

The Buck Stops in Benghazi: A Practical Application of the Dramatistic Pentad and  
Interpersonal Deception Theory

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Thesis Committee

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### Abstract

This study sought to determine whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi provided motivation for deception in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This was done by utilizing Burke's dramatic pentad to frame the events of the attack the responsive rhetoric to lay the foundation for a qualitative analysis that was conducted using criteria distilled from Buller and Burgoon's Interpersonal Deception Theory. This study posed two research questions. The first research question sought to determine through the use of the pentad whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration provided motivation for deception for Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony. The second research question sought to identify through the use of qualitative analysis whether or not Secretary Clinton engaged in deception during her testimony. These questions were answered in the affirmative. The overarching premise of this study is a call for transparency in government.

Dedications

To my wonderful and supporting parents, Bert and LuAnn Kirk

To my awesome brother and sister, Jonathan and Emily Kirk

To my amazing and beautiful girlfriend, Kaylan Shank

To my good friends Mattison Brooks and Ashely Wiktorek. We did it guys!!!

Finally, To my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

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Dr. Cecil Kramer – Chair

Dr. Kristen Hark – Reader

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

On the evening of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the United States was dealt yet another tragic blow by her enemies. On what marked the 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the horrendous attacks that were committed in New York City and Washington, D.C. by members of al-Qaeda, the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya was attacked and set ablaze which resulted in the deaths of four Americans, including the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens. Since the attack, controversy has surrounded the investigation and has been at the center of much debate over the way in which the U.S. State Department and the Obama administration handled the subsequent fallout in the days and months following the events of what transpired. Many accuse the Obama administration of being duplicitous in their presentation of the events and particularly heavy scrutiny was placed on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for the way in which the State Department characterized the events that took place in Benghazi. Thus, questions have been raised as to whether or not Hillary Clinton and the Obama administration attempted to deceive the American public about what actually happened in Benghazi and how the administration handled it.

The justification for this study is due to the fact that there was extreme political fallout from the results of both the events that took place in Benghazi and the way that this situation was handled and presented to the American public in the following weeks and months. There were concerns raised by both members of Congress and the American public about the way the administration handled the flow of information to the public through the media. Speculation was raised that not all of the facts were being disclosed and that the administration was attempting to mislead the American public. In the months following the attack in Benghazi,

several hearings were conducted by the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations committee to attempt to understand what exactly happened that night of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Members of the State Department were called to testify and present evidence, the most notable of these being Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. With all of the speculation and accusations of the State Department not being forthright with the evidence of what happened, it begs the question of whether or not Secretary Clinton was deceptive to the members of the committee during the hearing due to the amount of enormous pressure that was placed upon her by the rhetoric and stance of the administration at the time of the attack.

Further justification of this study can be found in the current political landscape that is unfolding at this present time. There is speculation that, now former, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will be running for president in the upcoming 2016 presidential elections. According to Mike Allen of Politico, "Hillary Clinton is in the final stages of planning a presidential campaign that will most likely be launched in early April"(Allen). Thus, with all of the controversy that is surrounding the events of the attack in Benghazi during her tenure as Secretary of State, it raises the issue of transparency within the government. Elected officials should be held accountable to those that they serve, and with so much controversy surrounding Clinton and the rest of the Obama administration at the present moment, it calls into question the integrity of the individual. Thus, the overarching premise of this study will be to demonstrate the necessity of transparency within government administrations and how they present themselves to the public which they serve.

This study will seek to investigate the claims that the Obama administration was deceptive in their rhetoric and answer the question of whether or not Secretary of State Hillary Clinton engaged in deception during her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations

Committee. This will be done through the utilization of Burke's dramatic pentad to examine both the historical events of what took place and the responsive rhetoric that the Obama administration produced in reaction to the events. The historical context and rhetoric will be examined to allow for a more thorough understanding of the events of the attack and provide a solid foundation for a qualitative analysis that will be conducted using Interpersonal Deception Theory. This qualitative analysis will consist of the use of criteria distilled from the theory and applied to the testimony given by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her hearing before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. These criteria will be taken from several of the key assumptions and propositions of the theory to be applied to the subject matter and seek to determine the presence of deception according to how it is defined by the theory. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi provided motivation for deception in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In order to gain a better understanding of the content of proceedings of the Senate hearing that will be examined, a brief history and understanding of the events of the attack on Benghazi and the subsequent rhetoric that was released by the administration is needed to understand the whole picture. On September 11, 2012, the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya came under attack from what was initially perceived as a terrorist attack. The results of the attack "killed four U.S. diplomats, including U.S. Ambassador to Libya Chris Stevens" (Kiely). The following is a brief, but not exhaustive, timeline of the events that transpired on September 11, 2012 so as to give a brief historical context to provide a better understanding of the event in question.

On the day of the attack in Benghazi, Libya, Ambassador Chris Stevens finished his meetings with a Turkish diplomat at 8:30 p.m. local time. At this time, "everything is

calm...there is nothing usual... there has been nothing unusual during the day at all outside” (U.S. State Department ). Then at 9:40 p.m., the agents inside the compound, “hear loud noises coming from the front gate. They also hear gunfire and an explosion” (U.S. State Department ). The Ambassador is immediately taken to a secure location within the compound as the other security officers seek to make the compound secure. They encounter resistance and are forced to separate while the attackers begin setting fire to various areas of the compound. In the ensuing skirmish, the U.S. Ambassador Chris Stevens as well as three other American security personnel are killed.

In the following hours, the U.S State Department Operation’s Center sends an email to the White House and other government agencies saying that Ansar al-Sharia is claiming the attack on the consulate on social media (Kiely). The significance of this is that Ansar al-Sharia is jihadist militia that is based in Benghazi (TRAC). This militia played a role in the Libyan revolution that took place in 2011, and has had a role in the region since then. Since the attacks, Ansar al-Sharia has been blacklisted by the UN Security Council (Donath).

Later on the day of the attacks at 10:00 p.m (EST), Secretary of State Hilary Clinton releases a statement concerning the attacks on the consulate, stating:

Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet. The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation. But let me be clear: There is never any justification for violent acts of this kind. (Kiely)

The following day, Secretary Clinton releases a second statement that bears close resemblance to the previous one that she made the night before referencing the anti-Muslim video (Keily). Later

that day, President Barack Obama made a statement in the Rose Garden of the White House in regards to the attacks that occurred on the consulate in Benghazi. President Obama made the following remarks:

The United States condemns in the strongest terms this outrageous and shocking attack... Since our founding, the United States has been a nation that respects all faiths. We reject all efforts to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. But there is absolutely no justification to this type of senseless violence. None. The world must stand together to unequivocally reject these brutal acts... No acts of terror will ever shake the resolve of this great nation, alter that character, or eclipse the light of the values that we stand for. Today we mourn four more Americans who represent the very best of the United States of America. We will not waver in our commitment to see that justice is done for this terrible act. And make no mistake, justice will be done. (Obama)

In this statement, Obama does not specifically mention anything about the purported anti-Muslim video that supposedly sparked a protest that led to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi, and he simply refers to them as “senseless violence” which suggests that they do not claim that the attacks were premeditated.

Following these remarks by both President Obama and Secretary Clinton, an investigation was authorized by the State Department to examine the events that occurred that were initially classified this as a spontaneous protest in response to an anti-Muslim video (Kiely). However, in the days that followed, the White House and the State Department began to change their assessment. In a statement made by an unnamed administration official, the administration’s position on the cause of the attack began to waver in their assurance that the

attack was the result of an anti-Muslim video. When asked in a press conference whether or not the attack was the result of protests regarding, the unnamed administration official stated:

With regard to whether there is any connection between this Internet activity and this extremist attack in Benghazi, frankly, we just don't know. We're not going to know until we have a chance to investigate. And I'm sorry that it is frustrating for you that so many of our answers are "We don't know," but they are truthful in that. (Kiely)

In addition to this, additional questions were raised in this press conference in reference to whether or not this was premeditated or spontaneous attack to which the official responded:

Frankly, we are not in a position to speak any further to the perpetrators of this attack. It was clearly a complex attack. We're going to have to do a full investigation...it's just too early to speak to who they were and if they might have been otherwise affiliated beyond Libya. (Kiely)

Thus, the administration began to shift its once strong stance that the attacks were a result of an anti-Muslim film and begin to entertain the possibility that this was a premeditated attack.

Another unnamed State department official stated in an interview with CNN that, "It was not an innocent mob...The video or 9/11 made a handy excuse and could be fortuitous from their perspective but this was a clearly planned military-type attack"(Aarthun). This change in rhetoric from the Obama administration in their characterization of the attack on the consulate in Benghazi will be the focus of the pentad analysis that will be explained in the methodology chapter of this study and be examined in the research and discussion chapter.

Now that a brief background has been established, it is important to know how this study will be conducted. This study will be broken down into five chapters that will deal with the

research problem. The second chapter will consist of a literature review of the material that is available concerning the historical context of the events that occurred in Benghazi, the responsive rhetoric of the Obama administration, Burke's dramatic pentad, Interpersonal Deception Theory, and review studies that have been conducted in order to lend credibility to the research that is conducted in this study. This literature review will present a brief historical background of the events of the attack on the consulate in Benghazi as well as present the Obama administration's rhetorical response to the events. In addition to this, the literature will include a discussion the theory of dramatism and the fundamental concepts of the dramatic pentad put forth by Kenneth Burke. This study will also consist of a fundamental breakdown of Buller and Burgoon's Interpersonal Deception Theory and its purpose to "account for deception, and more broadly, credible and noncredible communication, in interpersonal contexts" (Buller, and Burgoon 204). In addition to the discussion of the theory, the literature review will examine leakage and deception apprehension (Ekman and Friesen; Greene et al.; DePaulo et al.), strategic and nonstrategic behaviors (Greene et al.; Burgoon et al), and verbal and nonverbal factors (Buller, Strzyzewski, and Comstock; Vrij and Mann; Vrij; Vrij, Edward, et al.; Porter and Yuille). This is just a brief synopsis of what the literature review will entail.

The third chapter of this study will consist of the methodology of how the research will be conducted. The methodology of this thesis will explain the process of how the research will be conducted and provide research questions that this study will seek to answer. This study will seek to utilize a pentad analysis to frame the rhetoric of the Obama administration and how they responded to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi. By doing this, a foundation will be laid to examine the Secretary Clinton's hearing in the second portion of the research. The second portion of the research will consist of a qualitative analysis of the testimony given by Secretary

of State Hillary Clinton before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This will be done by distilling specific criteria according to Interpersonal Deception Theory and applying them to the recorded proceedings. The objective of this is to determine whether or not Secretary Clinton is engaging in deception during the hearing. These studies will seek to answer two research questions through this research.

The fourth chapter of this study, research and discussion, will follow the protocols outlined in the methodology chapter and implement them to gather the necessary information to answer the research questions. This chapter will then qualitatively analyze the information and data concerning the hearing gathered and then discuss the implications of the information and how they relate to the research questions posed in the methodology.

The final chapter of the study will consist of the conclusions that will be drawn from the research and how they apply to the research questions of the study. This will be done by review what was discuss in the previous chapter. In addition to this, this chapter will consist of a summary of the work that was done in this study and present suggestions for possible future research that can stem from the research problem and any other pertaining issues.

The purpose of this introduction is to give a brief understanding of the purpose of this thesis and to give a concise preview of what this study will entail. The following chapter will consist of the literature review that covers all of the material dealing Burke's dramatic pentad, Interpersonal Deception Theory, and all subsequent information regarding studies that have been conducted using these theories and procedures.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review is meant to demonstrate and explain the existing information concerning dramatism, the dramatistic pentad, Interpersonal Deception Theory, and all other relevant information concerning deception. By giving a thorough background and explanation of the existing material, a firm foundation will be established to build the methodology and subsequent research of this study.

This literature review will begin by review Burke's theory of dramatism and the dramatistic pentad and studies that are related to the subject matter. The purpose of this is to explain what dramatism is and demonstrate how the dramatistic pentad has been used in other research studies and how it relates to the subject matter that this study is seeking to examine. After completing this, the literature review will examine Buller and Burgoon's Interpersonal Deception Theory at length to provide a thorough understanding the implications that it has in relation to the study. In addition to this, supplemental material will be examined that is concerned with deception and how it has been researched in other studies. Upon completion of this, the literature review will conclude with a preview of the following methodology chapter.

In order to understand the significance of the dramatistic pentad and its critical importance in this study, a better understanding of it must first be achieved. The dramatistic pentad stems from the theory of dramatism that was proposed by Kenneth Burke, which attempts to explain the fundamental principles of human interaction and communication. Burke defines dramatism as "a method of analysis and a corresponding critique of terminology designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives is via a methodical inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions"(Kneupper). Put more

simply, motives are at the core of human interaction for they are the driving force behind all actions. Burke also asserted that dramatism, “invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action”(Burke). This means that through the lens of dramatism, it causes the individual to take in the totality of the circumstances that they are presented with and prompts them to seek the meaning behind the message that is sent to them through whatever medium is present. In this case, the message that is present would be the rhetorical position of the Obama administration in response to the events in Benghazi.

In addition to the circumstances that surround an event or instance of dramatism, Burke also paid close attention to the significance of language and its influence on how things are received and perceived by others. He believed that language does not simply reflect reality, but also select and deflect reality as well (Burke). Thus, in the context of the rhetoric that will be examined that was put forth by the U.S. State Department and the Obama administration, the language is a very crucial concept that is fundamental to the way that shaped the reality of the events that transpired in Benghazi. The examination of the language that they use, and its evolution is one of the aspects that will be examined in the methodology and discussion portions of this study.

Dramatism is a highly effective way in which critics can analyze and attempt to make sense of the world in which they live and the way they perceive things that are presented to them. One way of looking at it is as follows:

Dramatism addresses the empirical questions of how persons explain their actions to themselves and others, what the cultural and social structural influences on the explanations might be, and what effect connotational links among the explanatory

(motivational) terms might have the these explanations, and hence, on action itself”(Overington).

In order to be able to utilize the lens of dramatism to its full potential, the dramatisitic pentad was developed in order to provide the critic with the tools necessary to break down each individual element of a situation and understand how each one influences the other. The dramatisitic pentad is the “key model used by critics to analyze human use of symbols in communication. The pentad is made up of five elements or terms (hence the name *pentad*): *act*, or what was or will be done; *scene*, or the context of the act that answers the questions of where and when the act occurred; *agent*, or who performed the act; *agency*, or the way the act was performed; and *purpose*, or the goal of the act (German).” This is a very power rhetorical tool that allows the critic to examine each individual element of the subject matter and break them down into more easily understandable components. In the simplest of terms, the elements of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose can essentially be renamed the What, Where, Who, How, and Why of the rhetorical analysis (Kneupper). The way that this will be implemented will be by taking the individual elements of the Benghazi attack and the subsequent rhetoric that was put forth by the Obama administration and using it to establish the foundation of this study that looks at the U.S. Senate hearing.

The following portion of this literature review will consist of the various studies that have implemented the dramatisitic pentad to examine subject matter that is related in some way to this study. Though none of the pentad analyses are particularly concerned with deception, the majority of them are focused on examining various forms of public rhetoric and are subsequently analyzed to determine their effectiveness and the meaning behind them.

In the context of examining speeches and public statements, one study utilized Burke's dramatic pentad to "explore the motives of a sample of messages of a unique individual, within a special set of circumstances in order to attain a better understanding of the rhetor and the rhetorical situation of which those messages were a part...the rhetor is Jeane J. Kirkpatrick"(Miles 13-14). Jeane J. Kirkpatrick was the U.N. Ambassador for the United States in the 1980s, and made several contributions in the way of rhetoric. The study that was conducted by Miles was designed to look at the speeches that Kirkpatrick gave and determine the motive behind them. According to Miles, "Kenneth Burke's dramatic method is utilized in the present study because it is thorough in revealing a relatively objective description of the text. In addition, the use of his pentad shows how the textual parts reveal sufficient cause for identifying motive of the speaker...Burke's pentad is the most efficient method in accomplishing this goal"(Miles 23). This study was able to identify the motives of the speaker by fulfilling each element of the pentad and drawing conclusions from the respected fields of data.

Another example of the use of the pentad being utilized in the analysis of speeches can be found in the study that conducted an examination of the speech given by Ronald Reagan concerning the attack on the U.S. Marine base in Beirut, Lebanon in 1983 and the American military action in Grenada. This study highlighted and identified through a pentad analysis "major differences in Reagan's framing of the two events, differences that are reconciled in the context of his elliptical remarks on foreign policy at the end of the speech"(Birdsell 267). Thus, the pentad was able to identify the different motivations that the Reagan administration had in relation to both of these events. The author, Birdsell, made a remarkable assessment about the pentad and its usefulness when being applied to various situations. In the study the author states that "a great deal of the pentad's explanatory power rests upon the assumption that the terms in

fact are ambiguous, that there are not necessarily a single 'correct' rule for applying the terms in any particular situation"(277). Thus, the application of the pentad has limitless applications and variations that can be utilized which provides significant support for this study and its utilization of the pentad.

In a study that was conducted by Dickenson, groups of teenage students were taught to utilize the pentad to examine the persuasiveness of the Montana Meth Project to determine its effectiveness in reaching its target audience. The author identifies the elements of the pentad and makes the same observation as Birdsell and concurs by stating that, "there is no correct or true application of the pentad, and groups will come up with different analyses"(Dickenson 128). The results of the study were successful in reaching the students and demonstrating the usefulness of the dramatic pentad. This applies to this study because it demonstrates that the pentad can be utilized in multiple fashions, in this case, framing the foundation for a qualitative analysis.

Another study was conducted by Fox to examine the rhetorical nature of Burke's dramatic pentad and examined at the effectiveness of how it is used and how it can be applied in the field of professional communication. Fox states that "the pentad offers a simple tool for seeing and understanding the complexity of a situation...the pentad offers a method that reveals nuances, that exposes the messy and complicated nature of symbolic action"(Fox 371). The case of this study, the pentad enabled the researcher with the ability to "see way in which power, authority, and agency were negotiated, rather than fixed and finalized"(Fox 382). Thus, the pentad was able to be utilized to identify these nuances and elements. Thus, for the purposes of the present research problem, the pentad will help identify any nuances and discrepancies within the situation that is being examined.

. The final study that will be examine demonstrates the versatility of the pentad and was conducted by Walker and Monin. In this study, they utilize the pentad to examine a staff wide company picnic that stretched across several countries that was held by Hubbard Foods in 1998. This is a unique approach to using the pentad because it attempts to identify the reasons for this event held by the company. In the study, the authors had this to say concerning their use of the pentad:

We hoped that from our application of the pentad in the analysis on one organisational event we might gain an indication of its utility in other practical organisational settings... Our analysis suggests that ambiguity, and the multiple interpretations that it enables, leads us to further questions, not comfortably assured answers and explanations. The pentad, a simple interpretive guide to the analysis of organisational events, particularly accommodates the ambiguity of multivocality, and the recognition of the multiple frames from which many voices speak their diverse constructions of motivation, act, agency, agent, and scene, are better understood when Burke's pentad guides us through the complexities of interpretation. (Monin and Walker 277-278)

Thus, this study found that it was possible to examine a unique event, such as a company picnic, and determine the meaning associated with it. It also demonstrates the versatility of the pentad and how it can utilized in multiple different ways.

These studies serve to provide a background and basis for the research that will be conducted in this study using the dramatisic pentad. The application of the pentad will serve to frame the historical context of the attack in Benghazi and the subsequent rhetoric. The following is the review of Buller and Burgoon's Interpersonal Deception Theory.

Interpersonal Deception Theory (IDT) is designed to examine both the fundamental aspects of interpersonal communication and deception. Though the Senate hearing may not fall under the conventional interpersonal communication definition, it does have several significant elements of interpersonal communication that constitute a legitimate use of the theory: such as one-on-one interaction and direct dialogue between individuals. Though there is some dissention to the theory that claims that it “fails to describe how a unifying explanatory mechanism operates to influence deceptive communication across a variety of interactive contexts”(Stiff 290), it does provide a framework for specific instances of deception in interactive contexts (Stiff). Thus, there is a sender and a receiver that are influenced by the other in an interpersonal interactive context, and therefore IDT will provide a legitimate means of analysis for deception that is present within the hearing.

This theory was proposed by Buller and Burgoon in order to “account for deception, and more broadly, credible and noncredible communication, in interpersonal contexts” (Buller, and Burgoon 204). It was their hope that they could develop a model of interpersonal communication that accounted for “individual factors such as goals, motivations, emotions, and cognitive abilities are necessary but not sufficient factors to predict and explain topography of interpersonal deceptive encounters and their outcomes”(204). Their goal was to “approach the issue relationally, considering deceptive interchanges from a dyadic and dialogic rather than monadic and monologic perspective”(204). Since deception takes place on a fundamentally interpersonal level, Buller and Burgoon developed this theory to attempt to satisfy the interpersonal nature of deception and explore the various aspects of this.

Before diving into the discussion of IDT, some clear definitions must be established about the nature of the various aspects that this theory entails. According to Buller and Burgoon,

IDT consists of four distinct definitions that provide the framework for the theory. These four definitions that must be defined are: interpersonal, interactive, deception and suspicion (205). These four definitions provide the foundation that support the theory and its 18 propositions.

The first two definitions that must be covered are interpersonal and interactive.

Interpersonal communication is defined in simple terms as “the dynamic exchange of messages between two (or more) people”(205). This means that this form of communication takes place between two individuals in a personal, dyadic manner. Thus interpersonal communication is also interactive in nature due to the fact that “it entails synchronous rather than delayed turn exchanges and opportunities for immediate feedback and mutual influence”(205). According to Buller and Burgoon, “Much of the motivation for developing IDT rests in understanding deception in face-to-face interactions, as contrasted with deception under decreasingly interpersonal, interactive conditions”(205). This is essential to understanding in the context of the hearing because of the personal nature of the interaction; thus, “True interpersonal (face-to-face, interactive) deception invokes numerous considerations and demands not present when deception is noninterpersonal or entails highly constrained interaction”(156).

In addition to the interpersonal and interactive nature of IDT, this theory is primarily concerned with deception. This is defined by as “a deliberate act perpetrated by a sender to engender in a receiver beliefs contrary to what the sender believes is true to put the receiver at a disadvantage”(156). Another, more precise definition of interpersonal deception is “when communicators control the information contained in their messages to convey a meaning that departs from the truth as they know it”(205). This means that interpersonal deception occurs when an individual intentionally manipulates the information in order to convey a meaning that is not a true representation of the objective nature of the subject matter. Suspicion occurs when

an individual believes that deception is taking place. Suspicion is defined as “a belief, held without sufficient evidence or proof to warrant certainty, that a person’s speech or actions may be duplicitous”(205). These two definitions will work together in concert with one another other in order to uncover the truth of what is being said and determine whether or not what is being said is being manipulated or deviating from the truth.

Interpersonal Deception Theory operates on a series of assumptions that act as the framework for the theory which support its claims and direct the research conducted in this area of communication. These assumptions can be divided into two categories: interpersonal assumptions and deception assumptions. Both of these categories provide guided and rational assumptions based upon conventional communication theory and apply it to the dynamics that IDT seeks to articulate and define.

The first set of assumptions proposed by IDT relate to the interpersonal nature of the theory. These assumptions support the theory by taking what is already known about interpersonal communication and relating it to IDT. This gives credibility and weight to theory by incorporating assumptions that explain the interpersonal nature of the theory.

As stated by Buller and Burgoon, “An essential attribute of interpersonal communication is that it entails active participation by both sender and receiver, that is both are actors rather than passive recipients or observers of one person’s actions”(206). This means that both parties in the interaction are involved in the sending and receiving of the message. This is one of the crucial elements of interpersonal communication that is one of the most important assumptions of IDT. Without a sender and receiver, there is no communication, verbal or nonverbal. Working off of this, another assumption of IDT is that interpersonal communication is a dynamic activity (Buller and Burgoon). This means that the relationship between the

communicators is always in flux and changing as the conversation progresses. According to the authors,

Behavioral patterns fluctuate over time as communicators adjust to one another's feedback, acclimate to the communication context, and change topics. The implication for interpersonal deceptions is that a uniform deceptive profile is unlikely, as behavioral displays at the outset of deception differ from those exhibited later. (206)

In the context of the hearing, this is one of the assumptions that will examine the dynamic relationship that the committee members and those that are testifying share over the course of the proceedings. The shifting relationship that will be examined will liken itself to what Burgoon and Buller referred to as a game of moves and countermoves of the deceiver and deceived (157).

Another assumption that is central to the interpersonal nature of IDT is that interpersonal communication consists of both strategic and nonstrategic behaviors (Buller and Burgoon 207). The authors pose that senders are consciously aware of some of the behavior that they are engaging in, but otherwise unconsciously aware their verbal and nonverbal behavior. They state:

These inadvertent behaviors, which we are calling nonstrategic, usually reflect perceptual, cognitive, and emotional processes accompanying message encoding and decoding or the communicative situation – what in the deception literature is often termed as leakage. (Buller and Burgoon 207)

The term leakage was developed and conceptualized by Ekman and Friesen. In their research concerning nonverbal behavior and deception, they proposed that when people engage in deception they exhibit nonverbal behavior that betray them (Ekman; Ekman and Friesen). The term leakage is defined as “the nonverbal act [that] reveals a message otherwise being

concealed”(Ekman and Friesen 288). In addition to leakage, they also propose another concept known as deception clues, which are “the nonverbal acts [that] suggests that deception is occurring but does not reveal the concealed message”(288). These nonverbal cues are seen as nonstrategic behavior because they often cannot be controlled by the sender. Examples of these nonverbal cues are facial expression, which are universal and independent of any demographic (Matsumoto et al.). The concepts of leakage and deception clues in nonstrategic communication are very integral parts of the Interpersonal Deception Theory.

The third assumption that is relevant to IDT is the fact that interpersonal communication is multifunctional, multidimensional, and multimodal (Buller and Burgoon 206). This relates to how wide the scope of interpersonal communication is, and how it consists of so many factors that influence the communication process and in turn influence deception (DePaulo, Malone, et al.). The factors that are involved in the interpersonal interaction can consist of numerous goals that can operate simultaneously (Buller and Burgoon 157). According to the authors,

Deception strategies are intended to satisfy these multiple and sometimes competing communication objectives. Four that should be especially pertinent to interactive deception are impression management, relational communication, emotion management, and conversation management. The twin functions of impression management and relational communication concern, respectively, the kinds of images people project for a general audience.... Emotion or affect management concerns how regulate emotional experiences and expressions... Conversation management concerns how interactants regulate conversational activities. (157-158)

This all relates to deception through the way that individuals attempt to control the various aspects of the interpersonal exchange between the sender and the receiver. This will be examined in the hearing by looking at whether or not the individuals that are testifying are attempting to deceive the committee members and are engaging in these impression management strategies in order to attempt to be effective deceivers.

The final interpersonal assumption that is related to expectation and norms associated with interpersonal communication. This assumption relies on the fact that “normative expectations are foundational organizing principles in interpersonal communication... These expectations... form cognitive schemata for interpersonal communication.” (Buller and Burgoon 208). This means that people operate under various assumptions and expectations that help them understand the world. According to IDT, “one of the primary assumptions in interpersonal encounters is that people are telling the truth, that is, they enter interpersonal interaction with a truth-bias” (Burgoon et al. 306). Familiarity is also another contributor to truth bias, due to the fact that as relationships grow closer individuals will become more confident in their abilities to determine truth from lie (DePaulo, Charlton, et al.) Thus, it is important to be aware of inherent truth bias to be aware of possible deception that is taking place.

The second set of assumptions that is covered by IDT deals with nature of deception. These assumptions explain what deception consists of and how it relates to interpersonal communication and how it relies on interpersonal communication. These assumptions explain the core nature of deception and how it is manifested in interpersonal communication.

The first assumption of deception is that it is fundamentally a form of information management. According to Buller and Burgoon, “deceivers control information by encoding messages that alter veracity, completeness, directness/relevance, clarity, and personalization”

(209). This means that individuals that attempt to deceive must first control the information that they are communicating to make it serve the means that they wish the message to convey. In these deceptive messages, there are usually three components:

(a) the central deceptive message (usually verbal in nature), (b) ancillary messages (verbal or nonverbal) bolstering the verisimilitude of the deceptive message or protecting the source in the event deception is detected, and (c) inadvertent behaviors (mostly nonverbal) divulging deceptive intent and/or the “true” state of affairs. (Buller and Burgoon 210)

This goes back to the interactive nature of the theory in which there is the constant sending and receiving of messages. Thus, the deceiver will be mostly likely be aware of the first two types of messages that he is sending; however, it is the third type of message in which the deception is often found. The inadvertent behavior relates to the concepts of leakage and deception clues that were proposed by Ekman and Friesen and previously discussed.

The second assumption that relates to deception is closely related to the concept of nonstrategic behavior and leakage. This assumption assumes that “both deception and deception detection displays are partly a manifestation of underlying arousal, negative affect, cognitive effort, and attempted control”(Buller and Burgoon 210). In addition, this assumption accepts these four components “as likely etiologies for inadvertent behaviors typically described as deception leakage and deception clues”(Buller et al. 670). This assumption deals with the individual who is attempting to engage in deception and is experiencing various factors that contribute to leakage and deception clues. According to the authors,

Deceivers may experience varying degrees of physiological arousal and negative affect stemming from detection apprehension (the fear of being

caught deceiving) and guilt or discomfort associated with violating conversational rules and social prescriptions against deceit. (Buller and Burgoon 210)

In the context of the hearing, these are factors that this study will look for in attempting to detect deception. These emotional and cognitive functions of interpersonal communication show up in the dichotomy between the deceivers intended deception and the norms and expectations that he feels obligated to respect and uphold.

Now that the assumptions and general information about the theory has been covered and discussed, it crucial that the fundamental propositions of the theory be examined. Interpersonal Deception Theory consists of 18 proposition that state the fundamental properties and claims of the theory in an effort to better understand interpersonal deception and how it relates to interpersonal communication. The purpose of the propositions is to explain how deception is played out in interpersonal contexts (Buller and Burgoon). The following will consist of a brief description of the most crucial propositions as well as any supportive information that will explain the finer points of each of the propositions.

The first proposition of IDT proposes that the “sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as deceptive communication contexts vary in (a) access to social cues, (b) immediacy, (c) relational engagement, (d) conversational demands, and (e) spontaneity”(Buller and Burgoon 214). This first proposition takes into account the multiple aspects of interactive, interpersonal communication by first observing the pressures that are placed on both the sender and receivers. IDT notes that “the multiplicity of the sender and receiver roles and tasks may not only introduce excessive cognitive load that distracts from processing another’s message but also may impair one’s ability to project a credible

image”(213). This relates to the hearing, in that, the subject has multiple demands on them that must be fulfilled in order for them to attempt to effectively deceive the interrogator. This ties into proposition two which states that, “During deceptive interchanges, sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as relationships vary in (a) relational familiarity (including informational and behavioral familiarity) and (b) relational valence”(215). The amount of interaction and familiarity that the sender and receiver both possess will greatly influence the deceptive communication and how the multiple demands will be handled in relation to the sender and receiver.

The third proposition relates to the concepts of strategic and nonstrategic behaviors, as was previously discussed. Buller and Burgoon refer to Zuckerman et al. in that “attempts at controlling one’s performance also produced inadvertent behavior leaking deceptive intent”(217). They also argue that “strategic image and behavior management, if carried to extremes, may result in an overcontrolled or rigid presentation, inexpressiveness, and reduced spontaneity, which qualify as nonstrategic behaviors”(217). Thus, proposition three states:

Compared with truth tellers, deceivers (a) engage in greater strategic activity designed to manage information, behavior, and image and (b) display more nonstrategic arousal cues, negative and dampened affect, noninvolvement, and performance decrements. (218)

This strongly relates to the fundamental nature of this study and will be one of the key analytical tools that will aid in the analysis of the hearing. In order to be effective, the deceiver must control all of the strategic and nonstrategic behaviors. Buller and Burgoon make reference to the abilities of effective deceivers in that, “Successful deceivers should be those that have a knack for emitting behaviors that convey believability while masking behaviors that betray their true

feelings or communicate discomfort and dishonesty and for reading receiver feedback for acceptance or disbelief”(218).

The fourth proposition of IDT relates deals with the interactivity that occurs during attempted deception. Proposition four states:

Context interactivity moderates initial deception displays such that deception in increasingly interactive contexts results in (a) greater strategic activity (information, behavior, and image management) and (b) reduced nonstrategic activity (arousal, negative or dampened affect, and performance decrements) over time relative to noninteractive contexts. (220)

This means that as the interaction between the two parties increases, the strategic activity on the part of the deceiver will increase so as to increase the control over the act of deception; but in turn the he will lose control of the nonstrategic activity, thus resulting in leakage. Burgoon and Buller point out that, “IDT stipulates that both strategic and nonstrategic behaviors are likely to be present during interactive deception. Even though some deceiver behaviors are likely to be deliberate and instrumental, other behaviors may inadvertent, leaking clues to deception”(160).

Recalling what has already been discussed concerning expectations and social norms in interpersonal communication and the apprehension that is associated with breaking them, propositions five and six give definition to these claims and how they relate to IDT. Proposition five states that the “sender and receiver initial expectations for honesty are positively related to degree of context interactivity and positivity of relationship between sender and receiver”(221).

This means that both the sender and the receiver judge the expectations of the interaction in order to determine how to proceed through the interaction. It is in this assessment and judging of the

expectations of the interaction that proposition six occurs when deception becomes an element to the conversation. Proposition six refers to how the “deceiver’s initial detection apprehension and associated strategic activity are inversely related to expectations for honesty (which are themselves a function of context interactivity and relationship positivity).”(221). Once the deceiver engages in the act of deception, it becomes necessary for him to be aware of the expectations of the interaction. Becoming aware of these expectations will instill deception apprehension because he will be concerned with not violating the expectations of the interaction and the deception being discovered.

This leads to the next proposition that takes these expectations and translate them into the goals that the sender and receiver wish to accomplish during the interpersonal interaction. Proposition seven consists of one main point and two sub-points that stipulate the intentions and goals of the sender and receiver. The proposition is as follows:

Goals and motivations moderate strategic and nonstrategic behavior displays. (A) Senders deceiving for self-gain exhibit more strategic activities and nonstrategic leakage than senders deceiving for other benefits. (B) Receivers’ initial behavior patterns are a function of (a) their priorities among instrumental, relational, and identity objectives and (b) their initial intent to uncover deceit. (223)

This, again, relates back to the concept of strategic and nonstrategic behavior. The deceiver’s goal is to make sure that the message is convincing and that it is not resulting in any leakage. Unfortunately, this becomes evident to the receiver through deception clues that are present in the leakage that the sender is emitting. However, one element to this proposition is that the receivers vary on their perception of these cues. In one study, Burgoon et al. stated that “Whether

strategic or nonstrategic behaviors are likely to prevail is difficult to predict...but should depend...on receiver motivation and goals. Receivers should act differently depending on how motivated they are to uncover deceit”(Burgoon et al. 246). This means that the receiver will only likely detect as much deception as they are looking for.

This concept leads well into propositions eight and nine which tie into how the receiver is interacting with the deceiver, and how well the deceiver is able to present the attempted deception. Proposition eight states:

As receivers’ informational, behavioral, and relational familiarity increases, deceivers not only (a) experience more detection apprehension and (b) exhibit more strategic information, behavior, and image management but also (c) more nonstrategic leakage behavior. (Buller and Burgoon 224)

What this is saying is that as the deceiver and receiver become more familiar with each other through interpersonal interaction, the level of apprehension about being caught will rise due to the fact that nonstrategic leakage will become more present as the interaction continues.

Deception apprehension is also closely associated with the individuality of the deceiver and their unique personality (Ekman and Frank). The level of skill associated with deception varies from person to person, which leads to proposition nine which states: “Skilled senders better convey a truthful demeanor by engaging in more strategic behavior and less nonstrategic leakage than unskilled ones”(Buller and Burgoon 224). Thus, senders that are aware of the way that they present themselves will be more likely to present a seemingly more truthful message than those that are less aware.

As was previously mentioned, people enter into interpersonal interactions with an established truth bias that guides and directs how the individual will perceive the validity of what

is being presented by the opposite party. Propositions ten and eleven deal with how judgments and detection of deception will be filtered through this inherent truth bias in individuals.

Proposition ten states that “initial and ongoing receiver judgments of sender credibility are positively related to (a) receiver truth biases, (b) context interactivity, (c) and sender encoding skills; they are inversely related to (d) deviations of sender communication from expected patterns”(Buller and Burgoon 228). In contrast, proposition eleven states that:

Initial and ongoing receiver detection accuracy are inversely related to (a) receiver truth biases, (b) context interactivity, (c) and sender encoding skills; they are positively related to (d) informational and behavioral familiarity, (e) receiver decoding skills, and (f) deviations of sender communication from expected patterns. (228)

All of this means that a receiver will determine a message as truthful when the content of the message aligns with their preconceived expectations; it is only when the content of the message inversely corresponds to these expectations does the receiver detect deception. Essentially, senders that are aware of truth biases will be able to affect greater deception. According to Burgoon et al., “The ultimate litmus test for deceiver success is receiver judgments. If we are correct that an involved interaction style is more expected and credible, then senders who adopt and maintain such a style during the interaction should be judged more favorably at its conclusion than those who fail to do so”(672). Thus, success of the deception is based upon how well the sender is able to navigate these biases and expectations.

Propositions twelve through sixteen deal with the issue of suspicion and how it effects the interpersonal interaction between the two parties. As was previously discussed, strategic and nonstrategic behaviors are actions that the deceiver engages in during deception which can

arouse suspicion. Proposition twelve claims that receivers also engage in strategic and nonstrategic behavior when suspicion is aroused. It states that, "Receiver suspicion is manifested through a combination of strategic and nonstrategic behavior"(Buller and Burgoon 229). Thus, as the sender is engaging in these behaviors that alert the receiver, the receiver is also engaging in these behaviors as well. This leads to proposition thirteen which states that, "Senders perceive suspicion when it is present. Deviations from expected receiver behavior increases perceptions of suspicion. Receiver behavior signaling disbelief, uncertainty, or the need for additional information increase sender perceptions of suspicion"(231). This exemplifies the interactivity of interpersonal communication; there is constant interaction between the sender and receiver. Thus, when the sender is aware of the receiver's perceived suspicion, proposition fourteen states that, "suspicion (perceived or actual) increases senders' (a) strategic and (b) nonstrategic behavior"(231). This exemplifies the constant change and fluctuation that occurs in interactive interpersonal communication. This fluctuation can take on many forms over the course of the interaction as shown by proposition fifteen that states, "Deception and suspicion displays change over time"(232). Throughout this interaction, the sender and the receiver are constantly giving and receiving verbal and nonverbal messages that interact with each other. Proposition sixteen deals with this interaction deals with the issues of reciprocity: "Reciprocity is the predominate interaction adaptation pattern between senders and receivers during interpersonal deception"(233). Both the sender and receiver rely on each other for cues on how to react during the interpersonal interaction and this is characterized by either the belief or the suspicion of the receiver in reaction to the sender. During these interaction, the sender must adapt and control their behavior based on the feedback that is given from the receiver (Kraut and Poe). Thus, the reciprocity of feedback is an important aspect of the deceptive interaction.

The final two propositions of IDT deal with how both the sender and the receiver conclude the interaction and what they take away from the exchange. Proposition seventeen is concerned with how the receiver perceives the deception, it states: "Receiver detection accuracy, bias, and judgments of sender credibility following an interaction are a function of (a) terminal receiver cognitions (suspicion, truth biases), (b) receiver decoding skill, and (c) terminal sender behavioral displays"(Buller and Burgoon 234). This is how the receiver measures the accuracy of the deception that was encountered and how it is perceived. Whether or not the receiver accepts what is presented to him will be based off of these criteria. Proposition eighteen, the final proposition, deals with how the sender perceives the success of the deception. It states, "Sender perceived deception success is a function of (a) terminal sender cognition (perceived suspicion) and (b) terminal receiver behavioral displays"(234). The sender judges success of the deception by assessing both the level of suspicion in the receiver and the sender. This concludes the discussion of the Interpersonal Deception Theory and its various components. The following is a group of studies and tests that have been conducted to assess the validity of the theory and scrutinize the assumptions and propositions made by the theory. They are clustered according to similarity and method in order to maintain congruency and continuity.

Leakage and deception clues are one of the primary areas of the Interpersonal Deception Theory. Several studies have been conducted to determine the validity of these concepts and their usefulness and accuracy. Studies that are conducted with a focus on leakage and deception clues examine how the body reactions to the receivers attempted deception (Ekman and Friesen; Greene et al.; DePaulo et al.). These studies examine the various nonverbal tendencies of the sender and correlate them in attempts to establish commonalities between various groups of people.

In a study conducted by Greene et al. on how individuals attempt to control behaviors, they postulated that “attempted control concerns the ability of the individual to inhibit or manipulate overt behavior in order to avoid manifestation of the nonverbal correlates of deception”(337). Thus, the attempted control by the individual presents the circumstances for nonverbal leakage behavior. These attempts of controlling these behaviors are also influenced by the social skills of the deceiver and how the interpersonal interaction effects the attempted deception (Burgoon et al.). The study conducted by Greene et al. attempted to determine correlate the response latencies to questions while focusing on eye contact and the use of body movement during deception (Greene et al.). The study was conducted by asking participants to lie with both prepared lies and spontaneous lies (Greene et al.). The researchers were then able to observe the behavior of the participants and collect and correlate the data that was present. Through this method, the study was successful in supporting its hypothesis on body movement and its relationship to deception clues.

Ekman and Friesen concentrated on the relationship between the body and the face and sought to determine which was more accurate at detecting deception. They found that without individuals being familiar with the subject, there was no difference in their accuracy in determining what was deceptive and what was truthful by basing it off of the face and body alone (Ekman and Friesen). These studies also relate to how individuals attempt to control their behavior, yet result in leakage that is perceived by the receiver (Burgoon and Buller). These studies found definite trends in the relationship between deception and nonverbal behavior.

In addition to the research that has been conducted on the relationship between nonverbal behavior and deception, there has also been considerable research the area of verbal behavior and deception. These studies examine how individuals attempt use their verbal messages to convey

deception to another person. One critical element of deception verbal behavior is information management and control. This is the most common way that deceivers are able to create deception which involves withholding truthful information in an attempt to direct the interaction in the direction that is desired (Buller et al.). A study that was conducted to find how deceivers employ the use of various verbal techniques such as levelers, modifiers, and past-tense verbs when deceiving that decrease immediacy (Buller et al.). They also found that these techniques increased when the sender perceived suspicion (Buller et al.). In addition to the recognition of these verbal distancing techniques, the use of probing questions by the receiver is another way of examining the verbal cues of deception (Buller, Strzyzewski, and Comstock). According to the study, "Probing questions enhance attempts to manage behavior; however, this was merely because probing questions contained suspicion messages. Rather...probing questions may have caused deceivers to strive for greater fluency... when replying to questions to cover up their need to carefully construct answers"(Buller, Strzyzewski, and Comstock 20). This shows that probing questions are a legitimate method of causing behavioral changes that could indicate deception.

The final example of how verbal behavior can be examined is through an analysis of the content that is presented during the interaction. There is some contention that solely paying attention to nonverbal behavior without taking into account the content of the speech will provide an inaccurate picture of the information the deceiver is providing (Vrij). In terms of interrogation, "verbal cues may be of particular forensic relevance in that often the only evidence available to police are the conflicting statements of the complainant and the accused"(Porter and Yuille 444). When examining statements of deception, what is often employed is the use of a Statement Validity Assessment (SVA), which is a tool designed to measure the "veracity of verbal statements" (Vrij and Mann). According to Vrij and Mann, "One part of SVA is what is

known as Criteria-Based-Content-Analysis (CBCA), the systematic assessment of the credibility of a verbal statement”(66). The CBCA is a technique developed in Germany by Steller and Köhnken that consists of 19 criteria that test the validity and credibility of statements against logical structure, unusual details, and reproduction of speech just to name a few (Vrij; Vrij, Edward, et al.; Porter and Yuille; Vrij and Mann). In addition to CBCA, Reality Monitoring (RM) is another technique used to evaluate and verify statements. According to Vrij and Mann, “At the core of Reality Monitoring is the claim that memories of experienced events differ in quality from memories of imagined events”(67). This simply states that when determining the validity of statements, individuals will be much more likely to easily recall events that actually happened instead of ones that were contrived. Thus, analysis of statements and the various aspects of verbal interpersonal communication provide ample means for detecting deception.

In addition to examining the verbal and nonverbal behavior of deceivers, it is necessary to be able to detect deception with accuracy. Simply being able to observe and note deceptive behavior is not enough, it is crucial that individuals be able detect deception with accuracy. There have been several studies that have been conducted that have sought to understand the accuracy that must accompany deception detection. One surprising fact is that in the professional world, studies have shown that police officers accuracy rates in detecting deception range between 45-60%, which is similar to the average person (Hartwig et al.). In addition to this, Bond cites a study done by Bond and DePaulo which found that, “detection accuracy is close to 54%”(339). Also, “Detection rates reflect the average of above-chance truth-detection (70-80%) and below-chance lie detection (35-40%)”(Bond 339). In the study conducted by Bond in which screened law enforcement and undergraduate students were tested on accuracy, only two of the individuals, both law enforcement personnel, could be considered experts (Bond). The

confidence that people place in their judgments about deception detection has little to no impact on the actual accuracy of the judgment (Bond; Charlton et al.). Finally, one thing that is also related to the accuracy, or lack thereof, is ability to make the judgments about deceptions and the perception that is associated with it. One study that was conducted found that the amount of information available, be it verbal or nonverbal, “does not predict accuracy of detecting deception”(Bauchner et al. 262). Thus accuracy is an essential element to detecting deception and vitally important determining the validity of statements made in interpersonal communication.

This concludes the review of the literature. The purpose of this was to demonstrate the previous work and research that has been conducted using the Interpersonal Deception Theory and how it will relate to the research that has will be conducted in this study. This review consisted of a brief explanation of the theory and the assumptions and propositions that it consists of. In addition to the explanation of the theory, several studies were examine to demonstrate their results in this field of research. The research that was presented here is meant to support the methodology of this study and its research that will be conducted.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

In the preceding literature review, the information and literature concerning dramatism, the dramatisitic pentad, Interpersonal Deception Theory, and studies pertaining to them were discussed. This information was presented in order to establish a model, credibility, and support for the research that will be conducted as well as establish the foundation on which this thesis will be built. The foundational elements of the literature review will support the methodology and research of this study as it attempts to answer the research problem of whether or Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was deceptive before the members of Senate Foreign Relations committee due to the rhetoric put forth by the Obama administration in reaction to the attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

The presentation of dramatism, the dramatisitic pentad, and Interpersonal Deception Theory were discussed at length to give depth and understanding to the foundation of this study so that the fundamental aspects of the research can be clearly understood and referenced. In addition to the literature that was presented concerning dramatism and IDT, additional information was provided concerning the research that has been conducted on the subject of deception detection and their results and findings. The purpose of this was to examine the research that has already been conduct on this subject matter in order to relate the results and findings to the research that will be conducted in this study. The information concerning deception detection, deception apprehension, and leakage in interpersonal communication will be very foundational when examining the research that will be conducted.

The following methodology will outline the basic structure and research goals that this study will attempt to accomplish. Following a logical progression, the fundamental aspects of this study will be outlined and discussed.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi provided motivation for deception in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. To do this, this study will seek to answer two research questions.

The first research question of this study will seek to be answered by qualitatively assessing the historical context and the rhetoric put forth by the administration in reaction to the events of the Benghazi attacks. These will then be analyzed by conducting a pentad analysis of the events the attacks as they transpired and the subsequent rhetoric that was put forth by the Obama administration. In this pentad analysis, the events of the attack that occurred in Benghazi will be examined and correlated with the rhetorical response of the Obama administration. In doing this, the pentad will be able to identify the relationships between the historical events of the attack and how the Obama administration responded to them and identify if there are any inconsistencies within their administrative stance on the issue. Thus, the first research question that this study will seek to answer is as follows:

R1: Did the rhetoric put forth by the Obama administration in reaction to the events of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi provide motivation for deception for then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing?

The dramatic pentad is a highly effective tool that can be utilized to breakdown the historical context of events and the rhetorical significance of them. By utilizing and satisfying the five

individual elements of the pentad, a more thorough understanding of the event in its original context can be reached. As was explained in the literature review, the five elements of the pentad are *Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, and Purpose*. The act is what was or will be done; the scene is the context of the act and answers where and when it happened; agent refers to who performed the act; agency refers to the way the act was performed; and finally, purpose refers to what the goal of the act was (German). In this study, both the events of the attacks in Benghazi and the subsequent rhetoric of the Obama administration will be examined and compared to each other for each element of the pentad in order to understand the relationship between the two. In doing so, the pentad analysis will frame the backdrop for the Senate hearing that will be examined in this study.

To be clear, this research question will not seek to determine whether or not the Obama administration was lying or if there was a conspiracy to cover up something; but rather, it is simply seeking to determine whether or not the events that took place and the subsequent rhetoric of the administration align. Due to the subjective nature of the analysis of the rhetoric, there is the possibility of bias. To prevent a slanted and non-objective assessment of the evidence, this study will evaluate the rhetoric as it stands in relation to the events and refrain from interpretation and opinion. By presenting the information objectively, this study will be able to make logical conclusions based upon fact and not opinionated conjecture. This objective analysis of the rhetoric will provide a foundation to determine whether or not the Secretary Clinton had motivation to engage in deception during the Senate hearing. This again will not be based upon opinion, but through a logical presentation of the evidence and conventional reasoning based upon nature of deception and the principles that were established in

Interpersonal Deception Theory. This fundamental element is key in to the analysis that will be conducted on the recorded proceedings.

Once the pentad analysis has been conducted, this study will then examine the video recorded proceedings and written transcripts taken from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing and seek to analyze the dialogue that is presented according to Interpersonal Deception Theory and determine whether or not Secretary of State Clinton engaged in deception as it is defined in the theory. This hearing took place on January 23, 2013 in Washington, DC and was conducted by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which consisted of eighteen senators including: John A. Barrasso (R) of Wyoming, Barbara Boxer (D) of California, Ben Cardin (D) of Maryland, Bob Casey Jr. (D) of Pennsylvania, Chris Coons (D) of Delaware, Bob Corker (R) of Tennessee, Dick Durbin (D) of Illinois, Jeff Flake (R) of Arizona, Ron Johnson (R) of Wisconsin, Timothy M. Kaine (D) of Virginia, John S. McCain III (R) of Arizona, Chairman Bob Menendez (D) of New Jersey, Christopher S. Murphy (D) of Connecticut, Rand Paul (R) of Kentucky, James E. Risch (R) of Idaho, Marco Rubio (R) of Florida, Jeanne Shaheen (D) of New Hampshire, and Tom Udall (D) of New Mexico (C-SPAN). These senators were charged with the task to examine the Senate's Administrative Review Board (ARB) findings on the procedures and protocols that were given during the events of the attack on the consulate in Benghazi. During this hearing, they heard testimony from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to gain her perspective on what happened and also her opinion of what the ARB found and how its findings should be addresses in the future. This study will seek to analyze this hearing according to criteria distilled from Interpersonal Deception Theory. Thus, the second research question that this study will seek to answer is:

R2: Did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton engage in deception as it is defined by Interpersonal Deception Theory during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing concerning the Benghazi consulate attack?

To do this, this study will determine criteria based upon several of the assumptions and the propositions of the theory and codify them to provide the researcher with the proper analytical tools to objectively analyze the proceedings and arrive at a logical conclusion.

The objective of this portion of the study will be based upon four criteria that have been derived from the assumptions and propositions of IDT. The criteria that this study will use are as follows: information management, behavior management, and image management, and motivation of the deceiver. These four criteria represent fundamental aspects of the theory that relate to deception and how it is implemented and will serve as the basis for the research that is conducted on the recorded proceedings.

The first criteria that will be utilized in the analysis that will be conducted on the recorded proceedings is information management. This has been previously mentioned before in the literature review, and it deals with how the subject controls and manipulates the information that is presented to the receiver. Information management is a core principle of Buller and Burgoon's definition of deception which states that deception is "when communicators control the information contained in their messages to convey a meaning that departs from the truth as they know it" (Buller and Burgoon 205). This also is found in the first assumption of deception that was discussed which states that "deceivers control information" (Buller and Burgoon 209) and in proposition four in the theory. This criteria will attempt to identify instances where the subject intentionally manipulates the information through one or more of the following ways: (1) reinterpretation of the information, (2) rewording of the information, (3) omitting some, or all, of

the information, (4) denying of the information, or (5) adding information . These sub-criteria will seek to further clarify the overarching criteria of information management and provide specific instances of whether or not this occurs over the course of the recorded proceedings.

The second criteria that will be utilized in the analysis of the recorded proceedings is image management. This criteria is primarily focused on the way in which the subject presents himself to the receiver and attempts to portray a truthful demeanor. It will be based upon propositions three, four, and nine of IDT which were previously discussed and explain in the literature review. This study will be seek to identify instances where the subject engages in actions that are meant to portray themselves as truthful. The following sub-criteria will be utilized in the analysis of the recorded proceedings: (1) impression management, (2) relational management, (3) emotion management, and (4) conversation management. This study will be looking at the context of the instances of when these occur and qualitatively assessing them to ensure an accurate interpretation of the occurrence. By examining the image portrayal of the subjects, it this study will seek to identify instances of deception based upon this criteria and sub-criteria.

The third criteria that will be utilized in the analysis of the recorded proceedings is behavior management. This criteria will focus primarily on instances of strategic and nonstrategic behavior committed by the subject and will draw from what was discussed previously in the literature review in terms of leakage. It will be based upon propositions three, four, twelve, and thirteen of IDT as was previously explained in the literature review. The study will seek to observe instances in which the subject engaged in behavioral actions that are related to deception and seek to qualitatively assess them and integrate them into the context of the hearing. It must be noted that not all behavioral actions can be constituted as deception, therefore

it is important that a baseline be established when seeking to understand this aspect of IDT. These instances where the subject exhibits behavior that is not consistent with their normal established baseline will be the focal point of this criteria. These suspicious actions will be viewed in the context of the entire hearing so as to base it upon a more linear and objective viewpoint. For the purposes of this study, behavior management will only be identified when it is associated with the other criteria that are established as a part of this study to prevent any misconstruing of the facts or false positives.

Finally, the last criteria that will be utilized in the analysis of the recorded proceedings is motivation of the deceiver. This criteria will be based upon what is discovered in the pentad analysis and using it as a baseline, or truth bias, for what is being said in the hearing. Taking into account what was said in the literature review by Burgoon about people entering into interpersonal communication with an inherent truth bias (Burgoon et al.), this study will enter into this analysis with its truth bias resting on the results of the pentad analysis of the rhetoric of the administration. Since this is what the State Department representatives will be defending, it is important to understand where they are coming from and to establish a truth bias baseline for the study. This criteria will also be based upon the principles in proposition seven that discusses the goals and motivations of the deceiver and relate those to the initial research question of whether or not the rhetoric of the administration provided for a motivation for deception on the part of the questioned members of the State Department. By establishing the baseline motivation for deception with the pentad, this study will be able to determine where the questioned individual deviates from what is the perceived truth.

In addition to the criteria described that this study will utilize in the analysis of the recorded Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, this study will continue to rely on outside

work that has been conducted in the area of deception research that has been previously stated in the literature review. Any additional information that has not been outlined in the methodology that relates to the research that will be conducted will be identified when it is necessary and pertinent to the discussion.

This concludes the methodology portion of this study, the purpose of this being to establish the framework for this study and laying the foundation for the subsequent research and discussion portions of this study. This study will seek to apply the dramatic pentad and utilize Interpersonal Deception Theory to determine whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi provided motivation for deception in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. By establishing the historical context of the events of Benghazi and examining the rhetoric proposed by the Obama administration in a dramatic fashion according to the pentad, the testimony of Secretary Clinton before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will be analyzed according to the criteria that has been established and outlined.

The following chapter will consist of the research that is outlined in this methodology to provide information for the qualitative analysis that will be conducted in the discussion and conclusions chapter. This concludes the methodology chapter of this study.

## Chapter 4: Research and Discussion

In the following chapter of this study, the research and discussion of the subject matter will be examined according to the previously established methodology. The research portion of this chapter will conduct both the pentad and qualitative analyses in the manner in which they were outlined and specified in the methodology. The discussion portion of this chapter will then analyze and qualitatively assess the information that was presented in the research. In doing this, the research and discussion will attempt to provide sufficient evidence to answer the research questions that were posed in the methodology.

### Pentad Analysis

The pentad analysis, as it has already been explained in the methodology, will examine both the historical context of the events of the attacks on Benghazi and the rhetoric that was proposed by the Obama administration in reaction to these events. Each individual element, *Act*, *Scene*, *Agent*, *Agency*, and *Purpose*, will be broken down and fulfilled with their respected information pertaining to the field. For continuity and comprehension, it must be noted that this study will examine the events of the attack first, then the corresponding response that was made by the Obama administration for each individual element so as not confuse any details.

The first element of the pentad that will be examined and fulfilled will be the *Act*. This element is concerned with what happened in thought or deed, in this case the attacks on Benghazi and the Obama administration's response to these events. This act is divided into two parts that correlate to one another. The first part of the act, in this case, were the attacks on the

U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. According to the U.S. State Department, in a statement released the day following the attacks:

At approximately 4 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time yesterday [September 11, 2012], which was about 10 p.m. in Libya, the compound where our office is in Benghazi began taking fire from unidentified Libyan extremists. By about 4:15, the attackers gained access to the compound and began firing into the main building, setting it on fire...At about 4:45 our time here in Washington, U.S. security personnel assigned to the mission annex tried to regain the main building, but that group also took heavy fire and had to return to the mission annex. At about 5:20, U.S. and Libyan security personnel made another attempt and at that time were able to regain the main building and they were able to secure it. Then due to continued small arms fire, they evacuated the rest of the personnel and safe havened them in the nearby annex... The mission annex then came under fire itself at around 6 o'clock in the evening our time...At about 8:30 p.m. ... Libyan security forces were able to assist us in regaining control of the situation...Later that evening, we were able to bring our chartered aircraft from Tripoli into Benghazi to evacuate all of our Benghazi personnel back to Tripoli. (U.S. State Department)

The act that is occurring in this instance is an attack that directed towards to the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. In this statement that was made by the U.S. State Department, it gave a very brief and concise account of the events that unfolded. The act involved the storming of the American compound and the resultant deaths of Ambassador Chris Stevens three other U.S. personnel that were stationed at the consulate.

The second part of the act was the response of the Obama administration. In response to the events of the attacks, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton released a statement the night of the attack at around 10:00 p.m. acknowledging the attacks and also making reference to an anti-Muslim video by saying:

Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet. The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation. But let me be clear: There is never any justification for violent acts of this kind. (Kiely)

Thus, this is the first official position that the Obama administration took in response to the attacks within the first few hours of its occurrence. They claimed that the initial act was a response to an anti-Muslim video by proposing that it was the result of “inflammatory material posted on the Internet.” Thus, the act element of the pentad can be divided into two parts to account for the events of the attack that took place on the consulate in Benghazi and the initial response of the Obama administration in light of the attacks and their claim that it was the response to an anti-Muslim video that was posted to the Internet.

The second element of the pentad that will be examined is the *Scene*. The scene as it pertains to the study is the setting in which these events occurred and how they relate back to the act itself. The scene of the attack on the consulate in Benghazi took place against the backdrop of diplomatic work that had taken place there in the months leading up to the eventual attacks that occurred on September 11, 2012. According to the U.S. State Department in a background conference call that was given on October 9, 2012, State Department officials gave a bit of

background on the state of affairs in Benghazi prior to the attack. The State Department gave this account:

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011, a small Department of State team headed by Chris Stevens arrives by chartered boat in Benghazi. They set up shop in a hotel. This is at a time when Benghazi was liberated, Qadhafi was still in power in Tripoli, the war going on, our Ambassador had been expelled from Tripoli by Qadhafi, the Embassy staff had been evacuated because it was unsafe... [This] is the only U.S. Government people in Libya at this time... They set up shop in a hotel... A few weeks later in June, a bomb explodes in the parking lot of the hotel. The group in Benghazi makes a decision to move to a new location... by August they settle on a large compound which is where the actual activity on 9/11 took place. (U.S. State Department)

This is the setting in which the attacks took place, a city that was at the time still under much civil unrest and going through turmoil with the former government being overthrown.

The day following the attack that occurred in Benghazi, Secretary of State Clinton issued a similar statement to the one that she had released the night before concerning the anti-Muslim video. She states:

Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior, along with the protest that took place at our Embassy in Cairo yesterday, as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet. America's commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation. But let me be clear – there is no justification for this, none. (Kiely)

The Obama administration set the scene as a protest that was sparked as a result of “inflammatory material” and also the protests that took place in Cairo, Egypt earlier that day. It is true that earlier that day there were protests in Cairo, “Hundreds of protesters marched to the embassy in central Cairo, gathering outside its walls and chanting against the movie, which was reportedly produced in the United States (theguardian).” There is also speculation that since the attacks took place on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, there could possibly some connection there as well (Aarthun). The Obama administration proposed that the attack on consulate in Benghazi was a spill-over of the unrest that was present in neighboring Egypt and escalated into a drawn out attack that resulted in the deaths of four Americans. Thus, the Obama administration viewed this more as an isolated event that escalated and turned deadly and did not take into account the unrest that was present in the country as was previously stated by the State Department officials. These scenes are both crucial to understand for answering the questions that this study proposes.

The next element of the pentad deals with the *Agent*. The agent in this case refers to the party that committed the act. The State Department’s now official report says that the Islamic terrorist group Ansar al-Sharia claimed responsibility on social media hours after the initial attack (Kiely). This group is a jihadist militia that gained prominence after the fall of Muammar al-Qaddafi (TRAC). Since the attack, the United States has been looking for those associated with this group and involved in the attack. One of the leaders of Ansar al-Sharia, Ahmed Abu Khattala, was recently captured on June 15, 2014 as part of a joint U.S. military and law enforcement operation (Fishe). Though this group is suspected, there has yet to be any clear identification of who exactly carried out this attack against the consulate in Benghazi.

The Obama administration was initially very reluctant to classify this as a premeditated attack. In an interview that President Obama gave on September 12, 2012, he was asked whether or not he still believed that the attack was premeditated or was simply the result of an escalated demonstration. In this interview, the president states:

As I said, we're still investigating exactly what happened. I don't want to jump the gun on this. But you're right that this is not a situation that was exactly the same as what happened in Egypt. And my suspicion is, is that there are folks involved in this, who were looking to target Americans from the start. (Keily)

The Obama administration was unable to clearly define who the agent was in this situation. However, they were initially quick to state that it was an escalated protest, but reluctant to admit that this was a premeditated attack in the days following the attack. On September 13<sup>th</sup>, in the daily press briefing by State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland, in response to a question as to whether or not the attacks were “purely spontaneous” or “premeditated”, the spokeswoman responded:

We are very cautious about drawing any conclusions with regard to who the perpetrators were, what their motives were, whether it was premeditated, whether they had any external contracts, whether there was any link, until we have a chance to investigate along with the Libyans... We really want to make sure that we do this right and we don't jump to conclusions. (U.S. State Department)

Thus, the agent in this element of the pentad is difficult to define by the initial rhetoric of the Obama administration due to the fact that they were reluctant to identify any specific perpetrators. For the purposes of this study, this element of the pentad may be referred to as the unknown agent.

The fourth element of the pentad is the *Agency* used in the act. This is referring to the way in which the attack was carried out and how it was accomplished. In the case of the attack on the consulate in Benghazi, there are multiple points of view on this. In the days following the attack, the Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta and the Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs informed the Senate Armed Services Committee that it was their assessment that the attacks were “organized and carried out by terrorists, that it was premeditated, a calculated act of terror (Keily).” Evidence of the equipment that was reportedly used in the act also suggested that this was committed by those that came prepared to carry out the planned attack (Keily). In addition to these assessments made by American military personnel, outside assessments were also made. In an interview with Bob Schieffer on CBS News *Face the Nation* conducted on September 16, 2012, President of Libya’s General National Congress Mohamed Yousef Magariaf made this statement when asked if the attacks in Benghazi were premeditated:

The way these perpetrators acted and moved...and they’re choosing the specific date for this so-called demonstration...this leaves us with no doubt that this [was] preplanned, determined – premeditated. (CBS News)

Thus, the assessment from top military leaders, and from outside sources, believed that this attack was premeditated and carried out by terrorists.

In response to the growing number of officials that believed that this attack was premeditated and planned, the Obama administration continued to take the position that this was in protest in response to an anti-Muslim film that escalated into an attack on the consulate in Benghazi. In the same interview with Bob Schieffer on *Face the Nation*, United States U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice made this statement that supported the Obama administration’s position:

Based on the best information we have to date, what our assessment is as the present is in fact what began spontaneously in Benghazi as a reaction to what had transpired some hours earlier in Cairo where, of course, as you know, there was a violent protest outside our embassy sparked by this hateful video. But soon after that spontaneous protest began outside of our consulate in Benghazi, we believe that it looks like extremist elements, individuals, joined in that...And that it spun from there into something much, much more violent. (CBS News)

The official position of the Obama administration continued to propose that the attack was an escalated protest and not premeditated, thus, they believed that the agency was not carried out by one specific faction.

The final element of the pentad is *Purpose*. This refers to the goal of those that were involved in the action that was committed. In the case of the attack that was committed on the consulate in Benghazi, it is difficult to determine the true purpose of the attack due to the fact that there has been little evidence of groups making bold claims concerning the attacks.

According to some emails that were obtained by the news agency Reuters, "By the morning of September 12...there were indications that members of both Ansar al-Sharia, a militia based in the Benghazi area, and al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb...may have been involved in organizing the attacks (Hosenball)." As was already previously stated in the agent portion of the pentad, Anar al-Sharia is suspected of the attacks and according to the BBC, "Ansar al-Sharia is an Islamist militia calling for the implementation of strict Sharia law across Libya (Irshaid)." It is difficult to determine the purpose of the attack other than the possible clash of ideological differences and them being carried out in extreme measures against the United States.

The Obama administration, as it has been demonstrated through the presentation of their rhetoric, continued to propose that the attacks were a result of Islamic protesters in response to an anti-Muslim video that was posted on the Internet. However, after much speculation and hesitation to say whether or not the attacks were a planned terrorist attack, the White House finally released a statement on September 20<sup>th</sup> that the attacks were in fact premeditated. Then White House spokesman Jay Carney stated:

It is, I think, self-evident that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. Our embassy was attacked violently, and the result was four deaths of American officials...At this point it appears that a number of different elements were involved in the attack, including individuals connected to militant groups that are prevalent in Eastern Libya. (Carney)

Thus, the purpose of the attack became more confused because the Obama administration was not able to sustain their position that the attack was a protest that escalated out of control. This inconsistency in rhetoric will be the focus of the discussion later in the chapter.

This completes the pentad analysis of the attack that occurred in Benghazi and the subsequent rhetoric that was released by the Obama administration in response to the attack. In the following portion of this chapter, the information that has been presented here will be analyzed to attempt to answer the first research question, “Does the rhetoric put forth in reaction to the events of the 2012 Terrorist Attack in Benghazi by the Obama administration provide for a motivation for deception for Secretary Clinton during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing concerning the Benghazi consulate attack?”

### Discussion of the Pentad Analysis and R1

The pentad analysis that has been conducted in this study has examined both the events of the U.S. consulate attack in Benghazi and the rhetoric that was put forth by the Obama administration in response to it. It is the objective of this portion of the study to take the information that has been gathered and determine whether or not it can sufficiently answer R1, which states: “Did the rhetoric put forth by the Obama administration in reaction to the events of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi provide motivation for deception for then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing?” However, the first step in answering this question is identifying examples of inconsistencies in the rhetoric of the Obama administration.

In the pentad analysis, the first inconsistency that is present is their initial assessment of the events that transpired in the attack on the consulate is how they describe it. Going back to what Secretary Clinton stated initially on the day of the attack, she refers to it as a “response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet (Kiely).” Though there were protests going on at the time at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt and other various stations around the world, the hasty decision to label this as another spontaneous protest was a poor judgment call on their part and established the foundation for the subsequent rhetoric of the administration to follow. With the administration taking the initial position that this was a spontaneous protest, they in a sense painted themselves into a corner.

This is why in the days following the attack, the Obama administration was very reluctant to change their position, even as reports from outside sources and agencies began to speculate and concluded that this attack appeared to be premeditated and preplanned. As these reports began to surface, the State Department was not willing to concede this point. For example, as

was mentioned in the pentad analysis, on September 13<sup>th</sup>, the State Department issued this statement that demonstrated their hesitancy to concede the fact that the attack was preplanned. In this statement, Spokeswoman Nuland mentions, “We really want to make sure that we do this right and we don’t jump to conclusions (U.S. State Department).” This statement is an excellent example of the back pedaling that the administration was forced to do in light of taking the initial position that this was spontaneous protest.

The evidence against the assessment that this was a spontaneous protest continued to be stacked against the Obama administration in the days following the attacks. As was mentioned in the pentad analysis, Secretary of Defense Panetta and the Vice Chair of the Joint Chiefs discounted the Obama administrations claim by stating that attacks were “organized and carried out by terrorists, [and] that it was [a] premeditated, ...calculated act of terror”(Keily). This assessment was also corroborated by Libyan President Mohamed Yousef Magariaf who stated that “the way that these perpetrators acted and moved...leaves us with no doubt that this [was] – premeditated”(CBS News). These assessments by prominent individuals that were privy to the details and information surrounding the events of the attacks builds a strong case against the Obama administrations assessment of the attacks on the consulate in Benghazi.

The crucial piece of rhetoric that was put forth by the Obama administration that demonstrates the lack of transparency that was present in the days following the attack in Benghazi, was in the testimony given by U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice on the CBS News program *Face the Nation*. In this interview, Rice categorically states:

Our assessment is as the present is in fact what began spontaneously in Benghazi as a reaction to what had transpired some hours earlier in Cairo... after that spontaneous protest began outside of our consulate in

Benghazi, we believe that it looks like extremist elements, individuals, joined in that...And that it spun from there into something much, much more violent. (CBS News)

This stance that was taken by Rice further painted the Obama administration into their corner. Since a prominent member of the administration stated this position on national television, the potential for collateral damage in shifting position dramatically increased for the administration.

This statement made by Ambassador Rice was the focus of several questions directed towards Secretary Clinton in the Senate hearing as was previously examined in the research portion of this chapter. The significance of this is that this was a very controversial statement made by a member of the administration and one that was later proven to be false in the light of investigations that were conducted by various agencies including the Intelligence Community and the FBI. White House spokesman Jay Carney eventually confirmed in a press conference that the attack was premeditated and that there was evidence of “individuals connected to militant groups”(Carney). This discounted the statement that was made by Rice and was so adamantly supported by the administration.

Thus, with statements and positions being shifted and changed with the passing of each day following the attack on the consulate in Benghazi, the reluctance of the Obama administration to be forthright with the information and their assessment of the situation, it raised doubts and concerns about the transparency of the administration. This lack of transparency, as well as the other initial rhetoric of the administration being proven false, would logically provide adequate motivation for Secretary Clinton to engage in deceptive behavior to distance herself from the statements made by Rice and other administration officials. The speculation that was raised against the State Department in their handling of the situation and their vacillating

response to the inquiries made about the events and those responsible provide sufficient basis for any individual to want to distance themselves from the scrutiny that the department was under at the time. This does not constitute the necessity to blatantly lie about involvement in the rhetorical response to the event; it does, however, provide motivation to minimize exposure to the fallout from the events. Thus, in reference to R1, this question can be answered in the affirmative due to the fact that the rhetoric of the Obama administration provided sufficient motivation for Secretary Clinton to engage in deceptive behavior in Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing.

#### Analysis of the Senate Foreign Relations Hearing

The following is an analysis of the testimony that was given by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during a Senate hearing concerning the attacks that took place on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012. Utilizing the criteria that have been derived from the assumptions and propositions of Interpersonal Deception Theory, this study will examine the recorded proceedings and seek to identify instances of deception as they are defined by the theory and seek to provide information to answer research question two which states: “Does Secretary of State Hilary Clinton engage in deception as it is defined by Interpersonal Deception Theory during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing concerning the Benghazi consulate attack?” Once this has been completed, the following discussion will then analyze the information according to its findings. This study will look at questionable instances of possible deception throughout the hearing, but also provide examples of apparent non-deception so as to provide the reader with a baseline of the behavior for Secretary Clinton and how she responded to the questions that were posed to her by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In this

portion of the study, only instances of possible deception will be identified and related back to the established baseline of behavior.

In order to understand and properly identify instances of possible deception during this hearing, it is important to establish a baseline of behavior for Secretary Clinton that is consistent throughout the proceedings so that it is easier to identify possible instances of deception as they occur. To establish this baseline, this study will look at the opening remarks that were made by Secretary Clinton and identify several key characteristics of her behavior that can be examined according to the examination criteria. Though these opening remarks are clearly scripted and being read by her, it provides a clear baseline of behavior that can be used to gauge her responses to questions that are not scripted and require her to answer without prescribed answers.

In Secretary Clinton's opening remarks which take place at around minute 16:00, she is very open and cordial in her greetings to the members of the committee. She makes a clear statement about why she is there and the purpose for the hearing by saying:

As both the Chairman and the ranking member have said, the terrorist attacks in Benghazi on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 that claimed the lives of four brave Americans, Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Dougherty, are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our participants in North Africa. Today, I want to briefly offer some context for this challenge, share what we learned, how we're protecting our people and where we can work together to not only honor our fallen colleagues, but continue to champion America's interests and values. (C-SPAN)

In this brief portion of her lengthy opening statement, she exhibits no signs of deception as they are outline by the criteria of this study. In regards to the first criteria, information management,

there is no reinterpretation, rewording, omitting, or denying of any of the facts of what happened in Benghazi. She is forthright and firm in her delivery, and make no indication of evasion of the information that she is presented with in her statement. By applying the second criteria to this statement, image management, Secretary Clinton does not make any effort to alter her image in the eye of the committee. She is very cordial with the members of the committee, as they are with her, and she exemplifies the poise and dignity that is expected of her as Secretary of State. In terms of the third criteria, behavioral management, Secretary Clinton engages in behavior that is not suspicious. She is calm, composed, and deliberate in the manner in which she speaks. She uses very few gestures when speaking and has both of her arms crossed on the table as she gives her statement. This suggests that she is relaxed and truthful in her statement, and it is because of this that this study will use the totality of these circumstances as a behavioral baseline for this study.

After her opening remarks, the first questions that was posed to Secretary Clinton at the 32 minute mark was given by Chairman Menendez in which he asked about the decision making process regarding the location of the mission and the actions that Secretary Clinton and her staff were taking on the night of September 11<sup>th</sup> and into September 12<sup>th</sup> (C-SPAN). Secretary Clinton responded to the first part of the question by outlining the facts as they were, including information about how the Benghazi mission was moved from the hotel to the compound after attacks in parking lot of the hotel (C-SPAN). In addition to this, she provided her own personal insight to the decision making process and claimed that she was involved and the efforts that were made to further secure the sight. During this portion of the account, she gave no indication of deception through information management, image management, or behavior management. She stated the facts clearly and made no effort to distort them. She claimed involvement in the

decision making process and, thus, avoided any image management about her perceived involvement. Finally, she was very relaxed and exhibited the same control that she did when she gave her opening statement, including minimizing gestures to emphasize what was being said.

The second portion of Secretary Clinton's response to Chairman Menendez's question dealt with her actions in response to the attacks that were occurring in Benghazi. She answered by giving a detailed account of the actions that she took in response by highlighting several things:

I instructed our senior department officials and our diplomatic security personnel to consider every option...I spoke with the National Security advisor, Tom Donlin, several times. I brief him on developments. I sought all possible support from the White House...I participated in a secure video conference of senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House, and D.O.D. We were going over every possible option...so it was a constant, ongoing discussion and sets of meetings. (C-SPAN)

During this portion of her account, Secretary Clinton did not engage in any of the deceptive criteria. There was no information management present that would suggest deception, nor any image or behavior management as well.

The final portion of Secretary Clinton's answer to Chairman Menendez's question did mark a slight deviation from the composure that she had been exhibiting up until this point. It should be noted that at the 37:40 mark in the proceedings, she provides a caveat of information that relates to image management:

While this was going on, and we were trying to understand it, get on top of it, we were continuing to face protests, demonstrations, violence across

the region as far as India and Indonesia. There were so many protests happening and thousands of people were putting our facilities at risk, so we were certainly determined to do whatever we could about Benghazi. (C-SPAN)

Though this is not necessarily an indication of possible deception, it does provide a first example of Secretary Clinton engaging in information management and image management. In the terms of information management, Clinton made sure to include the use of the word “protests” in her justification for the State Department’s response to events in Benghazi. This is an example of sub-criteria 5 explained in the methodology, which is the adding of information. In addition to the information management exhibited by Secretary Clinton, there is also significant image management (1) present as well. In her account, Clinton used distancing language in order to take some of the focus off of her and place it on the State Department itself. Her continued use of the word “we” suggests that this was meant to take some of the focus off of her and onto the State Department. In addition to this, her behavioral management was less controlled. She relied on more heavily on gestures to get her point across than in previous statements. Though this is not a clear instance of deception, it is a deviation from the established baseline identified at the beginning of the hearing.

The next instance of possible deception that is displayed in the recorded proceedings by Secretary Clinton occurs at approximately the 58 minute mark. At this point in the hearing, Senator Risch makes note of the statements that were made by U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice on CBS’s *Face the Nation* the Sunday following the Benghazi attacks. He inquires as to whether or not Ambassador Rice was Secretary Clinton’s choice in delivering that message to the American

people (C-SPAN). Secretary Clinton responds by saying that she was not and went on to make the following statement:

I certainly have seen the resulting debate and concerns about this. You're right, it was a terrorist attack. I called it an attack by heavily armed militants... and you know that is clearly what happened. We know that. Second, the harder question is what caused it. [W]e didn't know... who the attackers [were and] what the motives were. As the ARB makes clear after months of research, the picture remains still somewhat complicated...there were a variety of potential causes and triggers for this attack. There's evidence that the attacks were deliberate, opportunistic, and precoordinated, but not necessarily indicative of extensive planning...I would say that I personally was not focused on the talking points. I was focused on keeping our people safe...doing what needed to be done in the follow-up to Benghazi...I really don't think anybody in the administration was really focused on that so much as trying to figure out what we should be doing, and you know, I wasn't involved in the talking points process. (C-SPAN)

In this statement, there are several things to consider, the first one being that Secretary Clinton carefully answers this question with specific language that does not deny what was said by Ambassador Rice, but instead minimizes it and tries to distance herself away from the statement that was made by Rice. This is very indicative of information management and fulfills sub-criteria 1, 2, 5 outlined in the methodology. Clinton makes sure that she reinterprets (1) what was said by Rice. She briefly acknowledges what was said by Rice, but reinterprets what was said as something that was an uninformed assessment. She minimizes its impact and attempts to manage

how it impacts the conversation. In addition to this, Clinton rewords (2) the information as well as added information (5) to what was said in order to give credibility to the statement. She refers to the statement as “talking points” and that states that she “was not concerned with the talking points”. Also, she added information to say that she was more concerned with “keeping our people safe”. This is indicative of distancing language and criteria (1) information management and also criteria (2) image management which relates back to what was discussed in the literature review concerning verbal techniques that utilize levelers, modifiers, and past-tense verbs to decrease immediacy (Buller et al.). Secretary Clinton engaged in image management by using language to distance herself for the statement that was made by Ambassador Rice and present herself as being more concerned with the safety of the people involved in the attacks than what was specifically being said in response to them. Thus, this instance can be an indication of deception due to the several times throughout her response that she made reference to the fact that she “was not involved in the talking points process” and used language to that affect to distance herself away from the position that Ambassador Rice took on national television.

In addition to Secretary Clinton engaging in information and image management, there was also significant evidence of criteria (3) behavior management as well. In this particular instance in comparison with the established baseline, Secretary Clinton was much more dynamic with her gestures and voice in stating this which is a deviation from the baseline that was established previously in the study. She constantly used her hands to emphasize points that she was making by pointing into the air to state facts, making back-and-forth motions to describe processes, and placing her hand on her chest to demonstrate sincerity in her statements. This relates to the study conducted by Greene et al. in that body movement is linked to deception. The gestures that were used were executed in a manner that suggested distancing herself from what

was being said. This is indicative of strategic and nonstrategic behavior as it is defined in Interpersonal Deception Theory in proposition four which says that as strategic activity increases the subject loses control over the nonstrategic activity (Buller and Burgoon). Thus, the behavior management exhibited by Secretary Clinton is indicative of deception.

The next instance of possible deception that she is displayed in the recorded proceedings takes place at approximately the 1 hour and 20 minute mark and continues from there for several minutes. During this time period there is an exchange between Secretary Clinton and Senator Johnson that displays a vivid portrayal of the criteria of this study. After a brief discussion as to whether or not Secretary Clinton had seen the cable sent by the consulate in Benghazi requesting additional help back in August 2012, and whether or not Secretary Clinton had personally spoken to those that were evacuated from Benghazi, Senator Johnson makes this point and question about the confusion that surrounded the attack itself and the testimony given by Ambassador Rice:

A simple phone call to the individuals would have ascertained immediately that there was no protest prior to this. This attacks started at 9:40 p.m., Benghazi time, and it was an assault, I appreciate the fact that you called it an assault... Then Ambassador Rice, five days later, [goes] to the Sunday shows, and [does] what I would say [is] purposefully misleading the American public. Why wasn't that known and again, I appreciate the... transparency at this hearing, but why weren't we transparent at that point in time? (C-SPAN)

This was a very pointed question by Senator Johnson that required a straightforward answer. The question deals with many of the issues that have been raised in the study and seeks to gain a proper understanding of the rhetoric that was proposed by the Obama administration at that time.

Several aspects of Secretary Clinton's response to this question fulfills multiple sub-criteria that this study seeks to find. The following is the dialogue that took place between Secretary Clinton and Senator Johnson:

**Clinton:** First of all, Senator, once the assault happened, once we had our people rescued and out, the most immediate concern was taking care of their injuries... And we did not – I think this is accurate, sir, I certainly did not know of any reports that contradicted the IC talking points at the time that Ambassador Rice went on the TV shows... I just want to say that people have accused Ambassador Rice and the administration of misleading Americans. I can say, trying to be in the middle of this, understanding what was going on, nothing could be further from the truth.

**Johnson:** Madam Secretary, do you disagree that a simple phone call to evacuees to determine what happened would have ascertained immediately there was no protest? That was a piece of information that could have been easily, easily obtained. Within hours if not days.

**Clinton:** Senator, you know, when you're in these positions, the last thing you want to do is interfere with any other process...

**Johnson:** I realize that.

**Clinton:** Number two... I would recommend highly you read both what the ARB said and the classified ARB. Because even today, there are questions being raised. Now, we have

no doubt that they were terrorists, they were militants, attacked us, killed our people. But what was going on, why they were doing what they were doing is still...

**Johnson:** Again, we were misled there was supposedly protests and...[an] assault sprang out of that. [It] was easily ascertained that was not the fact and the American people could have known that within days and didn't know that.

**Clinton:** With all due respect, the fact is that we had four dead Americans. Was it because of a protest or was it because of guys out for a walk one night decided to go kill Americans. What difference at this point does it make, it is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again, Senator. Now, honestly, I will do my best to answer your questions about this, but that fact is that people were trying in real time to get to the best information...It is from my perspective less important today looking backwards as to why militants decided they did it that to find them and bring them to justice and then maybe we'll figure out what was going on in the meantime.

This lengthy exchange is one of the most significant of the hearing, due to the fact that there are multiple instances of possible deception behavior in which Secretary Clinton engages. In order to understand the significance of this, a thorough breakdown of this exchange is necessary.

The first criteria that is more than adequately filled is information management. In this exchange between Senator Johnson and Secretary Clinton, there is a significant examples of reinterpretation (1) and rewording (2) of the information that was presented. Clinton used language that drew the attention away from the question that was posed to her and answered in a manner that gave relevant information, yet did not satisfy the Senator's question. She immediately drew attention to their "immediate concern" which was "taking care of their

injuries”. This is an example of distancing language that draws the attention away from the probing question due to the fact that probing questions cause “deceivers to strive for greater fluency...when replying to questions to cover up their need to carefully construct answers”(Buller, Strzyzewski, and Comstock 20). In addition to this avoidance, when confronted with the question about whether or not Ambassador Rice intentionally misled the American people, Secretary Clinton was careful to state that she “certainly did not know of any reports that contradicted the IC talking points at the time.” She fails to deny (4) or admit that what Ambassador Rice’s comments were wrong, she simply reinterpreted and reworded the information. However, Secretary Clinton does categorically deny that the accusations of the administration misleading the American by saying, “Trying to be in the middle of this, understanding what was going on, nothing could be further from the further from the truth.” Though this is a statement of denial, there are some modifiers in the statement that suggests that she and the administration were trying to figure out what was going on, and that is evidence of information management. Thus, the criteria of information management is heavily present in this dialogue between Clinton and Johnson.

In addition to information being present in this exchange, there was also a significant amount of image management present as well in the forms of sub-criteria (1) impression management, (2) relational management, (3) emotional management, and (4) conversational management. In this exchange, Secretary Clinton engages in impression management (1) in the way that she attempts to distance herself from those that were involved in the communication with the Embassy. Going back to her first initial response, she used impression management (1) to demonstrate that she was more concerned with the lives of those injured and in harm’s way, than attempting to figure out what was going on at the time of the attack. As the conversation

continues, Clinton begins to lose control over the relational (2), emotional (3), and conversational (4) dynamics of the interaction. In terms of conversation management (4), Secretary Clinton attempts to steer the conversation away from the point that Senator Johnson attempts to make about whether or not a simple phone call could have prevented the misinformation that was presented to the American people. She makes a substantial effort to avoid answering the question directly (4). In addition to this, Secretary Clinton exhibits signs of frustration and indignation (3) at his pressing for an answer, and responds with a very defensive tone (2). There is an elevated pitch in her voice that is a deviation from the established baseline, which is indicative of leakage and nonstrategic behavior. As Senator Johnson repeats his question and cuts her responses short in seeking the answer, Secretary Clinton continues to become more and more agitated by shifting uncomfortably in her seat and engage in behavior that is uncharacteristic of her up until that point. She responds to Senator Johnson's questions in an elevated voice that has a more aggressive tone than before which suggests possible anger and resentment. In addition to this, Secretary Clinton engages in the use of gestures and hand motions that are much bigger and more dramatic than ones that she had used previously throughout the hearing. Finally, the most significant example of lack of behavioral management is in when Secretary Clinton loses control over her emotions (3) in an uncharacteristic manner that is far deviation from the established baseline in response to Senator Johnson's continued questions. In this response in she stated:

With all due respect, the fact is that we had four dead Americans. Was it because of a protest or was it because of guys out for a walk one night decided to go kill Americans. What difference at this point does it make, it is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent

it from ever happening again, Senator. (C-SPAN)

In this response, Clinton's voice is elevated well above the normal level and she is using accusatory and indignant gestures and behavior. Pair with this statement, Clinton's voice is elevated to the point of almost shouting and both of her arms are completely off the table making big gestures to emphasize her point. Thus, this is an example of behavior management and an example of nonstrategic behavior that raises suspicion of deception.

The final instance of possible deception that this study will examine occurred at approximately the 1 hour and 31 minutes mark of the proceedings. It consisted of Senator Flake asking another question dealing with the comments that were made by Ambassador Rice. Senator Flake poses this question to Secretary Clinton:

What she [Rice] testified to was at variance with a lot of communications from the State Department and a lot of the information that had been gathered and things that had been said by yourself and others at the State Department...Can you just enlighten us as to...what discussions were had at the State Department after this testimony? (C-SPAN)

This question, though not as pointed and direct as the one posed by Senator Johnson, is another one that deals with the rhetoric that was put forth by the administration and questions why they were not on the same page in their presentation of the facts about the attacks in Benghazi.

Secretary Clinton and Senator Flake have a brief exchange over the question that is was raised. The exchange goes as follows:

**Clinton:** I cannot speak to any conversation I specifically had because conversations were on-going before and after Ambassador Rice's appearance on the Sunday talk shows, and we did not conclude finally that there were no protests at all until days after the

attacks. So maybe it was an abundance of caution, maybe it was trying to make sure we didn't step on anybody's toes while gathering information. Maybe it was because the IC was still looking at their sources, having different threats coming in. As the ARB said, even today, the motivations, the actions before they went on the compound, all of that is still not nailed down. So I think that we were trying very hard to provide information, maybe one of these lessons learned here is, you know, just withhold. Don't say what you don't know for sure until it is finally decided. That's not part of who we are as Americans. As public officials, we get out there, say here is what we think happened, it is subject to change. So I think all wish that nobody had ever in any way raised doubts, but certainly Ambassador Rice and the other administration officials were speaking off what had been determined were the most acceptable talking points.

**Flake:** Well, I think we know now [the] talking points, we don't exactly know where they were changed or how they were changed, but they were changed or altered. And I think that we can all concede that we were not given a clear picture of what went on.

**Clinton:** But Senator, you know, we didn't have a clear picture. I wish I could sit here today and tell you that within days, within a week, by September 20<sup>th</sup>, when we came up here we had a clear picture, we did not have a clear picture. If you wish to fault the administration, it is that we didn't have a clear picture and probably didn't so a clear a job explaining that we did not have a clear picture until days later, creating what I think are legitimate questions. You know, I understand, I have been on the other side of the table. I understand trying to figure out what was going on, why were we told this, that and the other. But I can only assure you that as the information came to light and as people thought it was reliable, we shared it, but that took some time. (C-SPAN)

Though this exchange between Secretary Clinton and Senator Flake is not as lengthy as previous exchange mentioned before, it does provide good examples of the strategic behavior on the part of Secretary Clinton.

Following the same approach as before, the first example of strategic behavior that will be examined is information management and the corresponding sub-criteria. In this exchange, Clinton does not divulge any specific information that clearly answers the question that Senator Flake posed. In the answer that Secretary Clinton gives, she utilizes reinterpretation (1) and rewording (2) by stating that “I cannot speak to any conversation I specifically had because the conversation was on-going.” This reinterpretation and rewording of the question provides distance and plausible deniability in relation to the conversations at the State Department. In addition, she denies (4) any conclusions that were purported by Rice and does not acknowledge (3) whether or not her statements were accurate or not by eluding to the point that they “did not have a clear picture” of what was going on at the time. In addition to this, Clinton adds (5) information to the discussion to justify the statements that were made by highlighting “one of the lessons here is...just withhold” the information. Thus, she engaged in several levels of information management to minimize the effects of what was said by Ambassador Rice and how that was perceived by the American public.

Secondly, Secretary Clinton also heavily engaged in image management and fulfilled multiple instances of its sub-criteria during this exchange. In her response to the question of whether or not she was involved in any discussion at the State Department after Rice’s comments, she used distancing language that suggested that she could not identify any “conversation [she] had specifically” to steer the conversation (4) away from the issue and place distance between her and the “on-going conversations”. This also serves as impression

management (1) because the language that she uses contains modifiers such as “I cannot speak to any conversation...”; “Maybe it was because...”; and “I wish I could sit here today...” which help Secretary Clinton carefully craft her answer, and still distance herself from the question. In addition to this, she also suggests the lack of communication on the part of the other agencies involved caused the misunderstanding and misinformation that was presented in Rice’s testimony, thus further distancing herself from the problem. Another example of image management that Secretary Clinton engaged in was in relational (2) and conversation (4) management. Towards the end of this exchange, Clinton brings the conversation to a more personal level with Senator Flake and attempts to relate (2) to him by acknowledging that she has “been on the other side of the table.” This example of relational management (2) can be viewed as an example of deflecting the attention off of herself and minimizing the issue, thus creating distance from the problem. This can be related back to proposition five of IDT which states that “sender and receiver initial expectations for honesty are positively related to degree of context interactivity and positivity of relationship between sender and receiver”(Buller and Burgoon 221). This attempt on the part of Secretary Clinton can be related to this due to positive affect that it was intended to have on the conversation. Though this is not necessarily an indication of deception, it does provide a sense of common ground of interactivity that both Clinton and Flake can share. This statement made by Clinton is also an example of conversation management (4) due to the fact that it gently steers the conversation away from the issue and allows the two to briefly find common ground.

In terms of behavioral management, in this exchange, Secretary Clinton is much more relaxed than in the previous exchange with Senator Johnson, but there is still evidence of nonstrategic behavior. In this exchange, Clinton uses more gestures compared to the established

baseline. She places her hands over her chest to demonstrate sincerity when referring to her not being involved with the conversations concerning the talking points. She had done this same gesture previously when denying involvement with Ambassador Rice's statements and she utilized animated gestures when searching for words to say a pauses in her speech. One of the most notable features of this exchange is the rate at which she speaks and the tone of voice that she uses. Secretary Clinton is much more hesitant in the manner in which she delivers her response. There are stutters and self-corrections in her speech that suggest uncertainty in the words that she is choosing. In addition to this, the tone of her voice is also uncharacteristic of her normal delivery. It is different that the tone that she used with Senator Johnson, where she was defensive and aggressive; this tone has a light-hearted, flippant quality that attempts to minimize the questions posed to her about the testimony of Ambassador Rice. This compared to the baseline behavior that was established at the beginning of this research portion, is indicative of nonstrategic behavior and leakage which suggests possible deception.

This concludes the analysis of the recorded proceedings of the testimony given by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the hearing concerning the attack on the consulate in Benghazi. The research that has been conducted in this portion of the study will be qualitatively analyzed and discussed in the following portion of the chapter to answer the research questions posed in the methodology.

#### Discussion of Secretary Clinton's Testimony and R2

In the previous portion of the chapter, the recorded proceedings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was examined and the testimony of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was analyzed according to the criteria that were established in the methodology. These criteria were distilled from the assumptions and propositions of Interpersonal Deception Theory and consisted

of information management, image management, behavioral management, and motivation of the deceiver. By applying these criteria, information was collected concerning possible deceptive behavior on the part of Secretary Clinton. This discussion will now qualitatively assess these instances and apply the fourth criteria of motivation to them to determine whether or not Secretary Clinton engaged in deceptive behavior during the course of her testimony.

The first aspect of the research on the recorded proceedings was to establish a baseline of behavior from which to reference Secretary Clinton's actions so that any assessment of her behavior would not be pure conjecture. This baseline of behavior provided a foundation for the subsequent analysis conducted using the criteria provided by IDT. In doing this, it gave more credibility to the analysis by allowing the observer to base the instances of possible deception against a baseline of apparent non-deception. The opening statement that was made by Secretary Clinton was characterized by minimal information management and moderate image management. Her behavior was nondescript, relaxed, and gave no cause for suspicion for deceptive behavior. Thus, as was pointed out in the research chapter, this serves as an adequate baseline to gauge her subsequent behavior and possible instances of deception.

The first instance of possible deception the research indicated occurred at the 58<sup>th</sup> minute mark and was concerned with the question posed by Senator Risch pertaining to the remarks that were made by Ambassador Rice on *Face the Nation*. In Secretary Clinton's response, she is very careful in how she words her answer by acknowledging what was said by Rice, but at the same time distancing herself from the statements that were made. She engages in higher levels of information management as was identified in the research. In addition to this, Clinton also engages in image management by attempting to distance herself from the statement that Rice made by eluding to the fact that she was "not focused on the talking points"(C-SPAN). Thus,

based upon the foundation of rhetoric that the administration proposed, Clinton made efforts to avoid identifying completely with their position.

In addition to this instance, a second question that was posed to Secretary Clinton by Senator Johnson who also made reference to this statement made by Ambassador Rice which he constituted as misleading the American public. In her response, Secretary Clinton engages in multiple instances deceptive behavior that are distinct deviations from the established baseline of her normal behavior. As is identified in the research, Clinton engages in information management by reinterpreting and rewording the information as it was presented. In addition to this, she denies any knowledge of reports that would have contradicted what Rice had said. She also, again, engages in image management and in order to distance herself from what was said by Ambassador Rice and tries to draw the attention away from the failure of the administration in the presentation of the facts to the situation that they were facing as the events continued to unfold.

In addition to engaging in information and image management, as is demonstrated in the research, Secretary Clinton engages in strategic behavior that is a distinct deviation from the established norm. Clinton loses control of her calm demeanor and is unable to manage her emotional response to the pointedness of the question posed by Senator Johnson. She becomes irate and raises her voice to a level that is uncharacteristic of her up until that point in the hearing. This, combined with the use of gestures and other body movements, suggests that she is attempting to move past this question by engaging in possible deceptive behavior. This emotional outburst is an excellent example of the concept of leakage that was discussed in the literature review. Though Secretary Clinton was able to maintain control over the information

that she was conveying to the committee, she was not able to fully control the emotional dynamic of her response and therefore demonstrating nonverbal leakage.

The final instance of deception that the research looked at dealt with another question posed by Senator Flake concerning the testimony that Ambassador Rice gave on the Sunday talk show. Again, as is shown in the research, Secretary Clinton engages in behavior that demonstrates possible deception. Clinton makes use of information and image management once again to distance herself from the comments that were made and also show that she was not privy to the talking points that Rice was using at the time. As she engages in a form of image management that had not been seen before until this point by taking a more personal approach to Senator Flake by identifying that she had been in his position before asking questions. This shows that she was, again, trying to minimize her involvement with the comments that were made and demonstrate apparent cooperation.

In addition to this, the behavioral aspect of Secretary Clinton's response was much more relaxed than before in the previous exchange with Senator Johnson, as was described in the research. The most notable aspect of her behavior is the tone of voice that she uses when responding to Senator Flake. The nonverbal leakage that occurs is evident in the flippant tone that she uses when referring to the statements made by Ambassador Rice. This leakage betrays her thoughts on how she really feels about the comments that were made and is evidence of deceptive behavior.

Since it has been established by R1 that the rhetoric of the Obama administration provided motivation for deception, this coupled with deceptive behavior that was identified in the research of this study can positively answer R2. Secretary of State Hillary did in fact engage in deception as it is defined by Interpersonal Deception Theory and satisfy the criteria that were

distilled from it. Though the deception is not overt and blatant, the presence of deceptive behavior is in fact there. The motivation for this is based upon the rhetoric that was proposed by the Obama administration and the inconsistencies that were found in it. Based upon these inconsistencies, Secretary Clinton had a motivation to distance herself as much as possible from what was said in an effort to maintain credibility in the light of apparent miscommunication and possible misleading perpetrated by the Obama administration. Thus, it is the findings of this study that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton engaged in deception as it defined by IDT during the course of her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

This concludes the results and discussion portion of this study. The research questions that were posed by this study were both satisfied and answered in the affirmative. In the following conclusion chapter, a brief summary of the study will be compiled as well as discussion of possible future research that can take place from the results of this study.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attacks of the consulate in Benghazi provided motivation for deception in Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This was done through an analysis of the events of the attack in Benghazi and the subsequent rhetoric of the Obama administration utilizing Burke's dramatic pentad. This analysis provided the foundation to determine whether or not the rhetoric provided motivation for deception. Once this was analyzed and assessed, this study conducted a qualitative analysis of the recorded proceedings of the testimony that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton gave before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on January 23, 2013. This was conducted using criteria distilled from the assumptions and propositions of Interpersonal Deception Theory.

The results of both of these analyses were applied to the two research questions that this study proposed in the methodology chapter. The two research questions were:

R1: Did the rhetoric put forth by the Obama administration in reaction to the events of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 terrorist attack in Benghazi provide motivation for deception for then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing?

R2: Did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton engage in deception as it is defined by Interpersonal Deception Theory during the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing concerning the Benghazi consulate attack?

Both of these questions were answered in the affirmative. The pentad analysis answered R1 by concluding that the rhetoric of the Obama administration in response to the attack on Benghazi provided adequate motivation for deception in Secretary Clinton's testimony. The qualitative

analysis found that Secretary Clinton did indeed engage in deception during the course of her testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

This study has demonstrated the effectiveness and versatility of the dramatistic pentad and the qualitative, analytical properties found within Interpersonal Deception Theory. The versatility of the pentad, as was shown in the studies in the literature, was demonstrated with great effectiveness that allowed the study to frame the events and rhetoric pertaining to the attack in Benghazi to set the foundation for the qualitative analysis. The criteria distilled from Interpersonal Deception Theory gave a wide scope of the totality of the circumstances surrounding the testimony of Secretary Clinton and allowed the study to identify deception as it was defined by the theory.

#### Future Research

The methodology of this study can serve as a solid foundation for future research in the area of deception detection, both in interpersonal and public communication. The pairing of Burke's dramatistic pentad with the criteria that were derived from the assumptions and propositions of Interpersonal Deception Theory can be utilized in multiple fashions and have a variety of applications. These can be applied to other instances of possible deception perpetrated by public figures in relation to events that have occurred.

Further and continued research can also be derived from this study on the ongoing investigation of the Benghazi attacks. There are multiple additional Senate and House hearings of testifying members of both the State Department and the Obama administration that can be examined using this same method as well as other aspects of the investigation that were not touched on in this study. One developing facet of the Benghazi investigation that has come to light over the course of the preliminary research of this study is the ongoing controversy

surrounding now former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. There are questions now being raised about private email accounts and whether or not she has turned over all of the emails that she sent during her tenure as Secretary of State (Lin). This provides adequate material for a study on deception and would be a worthwhile endeavor.

### Final Thoughts

As was stated in the introduction, the overarching premise of this study is to demonstrate the necessity of transparency within government administrations and how they present themselves to the public. Government and government officials must be held accountable to the public they serve and the public must be aware of how officials conduct themselves. In regards to former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her possible presidential run, this intense scrutiny and investigation may prove to be a hindrance to the American public in supporting her bid for office. With her integrity in question, it raises concerns of what may be brought into the office of the President of the United States. Thus, transparency of government and government officials is essential to gaining the trust of the public which they serve.

This has been a worthwhile study in both dramatism and Interpersonal Deception Theory that has garnered interesting and solid results. The most important accomplishment of this study is the demonstration of how Interpersonal Deception Theory can be used as a tool for evaluating and understanding interactions that were deception may be present. In conclusion, this study has been very rewarding and gratifying in the demonstration of the practical nature of Interpersonal Deception Theory.

## Appendix

### Assumptions of Interpersonal Deception Theory:

- Interpersonal Assumptions
  - Without a sender and receiver, there is no communication, verbal or nonverbal. (Buller and Burgoon 206).
  - Interpersonal communication is a dynamic activity (Buller and Burgoon).
  - Interpersonal communication consists of both strategic and nonstrategic behaviors (Buller and Burgoon 207).
  - Interpersonal communication is multifunctional, multidimensional, and multimodal (Buller and Burgoon 206).
  - “Normative expectations are foundational organizing principles in interpersonal communication... These expectations... form cognitive schemata for interpersonal communication.”(Buller and Burgoon 208).
- Deception assumptions
  - Deception is fundamentally a form of information management. According to Buller and Burgoon, “deceivers control information by encoding messages that alter veracity, completeness, directness/relevance, clarity, and personalization” (209).
  - Deception is closely related to the concept of nonstrategic behavior and leakage.

### Propositions of Interpersonal Deception Theory

1. “Sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as deceptive communication contexts vary in (a) access to social cues, (b) immediacy, (c) relational engagement, (d) conversational demands, and (e) spontaneity”(Buller and Burgoon 214).

2. “During deceptive interchanges, sender and receiver cognitions and behaviors vary systematically as relationships vary in (a) relational familiarity (including informational and behavioral familiarity) and (b) relational valence”(215).
3. Compared with truth tellers, deceivers (a) engage in greater strategic activity designed to manage information, behavior, and image and (b) display more nonstrategic arousal cues, negative and dampened affect, noninvolvement, and performance decrements. (218)
4. Context interactivity moderates initial deception displays such that deception in increasingly interactive contexts results in (a) greater strategic activity (information, behavior, and image management) and (b) reduced nonstrategic activity (arousal, negative or dampened affect, and performance decrements) over time relative to noninteractive contexts. (220)
5. “Sender and receiver initial expectations for honesty are positively related to degree of context interactivity and positivity of relationship between sender and receiver”(221).
6. “deceiver’s initial detection apprehension and associated strategic activity are inversely related to expectations for honesty (which are themselves a function of context interactivity and relationship positivity).”(221).
7. Goals and motivations moderate strategic and nonstrategic behavior displays. (A) Senders deceiving for self-gain exhibit more strategic activities and nonstrategic leakage than senders deceiving for other benefits. (B) Receivers’ initial behavior patterns are a function of (a) their priorities among instrumental, relational, and identity objectives and (b) their initial intent to uncover deceit. (223)
8. As receivers’ informational, behavioral, and relational familiarity increases, deceivers not only (a) experience more detection apprehension and (b) exhibit more strategic

- information, behavior, and image management but also (c) more nonstrategic leakage behavior. (Buller and Burgoon 224)
9. “Skilled senders better convey a truthful demeanor by engaging in more strategic behavior and less nonstrategic leakage than unskilled ones”(Buller and Burgoon 224).
  10. “Initial and ongoing receiver judgments of sender credibility are positively related to (a) receiver truth biases, (b) context interactivity, (c) and sender encoding skills; they are inversely related to (d) deviations of sender communication from expected patterns”(Buller and Burgoon 228).
  11. Initial and ongoing receiver detection accuracy are inversely related to (a) receiver truth biases, (b) context interactivity, (c) and sender encoding skills; they are positively related to (d) informational and behavioral familiarity, (e) receiver decoding skills, and (f) deviations of sender communication from expected patterns. (228)
  12. “Receiver suspicion is manifested through a combination of strategic and nonstrategic behavior”(Buller and Burgoon 229).
  13. “Senders perceive suspicion when it is present. Deviations from expected receiver behavior increases perceptions of suspicion. Receiver behavior signaling disbelief, uncertainty, or the need for additional information increase sender perceptions of suspicion”(231).
  14. “Suspicion (perceived or actual) increases senders’ (a) strategic and (b) nonstrategic behavior”(231).
  15. “Deception and suspicion displays change over time”(232).
  16. “Reciprocity is the predominate interaction adaptation pattern between senders and receivers during interpersonal deception”(233).

17. "Receiver detection accuracy, bias, and judgments of sender credibility following an interaction are a function of (a) terminal receiver cognitions (suspicion, truth biases), (b) receiver decoding skill, and (c) terminal sender behavioral displays"(Buller and Burgoon 234).
18. "Sender perceived deception success is a function of (a) terminal sender cognition (perceived suspicion) and (b) terminal receiver behavioral displays"(234).

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