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## Integration Paper

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# “Integration Paper” by Breanne Brigadoi



## Instructor's Notes

In this paper, Breanne uses Rhetorical Genre Theory to analyze and critique the field of nursing in an effort to discover the ways that she may need to actively resist the ideologies and assumptions held within those disciplines. Drawing on texts both in genre theory and on topics surrounding Christians in academic fields, she answers questions such as: What does it mean to say that genres portray community ideology? How might you resist genre conventions that portray ideologies that you disagree with? What are the specific disciplinary ideologies that you may need to actively resist? What might be some of the consequences of that resistance? How might you positively integrate your faith into the work of your discipline? What might be the reaction to that integration? Etc. The paper is organized into two sections: the first section talks in general about the ideas of genre and ideology, and genre critique and resistance, and then the paper moves on to talking about the nursing discipline and the specifics of the ideologies that she may need to resist and how she might positively integrate her beliefs into the nursing field. This organizational structure is probably much more complex than things you wrote in high school. If you were going to outline this paper, what might the outline look like? Why was this an effective organizational structure for this paper?

## Writer's Biography

Breanne Brigadoi is a first-year Nursing major and a cadet in the Air Force ROTC program. Breanne has learned to enjoy academic writing and hopes to improve her writing skills as her college career continues. Her hobbies include working out, playing soccer, watching Disney movies, spending time with friends and family, and scrapbooking.

## Integration Paper

Recently scholars of the composition community have become interested in the concepts of ideology and resistance that take place in various professional communities. There is much discussion over how communities use their genres to portray their ideology and how genre critique uncovers these belief systems. Furthermore, the idea of resistance to these ideologies has become a hot topic of debate, especially when it comes to Christians participating in secular communities. More research is needed in order to show how members of a community analyze their discipline in order to discover its ideology and then choose to resist these ideologies in a way that integrates their own belief system into their discipline. This is especially true for Christians, who often times find themselves participating in secular disciplines whose ideology, to some extent, disagrees with their faith. Therefore, this paper will be discussing the function of genre and how members, especially Christians, can effectively participate in a community whose ideology can be resisted, specifically in the professional field of Nursing. This will be accomplished by first discussing genre ideology, resistance, and analysis and then applying these thoughts to Christians in the discipline of Nursing. This will be done in order to prove that members of a professional community need to know the ideology of their discipline, how to resist those ideologies, the consequences of that resistance, and how they can be successful in integrating their faith into their profession.

The main purpose of genre is to express unity in a discourse community by portraying the ideology of the group. Bawarshi states that genres are, “ideological configurations that are realized in their articulation, as they are used by writers (and readers)” (9). In this case, ideology is the shared goals and beliefs of the community, a community made up of readers and writers. Bawarshi describes discourse community as, “the social and rhetorical environment within which cognitive habits, goals, assumptions, and values are shared by participants who employ common discourse strategies for communicating and practicing these cognitive habits, goals, assumptions, and values” (5). In other words, discourse communities are unified through common ways of communicating, and these modes of communication allow the ideology to be expressed and

shared throughout the group. These communities can be social, political, recreational, professional, or academic; also, we can be born into some communities while others we voluntarily join. Despite the differences between these various communities, the concept of genre demonstrating ideology acts as the unifying factor. Ann Johns, for example, expresses the significance of genre within a discourse community. She says, “These communities use written discourses that enable members to keep in touch with each other, carry on discussions, explore controversies, and advance their aims; the genres are their vehicles for communication” (503). As we can see from this quote, genre acts as the primary mode for members to communicate effectively with one another and share their goals. As a result, the genres that are used by the community focuses on uniting the group in communicating language, practices, values, conventions, and principles that they all share. In other words, genre is used to express ideology of the group.

Genres act as a mean to unify a community by portraying ideology, but they also can be resisted and changed within the community. The dynamic quality of genres and their ability to be resisted has been discussed by several writing scholars. For example, Bawarshi defines genre as not just merely a classification system for sorting different types of writing, but “instead that genres are dynamic discursive formations in which ideology is naturalized and realized in specific social actions, relations, and subjectivities” (8). This means that genre is always changing and its purpose is to address ideologies specific to certain situations and audiences. These situations and audiences change over time, but they also can be changed through resistance shown by the members of the community. Ann Johns discusses the power of this resistance. She says, “communities and their genres are useful to study...because they are evolving: through affiliation of new, different members; through changes in authority; through anticonventionalism, dialogue and critique” (516). This means that within these communities, genre is constantly being resisted and adapting to the members’ diversity, shifting ideologies, explored controversies, and changing authorities of the group. So as a result, the conventional use of the genre can be resisted, or fought against, because of various oppositions displayed by members of the group. This concept of resistance becomes increasingly important for Christians in a secular community,

because often times they find themselves in opposition with specific ideologies that are realized by the group's use of genre. This leads into the next point about genre, in that they should be analyzed and critiqued by members of the group.

Genres that are used by a community should always be analyzed and critiqued by members of the group so that members are aware of the underlying belief system that the genre wishes to convey and naturalize. It is through this critiquing that members decide if they wish to support or resist the group's ideology. Bawarshi discusses the importance of genre analysis; he says, "I offer genre analysis as a way for students to access, position themselves within, and participate critically in genred discursive spaces and the commitments, relations, identities, and activities embedded within them" (14). In this quote, Bawarshi is emphasizing the importance of genre analysis because that is the way that members fully realize their identity within the group and decide how they will contribute and participate as a member. For Christians in a secular world, it's important for them to undertake genre analysis in order to discover the underlying belief system of the academic or professional community they are involved in. Even if the secular community claims to possess ideology that is detached from religion, Edlin argues that, "The philosophical and presuppositional foundations of every subject emanate from a set of religious convictions that need to be exposed and critiqued" (207). This quote argues that every discipline operates under a belief system involving some kind of religious conviction. As a result, we can imply from this quote that through genre analysis, Christians can recognize the religious convictions their secular community actively or passively displays and ultimately decide if they agree or disagree and choose to resist those convictions. Overall, members of a community should always critique their discipline in order to uncover its ideology and decide for themselves how they will respond to it.

After taking a closer look at how genre portrays ideology and how ideology can be resisted, one can conclude that it's important for members of a community to undergo genre analysis in order to expose these ideologies and ultimately decide where they stand in relation to those beliefs. After having established this background of genre, the rest of this paper will now analyze and critique the professional discipline of Nursing, focusing on its ideology. This

critique will be done in order to discuss how Christians might resist certain ideologies portrayed by genres in the Nursing profession, the consequences of the resistance, and how Christians can make a positive contribution to the field while integrating their faith into their profession.

For a Christian in the Nursing profession, the ideology of the discipline in many ways lines up with the beliefs found in the Christian faith and is portrayed through the use of multiple genres found in the field of Nursing. The ideology of the Nursing profession can be summarized in its Code of Ethics, which is established by the ANA (American Nurses Association). A code of ethics is, “A set of guiding principles that all members of a profession accept. It is a collective statement about the group’s expectations and standards of behavior” (Potter and Perry 287). According to the ANA, the ideology of the Nursing profession is defined by the following terms: beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice, fidelity, autonomy, advocacy, responsibility, accountability, and confidentiality (286-288). Beneficence is defined as keeping the best interests of the patient more important than self-interests, in other words, doing good to others. Nonmaleficence is the avoidance of harm or hurt, or treating others as you would want to be treated; this is portrayed through the use of Nurse Practice Acts, which are professional nursing guidelines issued by the state. Justice is another term for fairness, such as staying unbiased and treating everyone with equality; nurses show this through their embrace of federal and state legislation regarding health care, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Fidelity refers to keeping promises and following through with plans; this is shown through use of organized Care Plans designed by the nurse that are individual to each patient. Autonomy refers to the patient’s independence, or the right to decide as an individual; this is demonstrated by the use of consent forms that a patient agrees or refuses to sign regarding treatment or medical procedures. Confidentiality includes privacy rights and honesty in conduct; this is portrayed by the use of HIPAA legislation, which gives patients greater access to and control over their medical records. Lastly, advocacy, responsibility, and accountability refer to the professional behavior that all nurses should portray. All of these components of the Nursing ideology share common features with Christian teachings, such as integrity in conduct, doing good

to others, treating others as you would want to be treated, equality under God, and freedom of choice. Although most, if not all, of the Nursing ideology is compatible with Christians, one of these components in particular, autonomy, usually becomes a problem that causes Christians to resist in the discipline.

Many Christians in the profession of Nursing find themselves resisting the ideology component of autonomy because of the ethical dilemmas that often are associated with it. Autonomy includes the right of the patient to decide about his or her medical care. This is indeed a very important right of every citizen, but it often tends to lead to medical questions of morality. Regarding controversial issues such as homosexuality, physician-assisted suicide, and especially abortion, medical personnel often find themselves asking questions of “Should we do this?” rather than “Can we do this?” (Orr 49). In other words, the morality of the caregiver comes into conflict with the patient’s right of autonomy. This is especially a problem for Christians in the medical field because Christians possess moral beliefs that are not subjective, contrary to the world’s view of individualized morality. Mark Cherry explains this by saying, “Contemporary biomedical ethics places persons, rather than God, in authority to define the right, the good, and the virtuous...cardinal moral value is instead assigned to individual liberty conceptualized as autonomous self-determination” (27). In this quote we can see that the right of autonomy refers to the patient’s medical decision based on his or her liberty of individual morals. In this context, patients often demand medical treatments, such as abortion, even if the caregiver is morally against it, claiming that their right of autonomy would be violated if the treatment was refused. This poses a problem for medical professionals because autonomy refers to the patient’s right to refuse a treatment (through not signing a consent form), not demand specific treatment. These ethical dilemmas based on the patient’s right of autonomy cause many Christians to resist in the discipline of Nursing. Fortunately, many Christians can successfully resist under the defense of the Right of Conscience. Robert Orr states that, “The right of conscience is the right of an individual to refuse to do something requested by another based on his or her own conscience or religious beliefs....The medical right of conscience has been codified in U.S. medicine, U.S. federal law, U.S. state laws, international law, and international medicine”

(Orr 50-51). Based on this, Christians can refuse to participate or assist in medical procedures, such as abortion, because it violates their right of conscience. There are, however, many exceptions and legal issues regarding this right, and there is also much debate over the elimination of this right. And unfortunately, there are also consequences that come to Christians when they resist by using the right of conscience.

When Christians in the medical field resist the ideology of autonomy, they often suffer harsh criticism by the secular world, resulting in some negative consequences. They are labeled as intolerant to the moral standards of others and unprofessional in the medical setting. Sharon Crowley argues, “The conservative Christian response to difference is too intolerant. Christian conservatives wish to impose a standard of moral behavior on all of us so that they can easily discern- and disciple- those who depart from it” (104). This quote frames Christians as strict moral policeman whose only goal is to point fingers at sinners and accuse them of their wrongdoings. In the medical field, the same situation happens as well, described by Tristram Engelhardt, saying, “The condemnation by traditional Christian health care professionals of some lifestyle choices and narratives as immoral is regarded by the secular culture as unacceptably intolerant” (97). We can see from these quotes that the consequence of resisting moral autonomy in a secular world results in being labeled as intolerant. This is a problem for Christians because postmodern tolerance demands respect in all aspects, so tolerance to the world can be summed up by saying, “There is no definite right or wrong, so let’s respect each other because we’re both right in our own way”. On the other hand, Christian tolerance has a very different perspective, in that it believes in an overarching, non-subjective truth of right and wrong—the truth that comes from the Bible. As a result, Christians in the medical profession are often labeled as intolerant, and as a result, they are considered unprofessional. The good news is that even though Christians may suffer these consequences, there is still hope that they can successfully integrate their faith into their profession and get positive reactions from others rather than negative ones.

Christian nurses can easily integrate their faith into the profession of Nursing by several means. One way is to actively demonstrate the ideology of Nursing that lines up with the Christian



faith and doctrine, such as beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice, fidelity, advocacy, responsibility, and accountability. This will not only exemplify the qualities of a good nurse, but also the qualities of a genuine Christian. There are also opportunities for Christians to share their faith in the profession of Nursing. According to *The Fundamentals of Nursing*, a nurse doesn't just provide care and support for a patient's physical needs; they also are called to care for a patient's mental and spiritual needs as well (Potter and Perry 1-3). This means that if a patient wants to pray with a nurse or talk about spiritual things, the nurse is more than welcome to pray and share their testimony as a way to meet the spiritual needs of the patient, if the situation calls for it. Even though opportunities like this can be rare, a Christian nurse should always display the love of Christ in all they do in order to serve as a witness for the Christian faith. Lizabeth Rand says, "Witnesses are called to testify that without the unconditional love and forgiveness offered to them through Christ, they would be nothing" (359). Indeed Christian nurses should also follow this example by keeping a humble and compassionate attitude when working in their discipline. By doing this, others will notice the difference they display and will hopefully have a positive reaction towards the Christian nurse's faith. Opportunities like these allow nurses to integrate their faith into the discipline of Nursing.

After taking a closer look at genre, ideology, and resistance, one can conclude that genre analysis and critique is crucial for members to be successful in their profession. By genre analysis, the ideology of the group is enacted and uncovered for members, especially Christians, to agree or disagree with and ultimately decide if that ideology should be resisted. It's then up to the member to find a way to resist the ideology while integrating their faith into their profession. This will continue to be a topic of debate as more research is done to show how Christian nurses accomplish this in their profession.

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