, the body is missing but they meet two Resistance workers instead (who have taken care of the corpse). Dougall and Godowski are hesitant at first, but they soon learn that the couple saw Godowski lighting an English cigarette in the café and knew he would need help. Dougall decides to tell them that they are trying to escape (at which point the couple notices his accent and discovers he is Scottish) and the Resistance workers offer help. They give the men directions to a farm where they can find bicycles and directions to somewhere safe to go in order to escape. (This is also the first time “bon voyage” is stated.)

When Dougall and Godowski arrive at the bicycles they discover that the directions send them to a hotel. While staying in the hotel, Dougall is encountered by police who ask to see his papers. Dougall lies, telling them that he is an Irish mechanic (just as Godowski had advised him). The men leave the hotel on the train, on which they meet a female Resistance agent who guides them to their escape point. At this point the tale is interrupted by a return to the office, where Dougall comments that everything worked out perfectly. He tells of the lady taking them to a farm, where a plane from England would pick them up. Only one man would be able to go on the plane; therefore, the men gambled to decide and Dougall, as evidenced by his presence in the office, won. The film cuts back to the farmhouse scene, where the lady is giving the men the details of Dougall’s escape. Godowski heads to bed with a request for Dougall to say goodbye before he goes. Dougall and the lady agent have clearly connected and have friendly conversation in which the lady reveals that she had believed Godowski to have gone to the Café du Marronneirs rather than the Café du Commerce.

The film transitions back to the office, where the colonel mentions that when Dougall went to say goodbye to Godowski, he was given a message to be delivered to a contact in England and sworn to secrecy. Dougall is shocked that the colonel knows this information but refuses to give him the details the colonel still needs, stating that it was a matter of honor, not a military matter. At this point it is necessary for the unnamed colonel to attempt to persuade Dougall that this is a necessary course of action. He begins by stating that Godowski was really a Gestapo agent named Stefan and that the Germans had actually orchestrated the entire escape in order to use Dougall to carry information to England. In order to help Dougall understand and be convinced that this is true, the colonel retells the story from a different perspective.

When Stefan went to the Café du Commerce, he actually went to meet with his partner in the plan, Emberg, and then to the Café du Marronniers. At the café, Stefan lit an English cigarette in order to attract the attention of the Resistance couple as well as the Vichy spy whom he later killed in the wine cellar to convince the Resistance workers of his persona as an escapee. In fact, all of the Resistance workers were taken in by this plan and manipulated by Godowski/Stefan. The colonel reveals that Stefan's comrade Emberg was on the train with them and that Godowski purposefully lost the dice throw so that Dougall could escape. Jeanne (the French lady agent now named), already suspicious because of the café names, hears of sightings of an agent (Emberg) in the area but bids a fond farewell to Dougall before taking action ("bon voyage" to be exact). She attempts to place a call but is killed by Stefan, who has come down the stairs. Stefan phones his comrade, who is shown on film to be in custody at the hotel where they are to meet. With some casualties, the French Resistance has still won this particular battle. After the account, Dougall wordlessly hands the requested information to the colonel. The last

line is an honoring statement made in reference to Jeanne, as the colonel mentions the future reverence that will be granted the war hero known as “The Unknown Civilian.”

### *Analysis*

Story Version #1 – Dougall’s Perspective.

#### *Narrative Coherence*

Narrative coherence refers to a story’s lack of contradictions. When Dougall tells his tale to the French officer, there are parts of the story that hint a little bit at the falsity of the narrative. While at first it seems that Dougall is able to offer explanations for the possible inconsistencies, a deeper look reveals clues. To begin, Dougall says from the very beginning and more than once that his experience was altogether “too good to be true.” While this carries elements of narrative fidelity in its reference to how acceptable it would be to an audience, it also reveals contradictions in the expectations Dougall had and the way his escape actually panned out. It is almost as if he himself does not believe that the things in his story fit together. With incredulity he reflects on the adventure.

In the first place, the very escape plan that he refers to as being “too good to be true” is contradictory in his and others’ minds because it was not the expected way that he would make it to London. Escaping from Vichy France into London was supposed to be a dangerous game filled with intrigue and complications, but it seemed to Dougall that at every turn, things worked out perfectly. To his knowledge, only the Vichy spy had been killed throughout the escape plan so the idea of a dangerous situation does not seem to reconcile with how easy it was.

There are also specific elements that may cause a hearer of this story to question the way the story fits together at first flush. First, when “Godowski” kills the Vichy agent in the wine cellar, he leaves the body and runs back wounded to meet Dougall. To borrow a term, this

creates a bit of cognitive dissonance. If he is truly the mastermind behind this orchestrated escape and if the seemingly simpleminded Dougall mentions right away that they should do something about the body, why did Godowski not do something right away instead of placing them in danger? Would not the discovery of a body incite an investigation, the very last thing they need while they are on the run? Godowski's behavior in this situation contradicts the confident, clear thinking character we believe him to be.

Another area that leads a listener (such as the colonel) to question the story's lack of contradictions is the entire issue of an English cigarette being lit in a café, and which café it was exactly that Godowski went to. It is stated in the film that if Godowski had lit an English cigarette in the Café du Commerce, he would not have made it out alive. However, Dougall believes that the Café du Commerce is exactly where Godowski lit the cigarette that caused so much havoc. To further complicate these contradictions, Dougall mentions in conversation to Jeanne that Godowski went to the Café du Commerce, which she contradicts by asking if it was not the Café du Marronniers. This apparent contradiction of what these two characters believe provide a type of foreshadowing completely lost on Dougall as he tells his tale. The colonel, as he listened to Dougall's story, must have noted the dispute. Naturally, Dougall's story comes out a little bit lacking in the coherence department, as we find out that he did not have all the information.

### *Narrative Fidelity*

Fidelity refers to the story's likelihood of being accepted as true or logical by the audience and involves much more than simple lack of contradiction. While the story has gaps, it is told by a particular character that the audience may identify with, which may make them more likely to accept it. Further, a significant portion of the acceptance of a story can be related to its

resonance or identification with things that an audience would know about and be familiar with. As Dougall tells his story, he refers to a few things that would resonate significantly both with the colonel and with the potential audience of the film.

First, Dougall and Godowski both seem to be “average Joe” (Jacques?) types. They behave like everyday men in a lot of ways and Dougall especially does not appear to exude any particular talents or abilities. One of the areas that Dougall’s role as a common man is heavily portrayed is in his obsession with food. The idea of being hungry when one is trying to escape is one that any audience would accept as logical; however, Dougall takes this a step further by appearing almost childlike in his desire for food and excitement over its appearance in ways that contrast to Godowski. There is also teasing that occurs between Dougall and Godowski about Dougall’s Scottish accent and how atrocious it makes his French sound.

However, while the fidelity of a story is a much more complex and, in a way, important aspect of its strength, the likelihood of an audience accepting it as true or logical is sometimes very closely linked to the coherence of the tale. Because of the contradictions in the story, it would be hard for an audience to accept it as likely or as something that relates to their lives. The French officer, of course, does not accept the tale because he has contradictory information, but his attitude seems to hint at his disbelief because of some of the “too good to be true” elements (perhaps he cannot believe that Dougall could be so naïve). The lack of coherence greatly influences the lack of fidelity in this case. On the other hand, there are some themes and values that the colonel can surely relate to.

#### *Themes/ Values*

There are several themes that permeate Dougall’s story. One of the most prevalent is the idea of everything working “like clockwork.” At every opportunity, Dougall remarks that things

were perfectly planned, perfectly timed, and “too good to be true.” Dougall trusted Godowski to have a plan of escape, and he did. Dougall also seems to imply that everything was “easy.” The encounter with the police at the hotel ended without problems because, big surprise, “lucky you (Godowski) rehearsed me last night.” The Resistance couple was in the right place at the right time to help them. Everything went smoothly, despite narrow escapes. Dougall’s tale almost breathes Providence or Fate in the sheer perfection of it.

Another aspect closely related to this is the theme of the people working together. The Resistance workers involved were plentiful and their plans well executed in coordination with each other. Early on in the tale, the couple from the café take care of Godowski’s murder victim; later, we find that the couple, the hotel manager, Jeanne, Jeanne’s father, and perhaps several other individuals all worked together just so that Dougall might have a chance to get out of France. This theme also leads to a conclusion about value. An inherent value in the French Resistance is the willingness of people to work together. During the French Resistance, so many people were involved from so many different ideologies that the one unifying factor was their resistance. This unity is displayed as a strong value.

Another theme and value that is shown by Dougall is the goodness of Godowski and the bonding that takes place in their relationship. At the beginning, Godowski teases Dougall about his Scottish accent and throughout the concept of food is somewhat of a running joke. Dougall also seems to speak of Godowski with fondness and also credits Godowski with most of the good outcomes of the escape plan. Later, when Dougall and Godowski must depart from each other, it does not strike Dougall as unnatural that Godowski wants to be awakened to say goodbye. Their good night exchange is itself a warm moment in the film, and Dougall’s reluctance to reveal Godowski’s secret and dedication to his word of honor is clearly augmented by how much the

relationship means to him. This value is somewhat challenged by the weak coherence in the tale and is further challenged later in the retelling.

While many of these elements reveal weakness in Dougall's tale, none are as strong as they are when placed in contrast to the French colonel's reiteration of what happened.

Coherence and fidelity in Dougall's narrative are further complicated by the story presented as the "truth" to the audience.

#### Story Version #2 – The Colonel's Perspective

##### *Narrative Coherence*

As with Dougall's tale, the fidelity of this is very closely linked to how coherent it seems to the audience. The colonel's version of what happened does answer many of the contradictions inherent in Dougall's limited version (by the very simple explanation that "the Germans did it"), and it is a version good enough for Dougall as he consents to give the information. But it is not perfect in its coherence.

One thing that helps Dougall accept the colonel's story as coherent is the fact that he does not try to prove that Dougall's story did not happen at all. Dougall has given him a version with many missing pieces and it is only his various interpretations that are corrected by the colonel. The colonel does not try to tell him that he did not hear and see what he believes he heard and saw. Further, he is able to build a coherent tale for Dougall because he builds on the story that Dougall not only already knows, but has already told. In this way his story has coherence because it merely completes the picture instead of creating an entirely new one. The colonel especially helps his case by never contradicting the merit of anyone else in the account except for "Godowski" (Stefan). Dougall's belief in Godowski's persona and character is challenged, but challenging his beliefs about Jeanne or the couple beyond that would have increased the

contradiction. He also “fixes” specific contradictions, such as that about the cafes. We learn that the names of cafes conflicted because Godowski lied to Dougall about where he really went. Jeanne knew where Godowski had been seen, but Dougall did not.

In another area, the colonel successfully creates and answers his own contradiction. Now that Dougall and the audience know that Godowski/Stefan was really a spy, they want to know why he would have ever killed someone who was on “his side” (the Vichy spy). This further addresses the contradiction raised by Dougall’s telling as to why he would leave the body to be discovered. The colonel explains Stefan’s indifference by implying that the Germans are not ethical like the French and English (implied and addressed further in the values section) and stating that a small time Vichy spy being murdered was not as important to Stefan and his partner as making the impression on the Resistance couple that they were manipulating that Stefan was truly Godowski, a runaway escapee. Dougall still finds this somewhat hard to believe and the leaving of the body still seems a bit risky (although it was presumably to induce the Resistance couple to offer help right away).

It also seems to be a bit contradictory to believe that if the Resistance people work so well together and communicate to coordinate so clearly (there are even people on the train who keep Stefan’s partner from following and potentially lead to his being caught), they would be so easily taken in by the Gestapo’s well-orchestrated manipulation. This is not a major lack of coherence but it does beg a few questions about how strong the Resistance really is.

One gap that exists is the question of the German orchestration of the escape. Now that we know that Godowski was really Stefan, what else can we question about how the escape occurred? What else did the German movement do beyond manipulating the Resistance? Did they work closely with authorities in the areas they were in so that they would not ever be

caught? Did they choose Dougall at random to be the escapee or was he chosen perhaps because of his naïve nature? There are explanations that are desired.

Overall, the colonel's story is more coherent than Dougall's (as he has all the facts) and, it was enough for Dougall to acquiesce to the request to share the information. But the cohesion is still not perfect and the tale potentially raises more questions than it answers.

### *Narrative Fidelity*

Closely linked once again is the acceptance of this story with how coherent it has appeared to be. It does seem quite unbelievable that the many gaps in the story are explained by one simple fact, that Godowski was really Stefan. The simplicity is not as deterring as with Dougall but it does still exist. Dougall even states as he is being told the truth that "it's all so hard to believe." This is perhaps the feeling of the audience as well. The absolute perfection of everything fitting together is still a cause for disbelief and the ability of the Germans to orchestrate this escape is also difficult to accept. This is especially noted when you consider that Dougall and any viewer are going to come from a framework of positive feelings toward the Resistance and any doubts as to their validity and intelligence are only confirmed by this tale.

Stories are sometimes accepted because they are like other stories that we have heard. The colonel has this working to his advantage since his story does sound like the one Dougall just told him, but with different details. This works with the coherence to help Dougall accept the tale. It works also on another level because, even though the Resistance looks almost inept, they are still portrayed as the heroes of the story. In the end, the good guys still win. The casualty of Jeanne in the process gives a sense of reality to what has occurred; the one area where everything was not "too good to be true." This reminds those who hear the story of the

reality of war, a reality they are familiar with, can identify with, and will accept. In this way, the colonel's story exhibits great fidelity.

### *Themes/Values*

One of the most remarkable themes and values that make this story so acceptable is the contrast that the colonel makes between himself and those on his side versus the Gestapo and Vichy on the other side. Before beginning his telling, he says to Dougall (after Dougall has refused to obey the order to give up the information), "I cannot force you to tell me against your will. We're not the Gestapo." This is the entire reason for his telling Dougall the truth, to persuade him through means other than the coercion that the "bad guys" would use. In this, we see a strong value emphasis placed on the Allied side as moral, ethical, and pure (even in war) while the German side is unethical, manipulative, and dangerous. This is the major theme and value that the subthemes relate to.

For instance, even though the Resistance workers are being fooled by the Germans, each one still exhibits great dedication and bravery. The couple follows "Godowski" as soon as they see him in the café, the people on the train act as soon as they see a need, and Jeanne does not appear to exhibit much fear when she knows that Stefan is about to kill her. The Resistance people are also shown to be stereotypically "good" people: clean cut, hardworking, and average. This portrays the value of courage and ethical standards in wartime that the French side would believe themselves to be represented by.

In contrast, the Germans are evil personified. The story is one of a massive deception on their part. The Germans' tactics are dishonorable throughout. After tricking Dougall and manipulating every Resistance worker that assists, it can only be presumed that those still in Vichy France are going to be punished for assisting an escape since they have been unknowingly

exposed (or at least, that may have been the plan before Stefan and Emberg were caught). Stefan emotionally manipulates Dougall by being close to him and very friendly and getting him to commit his own word of honor to delivering a message against his own nation's efforts.

This lack of ethics is perhaps demonstrated best through the murder of the small time Vichy spy. Dougall cannot accept the idea at first that a German would murder someone on their own side. The colonel's explanation reflects that the Germans are not loyal to each other like the Allies would be and that they care more about their cause and the manipulation plan than about a human life and this appears to be the case. This perpetuates the values that the audience (and Dougall) would desire to accept in knowing that what they are fighting against is truly evil. Even in Stefan's last scene after killing Jeanne, he takes her phonebook (presumably acceptable, however, because it has information valuable to him) and her wristwatch from her dead body, showing no respect for anything the audience might believe any humane person should. Interesting to note, however, that showing the supposed German lack of respect for humanity greatly dehumanizes the German people (perhaps in hyperbolic form) in its harshness.

### *Conclusion*

A voyage may be complex and terrifying or it may work out to be, quite literally, "too good to be true." Escaping from the clutches of Vichy France proved to be the latter for Sergeant John Dougall. This story of the French Resistance and the cunning of the Gestapo is complicated in its coherence and fidelity. In this section a summary of the film's plot and an analysis of the film's narratives were examined. How Hitchcock's message was interpreted is impacted by the imperfection of this tale. Perhaps as the next voyage, Aventure Malgache is examined, will have a little more smooth sailing.

## **Aventure Malgache**

Distance can cause great separation between parts of a nation or culture. Separation between nations can also be a problem. When Hitchcock made Aventure Malgache, he had multiple rhetorical aims, including unification of different parts of France as well as friendly relations between France and Great Britain. This film was never released, however, and it may be for reasons found through rhetorical criticism. Potential reception by the audience was an important thing for the Ministry of Information to consider before they spent money on circulation. This section begins with a detailed description of story of Aventure Malgache and ends with an investigation into its narrative coherence, narrative fidelity, and perpetuated themes and values.

### *Summary of Film*

Aventure Malgache is also told as a narrative given by main characters on the screen, only this time there is only one story told. There is no competing narrative to the tale of the actor, Clarousse. Significantly, the opening textual narration asserts that the story in the film is actually true. The film begins by being perhaps more direct in its goals, stating explicitly that it may “show how the spirit animated even the furthest colonies.” The colony in reference, of course, is Madagascar. The opening scene, however, takes place in London in 1944 (then contemporary) backstage at one of the plays for “soldiers, civilians and the many Britons who love France” put on by actors chosen by the French military. An actor comes into the dressing room complaining about a role that he has to play. Clarousse tries to encourage him by telling him a story of someone (Jean Michel, the chief of police in Madagascar) he reminds him of, which he can use as inspiration for the character.

Clarousse's story begins in April of 1940 in the colony of Madagascar. Clarousse is shown in a courtroom, defending an unknown client against Michel's accusations of theft by charging the police with setting his client up in order to earn the fine money. He also accuses Michel of having an affair with the accused's wife. This mark on Michel's record is one of the reasons why he seems to have a personal vendetta against Clarousse for the duration of the film. The scene ends with threats between the men and a cut back to the dressing room setting. The third actor (in the background) asks Clarousse if he did not have the proof to bring Michel down, which Clarousse claims that he did but that there were other things to consider.

As the story continues in 1940, the scene shows a group of men in a bar-like setting listening to a radio broadcast. The men claim that the armistice being announced (presumably France's with Germany, creating Vichy France) is a national treason. The men, ex-servicemen, clearly look to Clarousse, the lawyer, for leadership in defending the island colony from takeover. Clarousse leads them to place themselves in the services of a military organization so that they can save Madagascar for France and join the Allies. As chief of police, Michel is at the meeting in what appears to be the military general's office. He offers a pessimistic view on what the people could actually accomplish. Once again, Clarousse and Michel are at ideological odds; Michel claims that the British and South Africans have ulterior motives in helping Madagascar. The naïve general, however, listens to Michel's advice to await orders from France.

The story cuts back to the dressing room, where the background actor asks Clarousse why he did not leave, to which the second actor responds that would have been impossible with travel restrictions that would have immediately been in place. Clarousse agrees and continues his story. He makes his first mention of the Resistance as it is commonly understood, stating that "we were organized, and had our own quiet ways of slipping out." The scene cuts to a covert

line of escapees being sent off by Clarousse and then back to the dressing room, where Clarousse clarifies that he stayed in Madagascar as a prominent lawyer in a good position to continue to orchestrate these escapes. While Jean Michel suspected him of these actions, Clarousse shares how he kept himself above suspicion by becoming an “ardent Vichyite” and bonding with the Governor over despising the Resistance escapes.

The film cuts back to the earlier storyline, where Clarousse, Michel, and the Governor are in the Governor’s office where Clarousse discusses the impossibilities of anyone escaping from the island. The Governor requests that Clarousse use his influence over the ex-servicemen to fight against persuasion to the Resistance ideology. After Clarousse leaves the room, Michel tries to convince the Governor that Clarousse is not to be trusted. He claims that Clarousse is the leader of the Resistance movement and orders him followed, promising the Governor proof.

Back in the dressing room, the second actor expresses surprise that Clarousse continued after being watched so closely. Clarousse claims that it was simple, with secrecy and skill becoming even more important. The story cuts back to a group of men in what seems to be a hideout location, awaiting Clarousse’s arrival. Clarousse arrives and informs the men of Michel’s suspicions and that five of them will have to leave, but allows one young man to leave the secure location to say good-bye to his fiancé. In the contemporary dressing room, Clarousse calls himself a “sentimental fool” for allowing this.

The young man is shown then, explaining things to his fiancé. She does not take the news well and seems angry that he is leaving her just before their wedding when he may not be able to get back for years. After unsuccessfully attempting to persuade him to stay, she spitefully reports the escape plan to the police. According to the story-telling actor back in the dressing room, he was in jail two hours later. After over a month, Clarousse is visited in jail by a former

colleague, Panisse. Panisse is there under the pretense of coming to find out the “truth” so that he can defend Clarousse against the accusations presented against him. Clarousse feigns ignorance, claiming he has no compromising records that could rationalize a court martial. Panisse requests the “whole story” from Clarousse in order to be able to protect him. Clarousse sends him off with a smile, but is shown to really be disgusted at the spy work that was attempted.

Cutting back to the dressing room, the men are chuckling at Michel for believing that Clarousse would fall into such a simple trap. Back in Michel’s office, men are attempting to decipher telegrams sent by Clarousse during his time working closely with the Governor in hopes of finding incriminating secret messages. The decoder is getting frustrated with the work and says they are getting nowhere without a code, which another man believes may be in a children’s book of fables. In the dressing room, the second actor can hardly believe that Clarousse would use something as risky as coded telegrams, but Clarousse claims he was “amateur” in those days.

The story cuts back to the courtroom, this time with Clarousse on trial, being accused by Michel of being a Resistance leader. Clarousse is sentenced to death, which the background actor in the dressing room reacts to with incredulity. Instead of the sentence being carried out, Clarousse is given hard labor, but still kept in contact with the Resistance through an alarm clock hidden in his jail cell. Clarousse gloats in the dressing room that Michel never caught him with this particular trick. Cutting back to the story, nine months after being sentenced to hard labor, Clarousse is called into Michel’s office. Michel tells him that he is being sent to the penal colony, unless he gives him information on the Resistance. Clarousse, of course, refuses and is spit on by Michel (literally).

Cutting back to the dressing room (the men are now clothing themselves instead of doing makeup), the background actor presses Clarousse for more of the tale. Clarousse grants his request by telling of how the British Navy came to rescue him. Back in the dressing room, Clarousse gloats about how in his “ninth life” he was permitted by the Allies to broadcast over the radio to win Madagascar to the Allied side. Shown broadcasting from somewhere in the Indian Ocean, Clarousse transmits messages in Indian, Chinese, Malagash, and French. He calls for freedom in Madagascar, including a direct reference to Michel over the radio. After his broadcast, Clarousse turns on his transmitter to hear that he has been sentenced to death for his “anti-French” radio propaganda.

The scene now cuts to footage that appears as though from a news reel depicting the British coming to Madagascar. Clarousse narrates that the British come to help, but do not come to take over control. In fact, they would fly only the French flag on the island. Back in the dressing room (once again), Clarousse is asked if Michel fled. As the story cuts back to Clarousse’s tale, he tells the other actors that to understand Michel’s true character, you must understand this key moment. Instead of fleeing, Michel attempts to show loyalty to the new regime, abandoning his Vichy loyalties in a moment of self-interest. According to Clarousse, however, the British do not fall for this. In the final scene in the dressing room, the second actor (looking very much like Michel with his new false mustache and costume now on) angrily spits at Clarousse for saying that he is like this man that has been described. The moment of tension is interrupted by the men being called on stage and the film fades out to “Fin.”

*Analysis*

## The Actor's Tale.

*Narrative Coherence*

The narrative coherence in Aventure Malgache is mixed. Many of the elements of the storyline that perhaps do not fit together are acceptable for the espionage genre of film.

However, at the beginning of the film, the audience is told in the textual introduction that the story is true. This causes the audience to hold the film to a different standard, one that the narrative may not live up to. There are not seeming contradictions, just unbelievable results and actions by various characters. While these particular elements imply valid explanations, many are left without them.

The first thing that occurs and lacks explanation is the opening courtroom scene and the case that is involved. Clarousse is defending an (unknown) client against Michel's charges of theft. Clarousse makes some very drastic accusations toward not only Michel but the entire police force. Michel is visibly very angry and the judge seems irritated that Clarousse would make such statements without proof. However, we as the viewers never find out what became of this situation. In his storytelling to the other actors, Clarousse claims that everything changed because of a "radio broadcast," which was the announcement of French surrender to German control. In light of these bigger issues and shift in governmental control, robbery accusations would indeed pale in comparison. Nevertheless, later we find out that the court system works in the same way as Clarousse is held to trial, so why would an earlier trial just be dropped, even in such drastic circumstances? While the reason is alluded to (therefore redeeming coherence), the coherence could be strengthened by a more direct explanation.

Another thing that seems to leave questions unanswered in creation of a coherent tale is Clarousse's behavior after the Vichy government has control of the island. After taking a group of former servicemen to the general to incite rebellion against the new government resulting from the armistice with Germany, he has a complete change of attitude. In the eyes of those in authority (except, of course, for Michel, whose personal vendetta makes him continuously suspicious), Clarousse has become an "ardent Vichyite." Suddenly he is close friends with the new Governor and deplores the Resistance escapes with a ridiculous fervor. Believing this to be a true story, a viewer must ask himself how this works so well.

Having previously desired to rebel against the new government, such a drastic change to the Governor's side (literally and figuratively) should have been noticed by more than just Michel. Especially in a situation where tensions are high between ideological forces, erring on the side of suspicion would seem more natural. But Clarousse manages to remain a respected leader to both sides of the dispute. He is looked to for leadership by the Resistance workers and held in close contact by the Governor. This incredible circumstance is increased in confusion by his exaggerated ignorance and abhorrence of Resistance escapes. Further, why does Michel not suspect the gentleman he sends to follow Clarousse as well? He is involved in the Resistance effort, yet Michel does not become aware of this until later on. To the audience who knows the truth, this seems unbelievable. However, for an espionage drama, the lack of contradiction does hold up coherence. It is the further complication of claiming a true story that brings questions.

Another element that seems contradictory is the attitude toward England (this idea in general will be addressed more deeply when examining coherence and values). Throughout the tale, a reverent attitude towards England as a potential savior for the colony and an example of bravery and dedication to the cause is perpetuated by the hero of the tale. However, Great

Britain does not do anything in terms of the problem until the end of the story in 1942. And even at the point of Clarousse's escape (probably 1941 by the chronology of the narrative), another prisoner (as well as the background actor being told the story) expresses surprise that Britain would be involved in helping them get out. The various attitudes toward Great Britain are not directly contradictory, nor do they, however, perfectly match up.

When Clarousse stands trial for being a member of the Resistance, his lawyer defends him by saying that the prosecution has the burden of proof. Clarousse admits to having sent the telegrams but not to being a Resistance leader. It would seem to be instinct that in wartime situations when there is such controversy over the governmental control of a nation, proof would not be as essential to condemn a rebel. Consequently, Clarousse is charged with death. However, this sentence is not carried out. Instead he is given five years of hard labor. This is logical with the lack of proof but also suspiciously convenient.

There are also several little things that raise questions for coherence but are not major. For instance, Clarousse received radio transmissions while in prison through an alarm clock that he keeps very close to his head. Yet, this cover is never discovered by a guard or reported to Michel. Further, he is rescued from prison after the Resistance gets his message; however, until the point of the rescue, we are not even aware that he sent a message. How does he send it? His alarm clock transmitter only works one way so it could not have been through that. These are not major issues, but they do mildly puncture the coherence.

In sum, the coherence for the film is acceptable as a piece of literature of a particular genre. The espionage film is often based on excitement and close calls and unbelievable explanations as exist in *Aventure Malgache*. However, the standard for how well the elements fit

together is heightened by the claim of truth, something that will be addressed further in the next section.

### *Narrative Fidelity*

At the very beginning of the film, it is asserted that the story is true. When assessing narrative fidelity and how much the audience may be willing to accept the narrative, it is interesting to note the kind of forced fidelity that this assertion makes. While the audience may be hard pressed to deny the actuality of the story in this case, there are still many elements that do not necessarily resonate strongly with them. First is the question of who exactly the audience is supposed to be. The film was made under the auspices of the British Ministry of Information, but was reportedly for the people involved in the French Resistance movement. However, the opening sequence refers to the “French people” as a separate group, which may have a confusing, alienating impact on the audience and cause them to reject the tale.

Another factor that may cause the audience to slightly question the fidelity of the film is the nature of the frame given the narrative. The narrative is told in a dressing room where an actor is recounting his previous experiences. However, the group they are supposed to be a part of, much like the actual group involved in making the film, are creating works for people in Britain who “love France.” Because of the attitude of the French people toward the British government prior to and after the armistice with Germany (that the British government was cold and indifferent to their plight), this may cause them to reject the truth thereafter. A French audience may not have as easily accepted that there were “many Britons” who loved France since they did not sense any concern from Great Britain.

This element is confounded more deeply by what may be seen as a secondary rhetorical goal of the film. Oftentimes in the story, the British are spoken well of and portrayed as heroes.

Significantly, this film was made by a British director and circulated (or not circulated, as the case turned out to be) by a British governmental organization. An audience that already distrusts a former ally may be more inclined to question elements that glorify said ally. To the French audience, the British people are disloyal and unwilling to defend, not superior and courageous examples of resistance. The fact that they are and have been making such propaganda helps to combat this idea, but a sheltered French population may still cling to some disappointment.

One area of fidelity that is especially interesting and necessary to a goal of the film is the identification that is attempted between those in France and those in the colony of Madagascar. With this goal in mind, it would be especially important for the story to be accepted as true and resonate with real experiences of the audience. Assuming that the film was intended for release only within the main national borders of France, most of the people were probably not familiar with the experiences of their fellow Frenchman. However, as the film asserts, the French spirit of Resistance is shared. Because the audience of the film is able to recognize parts of the story they are experiencing in France, they are willing to accept that these same experiences are possible in a French colony. In this respect, the film pushes for a unity of the French people, no matter the geographic location.

Another notion they would be very willing to accept (although perhaps not from the nation they believe does not care about them) is the reverence for the French nation despite its being under Germany's control. When the young man is saying good-bye to his fiancé halfway through the film, he states that the greatness of a country depends on the spirit of the people. The inference can be made that because there is such a thing as a "French Resistance," then France has maintained its national greatness despite governmental conquer. There is a separation between what the government has done and what the people are capable of, something that

greatly supports the main goal of this film: to bolster the Resistance efforts. This love of country is very important to those involved in Resisting Nazi control and therefore would be accepted as valid.

### *Themes/ Values*

There are a few key themes in Aventure Malgache that reflect values being presented in the film. The first and most obvious value is a struggle between good and evil, with Clarousse and the Resistance members exemplifying “good” and Michel and the Vichy government representing “evil.” Those who are members or followers of the Vichy government are shown often to be self-serving, disloyal, or simply stupid. When the “armistice” is first announced and the group of former servicemen present themselves to the General to help fight invasion, the General refuses to take action because he is confused about whether to honor orders or to honor his conscience. Ultimately he decides to wait, losing any chance to prevent problems. Clarousse refers to the General in his nature as a good man but “none too brilliant.”

To be an intelligent Vichy follower, the idea is presented that one would have to be a lot like Michel. Michel is self-serving and loyal only to whatever side is going to serve him best. As chief of police, following along with the new Vichy regime is clearly beneficial to his career (indeed, trying to deny the new authority could potentially cost him more than his position). Further, Michel allows a personal vendetta against Clarousse to frustrate him even further as he tries to expose his Resistance activities. (Actually, throughout the film emotionalism is given a negative reputation in general as Clarousse’s sentimentality in allowing the young escapee to say good-bye to his fiancé jeopardized the plan.) Michel clearly does whatever is necessary to protect himself with no thought for others, exemplifying the negative characteristic of selfishness.

Further enforcing the view of Michel as evil and self-serving is Michel's assumption that others are like him. Towards the end of the story, he offers Clarousse a bribe to turn in his fellows in the Resistance. He claims to take pity on those Clarousse is about to betray. In this he shows that he cannot comprehend anyone who would place a higher value over their own benefit. Even more ridiculous is his reaction to the Allied takeover of the island. When the British Navy comes in 1942, Michel attempts to once again make friends with the new government. It is clear that he was prepared for this situation as he is shown switching pictures and wine in his office. The British, of course, do not fall for this trick; but Michel, true to his evil, selfish nature, was prepared all along to break his loyalty to the Vichy regime.

On the other hand, those who are working for the Resistance are portrayed as good and noble, despite their use of some of the same tactics. Clarousse and his followers use deception and exemplify rebellion throughout the piece, but none are portrayed as being self-serving. Even those who are escaping Madagascar and leaving others behind are doing so to be free to fight elsewhere, to answer to a higher call. The caricature of a good hero in the tale, Clarousse opts not to leave the island, as his position makes it possible for many more to escape.

Another theme of the film which reflects a strong value is the idea of the bravery and spirit of the French people. This has been alluded to above, but looking deeper reveals how much of an impact this theme could have. Clarousse stays in occupied territory to save others; the people escaping are escaping to be free to do what they can in the war effort; even those who stay unwillingly are still choosing to do so to serve their country. The French have become a people of unexpected heroes, and this film glorifies that image.

Embedded in the theme of unexpected heroism is a call to further bravery and self-sacrifice. Self-sacrifice is shown in the willingness of many to stay in Madagascar. Even the

young man who desires to say good-bye to his fiancé is willing to place honor and bravery and duty to country above his personal happiness, postponing his wedding. This character states it best when he says that, “A nation’s greatness depends on its people’s spirit.” In this story, we can see a call to the French people to continue to fight even though they are occupied. The message is sent that it is valuable to sacrifice for the cause of the country and whatever cost they pay is worth it in the end. Further, because those in the colony of Madagascar are experiencing similar scenarios to those within the nation’s borders, the people can feel unified in their plight with fellow Frenchmen. In the words of another great Britishman, Winston Churchill, the French are being told to “Keep Calm and Carry On.”

### *Conclusion*

The potential viewers of the propaganda created for members of the French Resistance were a tough crowd to deal with. As a revered filmmaker, Hitchcock seemed a wise choice for reaching this crowd. However, creating a story that resonated with such a crowd was a bit more complicated than expected. This section began with a detailed description of Aventure Malgache and concluded with an investigation into its narrative coherence, narrative fidelity, and perpetuated themes and values. Whether the French would have accepted the story with its mixed coherence and fidelity or not because of its strong values, the world may never know.

### **Bon Aventure – The Films Together**

In both comparing the films and examining them as a unified whole, it is useful to bring in more terms from Fisher. In the first part of this section, coherence of each narrative will be discussed through what Fisher refers to as argumentative (or rational), material, and characterological coherence (Fisher, “Toward a Philosophy” 47). Then, the fidelity will be

assessed via the concepts fact, relevance, consequence, consistency, and transcendental issues (109). In each, the films will be compared as well as combined.

### *Coherence*

#### Argumentative Coherence.

Fisher does not define argumentative or structural coherence to the depth that he does some other concepts (such as characterological coherence) because, as he implies, his concept is based on the common understanding of the term (47). The probability of a story can be determined first through the strength of its argumentative coherence.

In the case of Hitchcock's propaganda, there were some elements of argumentative coherence that were lacking in both films. In Bon Voyage, lack of rational coherence lies mostly with the story as it is told the first time, through Dougall's perspective. There are many seeming contradictions, including his own notion that everything that happened was truly impossible to have happened so perfectly (which he turned out to be right about). When the story is retold through the colonel's perspective, some contradictions are answered, but some are further compounded. There are gaps left that, if filled, would help the audience have a better understanding of what truly happened.

Aventure Malgache suffers from the same moderate lack of rational coherence. Aspects of the story that show Resistance workers to be mistaken in decisions they made that should have much worse consequences than they do are not answered. There are also questions concerning the overall attitude towards Great Britain, the Resistance, and the government in the colony. In contrast to Bon Voyage's creation of contradictions to advance the plot and make the second half more feasible, Aventure Malgache's seem more intended to skim over weak parts of the storyline.

Taking the two films together, it can be said that they are adequate, yet not exceptionally solid in their rational coherence. Both suffer from a general lack of explanation. Perhaps because of a lack of time (both in preparation and filming as well as in the half-hour length of each narrative), many gaps are created that cause an audience to question why. However, in the film genre, it may be acceptable to leave an audience wondering, especially about espionage. It is when the stories are compared in relation to material coherence that things get more complicated.

Material Coherence.

Fisher states in his book that material coherence refers to “comparing and contrasting stories... a story may be internally consistent, but important facts may be omitted, counterarguments ignored, and relevant issues overlooked...” (47). In comparing the stories of the film with each other as well as with the prevailing narrative of the war, this type of coherence is shown to be the weakest for Hitchcock’s propaganda.

In Bon Voyage, as mentioned above, there is a question of coherence in relation to the capabilities of the Resistance workers. While they are revered as being great heroes, they are also shown to be fooled by a German plot to fake an escape. In this way, there is a heroic entity being portrayed as still inept. In contrast, Aventure Malgache seems to carry a prevailing theme of the Resistance workers having slip-ups (despite their moral character) and still coming out on the other side clean. Things that appear to be obvious mistakes or poor judgments, such as drastic changes in opinion, are successful when it seems more logical that they would fail. For this, there is a heroic yet inept entity portrayed as being somehow protected, blessed, or just plain lucky. These two narratives seem to contradict each other. However, this dichotomy of

messages may be attributed to the filmmakers' desire to show multiple aspects of the Resistance Movement's personalities and accomplishments, which may actually be more realistic.

Another questionable aspect of material coherence is the attitude towards Great Britain. Remember from the introduction that relations between France and Great Britain were strained during the war (Kedward 4). While a secondary goal of the films created by the British Ministry of Information may have been to rebuild a relationship and convince the French people that Great Britain did not just abandon them, perhaps the goal was stretched beyond a certain point of realism. Specifically, in Aventure Malgache, Clarousse (representing membership in the Resistance) carries a strong pro-British sentiment that seemingly places Great Britain on a pedestal. To an audience who may already buy into the overall narrative that "Great Britain has not been the most successful ally," believing that someone who represents themselves would be so drastically different would cause a lack of coherence. The films' coherence is perhaps the weakest when compared to these overall narratives perpetuated in the historical context, but finds strength in the next area of analysis, characterological coherence.

#### Characterological Coherence.

Fisher says of characterological coherence, "Whether a story is believable depends on the reliability of the characters... Coherence in life and literature requires that characters behave characteristically... trust is the foundation of belief" (47). In the short films created by Hitchcock, the characters meet the requirements for this component of coherence effectively.

Before commenting, however, it would be useful to acknowledge the characterological coherence that is deliberately lacking in each narrative and used to advance the storylines. In Bon Voyage, the audience is challenged in this area by the revealed knowledge they (along with Dougall) receive about Godowski. After believing that Godowski is a friend and ally, the

audience must accept the fact that this character must be replaced with Godowski's true character: a German spy orchestrating the escape and making a fool out of his supposed friend. In Aventure Malgache, both Clarousse and Michel behave in ways that seem uncharacteristic to people within the film, but neither situation is expected to be accepted by the audience. Because the audience has a more complete knowledge of each character and who they truly are, they are not surprised or forced to distrust the narrative by things that do not "match up." For example, at the end of Aventure Malgache, when Michel attempts to show loyalty to the British when he has previously fought against the Allied cause, the audience expects this because they have learned that he is self-serving and disloyal.

Having said that, the values that are perpetuated (see analysis of each film) are exemplified through the expected and created characters in the films. Those in the films who are shown to be German or in support of the Vichy government characteristically behave as the audience would expect them to. Once we know that Bon Voyage's Godowski is really a German spy, it is believable that he would kill a Resistance agent so easily, steal from her dead body, pretend to be someone's friend and ally, manipulate a middle-aged couple, and even kill someone on his own side (if the viewer accepts the idea that the Germans are as disloyal as this demonstrates them to be). Similarly, in Aventure Malgache, Michel is portrayed consistently as a complete scoundrel and remains so for the entirety of the film. He is self-serving and manipulative and remains true to this character.

Conversely, "good" characters in each film are consistently portrayed as such. Members of the Resistance are shown to exhibit bravery (Clarousse's staying in Madagascar, Jeanne's facing of death) and to place an importance on honor. Even weaknesses of characters (such as Dougall's original rejection of the colonel's request for information or Clarousse's allowing of

the young man to say good-bye to his fiancé) are consistent with their characters, as they reflect honor and decency in the face of difficult situations.

Overall, the films are questionable in their coherence. Moderate rational coherence, weak material coherence, and strong characterological coherence balance out to create a level of coherence that may have made the British Ministry of Information hesitant for release. Turning now to concepts of fidelity, further understanding may be reached.

### *Fidelity*

Fidelity, according to Walter Fisher, can be examined through five different aspects: the question of fact, the question of relevance, the question of consequence, the question of consistency, and the question of the transcendent issue. First is the question of fact, which is an identification of the values of a particular narrative.

#### Fidelity – Fact.

The question of fact is simply a determination of what the implicit and explicit values embedded in a message are (109). In order to answer this in relation to the films together, reference should be made to the previous section where themes and values are explicated. There are a few values that stand out overall as being a part of each film (although some may exist more strongly in one or the other). The following is a brief summary of the earlier analysis.

The first value is that of the dedication and bravery of the Resistance workers. This value can be seen exhibited through various characters in the films such as Clarousse's decision to stay in Madagascar in Aventure Malgache and the Resistance couple and Jeanne and her father in Bon Voyage. Despite opportunities to be self-serving or to gain, the people working for the Resistance escapes are shown to be sacrificial and courageous despite any danger. These people also exhibit qualities of teamwork and cohesion in working together. This would be an

encouragement and an inspiration to those intended to be impacted who can relate to these characters, perhaps.

Another value is the good versus evil dichotomy that uses the heroism of the Resistance in opposition to the evil that is personified in the characters supporting Vichy rule. In Bon Voyage, the man pretending to be Godowski kills someone on his own (the German) side to increase his deception, and Michel in Aventure Malgache behaves self-servingly and exhibits whim in his loyalties, just to name some examples. Those in support of Germany are the “bad guys” in this tale.

A possible secondary goal and value that is perpetuated in the films is a reconciliation or veneration of Great Britain. These films are made by the British nation and there are attitudes towards the British that are exhibited by the characters that may not have been realistic. For example, Clarousse (Aventure Malgache) implies that Great Britain is going to be their salvation despite the attitude of some in the film (villains, notably) who scoff at the idea that Great Britain is concerned over their lot. These values will be examined through the next four aspects of fidelity.

Fidelity – Relevance.

As the title aptly suggests, questions of relevance refer to whether the values are appropriate to the decision. This also includes concerns about “omitted, distorted, or misrepresented values” (109). Given the primary values listed above, relevance can be evaluated for the audience’s potential reaction. First, a reminder of the goals of the propaganda films: the British Ministry of Information sought to strengthen the resolve of the French Resistance and perhaps to increase positive relations between Great Britain and France while reminding the

French that Germany was the enemy. Each of the three values seems to be relevant to accomplishing these goals.

A dichotomy between good and evil that places the potential viewers on the “good” side and the Germans in control on the “bad” side of the conflict would naturally be relevant in helping to strengthen the Resistance. Further, glorifying the efforts of the Resistance as courageous and self-sacrificial would by default glorify the intended audience of the films. This would also serve to remind those of the Resistance that they have exhibited these qualities in the past, implying that they are capable of continuing to do so (a “keep on keeping on” implication). This may also strengthen relations between the nations, as the viewers would be aware that this is what the British Ministry of Information believes about them.

It is important to point out, however, that distorted or misrepresented values may cause a lack of relevance. First, a reference to the British’ complimentary view of the French people. While those in Great Britain may indeed have had a positive view of the French citizens, it is a distortion of the value to portray French people as being so adamant about this perspective. Members of the French audience may not have seen that particular value as being relevant to them when they are more concerned with dealing with the issues at hand. Further, the portrayal of Germans as evil personified is a distortion of a value in an extremely exaggerated fashion. It was perhaps not as necessary to the strengthening of the Resistance to dehumanize the German people the Vichy side as it was to glorify the Resistance itself. This brings the relevance of this value on a large scale into question. It is noted, however, that it is a standard strategy in wartime to exaggerate the evils of the enemy.

Fidelity – Consequence.

To examine consequence in relation to fidelity, it must be asked what will result from accepting the values in the message or fulfilling the action the narrative endorses (109). These consequences relate to one's concept of self, behavior, relationships, and rhetorical transaction (109). Given the two goals that have been identified, there are mixed consequences.

The consequences of accepting the value that those involved in the Resistance are courageous and noble would be positive. Acceptance by the audience would contribute to a positive concept of the group (and therefore of the self as a member of the group). This could in turn lead to a strengthening of resolve, precisely the goal the British Ministry of Information had in mind. The implication is that a strengthening of resolve would lead to better efforts and more success. This would bolster the movement until help from the outside could have an impact.

The consequences of accepting the German regime as pure evil would have been positive in terms of the situation itself, but may have had lasting negative effects. A national memory of the German people being full of evil intentions and immoral actions, perpetuated by the values in propaganda films from the outside, could have detrimental effects on the national morale after the wartime has passed. It may also have had the negative effect of increasing hostility in the days following the war when the German people found themselves in a more desperate situation than the countries they had previously occupied.

The consequences of accepting Great Britain as a fearless and caring ally may not be quite as positive for the French viewer. While ultimately Great Britain and the Allies proved to be worthwhile to the French cause, many French viewers may have projected a different consequence, much as a character in Aventure Malgache did: as a way for Great Britain to take control of French territory. Also, the tensions were nothing new in the nations' history. Some

French viewers may have believed that a faith in Great Britain could lead to the same disappointment as in the past. This is one of the areas where the fidelity in terms of consistency could be examined.

Fidelity – Consistency.

This component refers to the truly “ringing true” portion of fidelity, specifically whether the values are “confirmed or validated in one’s own personal experience” (109). This factor would examine whether the audience would be willing to easily accept the values perpetuated as true or consistent with the experiences they have had.

Once again, the value of the British as good and loyal may not have appeared consistent when members of the French audience examine the situation that they were in. In the French experience, many perceived that they were occupied by Germany because Great Britain abandoned them. Therefore, this idea that they are supposed to be looking to Great Britain as their heroes and hope for salvation would not be consistent with their perception of the reality they found themselves in.

On the other hand, the French audience would find consistency with the values perpetuated by the glorification of the Resistance movement. The two films are consistent with each others’ values in this way, giving the implication of a trend in British World War II propaganda. The audience would find it to be consistent with their own behavior, perhaps, or with other, more factual stories of what their fellow Resistance workers had dealt with and behaved like during this time. Because of the internal and external consistency of the British propaganda in this aspect, the French may be more willing to accept that Great Britain and their nation can have positive relations. Further, being in France at the time of the war, members of the audience had the potential to experience or enact the bravery or honor that the Resistance is

portrayed as possessing, making that perspective consistent with their experience. They would also have had the opportunity to experience the negative consequences of Vichy rule, causing consistency to exist between their view of Germany and the portrayal of Germany in the films.

Fidelity – Transcendent Issue.

This component questions whether the values presented are ideal for a basis of human conduct (109). In other words, is acceptance of these values beneficial to the individuals directly or indirectly impacted? Do these values represent a view of society that is positive and favorable to its betterment? Are these values an ideal basis for human conduct?

The values of courage and bravery exhibited by the French Resistance would have a positive impact on society. As mentioned above, the consequences of accepting these values would result in positive self-concept as well as positive behavior in enacting these values. Courage and bravery as well as the sacrifice and teamwork of the Resistance are values worth emulating and would have a positive impact on society.

Whether the value of faith in Great Britain is one that would benefit society is a little more difficult to assess. The historical perspective of the War and the ability to look back and see the outcome of Allied victory over German forces makes it seem as though this faith in Great Britain was rationalized in view of a better society. However, many attribute the positive (in France's view) outcome of the War to many factors, not necessarily heroism by Great Britain. Finally, a faith in Great Britain is such a specifically needed value that it is difficult to see its transcendence to other areas.

The value of German evil is more problematic. Though it is useful and "good" for society to identify unfair practices and unethical control exercised by nations, it is not necessary to behave as though an entire group consists of only evil people. Wars can cause confusion and

polarization among people groups and this is a natural and unfortunate result most of the time. However, these need not be attitudes that are so strongly perpetuated by the propaganda of a nation as influential as Great Britain. Given that the winners write the histories, there may be a greater responsibility during wartime to market ideas that are worth standing by in peace as well.

Overall, through questions of fact, relevance, consequence, consistency, and the transcendent issue, the fidelity of these short films is fairly solid. Although some issues may be questioned in relation to the value-laden exaggeration of evil in the films, fidelity is definitely stronger in Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache than their inherent coherence. In this section, the films have been mutually compared and also examined as a unified whole, using additional terms from Fisher. In the first part of this section, coherence of each narrative was discussed; then, the fidelity was assessed. Overall, the comparison brings to light the general impression of rationality offered by Hitchcock's designated works for the war effort.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the Results (Analysis) and Discussion of the project. Through the methodology of Fisher's Narrative Paradigm, Alfred Hitchcock's Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache were assessed. The first section of this chapter dealt with the coherence and fidelity of the two different narratives told in Bon Voyage. The second section examined the narrative of Aventure Malgache specifically for coherence fidelity. Finally, the two films were examined and compared overall using components of coherence and fidelity more specifically addressed in Fisher's Narrative Paradigm. Through this analysis, it was found that the films possessed weak coherence but mostly effective fidelity.

## Chapter 5 – Recommendations for Future Research and Conclusion

Throughout this study, two short films by the revered filmmaker Alfred Hitchcock have been examined through the lens of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm. Through the Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, and Results (Analysis) and Discussion, several ideas for further study have been brought to the surface. While Hitchcock's films have been often studied by film critics and English scholars, there are still several aspects within his work and the film world in general to be analyzed.

In 1984, Alexander Doty asserted that Alfred Hitchcock's work in the 1940s had been too greatly ignored by critics. His dissertation examining five Hitchcock films made in the 1940s was one step in the direction of making up for this neglect (Doty). This study of the World War II propaganda films also contributed to this gap in the literature. However, the 1940s marked a key time in the film work of Alfred Hitchcock, as he transitioned from being a British filmmaker to working in Hollywood and as it marks a turning point in some elements of his film style. Further research should be done on this film era in the life of Alfred Hitchcock, including rhetorical work into the style transition and why it may have occurred.

Looking at the films created for the French Resistance could be interesting through a text in context perspective that focuses heavily on the history surrounding Hitchcock's participation and the film propaganda of the war. Comparisons between Hitchcock's works and some that were utilized and successful during the war could perhaps further understanding of the films. Also, a look into what the overarching themes of the French Resistance propaganda were and how they were perpetuated in various media would be useful to understanding the war rhetoric of this particular subgroup (or at least what was attributed to them by outside nations such as Great Britain). In addition, it would be interesting to compare these films made by

Alfred Hitchcock to other British Ministry of Information films, other British cinema, or perhaps French cinema to note any similarities or differences.

Further examinations of film propaganda, specifically of World War II, would be intriguing. While the German government established the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in 1933 and Great Britain did not respond with a similar organization until fall of 1939 when war actually broke out (Larson 412), the British did respond in full force. According to Vernon Stumpf,

During World War II Britain produced over a thousand official films for use at home, with the forces, and abroad. It was probably the largest campaign for men's minds through the medium of film ever mounted, considerably more impressive than the work of the German Propaganda Ministry during the war. Yet prior to [a 1973 conference], there had been no historical assessment of this part of the British war effort. (Stumpf 8, emphasis added)

Despite this fact, many still attribute the idea of strong political propaganda to the Nazi government of Germany. While there is something to be said about the ethics that each government perpetuated, it should also be remembered that regarding wartime, the winners write the histories. Therefore, more research with an open mind toward each side of the propaganda efforts would be useful for analysis. Perhaps the British are truly the greatest propagandists of this major point in history.

Specifically, it would be interesting to look at a comparison rhetorically of the strategies used by various nations on both (all) sides of the conflict. An evaluation of the ethics of the persuasion in all their propaganda techniques could be included, as well as a comparison to the way information has been disseminated during other major war times or the years of conflict

leading to war. The way governments (in Europe or otherwise) inform and influence the public during peacetime may also be compared. This would be especially enlightening in comparison to strategies used by recent and current presidential administrations (which are being studied) in the United States as wars are a much more fluid concept. How similar propaganda strategies are used to rationalize conflicts and give the United States' citizens an international enemy to blame may be revealing to discover.

Further, more rhetorical propaganda analysis could be done specifically on films made during wars in the twentieth century. As Stumpf insinuates in his article, there is an enormous body of film work that came out of World War II and the British Ministry of Information, and this is simply one nation during one war. With the universal impact of film at this turning point in the twentieth century, this presented an exciting new medium for presenting ideas to the public. While much has been begun in this general area, a deeper look would be helpful.

In the 2004 book Defining Visual Rhetorics, a chapter is included by Cara Finnegan in which she proposes a way of doing visual rhetorical analysis that view the visuals as a part of a history. A study using the critical process of examining the production, reproduction, and circulation (Finnegan 196) of propaganda (including films) would be an intriguing way to examine Hitchcock's propaganda, as well as the propaganda of Great Britain and other nations during wartime.

These films could be compared to the other forms of propaganda that nations used during the War. It would be interesting to see how films compared to traditional forms such as pamphlets, print forms, radio, and other media and whether they were more (or less) direct, more (or less) aggressive, or more (or less) persuasive. Perhaps there were different themes that each

form of propaganda focused on, and the film area had its own specific concentrated area of messages to disseminate.

Throughout the research on the Narrative Paradigm, there were few articles that dealt with narratives in full-length films. Because films are naturally narrative in nature, some may believe that they do not necessarily require deeper rhetorical study through this route. However, film stories have a heavy impact on culture in our society and fidelity and coherence could be examined in their relations to films that make rhetorical impacts or become cultural phenomena. For example, films like Star Wars and Indiana Jones, while appealing to certain specific audiences, became more than just films for entertainment. These films have become cultural icons that are referenced in other films and other forms of media that impact our culture as well. Is there something in their stories that make them resonate more strongly with the audience than another film like The Turning Point or The Deep, which were both released the same year as Star Wars? The Narrative Paradigm may lend some clues to questions like this.

Further study of Hitchcock's films, both successful and unsuccessful, could be examined through the Narrative Paradigm. With the distinguished filmmaking style of directors such as Alfred Hitchcock, people have certain expectations when they view a film. Is it possible that his narrative style (or the narrative style of the screenwriters he chose, as he had much more creative control than was typical) also correlated to the "expected Hitchcock" and success or failure was related to the coherence and fidelity expected by the audience? Other filmmakers have experienced some of the same phenomenon, such as George Lucas. Could further Narrative Paradigm analysis of films by such artists reveal another element to the fidelity of the films that the audience will not accept unless it meets certain expectations? Film and rhetorical scholars alike should examine such possibilities beyond mere speculation.

Beyond using the Narrative Paradigm in relation to the literal stories of the movies (perhaps specifically Hitchcock's), the films could be examined as a narrative in a different form. Camera techniques, screen shots, sound effects, and other technical devices can themselves be forms of narratives. Many of these techniques when used by particular filmmakers come to be known as trademarks of their work, another element of the narrative that could be examined. Also, how do these aspects contribute to the overall narrative? Can, for example, a camera technique be seen as not coherent because it does not make sense with the mood of what is being filmed? The Narrative Paradigm is such a broad perspective that it opens up a wide range of possibilities.

While people often go to a film for the good story, many often expect to be visually stimulated in a significant way as well. Visuals themselves create narratives and therefore there could be more studies done on the narratives created by significant visuals. Further visual rhetorical criticism should also be continued in film studies, including traditional as well as nontraditional theoretical perspectives.

In 2008, Eeling Tan and Robin Clair proposed that the Narrative Paradigm be extended to include narratives that we avoid (Tan and Clair 17-8). While they refer specifically to narratives about difficult personal or interpersonal situations, this extension of the Narrative Paradigm can be useful in media rhetoric as well. It may lend some more understanding to the choices that individuals make in their entertainment as well as other uses for electronic media and what kind of stories (or frames for stories) "ring true" to particular audiences.

In terms of the Narrative Paradigm's application to more generic communication experiences, there is much work that could be done. While a few studies have been done using the Paradigm in interpersonal communication (e.g., Beck ), more areas could be researched.

Fisher did not intend his perspective to be primarily a rhetorical means of analysis but rather a philosophical framework through which to view all human communication. Therefore, further application to face to face interaction in a variety of contexts would be a useful way to understand them.

The use of stories in small groups to persuade or influence decision making could be even further examined. Perhaps there could be a study of a particular small group and a tracing of the more or less influential stories that are used. Then, the stories could be examined for coherence, fidelity, values and themes that resound strongly with the group, and behaviors of storytellers to determine points of correlation between strengths and effects. Also, the use of stories in support groups or pair counseling (such as marital counseling) situations could further be analyzed for effectiveness in treatment or resolution.

Because the Narrative Paradigm is such a broad perspective on the world of communication, there is a plethora of ways that it could be applied. These few recommendations, along with recommendations on the study of film rhetorically, are but a sampling of the many areas that this diverse and useful theory may be utilized.

## **Conclusion**

In this project, the Introduction offered a historical background and context for the study of two unique Alfred Hitchcock films, Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache. The situation involving tensions between Great Britain and France before and during the War as well as the French response (initially and eventually) to the German occupation of their nation provide for an interesting context of British propaganda. Further, the context within Hitchcock's film career after having come to the United States just before 1939 and returning to his home nation in 1944 to make the films provides interesting background as well.

The Literature Review over Alfred Hitchcock offered the multiplicity of ways that his life and work has been studied in various disciplines, including English, communication, and film studies. The sheer amount of work done reveals the significance of Hitchcock as a filmmaker and the cultural impact of his works. Further, there has been little work done on the propaganda films that were examined in this study, although the context provided an interesting rationale for study. A Literature Review of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm explained the history and perspective of the approach utilized to generate conclusions about the strength of the narratives found in Bon Voyage and Aventure Malgache. The Narrative Paradigm is a well-known and respected theory and also useful for this type of study.

Through the Methodology and the Results (Analysis) and Discussion section, the particular approach tactic for analysis has been explained and the results have been evaluated. Through this study, it was found that while there are some significant issues with the coherence of the two films, there are also answers to many gaps and there is a strong sense of fidelity. The films perpetuate values that would be appropriate for a French audience (such as the bravery of the Resistance and the evil of the Nazi control) and perhaps offer respite from the reality of the French situation. It is clear that the values presented are set through a British framework and perhaps we can attribute the films' lack of circulation to the timing (1944 was toward the end of the War) as well as to the potential existence of film stories told more coherently. Finally, Recommendations for Future Research were offered to extend Hitchcock, rhetorical film scholarship, and the Narrative Paradigm.

Analyzing Alfred Hitchcock's film work was not an unusual task to undertake, but examining historical context and narrative structure offered unique perspective on the mystery filmmaker that many seek to comprehend. This study has offered a perspective on a little-

studied area of Hitchcock's repertoire and one that offers significant historical significance. As the journey in Hitchcock scholarship continues, may every voyage be an adventure.

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