

A TRANSPARENT HILLARY CLINTON THROUGH THE LENS OF  
APOLOGIA DISCOURSE

BY

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## ABSTRACT

In March 2015, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was accused of using her family's private email server for official government communications. While being a candidate in the 2016 Presidential Election, Clinton has been under public scrutiny for lacking transparency. Clinton has had to employ strategic means in order to repair her public image. This study utilizes Benoit's Image Restoration Theory's typology to analyze Clinton's rhetorical responses to the email controversy. It was revealed that for Clinton transparency was used as a strategy in her attempt to successfully repair her image. Ultimately, it was determined that there is an intersection between transparency and image repair theory.

## **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine and analyze the rhetoric of Hillary Rodham Clinton through the lens of apologia. This thesis also serves the purpose of finding and understanding the intersection of transparency and apologia within the political arena. Transparency serves as a vital factor to the structure of governance for various reasons, but the avoidance of corruption and promotion of trust in the government seems to be appropriate for its most crucial contribution. Governing bodies, despite which type of political system is utilized, strategically plan their actions. In most democratic governments, transparency is added in order to achieve clarity and accountability to a system that is prone to decline without the necessary checks.

Intersecting with transparency in this thesis is image repair theory and apologia. Apologia is seen in most instances during times of crucial conflicts including scandals. In the political perspective, image repair and apologia are simply used as tools of restoring or protecting one's reputation or returning it to its original state. In human nature, when one is attacked it is a natural reaction to defend one's self. For politicians, public image is important to maintain as the lack of trust in governance and the disability to lead can jeopardize a reputation. Image is everything in professional settings. Scandals, controversy, and other forms of accusation are in need of crisis management and for many in the political arena an effective rhetoric must exist.

Rhetoric choice is important to comprehend for an understanding of sincerity and being able to differentiate what can be trusted and what cannot. The general public often

generates an image that, despite the levels of sincerity an individual may adhere to, they can be brushed with a one-category-fits-all model. “Every politician lies” and “Every politician is crooked” are comments that are heard too often. Political rhetoric is used as a tool of persuasion. Understanding public rhetorical practice, the strategic use of intentional communication, helps to comprehend the underlying motives in use and in turn comments on image repair theory. This study assesses Hillary Clinton’s apologetic discourse as she addresses her current email scandal that questions her ethical use of transparency.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Numerous scholars have examined both transparency and apologia but very few, if any, have intertwined the two to analyze the intersection. The most influential contributions to studies on transparency have argued that transparency and accountability in governance have allowed for a more successful governing body. By more successful, scholars have emphasized that transparency with governments work in a way that avoids corruption as well maintaining and gaining public trust. Scholarly contributions to the literature on image repair discourse have focused on techniques, strategies, and tactics that can make or break the accused. Many strategies have worked well in line with the effectiveness of its use in individual rhetoric while other strategies may not be the best fit for the circumstances. Scholars have also interpreted rhetoric to be an expression of persuasion. The following sections overview arguments from scholars investigating the importance and functions of transparency, apologia, and rhetoric.

## ***Transparency***

In the United States, transparency is an assumed prerequisite or at least a major priority in establishing a vibrant democracy. In many definitions of democracy the supreme power is vested in the people and appointed officials in government are representatives of the people. Transparency has been one of the many commitments made by the United States government (Obama, n.d). The White House website has its own page that lays out the dimensions for transparency and open government in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Under the section labeled “*Government should be transparent,*” the section gives a clear understanding and definition of just what the government should provide to be transparent.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The White House website for Government transparency states, “My administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government” (Obama, n.d).

<sup>2</sup> The section states, “Transparency promotes accountability and provides information for citizens about what their Government is doing. Information maintained by the Federal Government is a national asset. My Administration will take appropriate action, consistent with law and policy, to disclose information rapidly in forms that the public can readily find and use. Executive departments and agencies should harness new technologies to put information about their operations and decisions online and readily available to the public. Executive departments and agencies should also solicit public feedback to identify information of greatest use to the public” (Obama, n.d).

Aspects of government transparency have left many wondering just how the government finds ways to cut the corners of efficiently being transparent. Richard Mulgan argues that there are complications lying within the promises of open government to the American people. He states, “Government officials, along with their political leaders, are subject to constant and increasing pressures to be more transparent and accountable” (Mulgan, 2014). Yet this claim becomes problematic when promises are broken as actual governance unfolds.

Scholars have focused their studies on transparency in efforts to draw conclusions on what transparency does for the public sphere as well as governing bodies. They have generally concluded that transparency has created a space which helps prevent corruption as well as maintaining a healthy and trustworthy relationship between two entities: institutions and the public sphere. John Wiley offers insight as to the role of transparency seen through the perspectives of communicators. Wiley writes, “Transparency in the government communication process is viewed by communicators as an essential element of their job” (Wiley).

Hollyer, Rosendorff, and Vreeland make the argument that parallels the arguments of Lindstedt and Naurin. Lindstedt and Naurin make the assertion that the possibilities of the public sphere learning of corrupt behavior can have a negative effect on the actor. Similarly, Hollyer, Rosendorff, and Vreeland discuss transparency in terms of finding equilibrium. They make the claim that transparency emerges in equilibrium. Stemming from this conclusion, they state, “Social welfare increases in transparency, and the inclination of the voters to reelect the incumbent increases with social welfare; transparency, therefore, affects reelection probabilities” (Hollyer, Rosendorff, Vreeland,

2011). This contention demonstrates the fact that as the degree of electoral accountability rises, the overall wellbeing of the public increases. These authors also demonstrate that social welfare, in this sense, is a function of transparency. Adding to this notion, social welfare is more determinative of an official's survival in office when that government is more democratic. This axiom then steers the government to be more open and willing to provide information relating to policies. Their study leads to the notion that electoral incentives that drive democracies to release data also drive these democracies toward greater openness to the public.

Contributing to the intellectual discussion that transparency eliminates corruption, Alasdair Roberts argues that secrecy on behalf of a governing body will lead to corruption. In order to avoid this threat of security breaches ultimately leading to corruption, governments must display openness. Roberts argues that after the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, clear reasons were presented stating that a robust democracy calls for strengthening national security measures. Where there is a path of improved security there must be practice that encourages the free flow of information, hence transparency. In a democratic state, citizens are entitled to expect that they will be given an opportunity to make judgments about important political decisions and, in the case of security, war. With a presence of secrecy and less open government, it becomes harder for citizens to weigh in on important matters. According to Roberts, more government openness may help to avoid human rights abuses, protect political participation rights, and even help to improve national security itself (Roberts, 2006).

Ann Florini (2000) argues that increased transparency reduces the possibility of corruption as well. Florini defines transparency in the political sense in the form of

governments being the agents of the citizens. She expresses the view that the wave of corruption scandals seen in the 1990s indicates the presence of too many government officials serving private, rather than public, matters when they are not under a microscope and close watch. Her argument calls for the understanding that increased levels of transparency provide good governance. Florini states, "If opacity has such a negative effect, increased levels of transparency would seem to serve the public interest, necessary to both good governance and well-functioning markets" (Florini, 2000).

Addressing the benefits of transparency in regard to corruption, Florini makes the assertion that paying particular attention to corruption in the sense of transparency may not always take down a government or impose sanctions and consequences on politicians, but it has done so frequently enough that having transparency is more likely to have a deterrent effect. Florini addresses politicians in relation to their role in transparency by stating:

The incentives against transparency in this field are obvious. Few corrupt officials confess. They get caught. However, although those officials have every incentive to keep their dealings opaque, others in those societies have incentives to increase the transparency of governmental processes. Honest officials welcome and promote transparency--some prominent figures in Transparency International, the international NGO that has led the global campaign against corruption, have been active in politics, although Transparency International itself maintains a nonpartisan stance. (Florini, 2000)

Suzanne Piotrowski and Gregg G. Van Ryzin argue in defense of citizens' attitudes toward transparency in local government. They create a foundation that defines

several reasons for the public's demand for transparency, which include public finances, safety, the principle of open government, and the notion of good or honest government. According to their argument, there are various reasons the public would want to see more transparency displayed by their government and elected officials. Those who already view government as being somewhat open demand less transparency. In contrast, those who do not see government to be as open lack trust in their government, therefore, call for more transparency. The more confidence citizens have in their government and officials, the less they are concerned about and interested in fiscal matters, ethical principles, and good government transparency (Piotrowski & Van Ryzin, 2007). In a general sense, their argument relies heavily on the notion that people who are politically engaged and who frequently contact their government officials tend to demand more transparency due to the fact that they are more likely to catch holes in policies and signs of corruption rather than the individual who may not closely follow politics.

### ***Apologia Discourse***

Scholars have associated apologia discourse with public image. Public image is the primary force behind apologia discourse, as the purpose of image restoration theories tends to be the defense of the public image. Image repair discourse occurs in multitude of public venues, sports to businesses, but politics has its own place in apologia discourse. Shared across situations, when image is damaged, two main objectives are to be obtained. The first objective is to maintain the relationship between two or more entities and the second objective is to mend or fix an image that has already been damaged. Scholars have emphasized the importance of image as well as examined the concept of the public's perspective on public figures.

Several scholars have contributed their own definitions as well as strategies in the genre of image repair theory and apoloia. Ware and Linkugel, Benoit, and Ryan are amongst the most cited theorists explaining image repair theory and apologetic discourse. Ware and Linkugel are generally acknowledged to be the first theorists to successfully identify and place name to themes in apologetic discourse. These scholars established apologetic discourse as a family of speeches (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). Their work includes identifying specific factors that ultimately characterize the apologetic form and also the identifying of several sub-categories. Ware and Linkugel organized their interpretation of apoloia theory into four major categories: *denial*, *bolstering*, *differentiation*, and *transcendence* (Ware & Linkugel, 1973).

The *denial* tactic is classified as reformative. This label means that this tactic is not used as in attempt to change the attitude of the audience but rather to alter the relationship it has with the speaker. They make the assertion that in many cases of apoloia, *denial* is used as a tool to achieve their means and is frequently used. Ware and Linkugel state, “Many apoloia rely upon the denial of *intent* to achieve persuasiveness” (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). The second tactic, *bolstering*, is classified to be the opposite of the first, denial. *Bolstering* refers to “any rhetorical strategy, which reinforces the existence of a fact sentiment, object, or relationship” (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). When *bolstering* is being used it is an attempt for speakers to identify themselves with something that is often viewed as favorable by the audience they are trying to appease. While using the *bolstering* strategy, the accused may be limited to some extent in terms of the reality with which the audience already identifies. It is used to counterbalance a negative emotion with a positive emotion (Ware & Linkugel, 1973).

The next two tactics in Ware and Linkugel's interpretation of apologia are *differentiation* and *transcendence*. *Differentiation*, according to the scholars, is a tactic that deals with "separating some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship from some larger context within which the audience presently view that attribute" (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). According to Brown, Dickhaus, and Long, using the *differentiation* tactic allows for the party at fault to be able to suspend judgment temporarily in hopes that future context of the situation will be seen differently (Brown, Dickhaus, & Long, 2012). The final tactic, transcendence, "joins some fact, sentiment, object, or relationship with some larger context within the audience does not presently view that attribute" (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). This tactic is an attempt to get the audience to understand the situation in a larger and more complex aspect in which the offensive act is seen in a more positive way.

Advancing Ware and Linkugel's theory on apologia is Ryan's argument pertaining to apologia and *kategoria*. Halford Ryan broadens the conceptual definition of apologia by making his own argument. Ryan contributes to apologia discourse by defining *kategoria* as being the accusation and apologia to be the defense. Ryan asserts that apologia and *kategoria* have a particular relationship with each other. His argument implies that apologia must be viewed in light of the actual attack (Ryan, 1982). Adding that the audience will better understand the relationship if they are evaluated together rather than individually. Ryan states, "By identifying and assessing the issues in the accusation, the critic will gain insights into the accuser's motivation to accuse, his selection of the issues, and the nature of the supporting materials for his accusation" (Ryan, 1982). He goes on to say, "As a response to the accusation, the apology should be

discussed in terms of the apologist's motivation to respond to the accusation, his selection of the issues—for they might differ from the accuser's issues—and the nature of the supporting materials for the apology” (Ryan, 1982). Adding to his notion, he argues that speeches that include accusation and apology can be in attack or defense of either policy or character. In Ryan's own words, “In treating accusatory speeches, one finds two kinds of speeches: accusation against policy or against character” and “Likewise, one finds two kinds of apologetic discourse: defense of policy or of character” (Ryan, 1982).

Benoit's image repair theory, a continuation of previous scholars' work, is known to be the most complete study of image repair theory. Benoit's theory of apologia has surpassed previous apologia discourse (Ultsler & Epp, 2013). Benoit's image repair theory is based on two primary assumptions. The first assumption being that communication is a goal-directed activity. Meaning, communication coming from an individual is based around a particular goal that an individual or group is trying to achieve. In the case of political image repair, how one may communicate with others is inspired by the goal of clearing their name and repairing their image back to its original state. Achieving restoration goals is dependent, in part, on how well they communicate in tackling this matter. The second assumption is that preserving a positive image is one of the central objectives. In trying to uphold a certain image, negative images will be recreated and “returned” to its original state, presumably a positive one. Politicians' number one goal in their field of work is to appeal to those they are representing.

William L. Benoit contributes a rather important and useful factor for political image repair theory. Benoit proclaims that image is important to uphold for politicians. Benoit lays out a fundamental landscape for the theory of image restoration discourse.

Starting with the basic concepts of image restoration theory, he lays out the component strategies to understanding image repair. Benoit clarifies that an attack has two major components, the first being that the accused is held responsible for an action and the latter being that the act is considered to be offensive to the complainant (Benoit, 1995). Also imperative is preparing for the restoration. Benoit gives guidelines in which he lays out recommendations where these strategies based on his research and application are applied to actual cases.

In Benoit's theory, a series of five broad categories are defined: *denial*, *evading responsibility*, *reducing offensiveness*, *corrective actions* and *mortification*; categories in which one or all may be used in order to achieve image repair. In the typology, *denial* can include two sub-categories, *simple denial* and *shifting blame*. *Simple denial* includes the denunciation that any wrongdoings ever occurred while *shifting blame* means the accused places blame on someone else. When it all boils down to it, the individual or individuals being accused simply deny having any involvement (Benoit, 1995).

*Evading Responsibility* is divided into four sub-categories. The first is *provocation*, which is used when the accused claims that the act they are accused of was done as a reaction to another act, that is, another entity could be now held accountable for the act. The second sub-category is *defeasibility*. It is explained in the sense of "pleading lack of information about or control over important factors in the situation" (Benoit, 1995). The third sub-category is *accident*. This strategy means just as it is read: the act was an accident or mistake. The final subcategory is *good intentions*. This tactic is intended so that people who do badly while trying to do well will not be viewed as a person who intentionally does badly (Benoit, 1995).

*Reducing offensiveness* of an act happens when the person being accused asks the public to view their wrongdoings as minor or less offensive than initially thought. There are six strategies that come along with *reducing offensiveness* that include *bolstering*, *minimization*, *differentiation*, *transcendence*, *attack the accuser*, and *compensation*. When the offender uses *bolstering*, they rely on their good reputation known to the public prior to accusations to invite the public to remember they still are a good person. The second sub-category is *minimization*. *Minimization* is used in attempt to lower the level of negative impact that has been produced by the questionable act. The third sub-category is *differentiation*. This tactic is used in an attempt to compare the questionable act to a similar but even less desirable act. This attempt is a quest to reduce or alleviate negative feelings formed by the audience. The fourth sub-category is *transcendence*. This tactic focuses on placing emphasis on a more important aspect to the situation in attempt to lessen negative attitudes toward the act. *Attacking the accuser* is the next sub-category and is used to question the credibility of the accuser. This sub-category can also be classified as *kategoria*<sup>3</sup> as previously mentioned as it pertains to how the accusation may be a motive for the apology. The final sub-category is *compensation*. Compensation is a form of reimbursement for any wrongdoing that has been presented. Compensation can come in the form of money as well as services.

*Corrective Action* is a strategy explained by Benoit as he asserts that the accused individual promises and makes a vow to correct the action that is in question. There are two ways this strategy can be used. First, the accused can promise to restore the act in

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<sup>3</sup> *Kategoria* is the offended party's accusation (Ryan, 1982).

which they are at fault back to its original state. Secondly, it can be used to make adjustments accordingly in order to secure a way for the offense not to be continual.

*Mortification* is a strategy that is used when the accused admits their wrongful action and asks for the forgiveness of the audience. According to Burke, *mortification* is one of the image repair strategies that is most complex. Apologies come in variety. An apology could consist of characteristics that another apology may lack, making it harder to identify a sincere apology. An apology can contain several contexts within the apology stemming from the expression of remorse, or even the request for forgiveness.

Scholars have argued that the public image is an important factor that must be constantly protected. They also argue that it is naturally defended when one has been threatened. Mary Anne Moffitt (1994) makes the argument that public figures as well as corporations target their messages to individuals as particular public audiences in attempts to create this “public image” that is long strived for and heavily protected. Brown and Levinson also state, “people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened” (Brown & Levinson, 1978). Goffman complements these arguments by writing, “when a face has been threatened, face-work must be done” (Goffman, 1967).

Ryan Winters explains that image restoration is divided into two theories: apologia theory and image repair theory. According to Winters, “When a person or a business fails to live up to a certain moral conduct or fail in any other way, they are expected to defend themselves” (Winters, 2015). He defines apologia theory to be one in which in the case of one’s image being threatened, apologia is utilized as a part of the defense. He goes on to say, “Not only does apologia theory allow for a person to be held morally accountable, but it also gives merit to those who expect a higher standard of

ethics from the accused” (Winters, 2015). On the other hand, image repair theory is accomplished not only through actions but also by communication and transparency (Winters, 2015). Adding credibility to this argument, Borden states, “The media provide a channel for apologia statements to be on the public record and provide public figures with a means for transparent communication with their publics” (Borden, 2012). Winter’s claim provides a foundation as to why Clinton chooses to use her rhetoric as a means to fix her image instead of simply relying on her actions alone. Clinton uses the media as a tool to get her message across and present her claims to the public.

Winters states, “For an apologia to be ethical, the guilty party must first admit the transgression if the accusations are truthful” (Winters, 2015). He goes on to mention, “Injury happens not only through harmful consequences but also moral violations, such as broken promise or unfair advantage” (Winters, 2015). Adding substance to this claim, Borden suggests that apologia should be used for the purposes of reconciliation rather than for self-interest of the individual. He claims that apologizing for a thoughtless action out of selfishness will create what is known to be an unethical response (Borden, 2012).

Image repair can be applied to both political images as seen by previous scholars and also inter-organizational situations as described by Jerome and Rowland. They offer two organizational actors which can be substituted for politicians and the public, fitting the needs of this study. Jerome and Rowland introduce image repair in the context of inter-organizational crisis situations. Their argument examines the purposes of image repair in a crisis situation. Jerome and Rowland explain, “In a crisis situation, organizations seek both to maintain positive aspects of their image and respond to the

particulars of the situation to repair damage done in the crisis” (Jerome & Rowland, 2009). In dealing with inter-organizational conflict, they set the notion that a third purpose for image repair is present. The third purpose is to maintain the relationship between the two organizations. Having a successful relationship up until the point of the crisis situation makes the assertion that there is value in maintaining this relationship. One party needs to maintain a positive image as well as relationship with the second party in hopes of maintaining a healthy relationship. Both parties play key roles for the other as they rely on one another to carry out their purposes.

Strengthening their argument is their recognition of the interrelatedness among the image-maintenance, image repair, and relationship-maintenance purposes. They explain that the purposes of all three may be consistent if the situation allows the two parties to continue throughout their crisis by relying on *denial* as their dominant strategy response. This stance means the crisis can be resolved and the relationship can be maintained by the denying the fact that one of the parties is responsible for the crisis. They also express that the three purposes may contradict. One strategy for achieving image repair may be for one party to blame the other for the crisis. This particular response would either strain or destroy the relationship between the two. The strategic alliance and purposes for them may create what they consider to be a push/pull situation which would force one party not only to maintain relations but also scapegoating the other party (Jerome & Rowland, 2009).

Hearit adds to this argument through the studies of apologies and public relations crises. He examines apologetic discourses through the use of persuasion as a part of image restoration theory. Hearit argues, “The initial charges of wrongdoing often carries

[sic] considerable effect: and in the sense that the apologist has to respond to those charges, the accuser initially has control over the terms of the persuasive exchange” (Hearit, 1994). The claims of these scholars suggest that Clinton has to adjust her claims and use strategies that are appropriately tailored for the accusations. In this case, the accuser ultimately has control of how Clinton needs to respond.

Working closely to the theories presented by Ware and Linkugel is Gold. Gold contributes to the literature on image repair and apologia by furthering the study of particularly, political apologia. In her studies, she examines how politicians borrow from the strategies provided by Ware and Linkugel in order to defend themselves from charges that arise on the campaign trail (Gold, 1978). Gold establishes two rhetorical constraints upon candidates that are seeking the presidency (Gold, 1978). The first constraint deals with the media. The media’s use of repetition of asking the same questions suggests that the charges brought are indeed true. She states, “As a result, the ‘accused’ seek increasingly to incorporate symbolic or visual strategies into their verbal self-defense, both to strengthen it and to meet the visual requirements of the press” (Gold, 1978). Gold suggests that in this instance, a “mini-apology” is necessary. Gold’s second rhetorical constraint is the growth of public alienation with politicians as well as the political process.

According to Gold, negative effects on the public force politicians to “shape their apologetic responses so as to avoid possible ‘contamination’ from previous apologies that proved to be false” (Gold, 1978). Clinton has had a number of previous apologia episodes in which she has needed to defend her reputation as well as to prevent any contradictions from previous cases.

Trent and Friedenborg acknowledge apologies as speeches that are delivered by political candidates in an attempt to apologize for some statement or behavior (Trent & Friedenborg, 2000). Kelley adds to this notion by stating, “Candidates and other government officials also turn to apologia more because the press frames character as more important than in the past, which produces more scandals that must be rhetorically managed if a politician is to remain in public life” (Kelley, 2001). She proposes several purposes for apologia rhetoric. These include “to explain the behavior or statement in a positive light, justify the behavior to minimize damage to image and character, or remove the topic from public discussion so that other issues may be discussed” (Kelley, 2001).

### ***Political Communication***

Rhetoric has been the primary focal point in several scholars’ studies on political language. It is a subject matter that is to be understood by the audience. Citizens can, at times, be gullible and naïve when it comes to political persuasion used as a means for power. It is important to understand the rhetoric of political figures and also important to understand the reasons for their use of this rhetoric.

Ronald R. Krebs and Patrick Jackson make the argument that rhetoric is central to politics in the pursuit of political power. Krebs and Jackson state, “Politics is typically marked by rhetorical competition, but our theoretical frameworks are generally hard-pressed to make sense of its dynamics and outcome” (Krebs & Jackson, 2007). Adding to this argument, Grunta Rozina and Indra Karapetjana argue that political rhetoric and power intersect, wherein linguistic manipulation can be considered an influential instrument of political rhetoric (Rozina & Karapetjana, 2009). The authors argue that this intersection is due to the fact that political discourse is primarily focused on persuading

people to make specific politically focused decisions. They also state that language plays a vital role in politics because it is an instrument used as a means by which the manipulative intents of politicians become apparent to the public. They break this idea into two sections. The first section is influential power and the second section is instrumental power. They pay special attention to instrumental power due to its prominent use by politicians. They define instrumental power to be explicit power. When politicians impose laws they are using instrumental power. According to Rozina and Karapetjana, politicians may also use particular language forms when answering journalists' questions. These scholars argue that language plays a major role in politics because its main function in various political situations is to enable politicians to form structurally stable social relationships (Rozina & Karapetjana, 2009).

Jonathan Charteris-Black sides with Rozina and Larapetjana's argument that persuasion and rhetoric go hand and hand. Charteris-Black leads into his assertion by first creating an understanding of persuasion as it relates to rhetoric. He explains that persuasion refers to the use of language by one party to encourage another party to accept its views. He extends his explanation of rhetoric to be the range of methods for persuading others. He also addresses the fact that you cannot have one without the other. Charteris-Black suggests that it is important to distinguish two roles in persuasion. The first role is an active role for the speaker and is characterized by deliberate intentions. He states, "persuasion does not occur by chance but because of a speaker's underlying purposes and ability to communicate this intention effectively through rhetoric" (Charteris-Black, 2011). He goes on to make the assertion that the purpose of this communication is to change the minds of an audience.

According to Charteris-Black, “The more democratic societies become, the greater the onus on leaders to convince potential followers that they and their policies can be trusted” (Charteris-Black, 2011). He backs up his argument by mentioning the thoughts of Burns who explains, “Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers” (Burns, 1978).

Contributing to the literature on image repair, Goran Eriksson and Mats Eriksson focus primarily on the interactional approach to image repair in which they base their approach of their study around news interviews and press conferences that involve public figures. Pointing out the benefits to interviews, these scholars argue that many look at interviews to just be a series of questions and answers but in actuality, they are much more. Interviews are the necessary starting point to understanding the roles as well as norms and patterns of particular actions that are linked to this practice of interviewing. Although an interview is scripted and prepared on both parties’ behalf, the lack of rehearsal makes the initial interview unpredictable and no one really knows how the participants will handle the situation.

After conducting a study that compared several sections from interviews, an essential argument was made for the interactional approach to image repair. Their argument states, “that image repair work to a large extent (but not exclusively) takes place in interviews, particularly when it concerns politicians, and if we aim at a more thorough understanding of how such work is carried out, it is necessary to take this interaction into consideration” (G. Eriksson & M. Eriksson, 2012). Interviews are

conversations that are not necessarily rehearsed between both parties, making outcomes unpredictable. In order for Clinton to utilize interviews to have success in image restoration, statements must be prepared in multiple angles. These angles should reflect what could possibly be asked and should also have parallel responses already in place.

Also stemming from their research is the analysis that demonstrates just how journalists conduct themselves during a press conference or interview. This result includes how they pose questions to the interviewee and how it has an impact that comes with consequences for the accused actor's chances of having a successful image restoration.

### **SAMPLING CLINTON'S APOLOGIA**

Hillary Clinton has used apologia throughout her political career. During her career she experienced the use of apologia on her own behalf and on the behalf of others. A series of incidents has obligated Clinton to use apologia as a means of escaping the repercussions; statements have followed her in the form of a trail. Watergate, Travelgate, Baking Cookies and Hosting Teas, and the Monica Lewinsky scandal were all events in which Clinton used apologia. These events provide background for the current study to understand the apologia of Hillary Clinton. The following section offers a brief history of instances in which Clinton has used apologia throughout her political career as well as throughout her years of being the first lady of the United States.

Denise Oles-Acevedo contributes to the literature on image repair theory by providing her study on the trajectory of Hillary Clinton's apologia. Given the fact that controversy finds its way back to Hillary Clinton, Oles-Acevedo conducts a critical analysis of image damaging events that Hillary Clinton faced during the 1990s. She provides examples of situations that were faced while being first lady and analyzes some of Clinton's personal controversies that are a result of personal actions. Oles-Acevedo's study was conducted through the lens of Benoit's image repair theory. Special attention and emphasis were placed on certain situations including how Clinton managed the scandals and controversies from it. It was found that a common theme appears in each of Clinton's attempts at image restoration, the denial strategy as a way to uphold her positive image as first lady.

### ***Whitewater Scandal***

The Whitewater Scandal initially surfaced during the 1992 presidential campaign. In 1978, Bill and Hillary Clinton used borrowed money from their friend James McDougal totaling \$200,000. The money was used to make an investment in property. During Bill Clinton's first term as governor of Arkansas, the McDougals and the Clintons created the Whitewater Development Company. In the 1980s the company was not much of a success. The Whitewater Land Investigation revealed that Hillary Clinton was legal counsel for James and Susan McDougal and the failed Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan. Clinton's position raised questions about how she became a billing partner on the account given her business involvement with McDougal and Bill Clinton's position as governor. Questions were also raised about Clinton's ethical practices in her law firm (Kelley, 2001). Oles-Acevedo explains that in this scandal Hillary Clinton uses the denial strategy. Oles-Acevedo notes, "she denied lying, cheating, obstructing justice, and having done anything that would have given the impression of misconduct by her or her husband" (Oles-Acevedo, 2012). Hillary Clinton denied every charge against her and continuously argued that the Whitewater investigation was a smear campaign against her and her husband.

### ***Baking Cookies and Hosting Teas***

The Baking Cookies and Hosting Teas incident occurred during the time of Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign. This incident also highlights the significance of Hillary Clinton's role in her husband's campaign (Gould, 1996). The statements made were in retaliation to the attacks on her husband and allegations of his infidelity.

In the incident with Tammy Wynette and baking cookies, Hillary Clinton had to deny that her comments were intentionally malicious toward traditional womanhood. During Bill Clinton's campaign stop in Chicago, a reporter asked Hillary Clinton a question pertaining her thoughts on accusations made by the Democratic presidential candidate at the time, former California Governor Jerry Brown. Gov. Jerry Brown made accusations that Hillary's husband, Bill Clinton, former Governor of Arkansas at the time, was purposefully directing state business to the Rose Law Firm in hopes of increasing Hillary Clinton's salary. Hillary Clinton replied, "I thought, number one, [the remark] was pathetic and desperate, and also thought it was interesting because this is the sort of thing that happens to...women who have their own careers and their own lives. And I think it's a shame, but I guess it's something that we're going to have to deal with" (Oles-Acevedo, 2012).

A follow-up question sparked the cookies and tea comment when Hillary stated, "You know, I suppose I could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas, but what I decided to do was fulfill my profession, which I entered before my husband was in public life. And I've worked very, very hard to be as careful as possible, and that's all I can tell you" (Oles-Acevedo, 2012). According to Oles-Acevedo, "A first lady cannot appear to be anti-home and anti-family, as these characteristics are not found in a dignified first lady" (Oles-Acevedo, 2012). Oles-Acevedo analyzed the statements and concluded that Clinton's apologia attempted to *deny* that her words were intentional and to also *reduce offensiveness*. She delivered this message by trying to explain, clarify, and defend her own words by *minimizing* the negativity within them. Kelley suggests that Hillary Clinton made an effort to save her husband's name by implementing a crisis

mode strategy. The strategy Clinton employed was to declare her unconditional support for her husband (Kelley, 2001).

### ***Travelgate***

The Travelgate scandal began in 1993, the end of Bill Clinton's third year as president, when seven longtime employees of the White House travel office were fired. The duties of the employees included handling travel arrangements for reporter and television crews covering presidential affairs. The scandal focuses primarily on Hillary Clinton. Clinton was alleged of having put pressure on White House lawyers into firing the travel office staff. Clinton was also accused of having the FBI investigate the employees in attempt to allow family friends enjoy the benefits of the office (Canason, 1996). Hillary Clinton's previous denials of having any involvement in the firings raised questions about her credibility (P. Flaherty and T. Flaherty, 1996). Brock (1996) implies that the "air brushing" of Clinton's involvement was an attempt to preserve her public image (Brock, 1996). After addressing the media's comments on her alleged involvement, Clinton was scrutinized for rhetoric being too harsh. Clinton then defended these allegations by saying her communication style is practiced in Arkansas and is a style of honesty and frankness.

### ***The Monica Lewinsky Affair***

Another Clinton image repair attempt began when she experienced backlash after she announced that she was staying with her husband after he publically admitted to his affair with then-twenty-one year old White House Intern Monica Lewinsky. During an interview with the *Today Show*, Clinton referred to the Lewinsky investigation as a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against her husband. This assertion ultimately implied the *attack*

*accuser* sub-category. She also referred to the events being a “battle” and that the series of issues leading up to the investigation was a conspiracy with the sole objective being to take down her husband. When questioned about the possibility of Bill Clinton repeating this act, Hillary Clinton stated, “... I have learned a long time ago that the only people who count in a marriage are the two that are in it. We know everything there is to know about each other, and we understand and accept and love each other. And I just think that a lot of this is deliberately designed to sensationalize charges against my husband, because everything else they’ve tried has failed” (Oles-Acevedo, 2012). According to Oles-Acevedo, as a strategy, Clinton again used the *attack accuser* sub-category in order to place blame on the accuser (Oles-Acevedo, 2012).

### ***Clinton’s Email Controversy***

Hillary Clinton has been the headliner not only for her candidacy for president of the United States but for a controversy that has evolved over time. Several news sources have been covering the email controversy since word got out that Clinton was hiding something. This section includes reports from *The Washington Post* along with other sources including *CNN*, *MSNBC*, and *FOX News* to corroborate a detailed account of just where the email controversy stems from.

The eruption of controversy surrounding Hillary Clinton’s email server unfolded when *The New York Times* presented the story with details about the email server. It was revealed that while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State, she used her personal email account to handle official government business rather than the designated government account. Following the Republican majority House Select Committee on the Benghazi investigation, a furthering of investigation on Clinton herself was initiated.

According to several news sources but particularly *The Washington Post*, Hillary Clinton's email issues began during her first days as Secretary of State (O'Harrow, 2016). Clinton's BlackBerry phone, one of her prized possessions, escalated frustration, as Clinton was not allowed to enter the seventh-floor suite of offices also known as Mahogany Row with the BlackBerry for security reasons. Being the Secretary of State, Clinton needed to manage floods of emails with friends, family, supporters, as well as colleagues. According to Clinton, she disliked the idea that she had to stow her phone before entering her own private office. After showing her concern for this policy, aides as well as senior officials worked to find a way for her to have access to her device but they did not pass approval of the diplomatic security bureau. The diplomatic security bureau had a fear that foreign intelligence devices could and would eventually hack the phone and use it as a listening device, hence becoming a security threat to the United States.

Although diplomatic security viewed the phone in general to be a security threat, they lacked knowledge of there being another underlying security threat. Clinton's BlackBerry was digitally connected to a private email server in the basement of her home, which was approximately 260 miles away. Seeing that there was no knowledge of this threat, officials failed to take preventative actions to protect the server.

The email server had been set up in November of 2008 when Clinton was selected by President Obama to be his secretary of state. It was also made clear that the server had been set up for former president Bill Clinton who had previously used it for personal and Clinton Foundation matters. Later during a press conference, Hillary Clinton told reporters that her server contained emails from her and Bill (Ross, 2015). Contradicting Hillary's statement, Bill's spokesman at the time stated that Bill Clinton had only used

email twice, both times while in office (Ross, 2015). Moving on to January 13, 2009, one of Bill Clinton's aides had registered a private email domain for Hillary Clinton, clintonemail.com, which would allow her to access as well as send emails over the server. Her first known usage of the BlackBerry communication through the basement server was on January 28, 2009. At this time Hillary Clinton exchanged notes with Army General David H. Petraeus, then the chief of the U.S. Central Command, but those have not yet been released. After warnings of the possibility that the server could be hacked, Clinton continued to use her private BlackBerry, the basement server.

Although the system had cyber security installed on it, computer-security specialists noted, "That means that anyone could have accessed it. Anyone" (O'Harrow, 2016). It was also noted, "The system had other features that made it vulnerable to talented hackers, including a software program that enabled users to log on directly from the World Wide Web" (O'Harrow, 2016).

Problems with the use of the personal email server intensified as citizens and the media began to see a lack of transparency. The media directed attention to President Obama's very direct statement about government transparency from his administration.<sup>4</sup> It was made clear that his administration would promote accountability through disclosure of a wide range of information that also included work emails. The *Washington Post* promotes the notion that the vulnerability of Clinton's basement server

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<sup>4</sup> After learning of Clinton's email controversy, President Barack Obama stated, "Let me just say Hillary Clinton is, and has been, an outstanding public servant. She was a great Secretary of State for me. The policy of my administration is to encourage transparency" (Independent Journal).

is one of the most prevalent unanswered questions that is driving this scandal. The *Washington Post* states:

Since Clinton's private email account was brought to light a year ago in a *New York Times* report -- followed by an Associated Press report revealing the existence of the server -- the matter has been a source of nonstop national news. Private groups have filed lawsuits under the Freedom of Information Act. Investigations were begun by congressional committees and inspector general's offices in the State Department and the U.S. Intelligence Community, which referred the case to the FBI in July for "counterintelligence purposes" after determining that the server carried classified material. (O'Harrow, 2016)

Subsequently, the email controversy has become a major topic of discussion, the FBI is now trying to decide whether a crime has been committed as far as handling classified material. The FBI is also striving to investigate whether the server was actually hacked. The *Washington Post* claims, "The resulting scandal revolves around questions about classified information, the preservation of government records and the security of her email communication" (O'Harrow, 2016).

As this controversy and rhetoric surrounding it continues to unravel, many have not been fans of Clinton as they say she placed herself above the law in a quest for control of her records. The media along with citizens have been outraged and all want answers to these controversial mystery emails. The *Washington Post* stated:

The unfolding story of Clinton's basement server has outraged advocates of government transparency and mystified political supporters and adversaries alike. Judge Emmet G. Sullivan of the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., who is

presiding over one of the FOIA<sup>5</sup> lawsuits, has expressed puzzlement over the affair. He noted that Clinton put the State Department in the position of having to ask her to return thousands of government records -- her work email. (O'Harrow, 2016)

This statement suggests that Clinton has not been as cooperative as they would like her to be in terms of turning over the thousands of government records.

According to the State Department, the number of emails coming to and from the basement system increased: "There were 62,320 in all, an average of 296 a week, nearly 1,300 a month, according to numbers Clinton later reported to the State Department. About half of them were work-related" (O'Harrow, 2016). Included in these emails were both confidential work-related material as well as personal materials. It was reported that her most frequent correspondent was Mills, her chief of staff, who had exchanged thousands of notes with Clinton. More of the classified material included 2,093 email chains that fit into the classified category. These classified emails were labeled confidential which is considered to be the lowest level of classification. A *Washington Post* analysis later found that 104 of the emails that contained classified material were

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<sup>5</sup> Since 1967, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has provided the public the right to request access to records from any federal agency. It is often described as the law that keeps citizens in the know about their government. Federal agencies are required to disclose any information requested under the FOIA unless it falls under one of the nine exemptions which protect interests such as personal privacy, national security, and law enforcement. The FOIA also requires agencies to proactively post online certain categories of information, including frequently requested records. As Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court have all recognized, the FOIA is a vital part of our democracy (FOIA).

prepared and sent by Clinton herself (O'Harrow, 2016). Adding to the trouble is the fact that before the server received a digital certification that marked the use of standard encryption, Clinton along with her aides exchanged a number of notes that touched on North Korea, Mexico, Afghanistan, military advisers, CIA operations, and a briefing for President Obama which all sounds pretty classified and confidential in terms of security.

Examples of what really lies within the server is broken up into two categories, work related and confidential. Fitting into the classified matters category, Clinton's adviser Philippe Reines wrote a note to her about Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai. In this note, Reines began the note by reminding Clinton that Reines's "close friend Jeremy Bash is now CIA Director Leon E. Panetta's Chief of Staff." Although the rest of the email contained important notions as to why it should not have been sent or received over the basement server, it was not released due to the fact that it was "national-security-sensitive." On March 29, 2009, right before the standard encryption on the server began, Sullivan emailed Clinton what was reported to be a draft confidential report she was to prepare for President Obama. According to sources, Sullivan wrote, "Attached is a draft of your Mexico trip report to POTUS" (O'Harrow, 2016). Other personal emails seemed to be routine. These emails included those sent to family and friends. Emails even seemed to be a mixture of both government and family business including the coordination of efforts to bring aid to Haiti by the State Department and her husband's New York-based Clinton Foundation. On December 5, 2014, Clinton's lawyers hand delivered twelve file boxes that contained printed paper which included more than 30,000 emails.<sup>6</sup> After

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<sup>6</sup> It was confirmed that Clinton had withheld almost 32,000 emails that were believed to have been of a personal nature. The State Department began releasing the emails around May that

carefully reviewing the emails, it was apparent to intelligence officials that some of those emails contained classified material. It was reported that on May 19, 2015, in response to a FOIA lawsuit stemming from the media organization Vice News, U.S. District Judge Rudolph Contreras ordered for all of the emails to be released in stages. Sources from the *Washington Post* also found federal law violations to apply in Clinton's case by noting several laws under which she is being investigated for possibly breaking.<sup>7</sup>

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started with approximately 296 emails that were requested by the Benghazi committee (O'Harrow, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Under Title 18, Section 1924, of federal law, it is a misdemeanor punishable by fines and imprisonment for a federal employee to knowingly remove classified information "without authority and with the intent to retain such documents or materials at an unauthorized location."...Under Title 18, Section 2071, it is a misdemeanor to take federal records without authorization, something that is sometimes referred to as the "alienation" of records. The law is rarely enforced, but a conviction can carry a fine or imprisonment (O'Harrow, 2016).

## **CHAPTER II: METHOD**

This study chose to sample several artifacts in which Hillary Clinton addressed the questions raised about her email controversy. The artifacts used for this study come from her Twitter account (Clinton, 2015), United Nations press conference (Miller, 2015), Syracuse University's Toner Prize Dinner (Toner Prize, 2015), *CNN* interview with Brianna Keilar (CNN, 2015), *Univision* interview (Washington Post, 2016), Iowa Democratic Wing Dig Dinner in Clear Water (4President, n.d), her Facebook statement (Clinton, 2015), interview with *ABC*'s David Muir (ABC, 2015), appearance at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa (PBS, 2015), Las Vegas Town Hall (NBC, 2016), *NPR* interview (NPR, 2016), and finally the Fifth Democratic Debate (Beckwith, 2016).

A Google search was conducted in which "Hillary Clinton email controversy" was entered. Amongst the search results were hits. The most common hits were current news coverage of the subject. Although these hits could have served as a data in subsequent study, the focus here was on actual statements Hillary Clinton publicly offered made over a course of time examined.<sup>8</sup> When selecting artifacts for the study, several considerations were employed. How was the question by the interviewer framed? This consideration was important because it also had an impact on how Clinton would

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<sup>8</sup> A secondary search was conducted. This search consisted of "Hillary Clinton email controversy transcripts." This search was successful in bringing forth several news stories from CNN, MSNBC, and ABC News that not only had full videos of the interview or speech but also a hyperlink directing to a full transcript.

structure her response. Whether Clinton was avoiding the actual questions was considered. Dates were another determining factor. In order to compare Clinton's language over the course of time, artifacts were selected to cover the period examined. The first artifact used was dated March 5, 2015, while the last artifact used was dated February 5, 2016, which was just shy of a one-year span. Twelve artifacts were accounted for. The data set for the artifacts used in this study is represented in Appendix C.

This study analyzed the respective artifacts in order to answer three research questions:

*RQ1: Does transparency appear in Clinton's apologia and how is it addressed?*

*RQ2: How does Hillary Clinton use the strategies provided by Benoit's image restoration theory?*

*RQ3: Does Clinton's rhetoric of transparency and apologia remain consistent over the course of time?*

In analyzing these artifacts rhetorical analysis was utilized to dissect the different speeches and interviews in which Hillary Clinton addresses transparency and the controversy surrounding her email server. Rhetorical analysis is the best method for this study because it allows for the close and direct interaction with Hillary Clinton's own words on the issue versus the voice of a news reporting. This study used a lens in which the rhetoric of Hillary Clinton was analyzed by applying Benoit's Theory of Image Restoration Strategies.

Although an abundant amount of literature on the subjects of transparency as well as apologia exists, literature on the intersection of the two is non-existent. Being able to intersect the two topics and show how one depends on the other and vice versa provides a valuable scholarly literature for the subject matter. It also allows for a close interaction with the text that examines specific categories and relationships that are embedded within the text. In this study, the categories and sub-categories from Benoit's image repair theory are applied to gain a better understanding of Hillary Clinton's use of apologia discourse. While her oratory helps categorize different aspects to her rhetoric, certain key words and phrases are used to determine whether any of the strategies or a combination of the strategies from Benoit's image repair typology apply. It is also important to acknowledge that one phrase may include characteristics from several categories as well as sub-categories.

### ***Application of Benoit's Typology***

Benoit's image repair typology allows for the analysis of individual's rhetoric as it changes over time during the strenuous period of controversy. Image repair in the political sense is closely tied to William Benoit's theory of image repair and the earlier but less detailed models of apologia. Benoit gives examples of language used for each general strategy. In Appendix A, sample statements in which Benoit uses to classify these categories are given. These examples were referred to in order to apply the typologies to Clinton's statements.

### ***Procedure***

The very first step in analyzing the artifacts consisted of reading the entire transcript and highlighting any statements made by Clinton addressing her emails. Once

potential statements were identified a second examination of the artifacts was conducted. The second examination consisted of labeling any indications of Clinton mentioning or demonstrating that she is/was being transparent with not only her emails themselves but also the investigation as a whole. Once signs of transparency were discovered, a third examination of each artifact was done. This time apologia discourse was analyzed. For each statement in the artifacts that Clinton made, Benoit's theory was applied. This application consisted of two parts: determining which of the five categories applied and which sub-category applied. Additionally, it was analyzed to see if statements appeared to fit into more than one category.

Once the identification and application process was completed a master chart was created in order to conveniently view the information. The chart included the name of the event in which Clinton made the comment, the date of the event, the actual statement, and what strategy was used, according to the characteristics provided by Benoit.

With easy access and visibility for all events, statements, and strategies, an investigation of the first research question was conducted. A specific procedure is conducted to answer the first research question:

*RQ1: Does transparency rhetoric appear in Clinton's apologia?*

While analyzing, each artifact consisting of transparency rhetoric was examined. The number of occurrences in which Clinton mentioned being transparent was counted and tallied in order to gain a total number of occurrences. Due to the frequency with which Clinton spoke of being transparent, it could easily be miscounted leading to the possibility of an inaccurate total of occurrences. To avoid this mishap, this procedure was conducted four times. During the final examination, all occurrences were accounted for.

Once the calculations were complete, a chart was made in order to determine whether transparency had been used with any of the apologia rhetoric. It also allowed for the determination of how many times they appeared together.

Upon the completion of the first research question, the second research question was analyzed which states:

*RQ2: How does Hillary Clinton use the strategies provided by Benoit's image restoration theory?*

To answer this question, the master chart was referred to in order to conclude how many times each strategy occurred within each artifact. The total number of appearances of each category as well as sub-category was recorded for each artifact. Sums were obtained for the number of occurrences of individual artifacts and each category across all texts. For example, a calculation of the total number of times *reducing offensiveness* occurred throughout each individual artifact and then how many times they occurred in all of the artifacts was conducted. Percentages were obtained. This step was repeated four times to avoid any misrepresentation of data. The first two attempts showed that single statements were analyzed as two separate statements making the number of occurrences fluctuate. The second two attempts provided a more accurate representation of statements belonging in several categories.

Once the calculations were complete, a chart was made including the total number of occurrences for all artifacts as a whole. Preparing a chart representing the number of occurrences for all of the artifacts allowed for a representation of which strategy Clinton used most throughout her apologia. By preparing the chart, a clear representation of statistics viewed individually allowed for a closer look at what route Clinton took on each

occasion. The chart consisted of the strategy categories as well as sub-categories. Next to each was the total number of occurrences, first, for the sub-categories and then the total of the particular category as a whole. This structure allowed for the determination of which categories were used most frequently in each individual artifact.

The final research question deals with the acknowledgement of the presence (or lack thereof) of consistency pertaining to Clinton's rhetoric of both transparency and apologia. This research question reads:

*RQ3: Does Clinton's rhetoric of transparency and apologia remain consistent over the course of time?*

In answering this question, the dates indicated on the master chart allowed for evidence proving that Clinton's rhetoric or way of speaking on the matter either changed or remained consistent. The first step in conducting this part of the analysis consisted of making two charts. The first chart focused primarily on exemplifying whether Clinton's mentions of her transparency toward the matter increased or decreased over time. In order to fulfill retrieving this data, the table included the date on which transparency was mentioned followed by the number of times it was mentioned on that particular date.

The second chart created to answer question three consisted of the same procedure for Clinton's transparency rhetoric. This table noted of the date of the event and the strategy utilized by Clinton followed by the number of times that strategy was used on that particular date. This table allowed for a number of questions to be answered. It allowed for the first occurrence of transparency rhetoric to be compared to other statements over the course of time. Language was compared throughout in order to achieve a consensus of pattern change throughout the course of Clinton's apologia.

### CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS

The charts and tables used to analyze the artifacts have shown several similarities as well as differences throughout the study. These similarities and differences show just how often Hillary Clinton utilizes image restoration strategies as well as rhetoric on transparency. The purpose of this chapter is to report and assess the data presented in order to answer each of the three research questions discussed previously. An account of the total number of occurrences for both transparency and apologia rhetoric is demonstrated below in Table 1.

**Table 1: Total Occurrences of Image Repair Strategies and Transparency**

DENIAL		
	<i>Simple Denial</i>	8
	<i>Shift Blame</i>	0
<b>EVADE RESPONSIBILITY</b>		<b>16</b>
	<i>Provocation</i>	0
	<i>Defeasibility</i>	3
	<i>Accident</i>	2
	<i>Good Intentions</i>	11
<b>REDUCE OFFENSIVENESS</b>		<b>47</b>
	<i>Bolster</i>	26
	<i>Minimize</i>	14
	<i>Differentiate</i>	1
	<i>Transcend</i>	2

	<i>Attack Accuser</i>	4
	<i>Compensate</i>	0
<b>CORRECTIVE ACTION</b>		<b>29</b>
<b>MORTIFICATION</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>TRANSPARENCY</b>		<b>38</b>

### ***Transparency***

Research question one is presented as: *Does transparency appear in Clinton's apology?* In order to answer this question an examination of the frequency with which Clinton mentions or attempts to demonstrate transparency is piloted. The number of transparency occurrences by Clinton defending her emails was thirty-eight as shown in Table 1. Out of the twelve artifacts used, Clinton consistently attempts to demonstrate that she, herself, has been transparent about not only the investigation but also throughout her time as Secretary of State. Clinton also attempts to persuade the audience that she has been transparent throughout the ordeal by exemplifying ways in which she has shown transparency. For example, in the March 10, 2015, United Nations Press Conference Clinton states, "Fourth, I took the unprecedented step of asking that the State Department make all my work-related emails public for everyone to see" (Miller, 2015). She then goes on to say, "And I heard just a little while ago the State Department announced they would begin to post some of my e-mails, which I'm very glad to hear, because I want it all out there" (Miller, 2015).

The statements previously mentioned clearly provide evidence that Clinton is attempting to show that she has been cooperative with the investigation. By making these

statements, Clinton is addressing the audience in a manner that is reassuring them that she is doing everything in her power to display transparency by providing the public with the actual emails. It also indicates that Clinton is trying to prove her innocence by showing that she does not have anything to hide as seen when she says, “which I’m very glad to hear, because I want it all out there” (Miller, 2015).

In the July 7, 2015, CNN interview with Brianna Keilar, Clinton also attempts to prove that she has been as transparent as possible. She states, “But I want people to understand what the truth is. And the truth is everything I did was permitted and I went above and beyond what anybody could have expected in making sure that if the State Department didn’t capture something, I made a real effort to get it to them” (CNN, 2015). This statement is Clinton demonstrating her leadership. The fact that she is doing more than what has been asked of her insinuates that she is being a leader. Even later in her September 8, 2015 Facebook status Clinton makes an even more evident attempt at proving her transparency. Clinton actually uses the word “transparent” in this statement making her intentions clear. Clinton states, “As this process proceeds, I want to be as transparent as possible. That’s why I’ve provided all of my work emails to the government to be released to the public, and why I’ll be testifying in public in front of the Benghazi Committee later next month” (Clinton, 2015). These examples prove the existence of Clinton’s rhetoric on transparency but they go a step further. Clinton’s use of transparency also intersects with her use of image restoration strategies.

In answering research question one, a table was created to illustrate the Clinton transparency references used in collaboration with specific apologia claims. An account

of transparency occurrences in collaboration with the individual image restoration strategies is exemplified in Table 2.

**Table 2 Transparency Occurrences with Individual Image Restoration Strategies**

<b>Transparency + Denial</b>	2
+Simple Denial	2
+Shift Blame	0
<b>Transparency + Evade Responsibility</b>	2
+Provocation	0
+Defeasibility	0
+Accident	1
+Good Intentions	1
<b>Transparency + Reduce Offensiveness</b>	26
+Bolster	21
+Minimize	3
+Differentiate	1
+Transcend	0
+ Attack the Accuser	1
+ Compensate	0
<b>Corrective Action</b>	24
<b>Mortification</b>	2

The recorded data representing the number of times transparency occurred in collaboration with individual image restoration strategies proved that *reducing*

*offensiveness* was used most frequently, with twenty-six occurrences. This accounted for approximately 47% of the total collaborative occurrences. *Bolstering* proves to be the most common sub-category with twenty-one occurrences with transparency. The second most frequent strategy used in collaboration with transparency is *corrective action*. This collaboration was responsible for twenty-four occurrences which is approximately 44% of the total collaborative occurrences. As Benoit mentions in his interpretation of apologia, *reducing offensiveness* is used as a vehicle to reduce the degree to which the act is perceived to be a negative one (Benoit, 1995). *Bolstering* is seen as a vehicle that allows the accused to exemplify good traits. Benoit also mentions that *corrective action* is utilized as a means of securing a plan to solve the issue or presenting preventative measures to make sure the issue does not transpire again.

Clinton demonstrates her use of transparency with *reducing offensiveness* and particularly *bolstering* during her September 8, 2015, ABC interview with David Muir. In this interview Clinton states, “And I want people to know that I am trying to be as transparent as possible so that, you know, legitimate questions can and will be answered” (ABC, 2015). Clinton’s statement on how she is “trying to be as transparent as possible” is showing not only that she is trying to be transparent but also implying that she possesses good traits. The most probable traits Clinton is trying to exemplify are that she is honest and reliable.

In the United Nations press conference Clinton demonstrates both transparency and *corrective action* in the same statement. In doing so Clinton states, “I am very proud of the work that I and my colleagues and our public servants at the department did during

my four years as secretary of state, and I look forward to people being able to see that for themselves” (Miller, 2015).

In Clinton’s October 7, 2015, interview at Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, she exhibited the language and characteristics of both transparency as well as *reducing offensiveness* and *corrective action*. In the interview at Cornell College Clinton states, “And I think that I’ve been as transparent—in fact, more transparent than anybody has ever been. And I think I’ll let the American people judge it” (PBS, 2015). In this statement Clinton mentions the fact that she has been “more transparent than anybody has ever been” which not only shows signs of transparency but also *reducing offensiveness*’ subcategory of *bolstering* as she uses this statement to show a positive trait that she possesses. Clinton shows her openness with the American people by allowing them to be the judge of the situation. In the same statement, Clinton also shows transparency and *corrective action*. Clinton’s statement, “And I’ll let the American people judge it” indicates that she plans to let her emails speak for themselves as a way of ending the controversy when they become public for the American people to view.

In the accumulated data regarding transparency and her apologia modes, another assertion is found. The least frequently used collaboration is transparency and *mortification*. Clinton only has one occurrence of the two together, which makes up approximately 2% of the total occurrences. The only time transparency is seen with *mortification* is in Clinton’s interview with ABC’s David Muir. In this interview Clinton states, “That was a mistake. I’m sorry about that. I take responsibility. And I’m trying to be as transparent as I possibly can to not only release 55,000 pages of my emails, turn over my server. But I am looking forward, finally, to testifying before Congress” (ABC,

2015). In this statement Clinton provides an apology along with the claim that she is attempting to be transparent. In regard to the number of appearances by transparency alone, there were only three occurrences. An example of a statement mentioning transparency alone comes from the UN press conference in which Clinton states, “There are four things I want the public to know.” (Miller, 2015). The present section has covered Clinton’s use of transparency; the next section handles the analysis of Clinton’s use of apologia.

### ***Image Restoration Strategies***

Research question two asked: *How does Hillary Clinton use the strategies provided by Benoit’s image restoration theory?* To answer this question Table 1 was used to account for frequency patterns for each strategy. This section is divided into each of Benoit’s strategic categories to examine how Clinton utilizes them rhetorically.

#### *Denial*

Denial is a strategy that Clinton uses in her apologia but that is only accounted for eight times and was responsible for approximately 8% of all strategy occurrences. All eight of these instances were *simple denial* whereas there was not a presence of *shift blame* in Clinton’s apologia. In all of the cases in which Clinton used *simple denial*, her denial did not mention the misuse of her server. Instead, Clinton’s denial suggested that she did not send or receive classified material over the server. This trait is shown in all eight of her uses of the *denial* strategy. Clinton states, “I did not email any classified material to anyone on my email. There is no classified material” (Miller, 2015). While denying that she sent classified material, Clinton is denying an important part of the issue. Clinton is denying what she can instead of denying her overall wrongdoing,

messaging outside of official tracking. She goes on to say, “So I’m certainly well-aware of the classification requirements and did not send classified material” (Miller, 2015).

This pattern is also seen in her Facebook statement, where she states, “And nothing I ever sent or received was marked classified at the time” (Clinton, 2015).

Although Clinton uses *simple denial*, she also denies in another typology form, *transcend*, a sub-category of *reduce offensiveness*. In doing so, Clinton mentions other government officials who may have committed the same act. In other words, Clinton insists that since they were not found guilty, neither is she. This strategy is explained further in the *Reduce Offensiveness* section.

### *Evade Responsibility*

*Evade Responsibility* was a frequently used strategy although it was not the most frequently used. This strategy appeared sixteen times in her statements. The occurrences were equivalent to approximately 16% of the overall strategy appearances. Sub-categories *defeasibility*, *accident*, and *good intentions* were all utilized while *provocation* did not appear within her apologia discourse. The sub-category *good intentions* was used by Clinton the most frequently showing its presence eleven times. *Defeasibility* and *accident* followed *good intentions*, tying with only two occurrences each.

Clinton used the sub-category of *good intentions* to show that although she may have committed a wrongful act, she meant well while doing it. In Clinton’s press conference at the United Nations she stated, “I opted for convenience to use my personal email account, which was allowed by the State Department, because I thought it would be easier to carry just one device for my work and for my personal emails instead of two. Looking back, it would’ve been better if I’d simply used a second email account

and carried a second phone, but at the time, this didn't seem like an issue" (Miller, 2015). In this statement the tactic Clinton is using is her way of saying that although her action may not have been a good idea, she did not see that at the time. Clinton uses convenience as an excuse to show her *good intentions*.

*Defeasibility* is the sub-category which Clinton uses in two ways, both to claim the lack of knowledge. In Clinton's interview with David Muir she was questioned about classified emails, Muir asked Clinton, "What changed in them so significantly that you wouldn't have seen red flags even just a couple of years ago as Secretary of State? That you, of all people, would've known" (ABC, 2015). In response to this question, Clinton employs the *defeasibility* strategy by responding, "Maybe there is a backward-looking effort to see, okay maybe that wasn't classified. Or maybe that was unclassified on the State Department system. But we had it on a different system and we treated it differently. Something that we wouldn't have known about in the State Department" (Miller, 2015). This statement by Clinton makes the impression that whether material is considered classified or not in the system being used is not something the State Department would have been aware of. Clinton's insinuation that the State Department did not know what exactly was on her server is an odd statement. Suggesting that the State Department did not know whether the emails were classified can also be interpreted as Clinton saying they were not officially classified. This interpretation is likely to confuse the audience, which could very well be her intention.

Clinton's second use of the sub-category *defeasibility* is demonstrated using the method of humor. Clinton is asked about reports that her server had been wiped to remove its contents. In her response, Clinton stated, "What, like with a cloth or

something? I don't know how it works digitally at all" (CNN, 2015). This statement by Clinton provided humor with the mentioning of the server being wiped with a cloth. This statement claims that she is unfamiliar with how the wiping of a server digitally works, proving indirectly lack of knowledge. This statement is a way for Clinton to evade any responsibility for the action. It can also be seen as a way for Clinton to proclaim that if it did happen, she was not knowledgeable. It could also be seen as a form of *denial*. By claiming that she does not know how the server was wiped is also a way for Clinton to suggest that she cannot be responsible for committing an act she does not know how to do.

*Accident* is also seen in Clinton's use of the *evade responsibility* strategy.

Accident is responsible for approximately 2% of all strategy occurrences. In both instances in which Clinton employs the sub-category she uses specific language and key words. In one statement given by Clinton she states, "Yes, I should have used two email addresses, one for personal matters and one for my work at the State Department. Not doing so was a mistake. I'm sorry about it, and I take full responsibility" (Clinton, 2015). In this statement, Clinton uses the word "mistake" declaring that the act was an accident and that she did not mean to do it. Similarly, in another statement Clinton makes, the language is almost exactly the same. She states, "That was a mistake. I'm sorry about that. I take responsibility" (ABC, 2015). This statement contains the same language in which she simply claims that the act was a mistake or mishap, not intentional.

### *Reduce Offensiveness*

*Reduce Offensiveness* was the most frequently used strategy by Clinton. Overall, Clinton deployed this strategy a total of forty-seven times. This strategy was responsible

for approximately 47% of the total strategy occurrences. Five of the six sub-categories characterizing the *reduce offensiveness* strategy were used by Clinton. These sub-categories included *bolster*, *minimize*, *differentiate*, *transcend*, and *attack accuser*. The sub-category *compensate* was not used by Clinton in any of her statements about her emails. Out of the sub-categories, *bolstering* was used the most often with a total of twenty-six occurrences. *Minimizing* was the second most frequently used with a total of fourteen occurrences. *Attack accuser*, *transcend*, and *differentiate* were used the least with *attack accuser* being responsible for four occurrences each, *transcend* was responsible for two occurrences, and *differentiate* was only responsible for one.

The sub-category *bolster* is the most frequently used by Clinton and is her way of expressing good traits that she personally possesses. She uses this sub-category in attempt to *reduce offensiveness* of the act. A majority of the time, *bolstering* appeared with another strategy. The majority of the statements made by Clinton exemplifying the *bolster* tactic used in the context of her explaining that she has done everything she could and can do plus more. Underlying these statements is a pattern. This pattern showcases that whenever there is a question or comment about Clinton deleting her emails or how can the public can be sure that she is being truthful, she mentions the fact that she has gone above and beyond to get information to the public. In one of her statements Clinton stresses, “And I feel that I did that and even more, that I went above and beyond what I was requested to do. And again, those will be out in the public domain, and people will be able to judge for themselves” (Miller, 2015). The way Clinton used this statement is evidence that she strongly stresses the fact that she did more than what was required of her. By stressing this, she exemplifies a good trait that she would like the audience to

focus on. By using the terms “above and beyond,” Clinton is making a point that she is not just doing what is being asked of her but she is also going out of her own way and taking extra steps to get to the bottom of the issue.

Another one of Clinton’s statements in which she uses the sub-category is almost identical to her language used when *bolstering*. When Clinton was presented with a question which implied that it is uncommon for someone to be advised to wipe his or her server under the circumstances, Clinton proceeds to explain that she had done everything she could to get to the bottom of the issue. Clinton states, “Well, what I say to that is turned over everything I was obligated to turn over. And then I moved on. People delete their personal emails, their work-related emails, whatever emails they have on a regular basis. I turned over everything I could imagine” (CNN, 2015). She then goes on to say, “I did everything I could to make sure people got anything that was related that I had” (CNN, 2015).

The sub-category *minimize* is the second most frequently used by Clinton. In most instances, Clinton uses the tactic to persuade the audience that the act is not as serious as it is believed to be. Throughout her statements, Clinton is seen doing this in a variety of ways. As seen previously with *defeasibility*, Clinton employs *minimizing* by offering humor. Other ways in which Clinton demonstrates the use of this sub-category are seen through her making statements implying that it is a common act for an individual to delete his or her emails. She also acknowledges that the act has been preceded by other accusations in which she is making the argument that her act cannot possibly be as serious as it is being made out to be due to the never-ending accusations against her.

In an example in which Clinton uses humor with *minimizing*, Clinton addresses the comments on her emails being erased by using Snapchat to compare the two. She states, “Those messages disappear all by themselves” (CNN, 2015). In doing this, Clinton makes the argument that her emails operate just like her Snapchat uploads, once viewed by individual recipients they are permanently erased. Due to the popularity and acceptance of the social networking application, the comparison implies that her emails being erased should be just as accepted, hence it is not as problematic as it is being made out to be.

When Clinton associates the fact that her email controversy has followed a path of controversies pertaining to her, she minimizes the situation by noting that this has been an ongoing problem with another party. During the Fifth Democratic debate Clinton stated, “Before it was emails it was Benghazi” (Beckwith, 2016). This statement is an example of how Clinton makes her act seem less distasteful. She attempts to provide evidence that this incident just falls in line with the other false accusations against her.

The next most frequently used sub-category by Clinton was *attack accuser*. In using this sub-category Clinton attempts to reduce the credibility of the attacker. In every occurrence of the sub-category, an attempt is made by a means of targeting the Republican Party. In certain examples she does not pinpoint a specific target but she does use language referencing that she is a victim.

In one of her statements, Clinton claims that Republicans are behind not only her recent email controversy but also prior ones. Clinton claims, “And the Republicans were stirring up so much controversy about that. And I testified for eleven hours, answered their questions, and they basically said, ‘Yep, didn’t get her, we tried.’ That was a

political ploy” (Beckwith, 2016). This statement is a concise representation of Clinton *reducing offensiveness* of her act. By her suggestion that Republicans are out to get her she is implying that her actual action is not as serious as it is deemed to be. When Clinton uses the *attack accuser* tactic to reference herself as a victim she states, “Yes, of course I can. I, as you might guess, have been around a while and there’ve been lots of, you know, attacks and counter-attacks and questions raised” (ABC, 2015). This statement by Clinton uses the words “attacks” and “counter-attacks” as a way of claiming that she has been attacked several times during her political career. These words also indicate that she has been the victim of these attacks, therefore reducing the offensiveness of the act.

There are several occurrences of *reduce offensiveness* that include more than one sub-category in order to enhance the claim. One statement that utilizes more than one sub-category of *reduce offensiveness* consists of *bolstering*, *attacking accuser*, and *minimizing*. Clinton states, “Well, they—people should and do trust me. And I have every confidence that that will be the outcome of this election. I cannot decide what the attacks on me will be, no matter how unfounded. And I’m well aware of the fact that it’s your job to raise those and we’ll do our best to respond to them” (CNN, 2015). This statement can be broken down to understand just how Clinton is using the tactics. When Clinton mentions that the people should trust her, she refers to herself as trustworthy that according to the typology is her expressing good traits. Clinton goes on to mention the word “attack” again, in which she is bringing forth the idea that she is a victim and that the accuser is the actual aggressor. The final tactic in this statement is used when Clinton mentions how the attacks are unfounded. The word “unfounded” suggests that any allegations against Clinton have been unsupported, therefor *minimizing* the offense.

### Corrective Action

*Corrective Action* appeared to be the second most frequently used strategy right after *reduce offensiveness*. *Corrective action* was used by Clinton a total of twenty-nine times making up for approximately 29% of the total strategy occurrences. In most cases, Clinton employs *corrective action* when asked about her emails being deleted and presenting the server for investigation. Some occurrences exemplify Clinton rendering a plan in which she intends to solve the issue. Others exemplify how she also acknowledges ways in which the incident could have been avoided.

One case in which Clinton renders a solution to the issue is when she mentions releasing her emails not only to investigators but also to the public. This is seen more often than when she mentions ways in which the situation could have been avoided. In one of Clinton's statements she proclaims, "I want the public to see my email. I asked State to release them. They said they will review them for release as soon as possible" (Clinton, 2015). Clinton's statement is a clear example of how she shows the public that she is trying to solve the issue. For this particular incident, the only way for her to solve the issue is to release her emails to officials and the public so that opinions and speculations can then be turned into facts.

Another way Clinton utilizes the *corrective action* strategy is by acknowledging that she is aware of ways in which the incident could have been avoided so that it is not a repeated action. Clinton explains, "Again, looking back, it would've been better for me to use two separate phones and two email accounts. I thought using one device would be simpler, and obviously, it hasn't worked out that way" (Miller, 2015). Clinton's approach in using this strategy is seen by first, acknowledging the fact that the situation could have

had a better result if things were done differently. Secondly, she acknowledges the fact that the way she did handle the situation did not work out the way she had expected it to.

### Mortification

*Mortification* was a strategy used by Clinton that had the least amount of occurrences. This strategy only accounted for a total of two times. These occurrences only represented approximately 2% of the total of Clinton's use of image restoration strategies. The statements, in which Clinton uses the *mortification* strategy, show almost the exact same language in both occurrences. In the first statement Clinton states, "I'm sorry about it, and I take full responsibility" (Clinton, 2015). The second statement uses identical language in which she states, "I'm sorry about that. I take responsibility" (ABC, 2015). In both occurrences Clinton is responding to statements made about her not using two separate emails. Interestingly enough, both uses of the *mortification* strategy happened on the same day at two different times. One was a written statement posted to her Facebook account while the other was during an interview with ABC's David Muir. Clinton also acknowledges that she takes full responsibility for her actions.

In conclusion to answering this research question, it is apparent that Clinton focuses her apologia on the use of the *reduce offensiveness* strategy. There are very few times in which she uses the *denial* strategy. This suggests that Clinton knew that it was almost impossible to deny the fact that she did anything wrong. Instead, she turns to *reducing offensiveness* of the action as a means of proving a few things. The first is that, although she may have done something wrong, she is still a good person, secondly, that the issue is not as big a deal as it is being portrayed, and finally, that she did it with *good intentions*.

Research question three states: *Does Clinton's rhetoric of transparency and apologia remain consistent over the course of time?*

In answering this question it was concluded after analyzing patterns and consistency over time that a specific pattern was not found. Clinton's use of rhetoric of transparency and apologia was used throughout all statements given about the email controversy. There was no evidence that Clinton used particular strategies more during her early statements than she did during some of her later statements. In all, Clinton's statements showed the use of all strategies and occurrences were sporadic. Additionally, her rhetoric of transparency was consistent over the course of time.

## **CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION**

This study has explored Hillary Clinton use of image restoration strategies when addressing her email controversy. It has also revealed the inconsistency in her rhetoric when juxtaposed with notions of appearing/being transparent. Although public image for a politician is always one of the main concerns, the fact that Clinton is a candidate for the Democratic 2016 presidential nomination is also a factor.

Overall, Clinton's use of image restoration strategies and apologia were deemed to be just that, strategy. The manner in which Clinton presents her explanations of the events that took place as well as answering various questions rendered a clear pattern. This pattern also proved that strategy was behind every word she uttered. Questions of the same form were repeated to her over the course of just shy of one year. Although it is expected for her to keep the same story, repetitiveness was a common factor.

In regard to her use of image restoration, it is apparent that Clinton sticks to the same stories and does not switch up her account of what happened. Each strategy used by Clinton involves similar language. She is seen using some of the exact same words and phrases throughout the artifacts used for this study. Her repetitiveness and consistency is evidence for her strategic ways. It also provides evidence that she has a solid goal in which consistency is her way of achieving it. Examples included when she offers that she is in full cooperation during the investigation. A statement by Clinton during the March 10, 2015, UN press conference states, "And we went, as I said, beyond that" (Miller, 2015). One of her statements from her CNN interview on July 7, 2015 she states, ". . . I wanted to go above and beyond what was expected of me . . ." (CNN, 2015).

Besides repetitiveness in Clinton's rhetoric, there is a pattern Clinton follows when responding to the questions being asked of her. As mentioned in Chapter one, Eriksson and Eriksson make the claim that an interview is scripted and both parties are prepared ahead of time. These authors argue that there also can be a lack of rehearsal between the two participants together which changes the dynamic in which responses will be given (G. Eriksson & M. Eriksson, 2012). Hillary's interviews did not appear dynamic in that sense; no matter what the question was or how it was phrased, Clinton employed a pattern using the same strategies and strategy collaborations. It is clearly indicated that Clinton's responses were rehearsed and prepared to answer questions drawn from the same family of questions.

On several occasions, Clinton is asked a specific question. For example, "Can Hillary Clinton survive this?" This question could have been answered with a simple response but instead, Clinton finds ways to use several strategies to answer the question. What Clinton is actually doing is utilizing her time to potentially be helpful in recreating this image that has been tarnished.

In answering questions Clinton primarily *attacks the accuser*, *transcends*, and offers *corrective action*. In the way in which she *attacks the accuser*, she states,

Yes, of course I can. I, as you might guess, have been around a while and there've been lots of, you know, attacks and counter-attacks and questions raised. And I can survive it because I think I'm running to be president to do what the country needs done...And I think on all of this, I'm looking forward to testifying before the Congress in public, which is what I demanded to be able to do. I'll answer all their questions for as long as they wish to ask them (ABC, 2015).

This statement is Clinton's way of saying the attacks and accusations targeted at her are nothing new. She is constantly under scrutiny and this just adds to the list. She uses this statement to *attack the accuser* by using the word "attack" in which she is the victim. She offers the view that she has been targeted and that the real offenders are those victimizing her by constantly questioning her actions. Also in this phrase Clinton *transcends* by mentioning that she is running for president to continue doing what the country needs done. This is her way of suggesting there is something more important and that the future of the nation is more important than emails. The final strategy used while answering this single question is *corrective action*. Clinton provides a solution in which she mentions her looking forward to testifying in front of Congress as a way to speed up the process of revealing the truth instead of the constant scrutiny and assumptions.

What has just been explained is how Clinton is using strategies as outlined in Benoit's typology. A collaboration of the strategies and their sub-categories is used to achieve effectiveness. Clinton's responses are also parallel to Benoit's assumption that communication is a goal-directed activity. Clinton's communication regarding her emails is based on a particular goal and that is to protect and maintain her public image. This is in hopes of a successful campaign and an even more successful political career.

It is also critical to acknowledge that Clinton's choice of words as well as use of strategies is employed in hopes of primarily *reducing the offensiveness* of the act and providing *a corrective action*. Seeing that these two strategies were employed the most, Clinton felt that in this particular situation the best ways to repair her image were to use *bolstering* and *corrective action*. By *bolstering*, Clinton was able to *reduce the offensiveness* of the act by stressing good traits. While using the *reducing offensiveness*

strategy she also mentions other political figures that she notes have done similar acts. She does this in hopes of making these traits stand out more than the actual act itself. In an interview Clinton states, “And we went, as I said, beyond that” (Miller, 2015). This statement indicates that Clinton is using the fact that she did more than she was asked to demonstrate. She does this by proving that she has nothing to hide and that she is in full cooperation with the investigation plus more.

Clinton’s use of *corrective action* is seen in two different ways. First Clinton offers a solution to the issue, which is to actually release the emails to the public for their own judgment. The second way Clinton employs this strategy is to offer ways which would be a remedy for the reoccurrence of the problematic. Clinton repetitively states that she acknowledges that using two separate phones and emails would have been better and would have avoided the entire controversy. Clinton also offers transparency as a *corrective action*, which assumes its own role in Clinton’s apologia. Clinton speaks of transparency as a way of solving the issue. By her being seeming transparent, she believes the public is reassured that they have access to everything that needs to be provided.

Clinton is seen using some strategies less than others for specific reasons. Clinton uses the *mortification* strategy the least because it could come with repercussions. When Clinton apologizes, it is an apology but it is not necessarily an apology for the greater of the offenses she is accused of. When Clinton does mention her being apologetic she is simply stating that she should have done things differently and she apologizes for not realizing the harm of her actions. Clinton never gives an apology for deleting her emails or does she give an apology for placing the American people at risk of security threats by

mishandling classified information. Clinton also makes an apology for the fact that her act raised a lot of questions, which does not suffice as an authentic ethical apology. If Clinton were to apologize sincerely for all of her actions that are being questioned, it would characterize her as guilty, ultimately doing more damage to her image.

Clinton's substantial promotion of open government and transparency has been a contributing factor as to why she mentions her personal demonstration of transparency in this controversy. As mentioned in Chapter one, Lindstedt and Naurin argue that the possibility of the public sphere becoming aware of corrupt behavior within the government could have a negative effect on the actor (Lindstedt & Naurin, 2010). In the case of Clinton's email controversy being exposed to the public, Clinton faced scrutiny from the public. Throughout Clinton's apologia for her email controversy, there is a large presence of rhetoric on transparency. She mentions transparency and just how transparent she has been and is trying to be for a specific reason, again, strategically.

Clinton's history of being an advocate for open government and transparency has called for her continuous promotion of it even during the time of a scandal. Not only is Clinton apologizing for this specific controversy but also for those that have previously surfaced. When Clinton mentions just how transparent she believes herself to be, she is referring to her transparency throughout her political career. Clinton mentions her transparency record and speaks of her overall performance. It was also mentioned that she is pleased with her performance as well as her colleagues which indicates she is using her political career as a whole to claim her transparency.

In 2010, Clinton lectured a group of foreign leaders about government transparency during a trip to Armenia. Clinton stated, "Democracy requires not just

elections, but open dialogue, a free exchange of ideas, government transparency, and accountability, and above all, an empowered citizenry, who constantly work together to make their country fairer, juster, healthier, and freer” (Rogin & Lake, 2015).

In July of 2011, Clinton gave a speech in Washington, DC in which she promoted an effort to improve government transparency internationally. The speech inaugurated the Open Government Partnership that was co-chaired by Brazil. In this speech, Clinton states, “When a government hides its work from public view, hands out jobs and money to political cronies, administers unequal justice, looks away as corrupt bureaucrats and businessmen enrich themselves at the people’s expense, that government is failing its citizens” (Rogin & Lake, 2015). She then adds, “And most importantly, that government is failing to earn and hold the trust of its people. And that lack of trust, in a world of instantaneous communication, means that the very fabric of society begins to fray and the foundation of governmental legitimacy begins to crumble” (Rogin & Lake, 2015).

In September of 2012 at the annual meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative, she mentioned lecturing a foreign government leader for lacking government transparency. In doing this Clinton stated, “Well, I have here a lot of the international lists of where your country stands on business climate, on corruption, on government transparency, and you are near or at the bottom. And it is time for you to recognize that in an interconnected global economy, you will benefit from doing what you should be doing internally for yourself” (Rogin & Lake, 2015). She goes on to say, “And so we have to have that kind of hard talk, which we do on a regular basis” (Rogin & Lake, 2015).

Transparency International recognized Secretary Clinton as an international leader in anti-corruption advocacy in government, business and development assistance. In

accepting this award on March 22, 2012, Clinton stated, “I am very honored to be here and delighted to be supporting the work of Transparency International-USA” (Overby and Montanaro, 2015). She then goes on to say, “Corruption and the lack of transparency eat away like a cancer at the trust people should have in their government” (Overby and Montarano, 2015). The significance of these statements about and from Clinton play a prominent role in figuring out just what it is Hillary Clinton is promoting. In the year of 2012, many articles, statements, and speeches were the focal point of the promotion of transparency from Clinton.

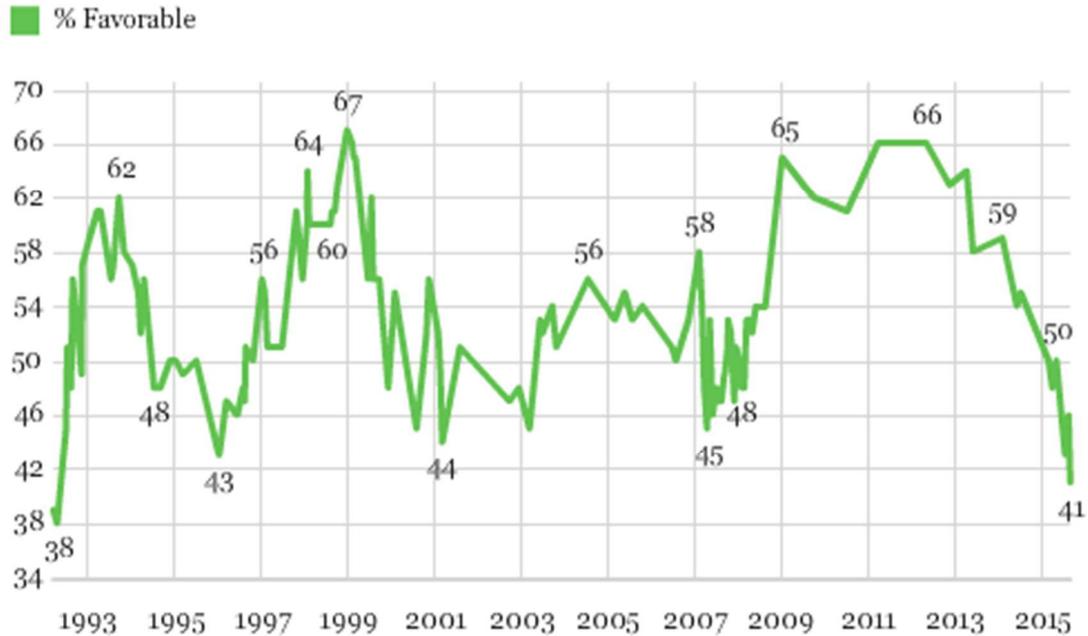
The efforts made by Clinton just mentioned are essential to understanding why transparency is reiterated throughout her responses to the email controversy. Due to the high volume of transparency mentions, it is apparent that Clinton knows that when she has been a strong advocate of transparency she must also be held reliable to practice what she preaches. Clinton is also aware that she cannot be a role model for foreign leaders to follow if she is not willing to be transparent on a domestic platform. These issues as well as the email controversy itself have revolved the media’s goal of questioning Clinton’s lack of transparency. Clinton uses transparency as a strategy to cover up her contradiction. Clinton’s contradiction is her advocacy for transparency and declaring she is transparent without actually being transparent. By claiming to be the most transparent candidate and politician, is a claim that does not prove or address whether she is being transparent for the questionable act. Instead, it is a tactic to divert the accusations to previous instances of transparency.

Several newspaper articles have headlined her lack of transparency and have associated this failure with her emails. In a *New York Post* article by Marisa Schultz, the

nation was able to see just how Hillary Clinton felt about government transparency as well as how she graded herself in the area of transparency. The opening of the article reads, “She deleted her emails, admitted she made a mistake in using a private home server and had to turn it over to the FBI. Now, Hillary Clinton is claiming she’s the most shining example of transparency in US history” (Schultz, 2015). This example shows a clear contradiction because transparency calls for the voluntary sharing of information. According to the article, Clinton only becomes transparent once the FBI gets involved. Similar sources have even mentioned that this pattern will have a negative effect her campaign and chances of becoming the United States’ first female president.

Many polls have been generated to gain insight on how Clinton’s email controversy could affect her chances of winning the election. According to the Gallup polls Hillary Clinton’s public opinion ratings have taken a turn for the worse after scrutiny stemming from her email controversy. Dugan and McCarthy state, “Dogged by continued scrutiny of her email practices as secretary of state, Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton’s favorability with the American public has sunk to one of its lowest levels in Gallup’s 23-year trend” (Dugan & McCarthy, 2015). According to this poll, as of September 2015 41% of US adults say they are favorable of Clinton while 51% are not as favorable (Dugan & McCarthy, 2015). The chart below is the actual results provided by Gallup.

### Hillary Clinton Favorability Ratings, 1992-2015



GALLUP

(Dugan & McCarthy, 2015)

The chart represents favorability ratings for Clinton between the years of 1992 and 2015. According to Dugan and McCarthy, Clinton's decline in favorability began after reports were publicized about her private email server. This poll serves the purpose of explaining just how the emails have affected the public's opinion on Clinton before and after her email controversy began its journey under public scrutiny, calling for the defense of her public image. When it comes to the question of Clinton's practices of transparency, her trustworthiness is also questioned. Any bad reputation being tacked on to her name definitely does not do her any favors. This is where the intersection of government transparency and image restoration theory exists. Due to the fact that there is a scandal in which Clinton is at the center of the investigation, her image is at stake. In order to

maintain a positive image and fix the one that is now tarnished, she must employ some sort of image restoration strategies.

While speaking on the matter of her emails, it is evident that Clinton is trying to do not only what she is being scrutinized for lacking but also what is expected of her. Clinton uses strategy also to attend to her transparency record. She mentions transparency a number of times in order to make a statement that she is not steering away from what she has called out other leaders for lacking. She wants the public to know that she is still practicing what she preaches. Interestingly enough, Clinton has used her demonstration of transparency in collaboration with image restoration strategies. The study reveals that Clinton's rhetoric on transparency is used as a strategy. Clinton's mentioning of transparency was seen alongside the *corrective action* strategy more than it was seen with any other strategy. It was also revealed that Clinton only used transparency without combining strategies with it twice. This pattern explains the notion that Clinton has merged her sense of being transparent as a way to fix her image. It also lends credence the assertion that strategy is being used to cover up a contradiction.

By offering reassurance that she is still the transparent Clinton that she was before, the controversy allowed for her not only to demonstrate her personal transparency but also to use her transparency as a means of solving the issue. By showing her opaque ways, Clinton was able to suggest that her being transparent and providing her emails was ultimately solving the issue. The only thing that the public wanted was the truth and she believed that those truths lay within her emails. It is constantly seen through her responses that she wants the public to be able to judge for themselves. One account in which Clinton makes this assertion is evident when she states, "I want the public to see

my email” (Clinton, 2015). Another time she mentions it is when she states, “And I feel like once the American public begins to see the e-mails, they will have an unprecedented insight into a high government official’s daily communications, which I think will be quite interesting” (Miller, 2015). Clinton’s mention of wanting the public to view her emails is being used as a way of attending to her contradicting transparency record as well as providing *corrective action*.

Hillary Clinton’s use of image repair theory has proven many things. It reveals that strategy has been used to produce every statement Clinton has made pertaining to her emails. The use of strategy has come full circle to lead us back to the number one issue of the American government and in this case, Hillary Clinton, which is trust. Due to the fact that strategy was the driving force of her rhetoric, it is even harder to distinguish between a sincere explanation leading to an ethical apology versus an explanation and apology that is amended just for the sake of one’s reputation. This study has shown that all six of Benoit’s image restoration strategies can be applied to the rhetoric of Hillary Clinton in regard to her emails. This study also provides proof that Clinton uses transparency in two ways, the first being to maintain and protect her reputation for being transparent and secondly to put an end to the scrutiny and gain the trust of the American people.

In conclusion, Clinton’s rhetoric on her email controversy has surfaced during a very crucial and untimely segment of her career. The fact that an apology was only given twice does two things. First, the lack of more apologetic discourse with *mortification* by Clinton shows that she does not truly believe that she has done anything wrong and her image to the public versus a sincere apology is more important. The untimely surfacing of the issue has backed Clinton against the wall. I argue that although government has set

forth an effort to ensure open government and transparency, there is a lack of authenticity. This study provides evidence for this argument by way of Hillary Clinton's use of transparency and image restoration strategies collaboratively. The fact that Clinton has used transparency as one of her strategies takes away from the authenticity of her actual transparency. Employing the strategies, for Clinton, proves to be her way of actually being transparent. Needless to say, this is when close attention needs to be emphasized on rhetorical communication.

In chapter one, rhetorical communication was referred to as a way to gain political power as well as a means of persuasion. Charteris-Black makes the argument that the purpose of this communication is to change the perspective of the audience (Charteris-Black, 2011). Rozina and Karapetjana make the argument that language plays a key role in politics because it is a way for manipulative intentions of politicians to be seen by the public (Rozina & Karapetjana). The fact that Clinton is mentioning how transparent she has been and is continuing to be does not necessarily mean that she is actually being transparent. By way of examining Clinton's rhetoric on the issue, it has been concluded that the strategy behind her rhetoric is an actual attempt at persuasion. By Clinton employing all six strategies she strengthens the argument that her public image is far more important than actual transparency. The use of transparency as a strategy instead of actually being transparent proves that it is in attempt to mend Clinton's image.

#### *Contributions to the Field of Apologia*

This study offers a perspective of political communication that has not been before explored, and can contribute to the field of apologia in interesting ways. The lack of public trust in the government has hindered the effectiveness of the United States

political process for years. Although incentives have been placed to promote and execute government transparency and open government, a problem still exists. Even when government is demonstrating transparency, transparency is not one hundred percent achievable. According to scholars, communication used in politics is designed to gain political power and to persuade. What may appear as transparency may be a strategic plan to obtain a particular goal and, in Clinton's case, to repair her public image and ultimately become president.

This study shows that strategy is used in politics even when a situation calls for authenticity. The best way to show trustworthiness and authenticity is to be as genuine as possible. This study also shows that patterns can be seen that question this sincerity. The Clinton email controversy employed strategies that *denied*, *evaded responsibility*, and *reduced offensiveness*. According to Benoit's theory, the use of several strategies combined is most effective. This is proven through Clinton's use of the strategies. Her use of Benoit's strategies indicate that there are certain scenarios in which would not have worked for her. In using *denial* more frequently than she did would have altered the effect of other strategies used. Once *denial* is used, the need for other strategies is conflicted. If you deny an act it is almost impossible to *reduce offensiveness* or *evade responsibility*. Reason being, saying something never happened does not call for claiming the lack of information, stating the act was a mishap, stressing the act is not serious, or issuing a resolution. These strategies can hint to intentions of covering up an accusation instead of actually presenting truth and sincerity.

Further research pertaining to scandals, controversy, and apologia is fundamental. Politicians function as our representatives and are elected to be leaders. There is an ample

amount of literature on image restoration theory and political scandals. There is also a lack of scholarly literature that address how transparency intersects with apologia. The intersection of the two is dynamic to each other for the purposes of understanding whether transparency truly exists. Additional research can potentially go further than just examining scandals as they unfold and actually follow through until enough information is available to study the effectiveness of the rhetoric used. The need for further research in the subject area is also vital to the democracy process of the United States. The lack in government trust by the public leads to voters' apathy and proliferates the search for a more transparent candidate.

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## Appendix A

### Benoit's Typology Examples

Beginning with *denial*, he shows that stating “I did not embezzle any money” or in an attempt to *shift the blame*, “John took your laptop, not me,” uses the tactic of *simple denial* and *shift blame*.

*Evading responsibility* involves *provocation*, *defeasibility*, *accident*, and *good intentions*. Phrases that were sought after for the provocation tactic will be similar to “I insulted you but only after I was insulted first.” *Defeasibility* will include a phrase similar to “I was tardy to class because of a wreck in which traffic delayed me.” *Accident* will come in a form such as “Our collision was an accident.” Finally for *Evading responsibility*, a phrase for the *good intentions* will be similar to “I didn’t tell you because I thought that I would be able to fix the issue first.”

*Reducing offensiveness* is a category with several tactics. All tactics will be taken into consideration during this study beginning with *bolstering*. A phrase that will associate with *bolstering* is “Think of all of the times I have helped you.” *Minimization* will consist of a phrase closely related to “I broke your vase, but it was not an expensive one.” *Differentiation* will consist of “I borrowed your computer without asking but I did not steal it.” *Transcendence* will look similar to “Searching travelers at the airport is an inconvenience, but it protects against terrorism and other threats.” *Attacking the accuser* will resemble, “Will says I embezzled money, but he is a compulsive liar.” Finally for *reducing offensiveness* is *compensation* which will look much like, “Because the waiter spilled a drink on your clothes, we will give you dessert on the house.”

*Corrective action* has a tactic list that is much smaller with just one example that was examined for. In this situation, a similar phrase will look similar to “Because the waiter spilled a drink on your suit, we’ll have it dry cleaned.” Last but not least is *mortification* that will have a phrase that looks much like “I am so sorry that I offended you. I regret hurting your feelings and I apologize.”

**Appendix B**  
Hillary Clinton Statements

“I want the public to see my email...”	Transparency + Corrective Action
“Now, I would be pleased to talk more about this important matter, but I know there have been questions about my email, so I want to address that directly, and then I will take a few questions from you.”	Transparency
“There are four things I want the public to know.”	Transparency
“First, when I got to work as secretary of state, I opted for convenience to use my personal email account, which was allowed by the State Department, because I thought it would be easier to carry just one device for my work and for my personal emails instead of two.”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
“Looking back, it would’ve been better if I’d simply used a second email account and carried a second phone, but at the time, this didn’t seem like an issue.”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
“Second, the vast majority of my work emails went to government addresses, which meant they were captured and preserved immediately on the system at the State Department.”	Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Minimize) Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
“I responded right away and provided all my emails that could possibly be work-related, which totaled roughly 55,000 printed pages, even though I knew that the State Department already had the vast majority of them.”	Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
“Fourth, I took the unprecedented step of asking that the State Department make all my work-related emails public for everyone to see.”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
“I am very proud of the work that I and my colleagues and our public servants at the department did during my four years as secretary of state, and I look forward to people being able to see that for themselves.”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
“Again, looking back, it would’ve been	Evade Responsibility

<p>better or me to use two separate phones and two email accounts. I thought using one device would be simpler, and obviously, it hasn't worked out that way."</p>	<p>(Good Intentions) Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>"But as I—as I said, I saw it as a matter of convenience, and it was allowed. Others had done it. According to the State Department, which recently said Secretary Kerry was the first secretary of state to rely primarily on a state.gov email account."</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions) Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>"And when I got there, I wanted to just use one device for both personal and work e mails, instead of two. It was allowed. And as I said, it was for convenience. And it was my practice to communicate with State Department and other government officials on their .gov accounts so those emails would be automatically saved in the State Department system to meet recordkeeping requirements, and that, indeed, is what happened."</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)</p>
<p>"And I heard just a little while ago the State Department announced they would begin to post some of my emails, which I'm very glad to hear, because I want it all out there."</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>"For any government employee, it is that government employee's responsibility to determine what's personal and what's work-related. I am very confident of the process that we conducted and the emails that were produced."</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)</p>
<p>"And I feel like once the American public begins to see the emails, they will have an unprecedented insight into a high government official's daily communications, which I think will be quite interesting."</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>"But I have absolute confidence that everything that could be in any way connected to work is now in the possession of the State Department."</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>

<p>“And I have to add, even if I had had two devices, which is obviously permitted—many people do that—you would still have to put the responsibility where it belongs, which is on the official. So I did it for convenience and I now, looking back, think that it might have been smarter to have those two devices from the very beginning.”</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions) Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“In fact, my direction to conduct the thorough investigation was to err on the side of providing anything that could be possibly viewed as work related.”</p>	<p>Transparency</p>
<p>“That doesn’t mean they will be by the State Department once the State Department goes through them, but out of an abundance of caution and care, you know, we wanted to send that message unequivocally.”</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)</p>
<p>“That is the responsibility of the individual and I have fulfilled that responsibility, and I have no doubt that we have done exactly what we should have done. When the search was conducted, we were asking that any email be identified and preserved that could potentially be federal records, and that’s exactly what we did.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“And we went above and beyond that. And the process produced over 30,000 you know, work emails, and I think that we have more than met the requests from the State Department. The server contains personal communications from my husband and me, and I believe I have met all of my responsibilities and the server will remain private and I think that the State Department will be able, over time, to release all of the records that were provided.”</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“And I feel that I’ve taken unprecedented steps to provide these work-related emails.</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness</p>

<p>They're going to be in the public domain. And I think that Americans will find that you know, interesting, and I look forward to having a discussion about that"</p>	<p>(Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>"And I feel that I did that and even more, that I went above and beyond what I was requested to do. And again, those will be out in the public domain, and people will be able to judge for themselves."</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>"First, the laws and regulations in effect when I was secretary of state allowed me to use my email for work. That is undisputed."</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)</p>
<p>"And what I did was to direct, you know, my counsel to conduct a thorough investigation and to err on the side of providing anything that could be connected to work. They did that, and that was my obligation. I fully fulfilled it, and then I took the unprecedented step of saying, 'Go ahead and release them, and let people see them.'"</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>"I did not email any classified material to anyone on my email. There is no classified material."</p>	<p>Denial (Simple Denial)</p>
<p>"So I'm certainly well-aware of the classification requirements and did not send classified material."</p>	<p>Denial (Simple Denial)</p>
<p>"No more secrecy. No more zone of privacy. After all, what good did that do for me?"</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>"Well, they—people should and do trust me. And I have every confidence that that will be the outcome of this selection. I cannot decide what the attack on me will be, no matter how unfounded. And I'm well aware of the fact that it's your job to raise those and we'll do our best to respond to them."</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Attack Accuser) (Minimize)</p>
<p>"Everything I did was permitted. There was no law. There was no regulation. There was nothing that did not give me full authority to decide how I was going to communicate. Previous secretaries of state have said they did the same thing. And people across the government knew that I used one device—"</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)</p>

<p>maybe it was because I am not the most technically capable person and wanted to make it as easy as possible.</p>	
<p>“Now I didn’t have to turn over anything. I chose to turn over 55,000 pages because I wanted to go above and beyond what was expected of me because I knew the vast majority of everything that was official already was in the State Department system.”</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“And now I think it’s kind of fun. People get a real-time behind the scenes look at what I was emailing about and what I was communicating about.”</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>“But I want people to understand what the truth is. And the truth is everything I did was permitted and I went above and beyond what anybody could have expected in making sure that if the State Department didn’t capture something, I made a real effort to get it to them.”</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)</p>
<p>Well, what I say to that is turned over everything I was obligated to turn over. And then moved on. People delete their personal emails, their work-related emails, whatever emails they have on a regular basis. I turned over everything that I could imagine.”</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Minimize)</p>
<p>“Now being—sitting in a meeting in the State Department, asking for iced tea, may not rise the level of negotiating peace, but I went above and beyond. That’s why there’s 55,000 pages of my emails.”</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)</p>
<p>“And so I think people have an interesting time behind the scenes. And all I can tell you is that the law, the regulation did not in any way stand in my way of being permitted to do what I did. And as I said, prior secretaries of state—I mean, Secretary Powell has admitted he did</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Differentiate)</p>

exactly the same thing.”	
We both did the same thing. Now years have passed, so he clearly doesn’t have anything left. I did everything I could to make sure people got anything that was related that I had.”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize) (Bolster)
The facts are very clear here. I did turn over all work-related emails in an effort to help the State Department make sure that their records were complete. And those are the facts. That doesn’t mean I will ever convince these partisans. Now you know, who are, trying to make all sorts of allegations. But I think the American people understand that.”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Attack Accuser) Corrective Action
“Those messages disappear all by themselves.”	Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
“What, like with a cloth or something? I don’t know how it works digitally at all.”	Denial (Simple Denial) Evade Responsibility (Defeasibility) Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
“I wanted you to hear this directly from me.”	Transparency
“Yes, I should have used two email addresses, one for personal matters and one for my work at the State Department. Not doing so was a mistake. I’m sorry about it, and I take full responsibility.”	Evade Responsibility (Accident) Mortification
“It’s important for you to know a few key facts. My use of a personal email account was above board and allowed under the State Department’s rules. Everyone I communicated with in government was aware of it. And nothing I ever sent or received was marked classified at the time.”	Transparency Denial (Simple Denial)
“As this process proceeds, I want to be as transparent as possible. That’s why I’ve provided all my work emails to the	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)

<p>government to be released to the public, and why I'll be testifying in public in front of the Benghazi Committee later next month."</p>	<p>Corrective Action</p>
<p>"I could have—and should have—done a better job answering questions earlier."</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>"I understand that you may have more questions, and I am going to work to keep answering them. If you want to read more, including my emails themselves, Please go here: <a href="https://www.hillaryclinton.com/emails/">https://www.hillaryclinton.com/emails/</a></p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>"That was a mistake. I'm sorry about that. I take responsibility. And I'm trying to be as transparent as I possibly can to not only release 55,000 pages of my emails, turn over my server. But I am looking forward, finally, to testifying before Congress. Something I've been asking for nearly a year."</p>	<p>Transparency Mortification Evade Responsibility (Accident) Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>"I did. I did. As I said, it was allowed and there was no hiding it. It was totally above board. Everybody in the government I communicated with—and that was a lot of people—knew I was using a personal email. But I'm sorry that it has, you know, raised all of these questions. I do take responsibility for having made what is clearly not the best decision."</p>	<p>Transparency Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)</p>
<p>"And I want people to know that I am trying to be as transparent as possible as that, you know, legitimate questions can and will be answered."</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>"Everyone I emailed with, and I'm not going to go into names, but let me say I emailed with many people in the White House and the rest of the government, of course, across the State Department, knew that I was emailing from a personal account."</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>"But I emailed two people on their .gov accounts. And that's why I believed and I think it's been proven to be accurate, that the vast majority of everything that I was</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Minimize)</p>

<p>emailing would be captured on the State Department system. Or on the government system that I emailed to.”</p>	
<p>“It does not change the fact that I did not send or receive any information that was marked classified at the time.”</p>	<p>Denial (Simple Denial)</p>
<p>“But in the State Department, you had an unclassified system. So, David, even if I had used a government account on the State Department—government system and I had said I wanted emails released, we would be going through the same process.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>“But I think even the Inspector General or the Intelligence Committee as well as—community as well as others have said I did not send nor receive any information that was marked classified at the time.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>“Maybe there is a backward-looking effort to see, okay, maybe that was unclassified on the State Department system. But we had it on a different system and we treated it differently. Something that we wouldn’t have known about in the State Department.”</p>	<p>Evade Responsibility (Defeasibility)</p>
<p>“There’s a lot of public information out about their nuclear program. I don’t know the specifics about the one that they are claiming is classified. I can only repeat what happens to be the case—that I did not send nor receive information that was marked classified at the time that it was sent or received.”</p>	<p>Transparency Denial (Simple Denial)</p>
<p>“Yes, of course I can. I, as you might guess, have been around a while and there’ve been lots of, you know, attacks and counter-attacks and questions raised. And I can survive it because I think I’m running to be president to do what the country needs done.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Transcend)</p>

<p>“And I believe the American people will respond to that. You know, with respect to the two points that you made, this is a security investigation. And that’s why I turned over my server. It’s not, as has been confirmed, a criminal investigation. Again, that needs to be explained to people because they may not understand the difference.”</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>“And I, I think on all of this, I’m looking forward to testifying before the Congress in public, which is what I demanded to be able to do. I’ll answer all their questions for as long as they wish to ask them.”</p>	<p>Transparency Corrective Action</p>
<p>“And I think that I’ve been as transparent—in fact, more transparent than anybody has ever been. And I’ll let the American people judge it.”</p>	<p>Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“I just reiterate, I never sent or received anything marked classified. I did perhaps receive some New York Times articles.”</p>	<p>Denial (Simple Denial)</p>
<p>“Before it was emails it was Benghazi. And the Republicans were stirring up so much controversy about that. And I testified for 11 hours, answered their questions, and they basically said, ‘Yep, didn’t get her, we tried.’ That was a political ploy.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Bolster) (Minimize) Corrective Action</p>
<p>“We had a development in the email matter today when it came out that Secretary Powell and close aids to former Secretary Rice used private email accounts.”</p>	<p>Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)</p>
<p>“I never sent or received any classified material. They are retroactively classifying it. I agree completely with Secretary Powell who said today this is an absurdity...I have absolutely no concerns about it whatsoever.”</p>	<p>Denial (Simple Denial) Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Minimize)</p>
<p>“I am 100% confident. This is a security review that was requested, it is being carried out, it will be resolved. But I have to add, if there’s going to be a security review</p>	<p>Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Transcend) (Attack Accuser)</p>

<p>about me, there's going to have to be security reviews about a lot of other people, including Republican office holders, because we've got this absurd situation of Retroactive classifications. Honest to goodness, this just beggars the imagination.</p>	
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**Appendix C**  
Data Set

<b>EVENT/DATE</b>	<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>STRATEGY</b>
Twitter March 5, 2015	“I want the public to see my email...”	Transparency Corrective Action
UN Press Conference March 10, 2015	“Now, I would be pleased to talk more about this important matter, but I know the...”	Transparency
	“There are four things I want the public to know.”	Transparency
	“First, when I got to work as secretary of state, I opted for convenience...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“I opted for convenience... Looking back, it would’ve been better if I’d simply used a second email account...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“Second, the vast majority of my work emails went to government employees at...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)(Minimize) Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“I responded right away and provided all my emails...”	Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolstering)
	“Fourth, I took the unprecedented step of asking that the State Department make all my emails...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolstering) Corrective Action
	“I am very proud of the work that I and my colleagues and our public...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolstering) Corrective Action

	“Again, looking back, it would’ve been better for me to use two separate phones and two email accounts...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions) Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
	“But as I—as I said, I saw it as a matter of convenience, and it was allowed...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions) Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
	“And when I got there, I wanted to just use one device for both personal and work emails, instead of two. It was allowed...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“And I heard just a little while ago the State Department announced they would begin to post...”	Transparency Corrective Action
	“For any government employee, it is that government employee’s responsibility...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
	“And I feel like once the American public begins to see the e-mails...”	Transparency Corrective Action
	“But I have absolute confidence that everything that could be in any way...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“And I have to add, even if I had had two devices, which is obviously...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions) Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“In fact, my direction to conduct the thorough investigation was to err...”	Transparency
	“That doesn’t mean they will be by the State Department once...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
	“That is the responsibility of the individual and I	Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)

	have fulfilled that response...”	Corrective Action
	“And we went, as I said beyond that. And the process produced over...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“And I feel that I’ve taken unprecedented steps to provide these...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“And I feel that I did that and even more, that I went above and beyond...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“First, the laws and regulations in effect when I was secretary of state...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“And I what I did was to direct, you know, my counsel...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“And I did not email any classified...”	Denial (Simple Denial)
	“So I’m certainly well-aware...”	Denial (Simple Denial)
Syracuse University Toner Prize Dinner March 23, 2015	“No more secrecy. No more zone of privacy. After all, what good did that do for me?”	Transparency Corrective Action
CNN Interview w/ Brianna Keilar July 7, 2015	“Well, they—people should and do trust me. And I have every...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Attack Accuser) (Minimize)
	“Everything I did was permitted. There was no law...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“Now I didn’t have to turn over anything. I chose to turn over...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“And now I think its kind of fun. People get a...”	Transparency Corrective Action

	“But I want people to understand what the truth is. And the truth is...”	Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
	“Well, what I say to that is turned over everything I was obligated...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) (Minimize)
	“Now being—sitting in a meeting in the State Department, asking for...”	Transparency Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster)
	“And so I think people have an interesting time behind the scenes. And all I can tell you...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Differentiate)
	“We both did the same thing. Years have passed, so he clearly ...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize) (Bolster)
Univision Interview August 11, 2015	“The facts are very clear here. I did turn over all work...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
Iowa Democratic Wing Ding Dinner in Clear Water August 14, 2015	“Those messages disappear all by themselves.”	Minimizing
	“What, like with a cloth or something? I don’t know how it works digitally at all.”	Denial (Shift Blame) Evade Responsibility (Defeasibility) Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
Clinton Town Hall in Las Vegas, Nevada August 18, 2015	“What like with a cloth or something? I don’t know how it works digitally at all.”	Evade Responsibility (Defeasibility)
Facebook September 8, 2015	“I wanted you to hear this directly from me...”	Transparency

	“Yes, I should have used two email address...”	Evade Responsibility (Accident) Mortification
	“It’s important for you to know a few key facts...”	Transparency Denial (Simple Denial)
	“As this process proceeds, I want to be as transparent as possible...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“I could have—and should have—done a better job answering questions...”	Transparency Corrective Action
	“I understand that you may have more questions, and I am going to work...”	Transparency Corrective Action
ABC Interview w/ David Muir September 8, 2015	“That was a mistake. I’m sorry about that. I take responsibility. And I’m trying to be as transparent...”	Transparency Mortification Evade Responsibility (Accident) Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“I did. I did. As I said, it was allowed and there was no hiding it. It was totally above board...”	Transparency Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“And I want people to know that I am trying to be as transparent as possible...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“Everyone I emailed with, and I’m not going to go into names...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
	“But I emailed two people on their .gov accounts. And that’s...”	Evade Responsibility (Good Intentions)
	“It does not change the fact that I did not send or receive any information...”	Denial (Simple Denial)
	“But in the State Department, you had an unclassified system so,	Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)

	David...”	
	“But I think even the Inspector General of the Intelligence Committee as...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
	“Maybe there is a backward-looking effort to see, okay, maybe that wasn’t...”	Evade Responsibility (Defeasibility)
	“There’s a lot of public information about their nuclear program, I don’t...”	Transparency Denial (Simple Denial)
	Yes, of course I can. I, as you might guess, have been around a while and there’ve been lots...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Transcend)
	“And I believe the American people will respond to that...”	Transparency Corrective Action
	“And I think on all of this, I’m looking forward to testifying...”	Transparency Corrective Action
Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa October 7, 2015	“And I think that I’ve been as transparent...”	Transparency Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
NPR Interview January 20, 2016	“I just reiterate, I never sent or received anything marked classified...”	Denial (Simple Denial)
Fifth Democratic Debate February 5, 2016	“You know before it was emails, it was Benghazi, and the Republican...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Minimize) Reduce Offensiveness (Bolster) Corrective Action
	“We had a development in the email matter today when it came...”	Reduce Offensiveness (Minimize)
	“I never sent or received any classified material. They are retroactively...”	Denial (Simple Denial) Reduce Offensiveness (Attack Accuser) (Minimize)
	“I am 100 percent confident. This is a	Corrective Action Reduce Offensiveness

	security review that was requested...”	(Transcend) (Attack Accuser)
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**Vita****Whitney J. Threatt**

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