Why We No-Shave in November

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DOI: 10.15520/jro.v7i2.50
Accepted 22 February 2020; Received 11 February 2020; Publish Online 25 February 2020

Reviewed By: Dr. Daniel V.

Abstract

Why We No-Shave in November gives a scholarly rhetorical vision of a trend that occurs for one month, yearly. No-Shave November is a social movement used to support cancer patients through financial, emotional and visual support. A Fantasy-theme criticism and the Symbolic Convergence Theory was applied to this popular fellowship. A historical research was conducted through websites, newspaper articles, and scholarly peer reviews for factual results. However, No-Shave November is an American community exhibiting companionship similar to Austria’s Movember and may be responsible for the emergence of the Big Beard Movement. For one month out of a year, participants shave their hair follicles and donate grooming funds to men’s health research projects to illustrate their support for cancer patients undergoing treatment, as the hair follicles grow wild and free.

Key words: Rhetorical Vision–Rhetorical Criticism–Fantasy-Theme Criticism–Symbolic Convergence Theory–Social Movement–Lifestyle Trends–No-Shave November–Character–Action–Theme–Artifact

1 Introduction

A movement is a unified action of individuals that share a particular worldview to support a common change. These social movements are organized to exhibit a volume of citizens in favor of changing local cultural, social and moral orders legally. “Social movements are defined as networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of shared collective identities. It is argued that the concept is sharp enough a) to differentiate social movements from related concepts such as interest groups, political parties, protest events and coalitions; b) to identify a specific area of investigation and theorising for social movement research” [1]. Without any doubt, there is a social movement that has been respectfully getting popular, since the turn of this century and continued to steadily grow annually. No-Shave November is a unified social movement where humans around the world illustrate their support for a common cause during the month of November. The development of this research came to question, Why We No-Shave in November? The project, Why We No-Shave in November?, evaluates the advancement and exploration of mankind not shaving for a month.

- The first research question goes as follows: How does No-Shave November influence people to participate?
- The second research question: Is No-Shave November a Lifestyle Trend?

No-Shave November is a social movement of individuals communicating symbolically to show social support for a moral cause. These participants do not shave for a month to donate their grooming expenses to charity. According to [2], “rhetoric is defined as the human use of symbols to communicate. This definition includes three primary dimensions:

(1) humans as the creators of rhetoric;
(2) symbols as the medium for rhetoric; and
(3) communication as the purpose for rhetoric.” (p. 3)

Each year during the Fall season, people seem to reference, explain or inform others about No-Shave November. This movement also seems to have humorous references regarding their practice, but it gains a lot of attention to the masses worldwide. However, people perceive the message as it been practiced for years and funded various cancer research projects. No-Shave November occurs during the month of November when participants do not shave anybody hair and donate their grooming allowance to a foundation supporting men’s health awareness.

2 Artifact

No-Shave November is a social theme where individuals worldwide do not shave to illustrate their support of men’s cancer awareness. The movement was coined in 2009 by a Chicagol and 8-siblings family that lost their father to a battle against colon cancer in November of 2007. No-Shave
November is a month-long journey during which participants forgo shaving and grooming in order to evoke conversation and raise cancer awareness. [3] No-Shave November’s mission is to bring awareness of their social movement which encourages people to embrace their hair and let grow freely. Participants are asked to let their hair grow wild for a month as their grooming costs are donated to an array of charities listed on their website, no-shave.org. “For No Shave November, men give up shaving, grow beards and donate the money for shaving expenses to causes that promote cancer awareness. Women can also participate by not shaving their legs.” [4] Similar to other social movements like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), there are four rules to playing this socially inspiring game with other supporters. The rules assist participants in enjoying No-Shave November for those cancer patients that are able to grow their hair.

3 METHODOLOGY

Rhetorical criticism is considered to be “the art of persuasion”. It is a systematic methodology used to thoroughly convey, understand, and perceive messages. “Rhetoric is, essentially, the study of how communication affects our understanding. It is, in other words, the exploration of how language, symbols, and signs—the stuff we see, read, hear, or experience–make meaning to us.” [5] Due to the standard procedures of rhetorical criticism and the very broad field of communication, there are various types of rhetorical criticism methodologies available today, such as cluster, narrative, metaphor, and ideological. However, the No-Shave November has attributes that align with the fantasy theme criticism which will be applied. “The fantasy-theme method of rhetorical criticism, created by Ernest G. Borman, is designed to provide insights into the shared worldview of groups.” [2] This methodology of the rhetorical criticism assists people within a group setting to understand their shared realities and why they think and act similarly in specific environments. Individuals that share a rhetorical vision seem to have a symbolic common ground as the Symbolic Convergence Theory set this methodology in motion. Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) is a communication theory developed by Ernest Borman where people share common fantasies and these collections of individuals are transformed into a cohesive group. [6] The theories of Fantasy-themes and Symbolic Convergence assist scholars and other professionals in defining or creating social movements, trends, and events. Therefore, the fantasy-theme analysis and SCT will furnish relevant information regarding No-Shave November for a factual analysis.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

II. Fantasy theme criticism: A Peroration (1982) is an examination of the fantasy theme methodology to understand rhetorical structure within its context. [7] discussed his accepted manuscript “An Essay on Fantasy Theme Criticism” by an academic journal for publishing which influenced this study. An analysis of different fantasy types was conducted, where Freudism was believed to influence a fantasy theme. Fantasies tend to questions a person’s knowledge of what is known, how it is known and its existence of being known to those perceiving the fantasy. Johnathon Bales worldview of fantasy is a psychodrama analysis approach that evolved from Freudism to express one’s imagination. Nonetheless, it was clarified that there is a very thin line between fantasy theme and symbolic convergence theory. The symbolic convergence theory derives from the general theory of symbolic transactions, however, this theory was developed from characteristics of organizational psychology from Freud. [7] also argued nature and forces of fantasy by explaining, “For Bales, psychodramatic enactment forges fantasy chains, interaction among people an imperative, and the Freudian inheritance permits him to project fantasy into all aspects of life. Deny that inheritance, however, and the extrapolation is unavailable. It is one thing to acknowledge fantasy chains and their functions in the histories of groups, but it is quite another matter to argue that the fantasy chain is a quintessential symptom of symbolic processes obtaining in all forms of communication, still another to argue concomitantly that to understand the phenomenon in the small group is to establish a purchase throughout the realm of symbolic transaction.” (p 308) To understand fantasy or fantasy type, one must have a rhetorical vision with a rhetorical community or persona expressing themselves with a particular communication style expecting a saga or collaboration amongst others to continue the fantasy. Furthermore, [7] found fantasy themes are constructed on the basis of a Freudian foundation with a theoretical approach used with various ideal methodologies. It was also found that fantasy-theme dramas are usually “extraordinarily ordinary” situations that may involve a superhero and villains within a simple plot, where they encounter action and suspense. This article is relevant to No-Shave November because the plot is how natural human can look ungroomed for a month, while the villains are the cancers and the participants are the heroes.

Defending Symbolic Convergence Theory From an Imaginary Gunn (2003) analyzes Gunn’s criticism regarding the Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT) from ideas that develop the critical analysis of other post-modernist writers. Scholars found the general theory is grounded and timeless in social science studies, while Borman has time limits within the special communication sector. However, Shields finds common ground between the SCT and the special communication theory, where Gunn’s transient special theory demonstrates Alexander the Great’s general theory as “any special communication theory as another rhetorical vision.” These scholarly assertions specified SCT with a thorough examination to apprehended its methodologies, as each knot was untied. The first Gordian Knot recommends a decentered and post-modern construction of reality from publicly shared fantasies that may seem common amongst society. The symbolic convergence theory is perceived in three
different visions of one's worldview: social, pragmatic, and righteous. [8] explains “rhetorical vision” has become the vocabulary of a journalist as a tool for research guidance within the field of media. Gunn classifies four rhetorical theories—pre-modern, modern, post-modern, and the popular imaginary—that are applied when conducting a rhetorical criticism. The second knot of Gordon ignores the social scientific attribute for a fantasy theme analysis by arguing Freud's psychoanalytic methodology can not analyze dreams. “Gunn's citation from Freud that dreams are deceptive and undecipherable because of 'concealing actual motives in the language of myth and symbol' is itself deceptive and weakens his indirect argument.” Freud asserts dreams aren’t deceptive, the interpretation of one's dream should give a comparison of its meaning to their realities. The third Gordian Knot simplifies, “SCT is not a theory of invention. Invention is not a meta-theoretical concept that can house general theories of communication such as SCT; rather, invention is a concept that comes from (neor)Aristotelian theory.” Gunn believes rhetorical scholars will only benefit from SCT if they view one's imagination as a psychoanalytic concept from an assembly of thoughts from the subconscious mind. [8] wrapped up this examination by closing, “A fair reading of the SCT literature leads to the conclusion that there is no reason to believe, as Gunn asserts, that rhetorical fantasizing is taking place in an individual's subconscious.” Comparable to Defending Symbolic Convergence Theory From an Imaginary Gunn (2003), No-Shave November gives the participants an imagination from a cancer patient's worldview. No-Shave November entrants are shaving their body hairs to let their hair follicles grow naturally for a month while donating grooming expenses to cancer research projects to fight the spread of illnesses. [6] studied Ernest Bormann’s Symbolic Convergence Theory within a team communication setting. This theory was analysis, in general, to define the nature of group communication from both personal and professional domains. Once a team is established in a personal domain, an evaluation of each members’ ability to execute a shared common goal is apprehended. Strong interpersonal skills are exhibited as feelings of sympathy and empathy of “like-minded individuals to initiate collective tasks” as respect and awareness of one’s rights or privileges. One the other hand, the Symbolic Convergence Theory within an institutional environment are typically individuals with identical qualifications where the “team emanates within established policies and guidelines” that are predefined established norms given from higher authority. To examine the shared narratives and goals amongst individuals in the group, particular procedures are set for the projected goal. “Institutional missions, visions, Acts, codes of conduct, guidelines etc. are constant factors. Periodical plans, assignments and targets count among the dynamic.” [6] made clear “A character fantasy theme may describe personal attributes of people involved in a narrative, ‘assign motives to their actions, portray them doing certain things or manifesting certain behaviours and place them in a given setting or scene’” (p. 20) The Symbolic Convergence Theory in team communication is very effective communication due to similar personalities within the team environment. Whether personal or professional, within groups members organize role models, such as villains and heroes. The attributes of a hero are acknowledged along with the characteristics of a villain “ensuring that collective actions are within individuals’ access and ability to contribute to the team’s overall success.” An analysis of the implications of the Symbolic Convergence Theory defines leadership within a team communication setting. [6] found individuals within a great work culture will have an effective team communication environment that has similar personality traits due to their life experiences and aspirations to identify a goal. “To conclude, application of the functional aspects of symbolic convergence theory, therefore, ensures the survival of a team and that of the institution for which the team works.” [6] This publishing is relevant to No-Shave November because it illustrates a structure of performance within the fantasy-theme. The No-Shave November has four basic rules participants should follow to enjoy and express themselves using the fantasy-theme criticism. This article illustrates structure and attitudes of those participating within the No-Shave November movement.

Fantasy Theme Analysis in Competitive Rhetorical Criticism (1985) is an essay that analyzes the theoretical structure of the rhetorical criticism methodology of a fantasy theme. Modern rhetorical criticism of fantasy theme created by Ernest [9], produced over 40 published works, and lead the foundation for the Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT). People build a shared view of reality when communicating verbally to create a common symbolic vision through rhetorical expressions. These assumptions are formed from interpersonal communication, shared reality, and an imaginative worldview of events with two different opposing perspectives. This essay is aimed to provide advice to scholars who may use the fantasy theme methodology to conduct rhetorical criticism research.

Basic, Structural, and Critical Evaluation Concepts are the three principles that provide a foundational structure of the fantasy-theme criticism for any sample available. The terms of the Basic Concepts comprise of the fantasy theme, fantasy type and modal societal fantasy. The fantasy theme unit assist in shaping one’s experience by structuring the storyline or scene, while the fantasy type is the mysterious plots of power or strength within the fantasy theme. The modal societal fantasy is a fantasy theme with a very intrinsic plot containing social elements and work ethics shaping the structure of a symbolic reality. A rhetorical vision is exhibited for an audience’s enlightenment with a given dramatic personae of characters in a plotline is the primarily scheme of a Structural Concept. Each action or role played within this rhetorical vision is a scene, while “sanctioning agent is the source that justifies the acceptance and propagation of a rhetorical vision.” However, the sanctioning agent can also be one’s superpowers, moralistic perception, and conspicuous occurrences to bring a fantasy theme into one’s worldview. [10] also clarified the Critical Evaluation
Concepts by explaining, “Thus, with fantasy theme analysis, rhetorical strategy refers to the critical assessment of whether or not the message (the drama or vision) exhibits greater emphasis on character or plotline or scene or sanctioning agent. With fantasy theme analysis as well, rhetorical strategy refers to the critic’s assessment of the degree of consistency between certain reality links and here-and-now phenomena and the symbolically depicted character attributes, scenic elements, and plotline actions.” (p. 109) Furthermore, there are three suggested applications available to mirror the rhetoric of a particular movement. The applications of speed, series of messages and movement rhetoric are important strategies used by critics when sharing a rhetorical vision. Speech is very important as it provides a scholarly opportunity to critically analyze a fantasy-theme. Understanding the plotline along with descriptions of details are series of messages regarding a fantasy-theme, whereas the explanation of a rhetorical action in a social movement or construction of an organization within a fantasy-theme is the movement rhetoric application. [10] concluded, “By allowing the student to explore alternative realities, fantasy theme analysis provides a method whereby the student can achieve both interest and depth in competitive rhetorical criticism.” (p. 115) To explore, No-Shave November is the theme, while the participants are the characters in the plotline to fight cancers. [11] investigates the mythical Christianity belief of an Aryan race which encourages white supremacy through rhetorical vision over other races. Pastor Dan Gayman has published a biography explaining the Aryan emergence from Adam in the Garden of Eden through Biblical references. Rhetorical criticism of Bales and Bormann’s fantasy theme perception was applied to gain insight on the beliefs of Adam’s descendent in the Aryan race. Bormann’s key concepts of the fantasy theme analysis are the theme, character type, and vision. “The artifact for this study is such a pamphlet titled entitled The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam’s Race by Pastor Dan Gayman. This document attempts to convey to the reader the nature of the white race as being that of ‘Adam’s seed.’ The Bible is conceived of as the white race’s spiritual heritage, and must be protected against the pollution of non-Aryans.” [11] This religious group has very dramatic assumptions of being descendants of Adam with Biblical references to shape a reality while a similar structure to Christianity. “These shared stories function as an escapist form of relief from reality; these ‘dreams’ allow for the positing of heroic roles, villainous enemies, etc. to explain and cope with problems and exigencies.” [11] A rhetorical vision was composition of Pastor Dan Gayman religious belief of a Blessed Spatio-temporal Surroundings, the heroic nature of Adam’s race, and the Villainous other Races.

A Pamphlet called “The Holy Bible: The Book of Adam’s Race” was published by Pastor Dan Gayman where a rhetorical vision was created; as the white race is special to God, since they inherit the blessings of the Garden of Eden, and became superior to all other races of mankind. Bornmann’s theory reflects the Blessed Spatio-temporal Surroundings as the fantasy theme, while the character types are in the Heroic nature of Adam’s Race. [12] The action of the rhetorical vision is their Villainous of Other Races where this congregation believes God will protect them even after committing a racial sin. Their theme Blessed Spatio-temporal Surroundings regards to this religion’s environment as where ever Adam’s descendants migrated. In this religion, Adam’s race has special value where they refer to them as the White Adamic Man within the Heroic nature of Adam’s race. Adam was God’s special creation, therefore, the white race is genetically heroic, receive special benefits and blessings from having a strong relationship with God while carrying out his duties. The Villainous Other Races is the fantasy-theme rhetorical vision within this religion as other races are viewed negatively, believed their barren, and sterile with no cultural background. Religion and Hate Fantasy themes within Christian Identity Rhetoric (2002) found, “the implied racism and hatred can be exhumed from the depths of Gayman’s biblical excursus on Adam’s race in an attempt to alert the community about its potentially deleterious message.” (p. 40) On the other hand, No-Shave November messages seem to support cancer patients by trimming at the beginning of the month and letting one’s hair grow freely; for those who had lost hair during treatments and donate grooming expenses for future research.

5 RHETORICAL ANALYSIS
A fantasy-theme is a story constructed in a group setting as a shared reality is common to the participants within the social movement, challenge or game. Scholars apply a rhetorical analysis to understand the viewpoint of a particular event, trend, activity, or social club. “The composite dramas which catch up large groups of people in a symbolic reality, I call a ‘rhetorical vision.’” [9] Yet, the fantasy-theme criticism of the rhetorical criticism is the understanding of a group’s shared reality with the use of three different theme types: setting, character, and action. A setting theme is a particular time, day or season of the fantasy-time, whereas the character are the actors in the shared reality. Nevertheless, an action theme is the activities apprehend through the plotline of the drama. No-Shave November is a themed social movement that act upon their shared reality during one month of the year, November. Participants of this movement are influenced not to shave during the month of November while donating their grooming fees to men’s health charities. No-Shave November is a social movement illustrating support for cancer patients as they may experience hair loss during their treatments. According to [13], the four rules to No-Shave November that participant should abide by:

“RULE #1: START WITH A CLEAN-SHAVEN FACE The goal is to start the month of November with a clean, shaved face. So, a few days before the 1st, grab your grooming tools and get to work.

RULE #2: NO SHAVING UNTIL THE 1ST OF DECEMBER It wouldn’t be much of a challenge if you could shave as you see fit throughout the month, now would it? You need to be ready to ditch your razor for the full month. And yes, that includes any sort of touching up.
RULE #3: TRIM IF YOU REALLY NEED TO
If you work in a strict corporate setting, no need to fret. You may not be able to show up to the office looking totally disheveled, but that doesn’t mean you need to shave. Instead, you can keep your facial hair neatly trimmed.

RULE #4: DONATE TO THE CAUSE
Make a general donation or donate to your favorite team to show your support for cancer education, prevention, and research.3

To enjoy this positive social movement, it is encouraged to follow the rules. One must shave clean by November 1st, and attempt not to groom until December 1st, while participants are letting their hair follicles grow freely like a chia pet. The participants of No-Shave November are the theme characters, while the theme action is embracing the growth and untidiness of one hair for one month. The theme setting is the month of November where hair follicles are grown naturally, similar to cancer patients while donating the grooming expenses to men’s health research projects. These three themed attributes of No-Shave November reveals its rhetorical vision with a fantasy-theme criticism.

6 DISCUSSION
The Rhetorical theory is a fundamental logic of symbols used to communicate a message. Fantasy-theme criticism is a scholarly strategy used to illustrate the worldview of a group’s shared reality. However, these theoretical frameworks are applied as an attempt to tell a story or perception of a group’s shared reality through the lens of a rhetorical vision. The month of November only has 30 days, which is the equivalent of 4 weeks and 2 days, out of the calendar year of 365 days. “No-Shave November is a month-long campaign to raise awareness and funding for cancer prevention, research and education.”4

The average male obtains a haircut every 2 weeks, while the average female shaves every 4 - 7 days. “Recognized on popular TV programs like the TODAY Show, No-Shave November is quickly picking up steam and is starting to become favored by men all across the United States – it definitely helps too that the general beard trend has been taking off at the same time!”5

This social action has been widely known through word-of-mouth communication, social media posts, and hashtags such as #NoShave & #LetItGrow. Throughout our history, we’ve encountered various events, trends, movements, and technologies that influenced our lifestyles. No-Shave November is a strong and powerful social movement that influences individuals not to shave and embrace their natural hair follicles. This movement shows support to cancer patients by shaving one’s hair while not grooming it for a month and donating their funds to a man’s cancer charity. Although this is an American men’s health awareness movement, No-Shave November has a similar organized movement from Australia, called Movember,6 for the mustache lovers. Also, the Big Beard movement emerged from No-Shave November, where a lot of men let their beards grow long and wild for the winter months. Furthermore, the contribution of Why We No-Shave in November will assist the lack of research conducted for No-Shave November, Fantasy-theme Criticism, and Symbolic Convergence Theory (SCT).7

REFERENCES