

Hangin' with Judas:

A Narrative Analysis of Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*

Presented to the Faculty

Liberty University

School of Communications Studies

In partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Arts in Communications Studies

by

Constance Alicia Falconer

May 2013

Thesis Committee

David D. Allison, Ph.D., Chair Date

Cecil V. Kramer, Ph.D. Date

William G. Gribbin, Ph.D. Date

Copyright © 2013
Constance Falconer
All Rights Reserved

This Project is Dedicated to My Family—

Donald Falconer, Father & Wealth of Knowledge

Connie Falconer, Mother & Encouraging Confidant

Aaron Falconer, Brother & Friend

—The Three Most Important People in My Life.

Acknowledgement

First, I would like to thank my thesis committee. My chair, Dr. David Allison, has been an encouragement throughout my graduate studies. I cannot extend enough gratitude toward him, for his guidance in scholarship, academia, and life. I am blessed to have met a professor who is truly invested in my decisions. Dr. Cecil Kramer was the first professor to encourage me into the graduate program, and to attend Liberty. I am thankful for the opportunity of getting to know Dr. William Gribbin. I would like to thank all three for the time they invested in this project. Without their suggestions and edits, this product would not be as strong.

I would like to thank the rest of the communication faculty who have taught me over the past two years. I would like to thank Dr. Michael Graves for taking interest in my writing, and encouraging me to write about *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Dr. Carey Martin, thank you for your expertise and practical advice for entering into the world of media. I appreciate Dr. Bill Mullen's encouraging words. To my fellow graduate students, thank you for the laughs and helping me feel at home in America! You kept me sane and "in-the-know" throughout this process.

I must thank the people of my home church, Calvary Baptist. Thank you for the prayers, support, and encouragement. I am blessed to have a group of people who can cheer me on, in the name of Christ. A special thank you to those who have told me they would like to read my thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, extended and direct. Mom, thank you for your endless prayer and reminding me to lean fully on God. Dad, thank you for proof reading my work and being excited about my projects. You both have continued to challenge me, spiritually and academically. Thank you for allowing me to strive for goals that seemed impossible, from the west coast down to the south.

Abstract

Stephen Adly Guirgis has created an era-melting play, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, which explores the timeless debate between divine mercy and free will. A systematic application of Walter R. Fisher's narrative analysis, through form identification and a functional analysis, determined how Guirgis accomplishes persuasion. This qualitative study focused on Guirgis's narrative, using Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm as a framework to answer the research question(s): (1) If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* are foreign and imagined, how is narrative probability and narrative fidelity achieved?; and, (2) How does Guirgis persuade his audience through narrative probability and narrative fidelity? Research found that Guirgis achieves narrative probability and narrative fidelity because his dramatic action is complete, self-contained, purposeful, varied, engages and maintains the interest of the audience, and is probable. This thesis concluded that persuasion can only be achieved when narrative probability and narrative fidelity are present.

Key Words: Judas Iscariot, Stephen Adly Guirgis, Walter R. Fisher, Narrative Paradigm, Narrative Probability, Narrative Fidelity, Persuasion

Hangin' with Judas Iscariot: A Narrative Analysis of Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of
Judas Iscariot*

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	4
Introduction.....	4
Stephen Adly Guirgis	4
<i>The Last Days of Judas Iscariot</i>	5
Critiques of Guirgis's Work Pre-/ <i>The Last Days of Judas Iscariot</i>	6
Previous Studies on Stephen Guirgis's <i>The Last Days of Judas Iscariot</i>	8
Biblical Recordings of Judas Iscariot.....	10
Judas Iscariot in Christology.....	11
Interpretation of Biblical Representation of Judas Iscariot.....	13
Changing Portrayal of Judas Iscariot from Biblical Recording to Popular Culture.....	17
Review of Theory: Walter R. Fisher's Narrative Paradigm.....	19
Conclusion.....	28
Chapter 3: Methodology	30
Qualitative Method.....	30
Researcher's Role.....	30
Defense of the Theoretical Framework, Narrative Paradigm.....	30
Data Collection Procedures.....	31
Data Analysis of Supplementary Texts.....	32
Data Analysis of Guirgis's Text.....	34

Chapter 4: Analysis and Discussion	37
Form Identification.....	40
Plot.....	40
Character and Characterization.....	45
Thought.....	53
Diction.....	56
Spectacle.....	57
Style.....	59
Form of Play.....	60
Summary of Form Identification.....	62
Functional Analysis.....	62
Narrative Probability.....	62
Narrative Fidelity.....	64
Implications of Research.....	68
Research Question #1.....	68
Research Question #2.....	70
Chapter 5: Conclusion	72
Purpose.....	72
Summary.....	73
Limitations.....	73
Recommendations for Future Research.....	77
Conclusion.....	79

Chapter 1: Introduction

Guirgis examines the purpose of religious faith and asks huge questions about the nature of divine love and the existence of free will.

--Toby Zinman

The verdict is in. Stephen Adly Guirgis has created an era-melting play, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. The dark humor, courtroom play centers on the biblical story of Judas Iscariot. On the surface, the play debates Judas Iscariot's eternal damnation, but Guirgis has his audience questioning bigger existential questions.

Guirgis combines the known with the unknown in order to demand answers to major theological and philosophical questions that have been asked since the beginning of time. Guirgis uses creative freedom to question the eternal damnation of Judas through the play's setting, characters, and plot. He merges factual events with a time-bending, serio-comically, imagined world between Heaven and Hell. He creates the dialogue of historical, infamous figures, and fictitious characters. By using black comedy and extreme language, it can be assumed that Guirgis is making a mockery of the church. His imagined world portrays his own struggles with the church and what he struggles to understand with his own existential beliefs. His play raises his concerns and questions about the faith, instead of attempting to answer philosophical questions like some of his contemporaries.

Before any analysis can progress, it is imperative to define the genre of the play. Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a black comedy. A black comedy deals with grotesque or unpleasant situations that attack comfortable assumptions about social taboos; for example, treating death as comedic. The usage of this genre derives from French dramatist Jean Anouilh, whom categorized his plays as either rose or noir (Black Comedy). Black comedies are

also referred to as dark comedies or tragicomedies. Simplistically stated, it is the blend of comedic and tragic aspects. Tragicomedies have commonalities to melodrama, which will be explored further in the Analysis section in this paper.

Guirgis's text merits an in-depth analysis and rhetorical critique because of its controversial nature. First, Guirgis loosely references the Bible as he uses biblical events and characters to pose theological questions. Second, he demands the attention of the audience by using urban and vulgar vernacular to show immediacy of the characters, both saints and sinners. Third, Guirgis offers a new persona of Judas Iscariot, undisclosed in the Bible, deliberately studying the character of Judas wholly.

A narrative analysis of Guirgis's text will provide an exploration of Guirgis's ideology and how it compares and contrasts to the biblical worldview from which the story of Judas Iscariot stems. This study is significant to those seeking the Spiritual, the non-Spiritual, and those who do not understand the Spiritual. The play is Guirgis's response to his Catholic childhood, his attempt to make sense of religion: "I do know that I am in continuous need of the Spiritual and that I usually go to great lengths to avoid it...And I think a connection to the Spiritual is essential to us as individuals and to the world as a whole" (Guirgis). He urges the readers of his play to contemplate questions regarding the Spiritual. Guirgis knows that religion has a bad reputation in America: "Non-maniac type people who are religious or spiritual have the responsibility to stand up, be counted, and gently encourage others to consider matters of faith and to define for themselves what their responsibilities are and what it means to try to be good" (Guirgis). This study is a form of activism, questioning and attempting to understand the root of existentialism through the study of the notorious traitor, Judas Iscariot.

This qualitative study will focus on Guirgis's narrative, using Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm as a framework to answer the research question(s): (1) If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* are foreign and imagined, how is narrative probability and narrative fidelity achieved?; and, (2) How does Guirgis persuade his audience through narrative probability and narrative fidelity? A systematic application of Walter R. Fisher's narrative analysis, through form identification and a functional analysis, will evaluate the persuasiveness of Stephen Adly Guirgis's narrative, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, and determine how Guirgis accomplishes persuasion.

According to Walter R. Fisher, humans are first and foremost storytellers. All forms of human communication are fundamentally stories, as interpretations of aspects of the world occurring in time, being shaped by history, culture, and character (Fisher "Clarifying the Narrative" 55). A story is considered believable if it attains the principles of narrative probability and narrative fidelity. Chapter Two is a compilation of research that will act as a foundation to base a comparison between the biblical Judas, the Judas in popular media, and Guirgis's Judas. The Literature Review concludes with the history and function of Fisher's narrative paradigm, including examples of its use in previous studies, and a definition of key components of the paradigm.

The Methodology Section, Chapter Three, outlines the researcher's steps used to accomplish the critical study of the text. Chapter Four, the majority of the thesis, is the analysis or findings of the study. Chapter Five highlights any strengths or weaknesses within the methodology or analysis, provides recommendations for future research on this subject or an expansion on this research study, and concludes with a summary of the main points of this thesis, and any closing remarks.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There are only two known facts stated in the Bible regarding Judas: Jesus chose him as an apostle, and Judas "handed" Jesus over to the Jewish authorities.

-- James Martin

Introduction

The literature compiled within this chapter will develop, compare and contrast Guirgis's ability to achieve narrative fidelity and narrative probability, through his personal ideology, and imagined world. It is important, then, to understand the biblical role and character of Judas Iscariot and the role and character of Judas Iscariot presented in popular media, art and literature.

This literature review is divided into several topics of interest: First, a brief introduction to the play, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, and playwright, Stephen Adly Guirgis; Second, a collection of critiques of the play; Third, a summary of previous academic studies and critiques on *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*; Fourth, a compilation of research focusing on the biblical character of Judas Iscariot; Fifth, a compilation of research on Judas's role in popular culture media that will juxtapose the character of Judas Iscariot in Guirgis's text; and, Sixth, an in-depth discussion of Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm—defining, learning the purpose and function, critiquing the theory, and discussing previous studies that have used the paradigm as a framework to study.

Stephen Adly Guirgis

Raised on the Upper-West side of New York by an Egyptian father and an Irish-American mother, Stephen Adly Guirgis attended Corpus Christi School on 121st Street, in Harlem. He started working at age twelve in the restaurants his father managed in Grand Station

Central. Growing up, his family could not afford to go to Broadway, but his mother raised him watching movies and seeing free plays in the Park (Klein).

Guirgis spent seven years “studying” at the State University of New York at Albany. It was not until his sister gave him a ticket to see Lanford Wilson’s *Burn This*, starring John Malkovich, as a birthday gift, that Guirgis changed his major to Theatre and had ambition for his future. He was invited to join LABYrinth, a theatre company, by a college friend, John Ortiz (Klein). Several of his plays have been produced and presented through LABYrinth, including *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*:

My theatre company is called LABYrinth. We go away every summer to workshop new material and to fall in love again. One year, they called and asked me, “What are you bringing up this summer?” I said, “I don’t know.” They said, “Should we just put you down as ‘I don’t know’?” I said, “I don’t know.” They said, “How about we just put you down on the schedule as ‘Untitled Guirgis Project’?” I said, “Okay.” And then—and I honestly have no idea why—I said, “Put me down as *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*.” And then I hung up the phone.

I grew up Catholic, so the story of the play is told within those parameters. When I was a kid, the story of Judas troubled me a lot. It didn’t make sense to me, it frightened me, and it seemed to fly in the face of the notion of the all-loving and all-merciful God that the very good and loving nuns at the Corpus Christi School on 121st Street were teaching me about. I can’t remember if I went home and asked my mom about it. What I do remember is that I stopped believing the story, and that not believing—or not wanting to believe—made me feel a lot of things

that didn't feel good. I was nine of ten at the time. From then on—unless I was in trouble—I was in no hurry to seek out God...

I don't want to know too much about why I write plays or why I wrote this play in particular. Perhaps it's true that the best way to move forward is to go back, and so, in writing this play, I went back (Stephen Adly Guirgis, 2005).

Critiques of Guirgis's work pre-/The Last Days of Judas Iscariot

"Guirgis may be the most extravagantly talented, maddening wayward playwright in America...To put it clinically, he is a master of American vernacular; to put it as one of his characters might put it, the sh-t is real," says Jeremy McCarter of *The New York Sun* (McCarter). Stephen Adly Guirgis is one of the most praised young playwrights of American theatre (Woltz 6), and was named one of 2004's 25 New Faces of Independent Film by *Filmmaker Magazine* ("25 New Faces"). Guirgis's plays have been produced on five continents and throughout the United States. He is known for plays such as *Jesus Hopped the A-Train* and *Our Lady of 121st Street* (Woltz 6).

Guirgis's plays are critically acclaimed. He has been awarded for his texts. His play *Jesus Hopped the A-Train* won the Edinburgh Fringe First award, the Detroit Free Press Best Play of the Year, and the Barrymore Award. His play *In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings* was named one of the 10 Best of '99 by *Time Out New York*, and was a Critics Pick in *Time Out London* (Guirgis). His work pre - *Last Day of Judas Iscariot* has captured the attention of critics. His popularity amongst his contemporaries is reason for a further analysis of the text.

Guirgis has been appraised for his religious/spiritual matter, and for raising existential questions. Michael Billington from *The Guardian* says, "*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* by the phenomenally talented Stephen Adly Guirgis...is an extraordinary play...Not since Tony

Kushner's *Angels in America* have I seen a play so unafraid to acknowledge the power of the spirit" (Billington). Ed Siegel of *The Boston Globe* says:

Guirgis has won friends and influenced theatregoers with a heady mixture of the sacred and the profane. The street smarts and cynicism of Guirgis's characters are balanced by the fact that in his plays, the church isn't merely something to ridicule or rebel against, though he does both articulately and humorously. The church can be the last refuge in a heartless, spiritually vacant world, and Guirgis derives considerable power from his unwillingness to give up on it (Siegel).

Theatre critics praise Guirgis's use of New York vernacular for making traditionally religious characters relatable. They defend Guirgis's characters' vernacular and language, when many religious folk would be offended when the saints and biblical beings curse. Peter Santilli from *Associated Press* says, "The perennial saints and sinners who inhabit the play are given fresh and strikingly contemporary interpretations. The Scriptures have never read like this. The thousands of tiny gems within this play keep the audience drinking in Guirgis's mosaic and thirsting for more" (Guirgis). Marilyn Stasio from *Variety* adds:

Hearing [Guirgis's] theological arguments delivered in the rough idioms and unsophisticated accents heard on urban streets is to hear them loud and clear. In giving St. Monica the attitude of a hooker and St. Peter the voice of a dockworker, Guirgis is not diminishing their characters but attesting to their common humanity (Stasio).

Critics agree that Stephen Adly Guirgis has created an era-melting play that meditates on the conflict between divine mercy and human free will, and leaves the audience with something more than entertainment, but food for the soul.

Previous Studies on Stephen Guirgis's The Last Days of Judas Iscariot

As previously mentioned in the Introduction, there are few studies on Guirgis's narrative. The studies that exist debate whether the play, theologically, should be evaluated and received at a spiritual level or a humanistic level. James Keane, former associate editor at *America* and current editor at Orbis Books, reviews *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, and in doing so examines the curious case of this committed disciple of Jesus, who not only sinned against Him, but failed to hear his master's message of divine mercy and forgiveness. He notes that even though Christians are reluctant to condemn anyone to damnation, Judas is usually an exception because of his dual sins of bribed betrayal of Jesus followed by submission to despair and subsequent suicide. Keane observes that the characters in the play, too, have committed sins, and have seemingly been forgiven. He then raises the question: Judas is found guilty, of course, but everyone else is guilty too, of something, and if they can be forgiven, can't he as well? The only person who does not believe this is apparently Judas himself, who persists in his catatonic state and is unwilling or unable to accept divine mercy. Keane notes that the theological emphasis of the play has been the basis of many negative reviews, including the criticism from the *New York Times* when Ben Brantley dismissed the play as "a classroom in a progressive parochial school" and "a heavily footnoted position paper on a big, big subject" (Brantley). In contrast, Keane appraises the theological undertone of the play: "As dramatic catharsis, this is artistically effective material; as a reflection of the human condition, it is a moving transformation that reworks the cacophony for two hours of courtroom drama to illustrate the power of divine mercy in a way that makes a great deal of theological sense" (Keane).

In contrast to Keane's focus on the theological material, Woltz interprets Guirgis's text at a humanistic level rather than a spiritual level. Scott Woltz, MA of Theatre, at Louisiana State

University, in his mixed methods study, *The Role of Judas Iscariot in Stephen Adly Guirgis' The Last Days of Judas Iscariot: A Production Thesis in Acting and the Actor Director Relationship*, methodologically examines the character of Judas through physical and tactical scores. He charts the physical activity within the scene, move-by-move. He then charts the tactical score by listing the moment-to-moment list of acting choices. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the actor's interpretation of the play, as well as a director's interpretation of the play, and as both perspectives interface, contrast, and finally combine (Woltz). In order to do so, Woltz notes the importance of relating to the play at a personal level (Woltz 8). Woltz, initially intimidated by the religious nature of the play, unearths Guirgis's intention of discovering the humanistic Judas, a flawed being: "We're all human; we're all fallible, so in some sense, we're all Judas" (Woltz 7). He notes the consistency in Guirgis's plays. Typically Guirgis's plays relate to the Spiritual, the character of God and a character's loss of faith. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is peculiar because this story of Judas Iscariot is devoted to the life of Judas, rather than the familiar story of Judas Iscariot as a key character in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Guirgis's text explores Judas and his downfall. If the audience is meant to identify with Judas, a life's "loser", then Guirgis's text is the story of the most iconic loser in history (Woltz 8).

Woltz, a self-proclaimed anti-Spiritual being, praises Guirgis for raising important existential questions throughout the text: What led to the downfall of Judas? Was it really [Judas's] fault? Did Jesus want [Judas] to do it? Why would Judas be in Hell? Why would anybody? (Woltz 7).

Woltz tests the text against narrative fidelity, unknowingly. He suggests that the audience is persuaded by the characters, and find them believable, because of Guirgis's usage of urban vernacular. This language creates a rhythmically charged feeling that takes the characters outside

of their traditional religiously iconic representations (Woltz 9). Hailing from New York, and working with urban youth and in prisons, Guirgis picked up a language that his characters, with New York wit, use to verbalize their wants and needs (Woltz 8).

Biblical Recordings of Judas Iscariot

In the Gospels Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Judas is referred to as “one of the Twelve,” and the one who betrayed Jesus. He is written as one of the disciples, amongst those who closely followed Jesus. Matthew 10:1-4 states:

Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal away disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: First, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas, who betrayed him (*New Living Translation*).

Matthew 26: 14-16 shares the first details on the planned betrayal of Jesus: “Then one of the Twelve—the one called Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priests and asked, ‘What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?’ So they counted out for him thirty pieces of silver. From then on Judas watched for an opportunity to hand him over (*New Living Translation*).”

In the Gospel of John, the story of Judas is further explored and explained. Great details are shared and the character of Judas is vaguely described. In John 12: 4-6, the character of Judas is portrayed in a negative way, a thief: “But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ‘Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.’ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a

thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it (*New Living Translation*).”

It is learned in the Gospel of John that Jesus was aware of his future betrayal. Specifically, in John 6:70-71, Jesus predicts his betrayal, “Then Jesus replied, ‘Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!’ (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.) (*New Living Translation*).” Again, in John 13:26-30, Jesus states his awareness of Judas’s betrayal. Not only does Jesus converse with Judas about the betrayal, but Jesus instructs Judas:

Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” Then, dipping the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. So Jesus told him, “What you are about to do, do quickly.” But no one at the meal understood why Jesus said this to him. Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the festival, or to give something to the poor. As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night (*New Living Translation*).

Judas Iscariot in Christology

In his text, *The Place of Judas Iscariot in Christology*, Anthony Crane approaches the biblical story of Judas Iscariot from a theological standpoint. Although the topic has been studied, the role of Judas in the Gospels is of importance to writers who respond to the topic from a dramatic or novelist point of view. Dramatists and novelists base their writings on “the Mistake”; Judas fell from grace and was eventually replaced by Matthias. There are several contemporary examples of this such as the radio play by Dorothy L. Sayers *The Man born to be King*, Andrew

Lloyd-Webber and Time Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and the novels *Christ Recrucified* by Nikos Kazantzakis, and *Silence* by Shusako Endo. In these dramatic and novelist interpretations, Judas has been given a background that attempts to explain his role in the Gospels. The most notable is the life of Judas, known in every language and country in medieval Europe, in which he murders his father and marries his mother in Oedipal custom (Crane 2).

In contrast to these contemporary views, Crane's argument is not novelistic but theological. He addresses the complexities of the texts concerning Judas. There are Christological implications that stem from the New Testament that record Judas as both called by Jesus and yet would be better unborn. The New Testament is intent on showing that Jesus knew what Judas would do from the beginning, calling Judas to be a disciple. He argues that the place of Judas Iscariot in Christology can be understood through the tension between providence and tragedy.

To examine this tension, Crane calls upon two theologians: Origen Adamantius, scholar and theologian of early Christian interest in Alexandria, and one of the writers of the Early Church, judged for his heretical writings, and John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, important Early Church Father. Crane explains Origen's contention that Judas was originally holy, but changed for the worse. Chrysostom saw Judas as being chosen for a specific purpose. Both views are of important to Christology. Origen's argument is that the presence of Christ was tragically insufficient for the salvation of Judas. In contrast, Chrysostom believed Judas to be a part of providential design (Crane 3).

The tension between providence and tragedy is furthered explored through Crane's examination of the opposite readings of Judas found in the writing of Karl Barth, Protestant theologian of the 20th century, and Donald MacKinnon, Scottish philosopher and theologian,

who both recognize the importance of the theologically neglected topic (Crane 2). The doctrine of providence asserts that God orders all things, from their beginning to their appointed end; all things are subordinate to the knowledge and the will of God. Barth argues that this doctrine cannot be understood outside of Jesus Christ. Therefore, Barth concludes that Judas takes place in the context of the doctrine of election, that Jesus knew from the beginning who would betray him: The handing over of Judas “is the eternal will of God, in what sense it has to be said that it did not happen by chance, that it has nothing whatever to do with human tragedy or the like, but that it had to happen as the will of God” (Crane 6). In contrast, Mackinnon believes that tragic discourse can offer important insights. Tragedy attends to the “dark and intractable aspects of existence which exposes the inadequacies of human ratiocination” (Crane 6). In a text broadcasted in 1963, Mackinnon writes that although the light of Christ is never overcome,

The darkness remains, and of the end of the traitor there is no record... There is no solution offered in the Gospels of the riddle of Iscariot though whose agency the Son of man goes his appointed way. It were good for him that he had not been born. The problem is stated; it is left unresolved, and we are presented with the likeness of the one who bore its ultimate burden” (Crane 6).

Crane suggests that the tension between this providence and tragedy is the key paradigm that emerges from engagement with the scriptures and subsequence tradition (Crane 4).

Interpretation of the Biblical Representation of Judas Iscariot

Through a biblical analysis, Reverend Richard P. Carlson, Professor of Biblical Studies at Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, constructs a quantitative study by tracking how many times specific themes are mentioned in relation to Judas's and the other religious leaders' betrayal. Specifically, Carlson uses numbers to reiterate how many times Judas is referred to as

"one of the twelve" and "the one who handed him over," and where these statements are recorded in the Bible (chapter, verse, and book). Through this study, there is a transition in Judas's character from a villain to a tragic persona. Although Judas could see his own sin in handing over innocent blood, he failed to see how God was offering forgiveness through that same blood poured out for many. Judas cannot be considered a villain because he is aware of his sins and his wrongdoing in betraying Jesus. Though no longer a villain, Judas ends as a tragic character in Matthew's story. Carlson proves a bias that Judas is a tragic character because his reversal fails to lead to true forgiveness. According to Carlson, although he sees Jesus as an innocent victim, he does not understand God's gift of salvation (Carlson).

Like Carlson, Dr. Britt Mize, Associate Director and Associate Professor at Texas A&M University, argues that Judas is a tragic figure, rather than a villain. The purpose of Mize's study *Working with the Enemy: The Harmonizing Tradition and the New Utility of Judas Iscariot in Thirteenth Century England* is to define and illustrate the life of Judas, in order to prove him as an ordinary Christian worthy of a certain measure of human understanding. He was a contrite sinner who did exactly what he should have done, before failing at the last moment to claim God's mercy (Mize 68).

As proven by Mize and Carlson, from the medieval era to the twelfth century, attempts have been made to transform the character of Judas from villain to tragic figure. The medieval Christian knew certain facts about Judas, known to be true, from the Gospels: Judas was a disciple, and Judas conspired with Temple officials to bring about Jesus' arrest. The dominant version of Judas, inherited by the medieval writers was: constantly wicked, with his wickedness tightly bound to the act that defined him of his betrayal of Jesus (Mize 77). Twelfth century writers and theorists have seen the ascendancy of the aesthetic, philosophical and spiritual

orientations that place an increasing value on private concerns and interior experience. They began to see Judas as a person—a sinful one—with a story of his own (Mize 78). The development of a newer penitent Judas is notable in reimagining him as a tragic figure—an adherent of the faith, flawed like everyone, despite having sinned, nearly understanding the message of Christ before faltering at the final critical moment (Mize 103).

Jayhoon Yang, Ph.D., conducted a study of the Gospel of Mark. Yang reasons that Mark, the author of the Gospel, manipulates the reader by controlling the information about Judas Iscariot. He examines the character of Judas in Mark's narrative. In the article, Yang focuses on the modification attributed to Judas and the characterization of the twelve disciples. Yang argues that the phrase "one of the twelve" is a rhetorical strategy Mark adopts in order to denigrate the disciple group. Jesus calls the twelve together for three reasons: First, to be with Jesus; Second, to proclaim the message of Jesus; and, Third, to have the authority to cast out demons (Yang 253). Right away, Judas is modified by being given the title "the one who handed him over." Judas is included in the group, but the author "foreshadows" Judas's actions. The group is expected to maintain a close relationship with Jesus to fulfill the reasons for gathering the group together. Ironically, the narrator mentions what Judas will do which does not correspond to the purpose of the twelve. Therefore the narrator gives a negative impression of Judas by describing him as an inappropriate member of the twelve (Yang 254). In the beginning of Mark, Judas is "Judas, the one who handed him over," and nearing the end of Mark, Judas is referred to as "Judas, one of the twelve, the one who handed him over." Yang asserts that this is intentional by Mark to denigrate the twelve (Yang).

In his study, *Why Did Judas Do It?*, James Martin, Catholic Priest and author, attempts to answer that question. Martin acknowledges that little is known about Judas Iscariot. There are

only two known facts stated in the Bible regarding Judas: Jesus chose him as an apostle, and Judas "handed" Jesus over to the Jewish authorities. Any other "facts" shown in film or plays is speculative and invented for artistic purposes. Martin believes that Judas was not always as villainous as he has historically appeared in art and literature. After all, he was one of the chosen twelve. Jesus saw redeeming qualities in Judas, and Judas recognized Jesus as someone worthy to follow (Martin).

Martin blames the writers of the four Gospels for Judas's negative portrayal. He notes that the writers were good storytellers who knew that for simple dramatic effect, the story of Jesus needed an arch-villain. Judas was not condemned simply for the betrayal of Christ. He was also condemned for the despair that led to suicide. Other scholars say Judas thought his sins were too great even for God's mercy, so he chose damnation. Martin believes the most plausible reason—historical, theological, and spiritual—that Judas betrayed Jesus was because Judas wanted a god of his own making (Martin).

Birger Pearson, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara, and Professor and Interim Director of Religious Studies and University of California, Berkeley, examines Judas's role in the controversial *Gospel of Judas*. The *Gospel of Judas* is allegedly 1700 years old, but was published in 2006. Several Christian theologians are sceptical of the authenticity of the Gospel, but Pearson believes the portrayal of Judas is a historically reliable alternative to the New Testament. In the New Testament, Judas is a betrayer, but in the *Gospel of Judas*, Judas is seen as the hero, the disciple closest to Jesus. Pearson analyzes the relationship between Judas and Jesus. In the *Gospel of Judas*, Jesus asks Judas to betray him. In doing so, Jesus is allowing his spiritual self to be freed from his mortal body at the time of his death. Judas is therefore rewarded with ascent to the divine realm above.

Pearson argues that Judas only knows the plans of Jesus because Judas is a demon. His non-Christian theology is evident through his language, using terms such as "alignment of the stars" and "fate" (Pearson).

Tzvi Novick's, Ph.D., Abrams Chair of Jewish Thought and Culture at University of Notre Dame, exegetical study explores the only passage in the New Testament that describes Judas's death and the prophecy of his successor. He quotes Peter's speech in Psalm 69 and Psalm 109. Novick notes that all interpreters agree that Psalm 109:8 stating, "May his days be few; may another take his place of leadership," is offered to justify the selection of replacement for Judas, who is ultimately Matthias. Interpreters' opinions on Psalm 69:26 are divided. The more prevalent approach is Peter reads it as a forecast of Judas's uninhabited field, where he passed. The second approach refers to Judas's office, in particular, to its vacancy after his demise (Novick).

Changing Portrayal of Judas Iscariot from Biblical Records to Popular Culture

The character of Judas has been fictionalized in popular culture. Recent modern adaptations of Judas in film include *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, and the *Passion of the Christ*, to name a few (Lunceford 2114). Richard Walsh, Ph.D., Professor of Religion at Methodist College, discusses the portrayal of Judas Iscariot in film, arguing that the Judases in film can be arranged into four types: a traditional Judas, a modern Judas, a Christ-figure Judas, and a parabolic Judas (Walsh 52). The traditional Judas reprises the Judas of John. These Judases are fated/determined outsiders. This traditional Judas reinforces the audience's beliefs and identities (Walsh 47). Often, the traditional Judas is represented by the moneybag and the hangman's noose; he is the betrayer (Walsh 38). The modern Judas is the center of attention. In these renditions, the audience is invited to identify with Judas rather than

the iconic Jesus figure (Walsh 48). The modern Judas is generally a visual opposite of Jesus. For example, he may have red hair or may be physically separated from the others—leaves the Last Supper before communion (Walsh 38). Some films improve the story by adding plot connections and amplifying Judas's character; they testify to the continuing power of Christian discourse. These films retell the Gospel, visualize the tradition, modernize Judas, and create new Christian myths (Walsh 38). For example, in *Godspell*, Judas is interpreted as Jesus's best friend. Like the other disciples, he participates in a conversion over the course of the play. However, Judas moves further and further from Jesus and His teachings, whilst the other disciples change from being confused to becoming followers. Judas remains the mythic other whose exclusion separates people from the evil that they do not wish to accept as part of their "self-identity" (Walsh 52). The Christ-figure Judas cooperates with Jesus in order to win spiritual freedom for humans. The Judas character replaces Jesus as the noble and sacrificial character (Walsh 48). The stories of the parabolic Judas do not replace the dominant discourse of the Gospels. Rather, they tell stories alongside the Gospels (Walsh 48).

People have been fictionalizing Jesus-stories by filling in gaps in historical and narrative record (Crook 33). Zeba Crook, Ph.D., Associate Professor at Carleton University, contrasts the two novels *The Gospel According to the Son* by Norman Mailer, and *Testament* by Nino Ricci, and specifically compares the character of Judas within both novels. In Mailer's *The Gospel According to the Son*, Jesus recruits Judas because he feels he can learn something from him. Judas tells Jesus that he does not believe in him or think he will succeed. He follows Jesus because he believes the poor can benefit from the hope Jesus' message offers, and from the tangible help He offers (Crook 42). When Judas betrays Jesus, Jesus is obliged to forgive Judas. In Ricci's *Testament*, Judas misunderstands Jesus' motives. He is offended that Jesus does not

support his deeply held conviction that the Romans are the enemies. Although he disagrees with Jesus' teachings, Judas still is protective of Jesus. He warns Jesus to stay away from Jerusalem because there will be violence (Crook 44). But, this makes the message of peace more important to Jesus. Judas then flees (Crook 45).

Crook asserts that the novels share three similarities: First, Judas is an independent thinker, arguing and disagreeing with Jesus; Second, Judas does not see Jesus as an authoritative figure, but rather as an equal. Both Jesus and Judas are educated and worldly, in the sense that both are not fooled by others' limitations; and Third, both novelists nuance the Gospel portrait of Judas. Mailer doesn't exonerate Judas, but Mailer makes Judas's actions understandable and defensible. Ricci exonerates Judas of any blame in the death of Jesus. However, Judas remains an unlikable character within Ricci's novel (Crook 45).

Review of Theory: Walter R. Fisher's Narrative Paradigm

Communication theorist Walter Fisher created the narrative paradigm in direct contrast to the rational world paradigm. The rational world paradigm states that humans are rational beings. Fisher believes that knowledge of, ability in, and the willingness to employ the logic of good reasons guarantees rationality in rhetorical interaction, which is, according to Fisher, the most important component in rhetorical competence (Fisher "Rationality" 129). The narrative paradigm presents a humanistic view that humans are essentially storytellers. Fisher argues that humans cannot communicate through words or deeds without the words or actions attaining narrative structure. Fisher would say that our rationality is determined by our sense of narrative probability, the coherency of the narrative, and narrative fidelity, whether the story rings true with what people already know to be true ("Forms of Rhetoric"). Probability then, not truth or

reality, is the aim of the person making the argument (Fisher "The Rhetoric of Argumentation" 137).

Before defining the purpose of the narrative paradigm, in his study, *Clarifying the Narrative Paradigm*, Fisher defines narration: narration is individuated forms such as depiction, anecdote and characterization, narrations include generic forms such as argumentation and narratives, and narration provides the conceptual framework for understanding human decision, discourse and action. He concludes that that the narrative paradigm is a philosophical statement that is meant to offer an approach to interpretation and assessment of human communication—assuming that all forms of human communication are fundamentally stories, as interpretations of aspects of the world occurring in time, being shaped by history, culture, and character (Fisher "Clarifying the Narrative" 57).

The narrative paradigm is an incredibly effective form of rhetoric as both a communicative technique and a persuasive tool. The narrative paradigm, like any other mode of rhetorical criticism, not only recommends a way of viewing the text, but it implies a conception of the audience that studies the text, and the communicator who presents the narrative (Fisher "A Motive View" 131). It should be noted that the most fundamental task of the critic is to their personal judgements, rather than to observe, measure, report, and explain (Fisher "Rhetorical Criticism" 78). Narratives are a selective reality. Those communicating the narrative create a selective reality. It is the audience that chooses what to believe (narrative fidelity), which is influenced by external forces ("Forms of Rhetoric").

The narrative paradigm can be considered a dialectical synthesis of two traditional strands in the history of rhetoric: the argumentative, persuasive theme, and the literary, aesthetic theme. The narrative paradigm does not deny reason or rationality; it reconstitutes them, making

them amenable to all forms of human communication. The narrative perspective has relevance to real and fictitious worlds, to stories of living and of the imagination (Fisher "Narration" 291).

The narrative paradigm proposes that: (1) humans are storytellers; (2) the paradigmatic mode of human decision-making and communication is good reasons; (3) the production and practice of good reasons is ruled by matters of history, biography, culture, and character; (4) rationality is determined by the nature of persons as narrative beings; (5) the world is a set of stories which must be chosen among to live the good life in a process of continual recreation (Fisher "Narration" 297).

In Fisher's study *The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration*, he explores how the narrative paradigm relates to traditional theories in the social sciences and humanities, and how the narrative paradigm can be employed in an interpretation and assessment of a text in which there are claims to knowledge, truth, or reality. Therefore, there is no genre, including technical communication, that is not an episode in the story of life, and is not constituted by logos (Fisher "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration" 347). Fisher proposes that a significant feature of compelling stories is that they provide a rationale for decision and action. These stories not only constrain behavior, they also determine behavior. The only way to test whether a story masks ulterior motives is to test it for narrative probability and narrative fidelity. In this study, Fisher believes narrative probability depends on comparison and contrast with prior, accepted stories, in addition to the formal features which include coherence, consistency, and noncontradiction (Fisher "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration" 364). Coherence is reflected in the story's internal consistency, its consistency with other stories that are deemed important by a given audience, and the way in which its characters behave in a trustworthy manner. Fidelity shows itself in terms of "the logic of good reasons" (Hyde 72). Fisher believes there are two subsidiary

rules to coherence: closure and significance. A story should fulfill, in some logical way, the expectations it arouses (unity), and there should be a consistency in the pattern presented in the state of affairs presented with their implications (significance) (Fisher "What Stories Are" 400). Fidelity is determined by how well its values provide good reasons for accepting or adhering to the advice fostered by the rhetoric of the narrative in question (Hyde 72).

Malcolm O. Sillars and Bruce E. Gronbeck believe Fisher has the most comprehensive view of narrative (Gronbeck and Sillars 215). Fisher sees narrative as the primary model of human symbol-use. He differentiates the "narrative paradigm" from the "rational world paradigm" that he believes once dominated Western thought. Fisher claims that "homo narrans" should be added to the list of terms that are used to define humans, such as "homo sapiens." Sillars and Gronbeck conclude that many critics would not go as far as Fisher, claiming that all discourse is narrative, but they would find narrative a central element in human communication (Gronbeck and Sillars 215). In traditional rhetorical analysis, narrative is considered one of the four principle genres of discourse, amongst exposition, description, and argument (Gronbeck and Sillars 214).

Like Fisher argues, Sillars and Gronbeck argue that narrative criticism is not meant to determine whether the story is appropriately told, or is an accurate interpretation of whether it is "true" (Gronbeck and Sillars 219). Instead, the narrative critic must ask what culture is reflected in or influenced by the content and form of the story (Gronbeck and Sillars 220). Thus, a form analysis is necessary when studying the narrative. Although a form analysis is not exclusive to the narrative paradigm or Fisher's thought, critics and scholars of narrative study agree of its necessity for a complete narrative analysis.

According to Gronbeck and Sillars, there are six characteristics that explain how the story influences, and is influenced by, the culture: theme, structure, *peripeteia*, narrative voice, character, and style. These characteristics make up the form of a story. Themes are the fundamental links between the story and culture (Gronbeck and Sillars 220). The structure of a story will tell the reader how to understand time and freedom (Gronbeck and Sillars 222). For critics, who often decide where to start and stop telling stories, beginnings and endings help them justify the story to their own text (Gronbeck and Sillars 223). Narrative voice is present in every story, because every story must have a storyteller. All stories have characters, and these characters link the stories to human experience (Gronbeck and Sillars 224). *Peripeteia* is a tool for showing the symbolic pivots when individual and social life changes (Gronbeck and Sillars 226). Style is imperative to form analysis because word choice, grammar, and figures of speech reflect a society's culture (Gronbeck and Sillars 227).

Gronbeck and Sillars acknowledge that there are many ways of integrating the six characteristics. Kenneth Burke's method of analysis is particularly popular (Gronbeck and Sillars 229). Burke believes there to be five principles around which a story is organized: act (what), scene (where; when), agent (who), agency (how), and purpose (why) (Gronbeck and Sillars 229).

In the study, *Narrative Research: Time for a Paradigm*, Gabriela Spector-Mersel, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, explains how the narrative paradigm coincides with other interpretive paradigms in certain aspects, in light of its six dimensions—ontology, epistemology, methodology, inquiry aim, inquirer posture, and narrative posture. Spector-Mersel believes the narrative paradigm rests on three premises: First, it relies on constructivist, postmodern, and performance notions; Second, it is a distinctive qualitative paradigm, which contains commonalities and differences with other interpretive paradigms; and, Third, the paradigm has a

distinct framework within which various approaches, theoretical orientations, and analyzes coexist (Spector-Mersel 206). The paradigm is unique and differentiates from narrative inquiry in that it prevents expansion within research (Spector-Mersel 220).

Barbara Warnick, Professor at University of Pittsburgh, presents a critical appraisal of Fisher's narrative paradigm in her study *The Narrative Paradigm: Another Story*. Warnick presents the contradictions in Fisher's paradigm, an appraisal of narrative rationality of the paradigm, and an assessment of the logic of good reasons in the paradigm. Warnick summarizes the contradictions in four points: Fisher is unclear about the status of traditional rationality in his model; Fisher insists that the public can and should judge the texts based on their narrative features alone, but does not promise that the audience will not choose bad stories based on self delusion or rationalization; Fisher's concept of "good reasons" is a circular concept, entailing only a notion of "the good" specific to a particular audience (Warnick 181).

There are several rhetoricians who criticize Fisher's paradigm. Russell Kirkscey, MA, Texas States University, San Marcos, believes that narratives can provide rhetoricians the opportunity to produce arguments with dubious values that may not assist in promoting "right" actions, especially because there is no standard of values without a biased ideological stance that interferes with the choice of values. Also, Kirkscey argues that the audience may consist of persons who may not like any of the choices presented by their traditional storytellers, but have no other choice than to accept one of the competing stories—even when it does not provide for a fulfilling existence (Kirkscey 5).

Paul Atkinson and Sara Delamont, Cardiff School of Social Sciences, believe the foundation of Fisher's paradigm is flawed. They argue that narrative should be analyzed as a social phenomenon, not as a vehicle for personal or private experience. They also counsel

caution when it comes to attributing to narrative or narrative analyzes an especially moral quality, because the narrators' social positions do not guarantee authenticity or expertise (Atkinson and Delamont 170).

Robert C. Rowland, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Baylor University, is also critical of key elements of Fisher's paradigm. First, he argues that Fisher's definition of "narrative" is too broad. Second, in contrast to Fisher's view, Rowland believes there is no independent standard of narrative rationality that can be distinguished from the rational world paradigm. Third, Rowland argues that the storyteller cannot be considered the expert in the public sphere (Rowland 264).

Kip Redick and Lori Underwood, professors for the Department of Philosophy and Religion at Christopher Newport University, find Fisher's construct of narrative probability problematic. Redick disagrees with Fisher's claim that reasons must escape the restraints of time and place. In order to do so, reasons must be timeless and self-evident, and above local constructs (Redick 394). Redick argues that no reason can be timeless or above known realities of time and place.

Fisher's paradigm has been used in various areas in the field of communication, showing its strength as a theoretical framework. Fisher's paradigm is used to analyze news coverage. In his study, *Crisis Storytelling: Fisher's narrative paradigm and news reporting*, Christopher Caldiero, Rutgers University, proves there is evident types of narratives during crisis coverage and these narrative types form patterns regardless of the crisis being covered (Caldiero 2). The paradigm shows that when narrative fidelity and probability is present, news reporting can enhance, and not deny, reason and rationality (Caldiero 8).

Elena C. Strauman, Assistant Professor of Communication at the College of Charleston, and Molly McCartha's study, *Fallen Stars and Strategic Redemption: A Narrative Analysis of the National Enquirer*, uses the narrative paradigm to prove tabloids, seen in the *Enquirer*, present themselves as a "moral voice" as they create and reflect a public moral code (McCartha 79-80). McCartha highlights Fisher's importance of including a satisfactory conclusion, whether helpful or resigned, to create an internal coherence (McCartha 80).

The narrative paradigm has been used to study popular television and films. In their qualitative study, *Big Brother: Merging Reality and Fiction: An Application of the Narrative Paradigm*, Michael Eaves, Professor of Communication at Valdosta State University and Michael Savoie's, Assistant Professor at Valdosta State University, prove how the narrative paradigm can be applied to a rhetorical artefact, specifically the reality television show *Big Brother*. The authors argue that narrative coherence and narrative fidelity are created and sustained throughout the airing of the show. Through a detailed narrative analysis of the text, Eaves and Savoie shed light on the scope and utility of Fisher's theory (Eaves and Savoie 96).

In her MA thesis, *The Girls Next Door and Advertainment Narratives in Season One*, Amanda Bratberg analyzes the narrative probability in the reality television show *The Girls Next Door* to assess the coherence of the season. Bratberg uses Chatman's elements of narrative structure: narrator, characters, plot, and setting (Bratberg 41).

In her thesis, Jennifer Brown, MA, uses Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm to rhetorically analyze the lesser-known propaganda films of Alfred Hitchcock, made for the British Ministry of Information in 1944: *Bon Voyage* and *Adventure Malgache*. Using Fisher's concepts of fidelity and probability, Brown investigates the themes and values of the films (Brown iv).

Fisher's narrative paradigm has been a theoretical framework for literature, like books and poetry. Jennifer F. Wood's, Associate Professor in Communication and Theatre Department at Millersville University of Pennsylvania, analysis of Marian Wright Edelman's book, *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*, demonstrates how a parental voice as a persuasive social force can move an audience to action (Wood 106). The study proves that parental narratives support Fisher's narrative, which treats people as storytellers. Wood explains this is because narrative rationality exists as external factors that are prevalent in a child's life (Wood 112).

In Charity Lee Given's MA thesis, *Poe's Poisoned Pen: A Study in Fiction as Vendetta*, she uses narrative fidelity and probability to determine Poe's motives in his writing about American literature. Givens expands on Fisher's belief that a text is able to show, prove, and imply, and ultimately proves Poe's ability to construct a rational story (Givens 10).

Nancy B. Stutt and Randolph T. Barker's study, *The Use of Narrative Paradigm Theory in Assessing Audience Value Conflict in Image Advertising*, proves that the narrative paradigm can be used to analyze advertisement campaigns. The narrative paradigm can identify potential sources of audience conflict by illuminating sources of disbelief arousing from both values and life experiences that contradict the corporate message (Stutt 209). In her research she found that the narrative paradigm theory's focus on teasing out contradictions between the materialistic and moralistic myth serves the analysis of communication well.

The paradigm has been used to analyze historical movements. In the study *Myth Making as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Martin Luther King Jr., and the Civil Rights Movement*, Kerry Owen, Professor and Director of Forensics at University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, expands on Walter R. Fisher's Narrative Paradigm to account for the role that

myths play in the creation of narratives and the impact they have on human understanding. By studying Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, Owen explores the probability and fidelity of myths (Owen 8).

In addition to text, Fisher's theory can be used to rhetorically analyze interrelationship communication, and basic human interaction. In their study *The Rhetorical Power of a Compelling Story: A Critique of a "Toughlove" Parental Support Group*, Thomas A. Hollihan, Ph.D., University of Nebraska, and Riley's, Ph.D., University of Nebraska, study, use Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm to study critiques of the Toughlove Story, a network of parental support groups designed to help families with delinquent children, and assess the rhetorical impact of storytelling (Hollihan and Riley 13). Hollihan and Riley use the concepts of fidelity and probability to study the themes in the narratives (Hollihan and Riley 23).

Conclusion

The story of Judas Iscariot has exhaustively been studied by religious theorists, philosophers, and researchers. It has been used as the subject in modern art, literature, and popular culture. Judas's character, intentions, and damnation continue to be debated. Judas has transformed from treacherous villain, to a tragic being, flawed like everyone else. These differing ideologies are interpretations of the biblical text, extended to fill in the gaps. The ideologies juxtapose Guirgis's text. These studies not only investigate the story of Judas, but they question larger existential questions.

In conclusion, in order to understand how Guirgis achieves narrative fidelity and narrative probability, one must compare and contrast Guirgis's ideology to previous literature that explores similar themes. A compilation of research on Guirgis's text, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, the interpreted biblical character of Judas Iscariot, the role of and character of Judas in

popular culture, and an in-depth discussion of Walter R. Fisher's paradigm, will act as a foundation on which to base such a comparison.

The text of Guirgis is complex, theologically, spiritually, and textually. The next chapter will be a discussion on the methodology that will be used as a framework to study Guirgis's text: A systematic application of a narrative analysis of Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, through form identification and a functional analysis, by evaluating the persuasiveness of the narrative through narrative probability and narrative fidelity.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Narrative rationality is determined by the coherence and fidelity of our stories.

-- Walter Fisher

Qualitative Method

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the persuasiveness of Stephen Adly Guirgis's narrative, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, by systematically applying Walter R. Fisher's narrative analysis, through form identification and a functional analysis. This qualitative study investigates the *how* and *why* of decision making, rather than just the *what*, *where*, and *when*.

Researcher's Role

Although there are no ethical issues that need to be taken into consideration, the play is religious in nature, and religious themes are the focus of the text. Due to the qualitative nature of the text, any religious biases presented within the study are developed and explored in detail. The researcher has attempted to avoid any biases by including literature published by religious and non-religious researchers, theologians, and writers. However, in a qualitative study, biases should be accepted by the reader because the analysis will be processed through a specific ideological lens of the researcher. In this case, the researcher is Christian; thus, any personal thoughts or theories will be developed through such ideological views.

Defense of the Theoretical Framework, Narrative Paradigm

Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm is explored and explained, using previous research studies and Fisher's work, in the Literature Review. The paradigm is chosen with purpose and great significance to be able to study Stephen Adly Guirgis's work fully and meticulously.

Past, present, and the continuation of the analysis of storytelling, using Fisher's narrative paradigm, proves its legitimacy. In 1985, Walter Fisher published his landmark, first essay,

Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm. This essay was deemed, by many, as one of the greatest works of the century, and immediately invoked a large range of criticism (Hanan 2). In addition to the acceptance of the narrative paradigm by educators and critics in the discipline, there have been a multitude of published articles that utilize the method. The following information serves a brief summarization of the Literature Review section dedicated to Fisher's theory, and will further provide examples of the paradigm's legitimacy: The paradigm has been used as the theory framework for several articles, theses, and dissertations to cover films and television series (Bratbery; Eaves and Savoie), news media (Caldiero; McCartha), books (Wood), interrelationships (Hollihan and Riley), campaigns (Stutt), and historical movements (Owen) in addition to other studies. Its precedent as a usable framework for narrative analysis for a range of text and its ability to surpass any criticism from contemporary scholars proves its legitimacy.

Data Collection Procedures

The focus of this thesis is Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* and Walter Fisher's narrative paradigm. This study will utilize the narrative paradigm as a framework to answer the following research questions: If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is foreign and imagined, how is narrative probability and narrative fidelity achieved?; and, How does Guirgis persuade his audience through narrative probability and narrative fidelity?

In order to understand how Guirgis achieves narrative fidelity and narrative probability, supplementary texts, in addition to Guirgis's text, must be examined. An exploration of the biblical account of Judas Iscariot, through theologians' studies (Communication and Religion journals), and the Bible itself, is imperative in order to compare Guirgis's extended version of the biblical story. Studying fictitious accounts of Judas Iscariot in popular media will develop

previous, and present preconceived notions of Judas Iscariot. This is important to understand why the audience would be willing or adaptable to persuasion.

Understanding Guirgis's intentions and purpose of writing the text is important to understand his ideology underlying the narrative. Therefore, the researcher will include statements made by Guirgis (interviews and quotes included in the preface of the play). These statements are beneficial to the audience to understand the development of Guirgis's ideology, and to learn Guirgis's thought and writing process.

The literature gathered will be categorized into fiction and non-fiction. In other words, all biblical material, studies, research and the biblical account will be grouped together, and all other literature will be grouped. Within these two categories, they will be further broken down into subcategories:

I. Biblical account of Judas Iscariot

A. Journals

B. Biblical story of Judas Iscariot

- Separated by Gospel

II. Fictional representation of Judas Iscariot

B. Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*

1. The text *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*
2. Previous studies on Stephen Adly Guirgis's narrative
3. Studies of the portrayals of Judas Iscariot in popular media

Data Analysis of Supplementary Texts

Once the literature has been divided into categories, and subcategories, the researcher will look for common themes, concepts, and ideas emerging from the research. For example, the

theme of Judas's character is important to this study. Seen in the biblical account of Judas Iscariot, Carlson's study, and Yang's study, the terms "one of the twelve," and "the one who handed him over," are common phrases. These phrases represent the controversy amongst the interpretations of the biblical study of Judas's character. The journals often are biased towards one of these ideas; Judas is either seen as the villain, the traditional view of Judas, or as the tragic human figure, the modern interpretation of Judas.

As discussed in the Literature Review, the character of Judas Iscariot has been fictionalized in popular culture. It is arguable that the Judases in film can be arranged into four types: a traditional Judas, a modern Judas, a Christ-figure Judas, and a parabolic Judas. The researcher will read the supplementary texts; those that study the portrayal of Judas Iscariot in popular media, and determine which characterization of Judas the text assigns. The researcher will also determine whether the Judas represented in each modern text is presented as a "villain" or a "tragic figure."

The categorization of these studies is detrimental to this study in order to compare Guirgis's ideology to the ideologies of other artists (writers, directors, playwrights, etc) that have portrayed Judas in a fictional text. The audience compares the truths presented within a narrative to the truths the audience knows to be true from their experiences. Therefore, other texts that have formed the audiences' experiences must be studied to answer the research question: If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is foreign, imagined, how is narrative fidelity and narrative coherence achieved? After this analysis and evaluation of supplementary texts is accomplished, the reader will be aware of the historical progress of titles and roles given to Judas Iscariot, from biblical accounts to the media's interpretation of Judas.

Data Analysis of Guirgis's Text

Before beginning an in-depth analysis of Stephen Adly Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, the researcher will read the text thoroughly several times. Reading the text multiple times, without analyzing the form or function, will familiarize the researcher with the text, and allow specific passages, dialogue, and themes to resonate to the surface. By reading the text several times within a short time, the reader is more likely to grasp concepts and themes presented throughout the text, that may be overlooked if only read once.

Then the researcher will read the texts again, with the research questions in mind. A thorough narrative analysis will be achieved by systematically applying a narrative analysis through form identification and a functional analysis. As mentioned in the Literary Review, form identification is imperative to fully uncover and explore Guirgis's modern, extended version of the biblical story of Judas Iscariot. The researcher will analyze the form of the text by discussing Aristotle's five elements of dramatic action: plot, character, thought, diction, and spectacle, suggested by Oscar Brockett, theatre historian. The researcher will also identify the style and form/genre of the play. These are important elements of the narrative. It is through the form of the narrative where Guirgis relays his ideological views. The form, structure of the narrative is key in uncovering narrative probability and narrative fidelity. Both narrative fidelity and narrative probability must be present for persuasion to occur.

Once a thorough exploration of the form has been developed, it is important to apply a functional analysis. Following the example used by Eaves and Savoie in their article, "Big Brother: Merging Reality and Fiction: An Application of the Narrative Paradigm," the researcher examines the text's narrative probability and narrative fidelity, then concludes whether the text is persuasive, by shedding light on Fisher's theory's scope and utility. This is accomplished by

examining the text using the elements of Fisher's concepts of narrative coherence and narrative fidelity. Narrative probability is what constitutes a coherent story. Narrative fidelity is whether the narrative rings true with the stories that humans know to be true from experience (Fisher "Narration" 297).

A functional analysis will evaluate the narrative probability and narrative fidelity of Guirgis's text. The researcher will determine its narrative probability through a specific standardized set of qualifications. The narrative must keep the attention of the audience, create identity between the reader and characters within the narrative, transfer the reader to a new culture, time, and place, and arouse emotional response in the reader. In addition to evaluating the narrative probability of the text, a functional analysis includes an analysis of the narrative fidelity.

The audience accepts the truths posed by Guirgis by investing in the characters in the narrative, by observing the consequences of Judas's actions and the debate amongst the defendant and crown, by listening to the witnesses' accounts and seeing their actions, and by comparing the truths to the truths we know to be true from our own experiences. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is a narrative that exhibits both narrative probability and narrative fidelity. From analyzing the form and function of the narrative, the reader sees that the story is coherent and/or probable.

The quest of understanding life is a narrative quest. Humans are essentially storytellers (Fisher "Narration" 297). Stephen Adly Guirgis uses an era-melting narrative to explore Christian existentialism and the paradoxes of faith. A narrative analysis of Guirgis's text will provide an in-depth exploration of Guirgis's ideology and how it compares and contrasts to the biblical worldview in which the story of Judas Iscariot stems. Although Guirgis's character of

Judas is fictitious, the existential questions he raises are powerful and have been questioned since the beginning of time.

Chapter 4: Analysis & Discussion

This ain't your grandmother's Gospel.

-- Charlotte Stoudt, *The Village Voice*

In rehearsal rooms, in theatres across America, iconic figures have engaged in the heated debate that has continued throughout centuries. Judas and Jesus have run lines together, and Mother Teresa and Satan make small talk before Sigmund Freud and the others arrive (Lanes, Hoiles, and Payne 2). These are hypothetical scenes during the rehearsals for Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Guirgis has revived the story of Judas Iscariot:

Judas Iscariot feels alone. Vilified by all Christians for the last 2000 years for his betrayal of Jesus Christ to the Roman authorities for thirty pieces of silver. For that act and for his subsequent suicide he has allegedly been condemned to hell for all eternity. It is a story with which we are all familiar. Perhaps the time has come to reprieve? Many others had their sins washed away by Jesus; many others were given the opportunity to start again. And, are there not other figures that should bear their share of the blame? And where better a venue for such a case than in a courtroom delicately poised between heaven and hell: as the attorney for Judas's defense states, "This is Purgatory...I've got all day" (Lane, Hoiles, and Payne 2).

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot is a black comedy, courtroom drama, set in Purgatory called "Hope"—downtown New York. The trial is between God and the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth versus Judas Iscariot. Fabiana Aziza Cunningham, the agnostic defense lawyer, obtains a writ from the God she is not convinced exists, to appeal the case of Judas Iscariot. Egyptian lawyer Yusef El-Fayoumy, up from Hell—"Temporarily detained—a problem with my

papers” (Guirgis 14), represents the prosecution. Various characters take the stand to testify for and against Judas Iscariot. Outside of the courtroom, Judas sits in a catatonic state, in the ninth circle of Hell, uncommunicative since his suicide. Later it is discovered, that since his death, Judas is attended by Jesus Christ, only. The following is a charted description of the form of the play:

Act and Unit	Unit Type	Brief Summary	Type of Plot
1 A	Monologue	Henrietta Iscariot introduces protagonist, Judas Iscariot	Exposition
1 B	Scene	Gloria, angel, introduces setting, “Hope”/ Purgatory	Exposition
1 C	Scene	Setting, courtroom, is established	Exposition
1 D	Monologue	Saint Monica describes Judas’s current state	Exposition
1 E	Scene	Court case, God and the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth vs. Judas Iscariot,” is established	Exposition, Inciting Incident leading to a Dramatic Question
1 F	Scene	Introduced to characters on the jury	Exposition
1 G	Witness Testimony	Henrietta Iscariot is questioned by the defense and prosecutor	Complication
1 H	Flashback	Conversation between, adolescent, Judas, and Henrietta	Complication
1 I	Flashback	Childhood recollections of Judas and Matthias of Galilee	Complication
1 J	Witness Testimony	Mother Teresa is introduced as a witness	Complication
1 K	Scene	Saint Peter and Saint Matthew testify their experiences as disciples	Complication
1 L (1)	Witness Testimony	Mother Teresa is questioned by the defense and the prosecutor	Complication
1 L (2)	Appearance	Sister Glenna appears to	

		define “Despair”	
1 M	Witness Testimony	Simon the Zealot testifies, questioned by the defense and prosecutor	Complication
1 N (1)	Witness Testimony	Satan takes to the stand	Complication
1 N (2)	Flashback	Satan describes his interaction with Judas at Bathsheba’s Bar and Grill	Complication
1 N (3)	Witness Testimony	Judge Littlefield announces a recess, end of Act 1	Complication
2 A	Scene	Saint Monica and Mary Magdalene converse, relationship between Jesus and Judas is developed	Complication
2 B	Witness Testimony	Sigmund Freud testifies, questioned by defense and prosecutor	Complication
2 C	Witness Testimony	Caiaphas the Elder testifies, questioned by defense and prosecutor	Complication
2 D	Monologue	Saint Thomas describes Judas’s character, and Judas’s relationship with Jesus	Complication
2 E	Video	Surveillance footage, used as evidence, is shown to the jury	Complication
2 F	Witness Testimony	Pontius Pilate testifies, questioned by the defense and prosecutor	Complication
2 G	Witness Testimony	Satan testifies, questioned by the defense and the prosecutor	Complication
2 H (1)	Monologue	Jesus speaks of his current state	Climax
2 H (2)	Scene	Jesus and Judas speak, current state of Judas	Climax, Peak of Intensity, Crisis
2 I	Monologue	Butch Honeywell talks to a catatonic Judas, revealing the verdict	Resolution
2 J	Scene	Jesus washes Judas’s feet	Resolution,

			Obligatory Scene
--	--	--	------------------

Form Identification

It is necessary to identify the form of the narrative, before analyzing the function. The functional analysis uses Walter R. Fisher's elements of narrative probability and narrative fidelity to evaluate the level of persuasiveness. Walter R. Fisher does not provide a method of form identification. Oscar Brockett, theatre historian, suggests the form of the play to be categorized by Aristotle's parts of a drama: plot, character, thought, diction, spectacle, and music (Brockett 31). This study considers these parts within this chapter, except music.

Plot

The plot is a summary of the play's incidents. It is the overall structure of the play: beginning, middle, and end. The beginning of a play establishes the place, occasion, characters, mood, theme, and scheme of probability (Brockett 31). The beginning of the play, then, involves "exposition," setting forth information about earlier events, identity of characters, and the present situation (Brockett 32). Act 1, Unit A to Act 1, Unit F is exposition. The audience learns, right away, through Henrietta Iscariot's monologue, that Judas Iscariot has died, and there is debate of where he is:

Henrietta Iscariot: On the day of my son's birth I was infused with a love beyond all measures and understanding...The world tells me that God is Heaven and that my son is in Hell (Guirgis 10).

In Act 1, Unit B, the setting is established, a courtroom, and the primary characters are introduced. In Act 1, Unit D, the audience learns, from Saint Monica's monologue, the current state of Judas Iscariot:

“I sat with Judas Iscariot for three days...He couldn’t look at me. Or he looked through me. I couldn’t tell. His eyes were empty. He barely breathed...On the third day, I remembered how Jesus had said that God has the biggest love for the least of his creatures—and Judas was the leastest creature I had ever seen”

(Guirgis 19).

The inciting incident sets the main action into motion. The inciting incident happens in 1E (Act 1, Unit E):

Judge Littlefield: *Next Case!*

Bailiff: “*God and the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth versus Judas Iscariot.*”

Judge Littlefield: Bailiff!!!!

Bailiff: She got a writ signed by God, sir.

Saint Monica: *Signed, Sealed, Delivered, mothahf--kah! Peace!!*

Cunningham: Here is the writ, Your Honor—note the signature at the bottom

(Guirgis 20).

Cunningham has presented the court with a writ signed by Saint Peter at the Gates of Heaven (Guirgis 12). She wishes to appeal the case of Judas Iscariot. The case is approved, and the court is in session.

This inciting incident leads directly to a major dramatic question around which the play is organized: Does Judas belong in Heaven or in Hell? A more complex question is formed: If God is all-forgiving, then why if Judas condemned to an eternity of hell?” (Brantley). This question is presented through the testimonies of the witnesses and Cunningham, the defense lawyer.

Although the verdict is given, this question is never answered. Instead, it raises more questions:

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot is not about one man's guilt and another's forgiveness; rather that through such a contemporary dramatic exploration of an ancient debate about celebrate figures, we as an audience are able to re-examine our own betrayals. Our own personal lapses of belied and who we need to look to for forgiveness (Lane, Hoiles, and Payne 2).

The middle of the play narrows the possibilities of action and creates suspense. As characters and situations are established and complications arise, the alternatives are progressively reduced (Brockett 33). The complications occur from Act 1, Unit G to Act 2, Unit G. It is in the witness statements and flashbacks that the audience discovers things that were not previously known. These discoveries include facts, persons, and self. In Act 2, Unit E facts are discovered. Cunningham introduces exhibit A-fourteen, ancient surveillance footage of an event that occurred twenty-four hours after Jesus' arrest:

Judas: I made a mistake, please, please, you don't understand, man—

Pilate: I understand perfectly. You sold out your bother...

Judas: I'm recanting—

Pilate: You can't recant! (Guirgis 81).

Before this scene, the audience is not aware that Judas tried to recant. This discovery is a complication. Audience's question: Was Judas remorseful for his betrayal?

In Act 1, Unit N (2), Judas explains to Satan that he betrayed the Messiah, and is worried about going to Hell, his eternal damnation. He questions his consequence:

Satan: ...But hey, I wouldn't worry about going to Hell.

Judas: Even if I did something, perhaps, a little controversial?

Satan: God understands.

Judas: Yeah, but, don't choices have, like, consequences?

Satan: C'mon, you really think we have a choice?

Judas: Well, don't we? (Guirgis 54).

This conversation unveils a complication that further examines the dramatic question of the play. These complications or discoveries are not resolved until the end, when the verdict is given.

The final portion of the play, often called the resolution, extends from the crisis to the final curtain (Brockett 35). The crisis begins in Act 2, Unit H (1) in Jesus' monologue.

Jesus: Right now, I am in Fallujah. I am in Darfur. I am on Sixty-third and Park having dinner with Ellen Barkin and Ron Perelman...Right now, I'm on Lafayette and Astor waiting to hit you up for change so I can get high. I'm taking a walk through the Rose Garden with George Bush. I'm helping Donald Rumsfeld get a good night's sleep...I was in that cave with Osama, and on that plane with Mohamed Atta...And what I want you to *know* it that your work has barely begun. And what I want you to *trust* is the efficacy of divine love if practiced consciously. And what I need you to *believe* is that if you hate who I love, you do not know me at all. And make no mistake, "Who I Love" is every last one. I *am* every last one. People ask me: Where are you? Where are you? ...Verily I ask of you to ask yourself: Where are *you*? Where are *you*?

Judas (Guirgis 101).

Although this is presented as a monologue, Judas is present. This is the first time in the play that Jesus speaks. The audience is introduced to the Truth, because Jesus is the Truth. An interesting choice, made by Guirgis, occurs. The stage directions state: "*Jesus makes his way to Judas. He speaks to us*" (Guirgis 101). For the first time in the play, the audience becomes a part of the

scene. The play goes from individual to universal. The climax continues into the next scene, Act 2, Unit H (2). Judas and Jesus converse about Judas's decision and current state. The audience learns that Judas blames Jesus for the betrayal. Jesus begs Judas to love him:

Jesus: ...Please take my hands, Judas. Please.

Judas: Where are they?

Jesus: Right here.

Judas: I can't see them.

Jesus: They're right here.

Judas: *Where are you going?!*

Jesus: I'm right here...

Judas: I can't hurt

Jesus: Please love me, Judas (Guirgis 107).

After the conversation between Jesus and Judas, Judas reverts to his frozen catatonic state. Following this intense, heavy climax, two obligatory scenes follow. The first is Act 2, Unit I. Butch Honeywell informs Judas of the verdict:

"I'm, uh, Butch Honeywell. I was the foreman of the jury at your trial there...and...well, we found you guilty, Mister Iscariot...I'm real sorry about that..." (Guirgis 107).

The final obligatory scene is portrayed through a stage direction:

Jesus sighs, takes off his shirt, plunges it in the bucket, rinses it, and begins to wash Judas's feet, Jesus washes meticulously and with care. He washes. And washes. Perhaps the water is mixed with tears (Guirgis 111).

In these final units, Jesus and Judas come face-to-face. Judas comes to grips with his implications. The vital information is released, that Judas is guilty, but Jesus still loves him, and wants Judas to love Him still.

Character and Characterization

The second element of a play is *character*. Character is primary material which plots are created, for incidents that are developed mainly through speech and behavior of dramatic personages. There are four levels of characterization: physical, social, psychological, and moral (Brockett 37-38).

The list of characters include: Satan, Gloria, Mother Teresa, Judge Littlefield, Caiaphas the Elder, Saint Matthew, Loretta, Mary Magdelene, Bailiff (Julius of Outer Mongolia), Simon the Zealot, Sigmund Freud, Saint Thomas, Pontius Pilate, Uncle Pino, Matthias of Galilee, Saint Peter, Jesus of Nazareth, Judas Iscariot, Saint Monica, Henrietta Iscariot, Sister Glenna, Butch Honeywell, Fabiana Aziza Cunningham, Yusef El-Fayoumy, and Soldiers.

Although the protagonist is Judas Iscariot, the story goes beyond his focus. Through the testimonials of the characters, the audience learns of the sins committed by each character. This leads to a subconscious comparison of the characters and Judas Iscariot. This is paralleled by the structure of the play. The opening scene is a monologue presented by Henrietta Iscariot, Judas's mother. She shares her grief of her son's death. Therefore, the play opens with the question of Judas's damnation. The play concludes with a monologue by Butch Honeywell, one of the jury members. Butch explains why he is in Hell with Judas. Guirgis uses his characters simply as pawns to address larger existential questions in the chess game of life (please excuse the cliché).

The physical characterization includes basic facts like age, sex, size, and color. Guirgis does not supply all this information, in the text. However, many of the characters are historical

figures or biblical figures. This being said, the audience has a general, preconceived knowledge of the characters—their biographies. For example, many people are aware that Mother Teresa served as a missionary in Calcutta, India, was female, and died at age 87. However, Guirgis includes stage directions, and a brief description of Mother Teresa's appearance: "*Mother Teresa hobbles up to the stand with a cane. She's old, but tough. She wears her signature sari, and a cross around her neck. She can hear hardly at all*" (Guirgis 32).

The social characterization includes a character's economic status, profession or trade, religion, family relationship—all the factors that place them in his or her environment (Brockett 37). Specifically, in this play, the social characterization is important. The characters are in a courtroom, located in Purgatory, where characters' eternal living or damnation is determined, Heaven or Hell. For every character, Guirgis informs the audience of their profession and religion. For example, El-Fayoumy introduces Caiaphas the Elder as, "...High Priest of Sanhedrin, Hello to you" (Guirgis 67). Another example is the characterization of Cunningham, the defense:

Judge Littlefield: You ever met God, Cunningham?

Cunningham: I don't know that I believe in God (Guirgis 22).

The religion of each character has several implications and determines their argument either for, or against Judas Iscariot.

The psychological characterization reveals a character's habitual responses, attitudes, desires, and motivations, likes and dislikes—the inner workings of the mind (Brockett 37). The psychological characterization of Judas is presented through Judas's description of himself (what Judas says about Judas):

"Been a while since I heard something nice" (Guirgis 53).

“I’m mildly afraid of going to Hell” (Guirgis 54).

“Minor incident last night—a miscalculation on my part—nothing serious” (Guirgis 54).

“Even if I did something, perhaps, a little controversial?” (Guirgis 54).

“I wasted my prime, man. And then I wasted my prime after my prime” (Guirgis 56).

“I made a mistake, please, please, you don’t understand, man—“ (Guirgis 81).

“I’m recanting—“ (Guirgis 81).

“And don’t you get that I don’t f--kin’ care?!” (Guirgis 103).

“I’ll tell you what I know: I watched you trip over you own dusty feet to heal the sick, the blind, the lame, the unclean—*any two-bit stranger stubbed their f--kin’ toe!* When some lowly distant cousin—too cheap to buy enough wine for his own f--kin’ wedding—suddenly runs out of booze—no problem, you just “presto change-o”—*and it was f--kin’ Miller time in ol’ Canaan again, wasn’t it, bro?!* But when I f--kin’ needed you—*where the f--k were you, huh?!*” (Guirgis 104).

“You forgave Peter and bullsh-t Thomas—you knocked Paul of Tarsus off a horse—you raised Lazarus from the *f--kin’ dead*—but me? Me? Your “heart”?... *What about me??!* *What about me, Jesus?!* *Huh?!* You just, you just—I made a mistake! And if that was wrong, then you should have told me! And if a broken heart wasn’t sufficient reason to hang, THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME THAT, TOO!” (Guirgis 104).

“All I know is that you broke me unfixable—“ (Guirgis 104).

“I don’t love you” (Guirgis 106).

“They should have buried me standing up—‘cuz I been on my knees my whole life!” (Guirgis 106).

“Why...didn’t you make me good enough...so that you could’ve loved me?” (Guirgis 106).

“I can’t hurt...” (Guirgis 107).

“I can’t” (Guirgis 107).

Learning Judas’s psychological characterization through an analysis of Judas’s description of himself can be misleading. This is because the character of Judas is only presented once, in his current state. The character of Judas is introduced in flashbacks. Therefore, it is impossible for the audience to witness any habits or qualities of the character. His psychological characterization is better revealed through the description of Judas from the other characters, the testimonies. Judas’s psychological characterization is also revealed through what the other characters say; through what other characters say about him, and what he does, or what the characters have seen him do:

Judge Littlefield: “Your client is Judas Iscariot! Your client sold out the son of God, for Chrissakes!”

... Judas Iscariot committed the one unforgivable sin. Everybody knows it”

... And then he did the world a favor and hung himself!” (Guirgis 15).

Saint Monica: “He looked f--kin’ retarded, he wouldn’t talk or nuthin’” (Guirgis 18).

Saint Monica: “His eyes were empty. He barely breathed. He was like a catatonic statue of a former human being. And I detected sadness from him. Paralyzing, immobilizing, overwhelming sadness. His sadness ran through him like a river that had froze up and died and no one lived there no more” (Guirgis 19).

El-Fayoumy: “...dripping with anticipation to defend with marvelous cunning and great relish the Kingdom of Heaven and Earth and your great sir-ness against the Satan-spawned traitor Judas Iscariot” (Guirgis 20).

Judge Littlefield: “Your friend Judas? He had Jesus for three years! Think about that, Cunningham. Three years in the foxhole with the best friend ya ever had, and then he shot him in the back for a pack of Kools” (Guirgis 23).

Cunningham: “My client is catatonic...” (Guirgis 23).

Judge Littlefield: “Someone who was aware of his own self-inflicted erosion of the capacity to be filled by Grace...Someone too prideful to ask for forgiveness even in the face of the fiery furnace. Or maybe he don’t bother askin’, ‘cuz he knows he don’t deserve it!” (Guirgis 23).

Gloria: “So anyways—about Judas, not a lot is known except that he was chosen to be an Apostle, he betrayed Jesus, and then he hung his-self. Not a lot to go on—especially when we’re meant to rely on facts” (Guirgis 26).

El-Fayoumy: “You were a single parent raising many children, Judas being your eldest, and the man of the family” (Guirgis 28).

Henrietta Iscariot: “*Selfish boy, you will come to no good!!!*” (Guirgis 29).

Mother Teresa: “Judas, he succumb to despair. The music of God’s love and God’s grace kept playing, but he, he made himself hard of hearing—like me, no? I need this earphone device to hear you, jess? Without them, I can no hear nothing. Judas, he threw his earphones away—and dat is very sad, but dat is what he chose and dat is what happened” (Guirgis 39).

Cunningham: “Was Judas Iscartio a zealot?”

Simon the Zealot: “Well, he didn’t go to the meetings or nuthin’, but, yeah, he was pretty much a zealot if you ax me” (Guirgis 42).

Simon the Zealot: “Personally, I think Judas was trying to throw Jesus in the deep end of the pool—make him swim.” (Guirgis 44)

Cunningham: “Judas tried to help Jesus?”

Simon the Zealot: “I believe so. Yes” (Guirgis 45).

El-Fayoumy: “...you accepted that you were created in God’s Image, whereas Judas Iscariot—he sought to create God in his own image—God as earthly avenger, which was not God’s way” (Guirgis 46).

Satan: “It seems like you preferred to be alone” (Guirgis 51).

Satan: “I can see you’re a man of wealth and substance” (Guirgis 52).

Satan: “I’d say that if this clown we’re talking about betrayed the Messiah, that, probably, *“it would’ve been better for that man if he had never been born”* (Guirgis 55).

Cunningham: “In your expert opinion, Doctor Freud, was Judas Iscariot a psychotic?”

Sigmund Freud: “Without question.” (Guirgis 62).

Sigmund Freud: “Number One, you cannot conjure or “bring about” mental illness. Number Two, any God who punishes the mentally ill is not worth worshipping. And, Number Three: “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”—the person who could have prevented this tragedy was Jesus, not Judas. He chose not to” (Guirgis 63).

Caiaphas the Elder: “It was Judas who approached me at the temple, not the other way around” (Guirgis 67).

El-Fayoumy: “...But in your opinion, was Judas Iscariot “loyal”?”

Caisphas the Elder: “Obviously not.”

El-Fayoumy: “Was he “honest”?”

Caiaphas the Elder: “No.”

El-Fayoumy: “...Was he obedient?”

Caiaphas the Elder: “To his own will and desires—yes. I believe that he was” (Guirgis 71).

Caiaphas the Elder: “He served a necessary purpose, but as a fellow Jew, I confess that he disgusted me” (Guirgis 71).

Saint Thomas: “Judas was the kinda guy—at least with me—where, one minute he’s your friend, and the next minute, he’s making fun of you in front of everybody. He used to like to say that the reason Jesus had to do the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes was because I ate all the food when no one was looking. Stuff like that. But then other times, he could be real nice, like, once we were partnered together to go into town to heal people and cast out demons, and well, I had some problems that day—everyone I tried to heal ended up getting worse...He healed them—he really did—and that tell me his faith was genuine...Jesus liked him, likd him a lot, in fact. Judas was right up there in the top three with Mary Magdalene and Peter...Judas was loyal to a fault. Obsessively loyal, even. Judas would have taken on The Devil and his entire army, one against a thousand, if he had to, and he woulda done it with relish. Other people say Judas did it ‘cuz he knew the ship was sinking and he was trying to get himself a nut to have something to fall back on. Lissen: Judas was not a “fall-back” guy, he was one hundred percent “fall forward” (Guirgis 78-80).

Cunningham: “You bear the responsibility for the death of Jesus Christ—not Judas Iscariot, but you—Isn’t that correct, Pontius Pilate?” (Guirgis 83).

Pilate: “Judas Iscariot had no Remorse—His Fear left no room for it. His Fear was one hundred percent Ego-Driven and Self-Serving. One hundred percent panic. Zero percent remorse” (Guirgis 91).

Satan: “Your client succumbed to Despair—” (Guirgis 99).

Jesus: “Where’s your *heart* in all of this, Judas? You think you were with me for any other reason than that?! It was your heart, Judas. You were *all heart*. You were my heart! Don’t you know that?!” (Guirgis 103).

Jesus: “Judas—What if I were to tell you that you are not here? That you are with me in my Kingdom even now, and that you have been there since the morning of my Ascension and that you have never left?” (Guirgis 104).

Butch Honeywell: “I was the foreman of the jury at your trial there...and...well, we found you guilty, Mister Iscariot...” (Guirgis 107).

Butch Honeywell: “You cashed in silver, Mister Iscariot, but me? I threw away Gold...That’s a fact” (Guirgis 111).

Due to the varied personages of Judas, as described by the other characters, it is difficult for the audience to perceive the character’s true nature; the information presented about Judas is scattered, in fragments, throughout the play. Also, there are several contradictory statements given about Judas.

The moral characterization is apt to be used in serious plays, like tragedies. All human action has some ethical standard. Moral decisions differentiate amongst characters, since the choice they make when faced with a moral crisis shows whether they are selfish, hypocritical, and honest etc. Within a courtroom context, it is easier for Guirgis to reveal each character’s ethical makeup. An example of strong moral characterization is the character Caiaphas the Elder:

Cunningham: ...Judas Iscariot, who came forward in the face of this “great threat,” is in your eyes not a patriot, but a traitor. A traitor who, in your words, “disgusted you.” Why is that, Caiaphas?

Caiaphas the Elder: Because he handed Jesus over for money.

Cunningham: And why did you hand Jesus over, Caiaphas?

Caiaphas the Elder: The words and deeds of Jesus were leading towards a rebellion—and the price of rebellion under Roman rule was a bloodbath. A massacre, Counselor. So I determined that it were better to have one man dead than a thousand—that's why (Guirgis 74).

In the face of moral dilemma, Caiaphas comes across hypocritical. When Cunningham questions the difference between Judas's betrayal and Caiaphas's betrayal, the line is blurry. Caiaphas fails to recognize his act as a betrayal, but is adamant that Judas is unforgivable. Another example of a strong moral characterization, is the character of Pontius Pilate:

Pontius Pilate: You can say what you want to, think what you want to, but them Jews was fixin' to pitch a fit until that boy was served up for lunch like chicken in the skillet! And they had the numbers on us that weekend—two hundred thousand strong converging on the city for they High Holidays and ready to rumble at the drop! I did what I had to do to preserve the damn peace! Why?! 'cuz that was my damn job! I did my job! I did my damn job and now you wanna call me a liar?! Question my veracity and my character?! I am a Roman, lady! One hundred percent, 24/7, we never close! (Guirgis 89).

When Pilate takes the stand, and the defense lawyer, Cunningham, interrogates him, he argues that he sentenced Jesus to be crucified to keep the peace, and that is what differentiates himself from Judas. He defends his own honor, and defends his (im)moral decision.

Thought

The third element of a play is *thought*. It includes themes, the arguments, the overall meaning, focus, or significance of the action. In thought, a play is both general and specific.

Thus, the general topic, or theme, serves as a point of focus around which the events cluster, while the specifics of the story give concreteness to ideas that would otherwise be considered too abstract. The general and specific subjects of the play are related to the concepts of universality and individuality (Brockett 40).

The thought, within the play, is religious in nature. Guirgis's play is infused with themes of guilt and redemption. He explores the timeless debate between divine mercy and free will. Guirgis contemplates the consequences of choice and the limitations on forgiveness, between the divine and humankind, and forgiveness amongst humans. These themes are universal and timeless, and enable the play to communicate with audiences, even if centuries have passed. There are also individualistic themes are made known through various elements within the play. It has many elements that depart from the normal experience, disallowing the story of Judas Iscariot from becoming overly familiar. These elements include Guirgis's unique characterization, dialogue, and plot.

The unique aspect of this play is that Judas is never abandoned, sentenced but not abandoned. In many popular and modern interpretations of Judas, he is sentenced to Hell and is to be ignored for eternity. However, this play is unique in showing that the love of Christ transcends Judas's active betrayal. In the end, Jesus does not forsake Judas; Jesus still loves Judas and is by his side, even in the ninth circle of Hell.

The significance of the play is implied. Guirgis uses a courtroom setting to present the argument between divine mercy and free will. He uses the defense, prosecutor, and witnesses to present intellectually stimulating arguments. These arguments reveal Guirgis's knowledge of Christian theology and its contradictions. Guirgis involved James Martin, a senior Jesuit Priest,

as a theological advisor during the writing, rehearsals, and performance of LABrynth Theatre Company's original production of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Martin stated:

[Stephen Adly Guirgis] ...had stumbled upon a theological conundrum that has challenged theologians, philosophers, and saints for centuries. Doesn't God, who is kind and merciful, forgive every sin? How could a merciful God create hell?

Theological questions were foremost in the playwright's mind, and our conversations ranged from the broader questions about grace, forgiveness, and despair to more detailed inquiries into the history of the individual characters in the drama.

After all his research, Stephen wanted to hear what I thought about who killed Jesus. The responsibility for Jesus' death was the underlying theme of his play, and the answer to the question of who was responsible would help us unlock the riddle of Judas Iscariot.

But the Gospels are murky about precisely what lay behind the death of Jesus. For the evangelists were not as concerned with providing a historically accurate picture as modern readers might assume. What [they] were intent on providing was not historical truth but something more elusive, and far more important for the early Christians: the religious meaning of the events in question...

...Stephen's use of the trial device would show the audience not only how but also why the death of Jesus occurred, shedding light on a notoriously dark topic. As I watched Stephen deal with the demands placed upon these scenes – the requirement to sort through so much history, the artistic need to keep the interest

of the audience ... I was impressed with what he was able to accomplish (Lane, Hoiles, and Payne 22).

This statement says that the church was not concerned with history, but rather the religious meaning behind Jesus's death. Guirgis illustrates this belief by having the characters of Pontius Pilate and Caiaphas the Elder be blamed for the death of Jesus Christ. In the characters' witness testimonies, Pilate and Caiaphas defend themselves, and attempt to differentiate their character from Judas's.

Diction

Diction serves several purposes, to: impart information, direct attention, reveal themes and ideas of a play, establish tone and probability, and establish tempo and rhythm (Brockett 43-44). Guirgis uses a realistic dialogue that retains the rhythms, tempos, and basic vocabulary of colloquial speech. Each character has a New York "wit" about them. The language assists in identifying each character and their particular setting. Monica, known as the Patron saint of verbal abuse, uses the language to create a New York atmosphere. The flow of eloquence forces the audience to believe in Monica's strength, and offers comedic tidbits in the darkly saturated play:

"My name is MONICA—better known to you mere mortals as SAINT Monica. Yeah, dass right, SAINT—as in "better not don't get up in *my* grill 'cuz I'll mess your sh-t up, 'cuz I'm a Saint and I got mad saintly connects," okay? You ever ate some suchis down the Santa Monica Pier? Well dass *my* boulevard and *my* pier, and dass all I gotta say about that—" (Guirgis 17).

Saint Monica is given the attitude and voice of a streetwalker. Satan is given the personality of a New York Mobster:

“Don’t tell me what’s unacceptable—Those two court officers were mine, Frank—their souls safe in Hell, safe and secure! What? I don’t got enough to contend with?—*now* I gotta deal with God cruisin’ the barnyards of Hell poaching condemned poultry like some kind of silver-fox-tailed thief in the f--kin’ night?? This is bullsh-t, Frank, and you know it—and I’m not leaving here this time without my satisfaction—so you better do something about it right f--king now!”
(Guirgis 92).

Like all the other elements in the play, the diction uses the familiar and unfamiliar, the typical and individual. Guirgis uses the accepted, New York colloquial vernacular. The audience has heard this language before. However, this diction becomes individual because of the characters, saints and sinners. The use of familiar language gives clarity, but the strange and unusual adaption of saints using this language adds variety.

Spectacle

The visual elements of the play are the dramatist’s principal means of expression. The spectacle serves several functions to give information, aid characterization, establish the scheme of probability, and establish the mood and atmosphere (Brockett 48).

The spectacle gives information by establishing where and when the action occurs. The primary setting in Guirgis’s text is a courtroom in Purgatory: “Between Heaven and Hell—there is another place. This place: Hope. Hope—is located right over here in downtown Purgatory” (Guirgis 10). Although the primary setting is Purgatory, or Hope, it is implied that little hope, if any, does exist. Gloria, an angel working in the courtroom, describes Hope:

Now Hope, it changes with the times, but has stood always as God’s gift to the last of his children. It is said that every civilization rearranged the cosmic

furniture differently. In biblical times, Hope was an Oasis in the desert. In medieval days, a shack free of Plague. Today, Hope is no longer a place for contemplation—litigation being the preferred new order of the day” (Guirgis 11).

Within Guirgis’s created Purgatory, or Hope, there is doubt. The setting, and constant litigation, magnifies the flaws of the characters, humanity over the centuries. The characters in Purgatory are waiting for their eternal sentencing. They have committed acts that society deems unacceptable, like suicide or abortion. For example, Judge Littlefield hanged himself on the battlefield in northern Georgia (Guirgis 24), and the defense attorney, Cunningham, had several abortions. Although these characters have hope for their futures, there is a shadow of doubt that their flaws or mistakes will ultimately lead them to an eternity in Hell:

Judge Littlefield: My papers are pending—I’ll be up there any day now.

Cunningham: Your papers have been pending wince 1864, Your Honor, that’s a hundred and forty years—” (Guirgis 24).

The characters’ flaws parallel Judas’s betrayal; they are in Purgatory because one major sin is preventing them from entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

The spectacle aids characterization by establishing social factors. Although costumes are not heavily established, Guirgis does, specifically, project the social aspects of characters, through costume. For example, Satan is present in two scenes. In both scenes, his clothing is mentioned. In the first Act, Judas asks Satan to switch shirts with him:

Judas: C’mon, man—switch shirts—switch shirts. We’re buds now, friends an’ shit—I’ll let you be my wingman... Yo, I dig this shirt, what is it? Silk?

Satan: From Cappadocia (Guirgis 53).

The switching of shirts, arguably, is symbolic of Judas belonging to Satan, or becoming “un-Christ-like.”

Style

Style is the quality, which results from a characteristic mode of expression or method of presentation (Brockett 57). The work of each playwright is distinctive because each perceives the human condition from a somewhat different point of view, and must find ways to communicate his vision to others (Brockett 59). The term stylization is used to define anything that deviates from realism (Brockett 60).

Guirgis has a distinctive voice. Specifically, in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, Guirgis uses several methods to communicate his vision to the audience that deviates from realism. He creates a unity of style; there is a consistency in the stylistic elements in the production.

In his time-bending, seriocomically (serious and comic) imagined world between Heaven and Hell, Guirgis creates the dialogue of historical people, infamous figures, and fictitious characters. In order to make sense of this, Guirgis uses a non-linear narrative to structure *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. He utilizes flashbacks, direct address to the audience, traditional and realistic scenes, freezes, and video elements. The plot—dialogue and action—flows seamlessly between these types of storytelling.

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot is a two-act play. In the text, a page is devoted to the title of each act: Act 1, and Act 2. On each of these two pages, there is a quote, written in Latin: Act 1 states, “Domine adiuva incredulitatem meam,” meaning, “Lord, help my unbelief!”; and Act 2 states, “Sic deus dilexit mundum,” meaning, “God so delighted in the world.”

Stylistically, Guirgis does not break the acts into scenes. The researcher refers to each “dramatic act” within the main act as a “unit.” The style of this contemporary play demands an

easy transition between the different realities. The structure of the play centers on the trial; the courtroom, then, is the primary setting. The basic trial structure forwards the play and dictates the structure of the play—calling witnesses, cross-examinations, addresses to the jury, etc. There are also other “spaces” utilized by the characters: The Bathsheba Bar and Grill, an interrogation room, an assumed entrance to both Heaven and Hell (never seen by the audience), and the ninth circle of Hell where Judas resides. The transitions between these realities are completed without interruption; the audience is transferred between these realities, without an explanation, through specific lighting choices. Guirgis goes as far as to script the transmission between Act 1 and Act 2:

Judge Littlefield: Meal break! Fifteen minutes!

El-Fayoumy: Fabiana, free for lunch?

Gavel bangs. Lights fade.

Cross-face to Judas’s lair. Jesus is there with his bucket, alone (Guirgis 56).

Form of Play

The Last Days of Judas Iscariot is a black comedy, or tragicomedy. According to Oscar Brockett, a tragicomedy is synonymous with melodrama. The characters in Guirgis’s play are completely sympathetic or antipathetic. There are characters that are simple-minded and provide comic relief. El-Fayoumy, the prosecution, represents the comic relief, through his “brown-nosing” ways, and his flamboyant personality:

El-Fayoumy: Yes. Hello Mother! Yes. Can you hear me now?

Mother Teresa: Jess.

El-Fayoumy (*much softer*): How about now?

Mother Teresa: Jess.

El-Fayoumy: How about that?

Mother Teresa: ... You are tricking me, no?

El-Fayoumy: Yes! Yes! I was tricking!

Mother Teresa (*playfully*): Bad boy.

El-Fayoumy (*playing back*): Very bad! A scandal! Yes! I know (Guirgis 34).

The characters do not grow or change, as they would in a tragedy. This is because the moral code is established at the beginning of the play, or when each character is introduced, and it remains constant throughout the play. Each character reveals their ethical and moral code.

The action of the melodrama develops a threat against the protagonist, Judas Iscariot. It shows the entanglement in a web of circumstance, and his eventual rescue from his eternal damnation. Judas's rescue occurs in Act 2, Unit H (2) when Jesus visits him in the ninth realm of Hell. Although Judas has been sentenced to Hell, Jesus still tells him that he loves him and that he can still choose to be His (Guirgis 105). Like many melodramas, the protagonist's rescue does not come until the end.

Melodramas have a happy ending, where good characters are rescued, and evil characters are detected and punished. Because of the settings—Hell, Heaven, and Purgatory—it is easy for the audience to determine the sympathetic characters from the antipathetic characters. Those in Hell (Satan), are evil, and those from Heaven (Mother Teresa), are good. Many would argue that *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* does not exhibit a happy ending. In the end, Judas reverts into his catatonic state. However, in the final unit, Jesus is seen washing Judas's feet. This scene represents Jesus's unflinching love for Judas; Jesus does not forsake Judas. In that sense, this is a happy ending.

Summary of Form Identification

This section provides a preamble to the functional analysis. The researcher identified the form by describing the parts of a play (plot, character, thought, diction, and spectacle), as defined by Aristotle. With a strong understanding of the narrative and its purpose, the researcher can now perform a functional analysis.

Functional Analysis

Narrative Probability

Narrative probability is what constitutes a coherent story (Fisher 297). From analyzing the form of the narrative, the story is coherent. The story fulfills the four narrative functions: keeping the attention of the audience; creating an identity between the reader and the characters within the narrative; transfers the reader to a new culture, time, and place; and arouses an emotional response in the reader.

Guirgis creates a narrative that holds the attention of the audience. Guirgis's play has the characteristics and narrative elements to "energize the audience." In order to gain and keep the attention of the audience, the narrative does not need to be true. However, the narrative needs to be credible (Kuypers 122). There is little truth in this play. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is an extension of the biblical story of Judas Iscariot. By combining the known and the unknown, Guirgis demands the answers to major theological and philosophical questions that have been posed since the beginning of time. These questions revolve around the play's theme of guilt and redemption.

Guirgis uses the classic narrative format: set-up, conflict, resolution to hold the audience's attention. He focuses on the conflict. People love the controversial and the dramatic. The audience is taken on a journey, a full court case of the most notorious traitor in history.

Guirgis frames the narrative with the theme of forgiveness. In the opening scene, his mother, Henrietta Iscariot, says, "The world tells me that God is in Heaven and that my son is in Hell. I tell the world the one thing I know: If my son is in Hell, then there is no Heaven—because if my son sits in Hell, *there is no God*" (Guirgis 10). The stage directions for the final scene say, "JESUS *sighs, takes off his shirt, plunges it in a bucket, rinses it, and begins to wash JUDAS's feet. JESUS washes meticulously and with care. He washes. And washes. Perhaps the water is mixed with tears*" (Guirgis 111).

Guirgis creates identity between the audience and the characters within the play. The strongest, and most controversial element of Guirgis's narrative style is his use of vulgar vernacular to show immediacy of the characters, both saints and sinners. Like Jeremy McCarter from *The New York Sun* said, "Guirgis may be the most extravagantly talented, maddeningly wayward playwright in America... To put it clinically, he is a master of American urban vernacular; to put it as one of his characters might put it, the sh-t is real" (Guirgis). This language creates a rhythmically charged feeling that takes the characters outside of their traditional religiously iconic representations (Woltz 9). As previously mentioned, Guirgis gives Saint Monica the attitude of a street-walker, Saint Peter the voice of a dockworker, and Satan the lifestyle of a mobster—Gucci suit and all.

Guirgis successfully creates a narrative that takes the audience out of their time and culture and places them into another culture: "People understand the world based on their own experiences and culture, meaning that they often find it difficult to understand different culture and time" (Kuypers 122). Guirgis breaks down barriers to understanding by transporting the reader into a different time, place, and culture. Guirgis creates a narrative, although imaginary, that is able to cross time and culture because it utilizes universal trans-cultural messages of a

shared reality and meaning. In his narrative, the constant debate between divine mercy and human free will is a staple. Religion is a concept understood/questioned by humans in every era.

Guirgis arouses an emotional response in the audience by tapping into their values and needs. Guirgis in the Introduction expands on his recognition that humanity needs the spiritual: "I do know that I am in continuous need of the Spiritual and that I usually go to great lengths to avoid it. And I think I'm not alone in that. And I think a connection to the Spiritual is essential to us as individuals and to the world as a whole. I think our survival depends on it" (Guirgis viii). By creating a play that explores his own theology and questions, Guirgis's play is as personal and sacred as his own faith:

God. I struggle with God. I struggle with Life. I want simply answers and easy solutions. I want to do it on my own and always be in control. Mostly, I want to do it on my own and always be in control. Mostly, I want to avoid the uncomfortable, which only leads to more discomfort. God is, I think, perhaps, The Unavoidable, and writing, for me, is the curse that brings me a little bit closer to that Unavoidable entity that ultimately allows me freedom and access to my work and to my life. Some people are curious about a writer's "creative process." I can't explain mine except to say that God is the starting point and the finish line. In other words, when all else fails—and it always does—I pray" (Guirgis 115).

Guirgis's spiritual struggle(s) saturates the play, entirely—plot, characters, theme etc.

Narrative Fidelity

Narrative Fidelity is whether the narrative rings true with the stories that the audience knows to be true from their own experiences (Fisher 297). From first glance, Stephen A. Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* holds no narrative fidelity. But, narrative fidelity does

not require truth, only credibility. The story of Judas Iscariot is historical, biblical. In contrast, Guirgis's story of Judas Iscariot is fictitious. Judas becomes a character. His story is an extension of the Bible.

By telling the narrative in a courtroom drama, Guirgis is able to justify his decisions for Judas's verdict and ultimate fate. The process of litigation allows Guirgis to “talk-out” and debate the consequences of Judas’s betrayal. The audience sees how Judas was lead to make the decision he did, the conflicting sides of his betrayal, and his ultimate consequence. Within this context, Guirgis transfers the reader into this world where he uses rational arguments to persuade the reader to think logically about existentialistic ideas. In this world there is a consistency, which readers are able to relate their reality to this new culture.

In *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, Guirgis introduces the audience to a different/new Judas Iscariot, one that is not fully developed by the Bible. By doing so, Guirgis is going against the norm and further investigates the person behind the label of "betrayer." Judas Iscariot has become synonymous with "traitor." He has the audience see Judas from a different perspective, and gives them reasons/options for Guirgis's decision to betray Jesus. For example, when Simon the Zealot takes the stand, he testifies that Judas tried to help Jesus: "I think, personally, that Judas did what he did to help Jesus realize his destiny and fulfill his mission" (Guirgis 45). The audience is introduced to a different Judas, a Judas who made a mistake. Although this is not a popular view of Judas, it is a believable perspective.

In the Bible, Judas is a betrayer. Guirgis pulls Judas out of the Bible, and creates the story of Judas's life. Guirgis reminds us that Judas is human. We are reminded of this within the opening scene of the play. It is a monologue spoken by Henrietta Iscariot. The opening lines are, "No parent should have to bury a child...No mother should have to bury a son. Mothers are not

meant to buy sons. It is not in the natural order of things" (Guirgis 9). Right away, the audience is introduced to Judas as a son, somebody's child.

He gives Judas a past, present, and future. For example, Guirgis creates a meeting between Judas and Matthias of Galilee, a childhood friendship when Judas was eight years old. In Act 1, Unit I, in a flashback, the audience sees Judas a friend to Matthias of Galilee:

Matthias of Galilee: Thank you for letting me play with your spinning top, Judas. Maybe someday my daddy'll get some more goats and then I'll get a spinning top, and then I'll come back and play spinning tops with you, and we can play spinning tops an stuff, 'cuz that was really fun.

Judas: Wait. (*Pause.*) Here.

Matthias of Galilee: What?

Judas: You can have it (Guirgis 31).

In this scene, the audience sees Judas not only as a child, but a friend, and a generous friend. Guirgis portrays Judas as a son, friend, and follower of Christ.

Guirgis wants the audience to relate to Judas, and see him simply as one of life's losers: "If we are 'identifying' with a 'loser' in Judas, then this might be the story of the most iconic loser in history" (Woltz 8). Everyone can identify with being a loser. The term "loser" is not as harsh or derogatory as the terms "traitor" or "betrayed." Guirgis creates a powerful narrative, where each member of the audience is able to say, "I am like Judas." The story goes beyond Judas and has the audience relating and positioning themselves into his situation, a human, a loser: "Its true setting is not the courtroom but the classroom. Make that a classroom in a progressive parochial school where the subject may be religion but questions are encouraged" (Brantley). As each

member of the audience takes on the role of Judas, they become the protagonist. It becomes their story. In this regard, the narrative becomes their story.

Although Guirgis's world is far from reality, it holds truth, or Truth, depending on the audience. Whether a Christian or non-Christian reads this play, it is believable due to its religious content and spiritual basis. Like David Cote says, "*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* is no Sunday school class... Depending on your faith—or lack thereof—you may find yourself disturbed or even enlightened by the arguments for and against Judas. For those whose church is the theater, there's plenty here to feed the soul." People are spiritual beings by nature, searching for answers. Although there is a controversial undertone to the play, the controversy is not static in the shallow aspects of the play—characters, plot, and dialogues—but rather is rooted in the major themes and questions within the play. Guirgis's controversial text, whether loved or hated, has the ability to strike philosophical and theological debate amongst theatregoers whether biblical scholars, or nonreligious. Ed Siegel of *The Boston Globe* says:

Guirgis has won friends and influenced theatregoers with a heady mixture of characters balanced by the fact that in his plays, the church isn't merely something to ridicule or rebel against, though he does both articulately and humorously. The church can be the last refuge in a heartless, spiritually vacant world, and Guirgis derives considerable power from his unwillingness to give up on it.

Unlike most biblical-based plays, Guirgis's play needs a censorship warning. This is because Guirgis's characters struggle with God. More specifically, Guirgis has Judas literally argue with Jesus. Shockingly, Judas even spit in Jesus' face. Controversially, Guirgis chooses to have Judas

deny Jesus' love in the final scene. This leaves the audience wondering: Would I deny Christ because of my sins?

Implications of Research

Research Question #1:

*If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* are foreign and imagined, how is narrative probability and narrative fidelity achieved?*

Guirgis achieves narrative probability and narrative fidelity because his dramatic action is complete and self-contained, purposeful, varied, engages and maintains the interest of the audience, and is probable. This question has been developed in the Functional Analysis, but this section will act as a review.

A complete and self-contained play includes everything necessary for understanding (Brockett 28). Guirgis uses the basic form of a dramatic action: beginning, middle, and end. His play involves an inciting incident, exposition, complication, discovery, climax, crisis, and an obligatory scene, centered on a major dramatic question. Without these elements, the action will be confusing or unsatisfactory to the audience (Brockett 28).

A play's purpose may be simple or complex, but events, characters, mood, and other elements should be shaped and controlled with a purpose in mind (Brockett 28). Guirgis's text is organized to arouse a specific response, and raises emotions. His play poses questions that can only be answered outside of the theatre. Guirgis wants to stimulate thought and action about real social conditions, existentialistic questions. The play is essentially circular in the fact that it suggests that the events and issues raised will repeat themselves, endlessly.

The dramatic action in Guirgis's play is varied. Although the action is unified by the framework, through a continuous thought and purpose, Guirgis adds variety in the plot,

characterization, spectacle, thought etc. Guirgis avoids predictability by creating a play, set in an imagined world, where historical, biblical, and fictitious characters debate a “real” issue.

Guirgis’s realistic variables—people, courtroom—have individualistic characteristics specific to the play. For example, the courtroom is set in Purgatory.

The dramatic action engages and maintains the interest of the audience. The situation Guirgis creates is compelling enough to arouse interest, and the issues are vital enough to warrant concern. The play’s style and form excite the audience. Guirgis’s knack for the controversial stimulates the audience.

Guirgis’s play is probable, logically consistent. His play depicts impossible events, but they are believable because the incidents occur logically within the framework created by the playwright. Guirgis establishes a scheme of probability through his choice of diction and spectacle. The diction used indicates the play’s tone, comedic and tragic. Guirgis also establishes probability in the element of spectacle. The costumes, lighting, actors’ gestures and movement, all establish his context of reality.

This scheme of probability relates to the concepts of universality and individuality. Universality allows the play to communicate with the audience, even when centuries have passed. These situations confront human beings of any social class in any time. Every story is individualized if the story is interesting and believable (Brockett 41). Every element of the play is universal and individualized. For example, his characters are first general, typified (ex. saint, mother etc.). Then the characters are individualized (ex. street-walker).

Research Question #2:

How does Guirgis persuade his audience through narrative probability and narrative fidelity?

Guirgis does not achieve persuasion through narrative probability and narrative fidelity; Guirgis achieves persuasion because narrative probability and narrative fidelity exist. For narrative fidelity to be achieved, the play must be self-contained, purposeful, varied, and engaging to the audience. For narrative probability to exist, the incidents must occur logically within the framework. Only when both narrative fidelity and narrative probability are present can persuasion be achieved.

A dramatist can persuade by two means: First, the author can subordinate the message and depend on implications to be persuasive; and Second, the author may make the argument clear, through direct statements, by oversimplifying the issues to make the choices clear. In the latter case, the dramatist alienates the audience, who may conclude that the play has been an excuse for delivering a sermon or social message. When a dramatist expects complete clarity, the meaning of words and action must be restricted. This may eliminate any connotations or implications that the significance goes beyond the play (Brockett 41).

Guirgis aims to persuade the audience to think or act in a certain way. In this case, Guirgis's persuasion is, "to gently encourage others to consider matters of faith and to define what their responsibilities are and what it means to try to be 'good'"(Guirgis viii). Guirgis's text allows for ambiguity. Like Brockett says, "...ambiguity is basic to human experience: Life does not come equipped with meanings which are unmistakable; we ponder over our experiences and try to find significance in them, but we can never be certain that we have solved the riddles" (Brockett 41).

Persuasion relates to the basic element of *thought*. In thought, a play is both general and specific. For example, in Guirgis's play, the general topic is "free will vs. divine mercy" and the specific topic is "Judas Iscariot's choice vs. the forgiveness of Jesus Christ." The general topic, then, serves as a point of focus around which the action revolves, while the specific story gives concreteness to ideas which otherwise would be too abstract (Brockett 40).

Therefore, Guirgis is persuasive because his narrative consists of narrative fidelity and narrative probability. The concepts of universality and individuality are developed in every element of form: plot, character, diction, spectacle, thought etc. Because the narrative has consistency, a logical framework, the audience is not distracted by the absurdity within the play. The audience is able to focus on the message of the play, which is Guirgis's ultimate goal.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

What you are about to do, do it quickly.

-- John 13:27

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the persuasiveness of Stephen Adly Guirgis's text, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, by systematically applying Walter R. Fisher's narrative analysis, through form identification and a functional analysis, to determine how Guirgis accomplishes persuasion. The following research questions were addressed: (1) If Guirgis's ideology and created world in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* are foreign and imagined, how is narrative probability and narrative fidelity achieved?; and (2) How does Guirgis persuade his audience through narrative probability and narrative fidelity? The following chapter provides a summary of the chapters in this study, a discussion of limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Chapter One provided a rationale explaining why Guirgis's text merits an in-depth analysis and rhetorical evaluation. It discussed the significance of the study, outlining the researcher's questions and an application of the framework. Chapter Two is a compilation of research acts as a foundation on which to base a comparison between the biblical Judas, the Judas in popular media, and Guirgis's Judas. This chapter includes a brief autobiography of Guirgis; several critiques of Guirgis's past work, pre-*The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*; Biblical recordings of Judas Iscariot; studies on Judas Iscariot in Christology, by Christian theologians; interpretations of the biblical recordings of Judas; and studies on the portrayal of Judas in popular culture. The Literature Review concludes with the history and function of Fisher's narrative paradigm, including examples of its use in previous studies, and a definition of key

components of the paradigm. Chapter Three explains, in detail, the researcher's role, theoretical framework, data collection procedures including the data analysis of supplementary texts and the data analysis of Guirgis's text.

Summary

The rhetorical analysis of Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* began in Chapter Four. This examination of the text resulted in a thorough form identification, a detailed description of the style and form, including diction, spectacle, thought, plot, character etc. After the form identification, the researcher applied a functional analysis. This was accomplished by using Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm's scope and utility. An analysis of the form was essential in determining the narrative probability and narrative fidelity of Guirgis's text. To determine the narrative probability of the text, the researcher used a standardized set of qualifications: the narrative must keep the attention of the audience, create identity between the reader and characters within the narrative, transfer the reader to a new culture, time, and place, and arouse an emotional response in the reader. In addition to the narrative probability, the researcher explored elements of the narrative that correlate with the stories that the audience knows to be true from experience, narrative fidelity.

Limitations

Although the researcher found the study to be successful, there were several limitations that arose. First, the nature of the thesis was a limitation, both in time and length. The nature of the rhetorical study is unending. In this specific study, by conducting a narrative analysis, through form identification and a functional analysis, the opportunities of examination were endless. For example, when applying form identification, the researcher chose to focus on specific elements of the play: characters, spectacle, diction etc. There are several elements of

form that the researcher could have examined, had time permitted. When applying a functional analysis of the text, the researcher used four standard qualifications to evaluate the narrative coherence: the narrative must keep the attention of the audience, create identity between the reader and characters within the narrative, transfer the reader to a new culture, time, and place, and arouse an emotional response in the reader. These qualifications are a sample of qualifications that could explain whether or not a story could be considered coherent. There are several other options that could be used to determine whether it is coherent, including the structure of the story itself. Due to the time and page restraint, the researcher used the qualifications for both form and function that would be most efficient at its purpose.

Another limitation was the researcher's lack of expertise and knowledge in theatre production and play-writing. A playwright could have insight or understanding on why certain structural and literal choices were made. A play's structure is vastly different than that of a story, depending on the number of acts, genre, and form of the dialogue. These elements, when translated to the stage, are sure to affect how an audience is persuaded. A director or playwright is able to manipulate the way the narrative is presented, ultimately controlling the perceived reaction.

Analyzing the play through a Christian viewpoint was a limitation. The researcher first saw a live performance of the play during her undergraduate studies as a requirement for a playwriting course. She left the performance with several existential questions and had lengthy discussions with her classmates regarding the theological questions the play raised. Later, the researcher bought a transcript of the play and began to read. Disgusted with the language, she was embarrassed she ever suggested others watch the play. But, after another read, the questions she originally formed began to surface once again. These questions were so powerful she knew

she had to study the play and urge others, Christian or non-Christian, to ask themselves the same questions regarding humanity. Having a Christian worldview caused the researcher to be fearful and intimidated by the possible reaction of fellow Christian researchers. It was difficult for the researcher to focus on the content, without being distracted by the poor theology and vulgar language.

Analyzing the text, rather than a live performance was a limitation. Watching a live performance of a drama differs from reading a script of the same drama. When reading a script, only two elements are involved: the written word and the reader's capacity to understand and envision what is conveyed through the written word. However, a live performance translates the written word into speech and gives concreteness to movement, setting, costume, atmosphere, and other variables that must be imagined when reading. The reader is translated into a spectator-auditor and his or her solitariness is replaced by group experience. A live performance is a cooperative imagination, which extends from the script through the director's conception of the script, to the interpretations of that conception made by the actors, designers, musicians, dancers, technicians etc., to the audience's perception of those conceptions to, finally, the final result (Brockett 61).

The final limitation was using Walter R. Fisher's Narrative Paradigm as the framework. Although using a framework, or theory, focuses the study, it can also hinder the researcher from discovering ideas and concepts. As stated in the Literature Review, several theorists have criticized Fisher's theory, debating contradictions found within the theory.

For example, Fisher's concept of "good reasons" is a circular concept that can be detrimental to the study of a text like *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* because of its religious nature. Fisher believes that knowledge of and the willingness to employ "good reasons,"

guarantees rationality (Fisher “rationality” 129). These “good reasons” are dependant on the audience’s history, biography, culture, and character (“Forms of Rhetoric”). However, there is no standard of values without a biased ideological stance that interferes with the choice of values (Kirkscey 5). Narratives allow the storyteller the opportunity to produce stories with dubious values that would not lead to “good actions.” The audience is left with a narrative that is not necessarily going to provide a fulfilling rationale. This contradiction is specifically important for the study of this play, because Guirgis has created a narrative with a moral quality, but his social position does not guarantee authenticity or expertise. Therefore, the audience is going to critique the narrative based on personal judgments. The narrative, then, will be persuasive only to some, based on what they believe to be true. Ideological differences will then, be the divide. Christians and non-Christians will have very different “traditional stories.” These traditional stories are what they know to be true; they are the ideological make-up of the world around them. Traditional stories will be used as a comparison when interacting with a new narrative. There is no universal truth, according to the paradigm.

Fisher believes the only way to test whether a story masks ulterior motives is to test it for narrative probability and narrative fidelity, by studying the narrative elements. However, he does not provide a methodology to do so. Rather, it is in the audience’s hands to compare existing stories, which they know to be true, in order to make judgments. Basically, the narrative paradigm is a private or personal judgment of rhetoric. It does not guarantee mass agreement. Despite the contradictions in Fisher’s theory, Fisher believes that probability, not truth or reality, is the aim of the storyteller (Fisher “The Rhetoric of Argumentation” 137). If this is true, then Guirgis has mastered the art of storytelling. He does not claim to know Truth, but rather, raises questions that cause the audience to consider the options of Truth.

Although the researcher is critical of Walter R. Fisher's narrative paradigm because of its inconsistencies and contradictions, the theory was useful in proving Guirgis's narrative to be persuasive. Through this study, the researcher clarifies the paradigm, developing its elements, which may be helpful to future researchers wanting to use the paradigm. This study is important to the field of communication because it sets a precedent to using the narrative paradigm to analyze a piece of rhetoric, specifically a play.

Recommendations for Future Research

For the researcher interested in studying Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* further, there are a myriad of available rhetorical approaches one could use. The first suggestion is to apply Kenneth Burke's dramatic pentad to Guirgis's text. Burke's approach is an interpretive communication studies theory used to analyze human relationships. It focuses on the critic's role to uncover the speaker's motives. There are three core concepts to this approach: identification, dramatic pentad, and guilt-redemption. Identification is the relationship between the speaker and the audience. Once identification is established, persuasion is able to occur. The pentad includes the elements of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. The ratio between these key elements will determine the motive in human drama. Lastly, the purpose of drama is to purge one's guilt. The motive behind this is determined through the pentad. This theory is useful for the study of the religious theme in Guirgis's text.

The second suggestion is to apply an argumentative analysis. Like the narrative paradigm, the argumentative analysis is not concerned with whether the premises are true or whether the argument is strong; the premise is what the speaker or author intended. Rather, an argumentative analysis would focus on understanding the reasoning of the author or speaker. The critic would pick out the premises, conclusions, and any intermediate steps. In this case, the researcher would

focus on Guirgis's intentions and ideologies and how he used the text as an intermediate, in order to get his conclusions across.

These are only two examples of rhetorical approaches that could be taken. However, there are other qualitative methods that could be taken into consideration, in relation to the theatre productions. First, the researcher could interview Stephen Adly Guirgis. Within this study, the researcher used past interviews with Guirgis and adapted them to the study. However, by interviewing the playwright firsthand, the researcher could focus on intimate details relating directly to the researcher's questions and focus of the study. Second, the researcher could interview audience members, after a live-performance of the play. If the researcher continued to study the persuasiveness of the text, the researcher could poll the audience, asking questions like: Was the playwright able to transfer you to a different time, culture, or place? Did you relate to the character of Judas? Did you feel sympathetic or anger toward Judas? Do you agree with the verdict given to Judas? It would be interesting to compare the audience's views on the play, Christian perspective versus other worldviews. Third, the researcher could interview the cast. Rather than a character study of fictional characters, it could be interesting to question the cast on their interpretations of their roles. Knowing how the cast uses their character to interact with the audience is essential in understanding the audience-character relationship. Fourth, the researcher could compare productions of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Directors have different interpretations of the text, and can choose to make changes that will ultimately affect the audience's experience. For example, having Saint Monica dressed like a street-walker, as opposed to regular clothes can effect the persuasiveness of her character for a specific audience.

These are a few suggestions for future researchers interested in exploring Stephen Adly Guirgis's play further. No matter which methodology the researcher chooses, the play will have

an effect on the researcher because of its themes. As the researcher becomes more involved in study of the play, the daunting questions within the play are sure to arise. What could begin as a simple study of drama, will become a personal theological study, questioning life and its important questions.

Conclusion

This chapter restated the purpose of the study, summarized the previous chapters, and discussed any limitations experienced by the researchers that hindered the full development of the study. This concluding chapter also offered other approaches or avenues of research that future researches may use to further analyze and examine Guirgis's text.

The purpose of this study is simple: to determine the persuasiveness of a text. The study, however, serves a greater purpose; it develops an explanation of the way people interpret the world. If Walter R. Fisher is correct in asserting that "humans are essentially storytellers" (Fisher Narration 297), then every aspect of life is a narrative. The story of Judas Iscariot, as told by Stephen Guirgis is simply an example of the way people interpret the narratives that surround them. It is fascinating that a fictitious narrative has the power and ability to raise questions about foundational matters, such as faith. A narrative can change the way one views his or her world, beliefs, and existence.

The quest of understanding life is a narrative quest. Stephen Adly Guirgis uses an era-melting narrative to explore Christian existentialism and the paradoxes of faith. When the curtain closes, or the play is read, the audience is left "hangin'" on to the wonders and open-ended questions Guirgis's raises from the verdict he gives to Judas. The audience is left questioning: Am I a life-loser like Judas?

Works Cited

- "Almeida Theatre, London." *Almeida Theatre, London*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Feb. 2013.
<<http://www.almeida.co.uk>>.
- Atkinson, Paul, and Sara Delamont. "Rescuing Narrative from Qualitative Research." *Narrative Inquiry* 16.1 (2006): 164-172. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Billington, Michael. "You Can Smell Hatred in the Air." *TheGuardian*. The Guardian, 7 March 2005. Web. 6 May 2012.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/2005/mar/07/theatre.davidmamet>>.
- "Black Comedy." *Bloomsbury Guide to Human Thought*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Ltd, 1993. *Credo Reference*. Web. 02 March 2013. *Credo Reference*. Web. 02 March 2013.
- Brantley, Ben. "Theater Review; Judas Gets His Day in Court, but Satan is on the Witness List." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 3 Mar. 2005. Web. 6 May 2012.
<<http://theater.nytimes.com/mem/theater/treview.html?res=9B06E0DB133DF930A35750C0A9639C8B63>>.
- Bratberg, Amanda. *The Girls Next Door and Advertainment: Narratives in Season One*. MA Thesis. California State University, 2011. Web. <<http://csusdspace.calstate.edu/handle/10211.9/1056>>.
- Brockett, Oscar G. *The Theatre: An Introduction*. 4 ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979. Print.
- Brown, Jennifer R. "Alfred Hitchcock Presents; 'Propoganda'": *World War II Propaganda Films*. MA Thesis. Liberty University, 2010. Web.

- Caldiero, Christopher T. "Crisis Storytelling: Fisher's Narrative Paradigm and News Reporting." *American Communication Journal* 9.1 (2007): 2. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Carlson, R. "From Villain to Tragic Figure: The Characterization of Judas in Matthew." *Currents in Theology and Mission* 37.6 (2010): 472-478. Print.
- Chesebro, James W. "Text, Narration, and Media." *Text & Performance Quarterly* 9.1 (1989): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Crane, Anthony. *The place of Judas Iscariot in christology*. Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate Pub., 2005. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Crook, Zeba. "Fictionalizing Jesus: Story and History in Two Recent Jesus Novels." *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus* 5.1 (2007): 33-55. Print.
- Eaves, Michael H., and Michael Savoie. "Big Brother: Merging Reality and Fiction: An Application of the Narrative Paradigm." *Texas Speech Communication Journal* 29.2 (2005): 91-97. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "A Motive View of Communication." *Quarterly Journal Of Speech* 56.2 (1970): 131-139. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "Clarifying the Narrative Paradigm." *Communication Monographs* 56.1 (1989): 55. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument." *Readings in Rhetorical Criticism*. 4 ed. Carl R. Burghardt, Ed. State College, PA: Strata Publishing Inc., 2010. 1-710. Print.
- Fisher, Walter R. "Rationality and the Logic of Good Reasons." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 13.2 (1980): 121-130. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.

- Fisher, Walter R. "Rhetorical Criticism as Criticism." *Western Speech* 38.2 (1974): 75-80.
Communication & Mass Media Complete. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration." *Communication Monographs* 52.4 (1985): 347. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "The Rhetoric of Argumentation." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 4.2 (1971): 136-137.
Communication & Mass Media Complete. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Fisher, Walter R. "What Stories Are: Narrative Theory and Interpretations (Book)." *Quarterly Journal Of Speech* 74.3 (1988): 400. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- "Forms of Rhetoric: The Narrative Paradigm." *Living Rhetorically in the Real World*. Wordpress. 2 July 2009. Web. 5 Feb. 2012.
- Givens, Charity Lee. *Poe's Poisoned Pen: A Study in Fiction as Vendetta*. MA Thesis. Liberty University, 2009. Web. < <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/masters/64/>>.
- Gring-Pemle, Lisa M. "'Are we Going to Now Govern by Anecdote?': Rhetorical Constructions Of Welfare.." *Quarterly Journal Of Speech* 87.4 (2001): 341.
Communication & Mass Media Complete. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Gronbeck, Bruce E., and Malcolm O. Sillars. *Communication Criticism: Rhetoric, Social Codes, Cultural Studies*. Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc, 2001. Print.
- Guirgis, Stephen Adly. *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. New York: Faber and Faber, 2006. Print.
- Hanan, Josh. "The Continued Importance Of Walter Fisher's Narrative Paradigm: An Analysis Of Fisher's Extant Work." *Conference Papers -- National Communication Association* (2008): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 4 Oct. 2012.

- Hollihan, Thomas A., and Patricia Riley. "The Rhetorical Power of a Compelling Story: A Critique of a "Toughlove" Parental Support Group." *Communication Quarterly* 35.1 (1987): 13-25. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Hyde, Michael J. "Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 22.1 (1989): 71-74. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Keane, James T. "With God on His Side." *America* 192.15 (2005): 15-16. Print.
- Kirkscey, Russell. "From Homo Narrans To Homo Attendens: A Revision Of The Narrative Paradigm." *Conference Papers -- National Communication Association* (2008): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 6 May 2012.
- Klein, Julia M. "Growing Up with the Hat." *The Wall Street Journal*. The Wall Street Journal, 9 June 2011. Web. 1 Jan. 2012.
<<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304432304576372001158163540.html>>.
- Kuypers, Jim A. *Rhetorical criticism: perspectives in action*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009. Print.
- Lunceford, J. "Three versions of Judas. " *Choice* 1 Jul 2011: Research Library, ProQuest. Web. 22 Apr. 2012.
- Martin, James. "Why Did Judas Do it?" *America* 194.19 (2006): 12-16. Print.
- McCarter, Jeremy. "Betraying the Betrayer." *The New York Sun*. The New York Sun, 3 Mar. 2005. Web. 6 May 2012. <<http://www.nysun.com/arts/betraying-the-betrayer/10043/>>.

- McCarthy, Molly, and Elena C. Strauman. "Fallen Stars and Strategic Redemption: A Narrative Analysis of the National Enquirer." *Florida Communication Journal* 37.2 (2009): 71-82. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- McClure, Kevin. "Resurrecting The Narrative Paradigm: Identification and the Case of Young Earth Creationism." *RSQ: Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 39.2 (2009): 189-211. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Mize, Britt. "Working with the Enemy: The Harmonizing Tradition and the New Utility of Judas Iscariot in Thirteenth-Century England." *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 36.1 (2010): 68-110. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012. *Holy Bible: New Living Translation*. Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Novick, Tzvi. "Succeeding Judas: Exegesis in Acts 1:15-26." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129.4 (2010): 795-799. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.
- Opt, Susan K. "Continuity and Change in Storytelling about Artificial Intelligence: Extending the Narrative Paradigm." *Communication Quarterly* 36.4 (1988): 298-310. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Owens, Kerry. "Myth Making As A Human Communication Paradigm: The Case Of Martin Luther King, Jr., And The Civil Rights Movement." *American Communication Journal* 9.3 (2007): 8. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 4 Oct. 2012.
- Pearson, Birger A. "Judas Iscariot Among the Gnostics: What the Gospel of Judas Really Says." *Biblical Archaeology Review* 34.3 (2008): 52-57. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.

- Query, Jr., Jim L., and Kevin Wright. "Assessing Communication Competence In An Online Study: Toward Informing Subsequent Interventions Among Older Adults With Cancer, Their Lay Caregivers, And Peers." *Health Communication* 15.2 (2003): 203-218. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 4 Oct. 2012.
- Redick, Kip, and Lori Underwood. "Rationality and Narrative: A Relationship of Priority." *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 40.4 (2007): 394-405. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Robinson, Gesine Schenke. "An Update on the Gospel of Judas (After Additional Fragments Resurfaced)." *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der Älteren Kirche* 102.1 (2011): 110-129. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 22 Apr. 2012.
- Rowland, Robert C. "Narrative: Mode of Discourse or Paradigm?" *Communication Monographs* 54.3 (1987): 264. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Siegel, Ed. "In Their Courtrooms, Flawed Arguments." *Boston.com*. The Boston Globe, 27 Mar. 2005. Web. 6 May 2012.
<http://www.boston.com/ae/theater_arts/articles/2005/03/27/in_their_courtrooms_flawed_arguments/?comments=all>.
- Stasio, Marilyn. "The Last Days of Judas Iscariot." *Variety*. Variety, 2 Mar. 2005. Web. 6 May 2012. <<http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117926416?refCatId=33>>.
- Spector-Mersel, Gabriela. "Narrative Research: Time for a Paradigm." *Narrative Inquiry* 20.1 (2010): 204-224. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Sreenivas, Divya. "Assessing Narrative Rationality Of Phir Milenge: Indians In The U.S. Interpret Health Content In Bollywood's First HIV/AIDS Film." *Conference Papers --*

- National Communication Association* (2007): 1. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 4 Oct. 2012.
- Stark, Jacqueline Ann. "Content Analysis of The Fairy Tale Cinderella - A Longitudinal Single-Case Study Of Narrative Production: "From Rags To Riches"." *Aphasiology* 24.6-8 (2010): 709-724. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Stewart, Craig O. "Social Cognition and Discourse Processing Goals in the Analysis of `Ex-Gay' Rhetoric." *Discourse & Society* 19.1 (2008): 63-83. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.
- Stutts, Nancy B., and Randolph T. Barker. "The use of Narrative Paradigm Theory in Assessing Audience Value Conflict in Image Advertising." *Management Communication Quarterly : McQ* 13.2 (1999): 209-44. *ProQuest Central*. Web. 4 Oct. 2012.
- Theye, Kirsten. "Shoot, I'm Sorry: An Examination Of Narrative Functions and Effectiveness within Dick Cheney's Hunting Accident Apologia." *Southern Communication Journal* 73.2 (2008): 160-177. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Walsh, Richard. "The Gospel According to Judas: Myth and Parable." *Biblical Interpretation* 14.1-2 (2006): 37-53. *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.
- Warnick, Barbara. "The Narrative Paradigm: Another Story." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73.2 (1987): 172. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.
- Webb, Sheila M. "The Narrative of Core Traditional Values in Reiman Magazines." *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 83.4 (2006): 865-882. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 12 Feb. 2012.

- Woltz, Scott. "The Role of Judas Iscariot in Stephen Aldy Guirgis' *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*: A production Thesis in Acting and the Actor Director Relationship." MA thesis. Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2009. Print.
- Wood, Jennifer F. "Living by Parental Narratives: A Narrative Criticism of Marian Wright Edelman's the Measure of our Success: A Letter to my Children and Yours." *Texas Speech Communication Journal* 29.2 (2005): 106-117. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 21 Apr. 2012.
- Yang, Jayhoon. "'One of the Twelve' and Mark's Narrative Strategy." *Expository Times* 115.8 (2004): 253-257. *ATLA Religion Database*. Web. 20 Mar. 2012.
- "25 New Faces of Indie Film 2004." *Filmmaker*. Filmmaker Magazine. 2004. Web. 6 May 2012. <http://www.filmmakermagazine.com/issues/summer2004/features/25_faces16-20.php>.