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### Eradicating the Logs, Brambles, and Boulders of Misunderstanding: Creating Social Change Through Oratory in Early America

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# **Eradicating the Logs, Brambles, and Boulders of Misunderstanding: Creating Social Change through Oratory in Early America**

Naomi Roswell  
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In Search of America  
English 255



**CANASSATEGO**

Image courtesy of  
John Kahionhes Fadden



**MONTMAGNY**

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Historiques Canadiens

## **Eradicating the Logs, Brambles, and Boulders of Misunderstanding: Creating Social Change through Oratory in Early America**

Oratory emerged as an important medium for conflict negotiation and social change among Native Americans and the European settlers in the 17th and 18th century. Skilled Native American orators were able to persuade adversaries to compromise and compel masses to make behavior changes for a more just society. In recent times, scholars such as Nancy Duarte, deliverer of the well-known TED Talk “The Secret Structure of Great Talks,” have analyzed speeches and coded for elements that contributed to a speaker’s success of igniting change. To determine if successful speeches from early America shared any common structures, tools, or patterns that could inform social justice organizers today, I consulted nearly a dozen transcriptions of speeches delivered by Native American spokespeople, many secondary sources on rhetoric and oratory, accounts of Iroquois tradition, culture, and language, and modern studies on what makes compelling speeches. An investigation into the origin of oratory in North America, the history and symbolism essential to Iroquois people, and a deep analysis of two speeches delivered by Iroquois sachems reveal two remarkable oratorical devices that contributed to catalyzing positive social change. The genre of Native American oratory in the 1600s and 1700s employs a structure that compares *what is* to *what could be*, and, like a rock dam in a small stream, is brimming with embodied images of nature that elicited changes that fostered better cross-cultural relations.

In early America, and especially in Native societies, “rhetoric was identified as the art that contributed the most toward the proper workings of the political process, the disposition of justice, and the maintenance of public welfare and social conscience.”<sup>1</sup> Maintaining public welfare and social conscience through oratory requires immense skill and disposition, but according to some scholars, there are patterns that orators throughout history have used that regularly elicit a passion for change and generate a movement of behavior changes to reach the goal. Many high school classes teach Aristotle’s Ethos, Pathos and Logos, but Nancy Duarte, a twenty-first century communications expert, built on Aristotle’s principle that rhetoric is “the ability, in each particular case, to see the available means of persuasion.”<sup>2</sup> Duarte analyzed many well-received speeches and discovered a consistent structure of organization. Unlike a story arc that has a rising tension, climax, and falling resolution, a good speech flips back and forth

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<sup>1</sup> Johnson, Sandy. 1994. *The Book of Elders*. San Francisco: Harpers. 139

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle. 350 B.C.E. Rhetoric: Part II. In *Rhetoric.*, ed. Rhys Roberts.

between the less than ideal present (*what is*) and the better, imagined future (*what could be*). Duarte calls this shape the ‘secret structure of good talks’<sup>3</sup> and claims that it allows the audience to embrace the orator’s vision of the future and understand how it is better than the present. These observations by Aristotle and Duarte provided a framework for analyzing the two speeches examined in this paper, but the speeches, in turn, revealed another means of persuasion: A kinesthetic and embodied connection to nature.

There is a surprisingly intact record of Native American speeches delivered to white settlers, and many of the responsible orators were effective at dispelling opposition, eliciting agreements to treaties for peace, and securing a pathway towards sustained positive relations. By examining speeches delivered by Iroquois orators, Kiotsaton and Canassatego, to European settlers, I’ve identified three primary rhetorical elements and strategies that make them effective. I do this with the hope that students of the 21st century can evoke the fourth available means of persuasion of connection and illusion to the natural world to strengthen their own persuasive arguments for a more just and peaceful future.

The most important element of these speeches are the metaphors the orators use to illustrate relationships between the natives and settlers and to envision a better future. These metaphors are shaped by natural processes, and thus are able to grow, flow, and develop with each new situation. These metaphors taken from nature provide an exceptionally precise, and yet casual form of persuasion, and ultimately contribute to the speeches’ success. The other two primary strategies include following a structure that compares the imperfect present to the ideal future and directly addressing the parties that have the capacity to enact the desired change. By using these three rhetorical strategies, Iroquois orators were able to employ images of nature to persuasively secure a better future for themselves and their people.

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Both speeches were delivered by Iroquois sachems to the governors of the nearest colonies. Kiotsaton’s speech in 1644 to the governor of Quebec is in response to a triangular exchange of Iroquois warriors taken captive by the neighboring Algonquian tribe and sold to the French in Quebec for liquor, and Canassatego’s speech to the Pennsylvanian government in 1742 reaffirms a peaceful alliance after a miscommunication of land rights. These speeches each use the rhetorical strategies and symbols outlined above. Together, they reveal a relationship

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<sup>3</sup> Duarte, Nancy, and Patti Sanchez. 2016. *Illuminate*. New York, NY: Portfolio / Penguin. xii

between the literary genre of oratory, the use of nature as a means of persuasion, and methods of igniting social change.

Before analyzing the speeches themselves, it is important to consider both the origins of oratory as a medium of communication between settlers and natives, as well as the historical and mythological contexts of the Iroquois people. William Clements, in his book *Oratory in Native North America*, examines in detail the pathway of orators. Speeches that communicated ideas and needs across the native and settler boundaries emerged as preferable to other forms present in both cultures such as myth-telling, lyrical poetry, and song because of proclivities of each culture.<sup>4</sup> In most Native American tribes, sachems, or chiefs, were not selected via family line or elected through voting, but rather became apparent organically, often because of their ability to act as arbiter or peacemaker. In fact, situations that involved some sort of speaking on behalf of others often exposed these titular leaders, because much of the responsibility of sachems involved negotiating. This is affirmed in the number of native tribes in North America that have a word translating to “He speaks true,” which was regarded as an exceptionally high form of flattery.<sup>5</sup>

Aside from being intrinsically valued as an important skill in the native societies, oratory was also preferred by Old World settlers, and this combination secured oratory as the primary medium of conflict resolution and negotiation. The appeal of speeches to the settlers was scaffolded by its similarity to sermons and other familiar Old World means of mass communication, but was heightened by the European’s choice to affirm the aspects of native society that they regarded highly, such as virtues of “directness, courage, and spiritual grandeur, to name only a few that early observers were likely to appreciate.”<sup>6</sup> In this way, speeches became the method, and a genre of literature, of igniting change within and across cultures in early America.

Understanding the origins of oratory as a form of social change in early America is not enough to contextualize speeches that are available for analysis. Sandra Gustafosn, author of *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and performance in early America*, emphasizes the complexity of power and symbolize in early American speeches. She outlined the several other intermediators

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<sup>4</sup> Clements, William M. 2002. *Oratory in Native North America*. Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press.

<sup>5</sup> Williams, Roger. 1647. *A key into the language of America: Or, an help to the Language of the natives in that part of America, called New England*. London: Gregory Dexter.

<sup>6</sup> Clements, William M. 2002.

that require acknowledgment before examining speeches themselves. Oratory is about much more than the order of words; it is also about cadence, poise, audience connection, and even the physical arrangement of people in the space. These, however, are nearly impossible to capture in writing. Another barrier to fully examining speeches from native people in early America is translation; almost all of the speeches from Native Americans to governors of early settling towns were delivered in their native languages. Generally, a trusted interpreter served as the go-between, and was awarded said trust because of some dual allegiance.<sup>7</sup> This role was often filled by Europeans who were taken captive at a young age and raised by natives, and therefore were fluent in both languages and equally allied to both.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to missing the face-to-face components lost by not being present for the speech and any nuances missed in translation, it was neither the orator or the translator who transcribed the speeches that are available for study today -- often it was a third party European who could have taken other liberties with the words attributed to the orator. The accounts that are published were usually written by journalists who were writing for early newspapers, soldiers who were keeping personal journals that were found and later published, or missionaries who were creating records.<sup>9</sup> People from two of these roles are responsible for preserving the speeches analyzed in this paper; Kiotsaton's speech was recorded by a Jesuit missionary, and Canasatego's oration to the Pennsylvanian government was archived by Ben Franklin.

Most of these writings by settlers about native Americans include secondary commentary that express admiration of the apparent eloquence of native orators, but it is worth noting the occasional sentiment among American Puritans that was clouded with fear. Some believed that strong oratory skills were evidence of the Devil's presence in the native orators; they believed that the ability to persuade masses of people or to speak on behalf of them in a way they affirmed was sly, and therefore reflected a satanic impurity in the native.<sup>10</sup> This was emphasized by the fact that the speakers were not reading from a page. Without a written language, there was no reason for orators to write out a speech in preparation. The extemporaneous eloquence contributed to the genuine, inspired, and direct nature of the speeches, but also added to the eeriness for suspecting settlers, especially Puritans.

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<sup>7</sup>Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000. *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and performance in early America*. North Carolina: University North Carolina Press.

<sup>8</sup> Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Clements, William M. 2002. 5

<sup>10</sup> Clements, William M. 2002. 5

Speeches have complexity beyond the number of middle people who handled the words between their delivery and my study of them. It is still imperative to provide a historical context for the Iroquois people in order to understand the impact and use of symbolism from available and natural metaphors embedded in these speeches. Nancy Duarte acknowledges that speeches require more than just a shape guiding a general outline; good speeches often contain stories, ceremonies, or symbols that amplify ideas and heighten emotion.<sup>11</sup> This was undoubtedly the case in speeches delivered by Native Americans to settlers, and below is a brief description of the Iroquois origin story. This begins to highlight the role of metaphors and symbols that are a marked component of Native American oratory.

The Iroquois people, according to oral tradition transcribed by a contemporary Iroquois, George-Kanentiio Doug, all descend from the Sky Woman who descended to earth following her curiosity and built the earth upon the Great Turtle's back. However, since their creation, her descendants, the humans, split into five tribes that were further divided into clans. These five tribes were not always peaceful, and in fact often fought and killed each other with ferocity until a prophetic Peacemaker came to persuade them to live underneath a Great Tree of Peace and establish the Iroquois Confederacy.<sup>12</sup>

While the Iroquois people did not renounce war altogether when the Peacemaker arrived, they did create a nuanced system of government and representation complete with checks and balances to prevent any one leader from rising to complete power. The power to make recommendations for sachem was left to women, making the Iroquois a strong matrilineal and democratic society.<sup>13</sup>

The creation of the governmental structure occurred as the Confederacy was forming under the Great Tree of Peace, which, oral tradition tells us, was a White Pine because of the Peacemaker's vision of a White Pine "reaching to the sky and gaining strength from three counterbalancing principles." These principles -- peace between both mind and body and individual and society, human conduct and freedom of speech and thought as necessary for justice, and physical strength and civil authority -- were supported by the four tree roots. The roots spread in different directions and symbolize the confederated nations and invitations to

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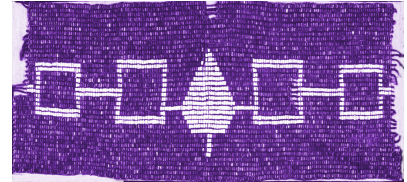
<sup>11</sup> Duarte, Nancy, and Patti Sanchez. 2016. 22

<sup>12</sup> George-Kanentiio, Doug. 2000. *Iroquois Culture and Commentary*. Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light Publishers.

<sup>13</sup> Johansen, Bruce Elliott, and Barbara Alice Mann, eds. 2000. *Encyclopedia of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois confederacy)*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. 76

others regardless of race, shelter, or tribe.<sup>14</sup> Another notable aspect of the Great Tree of Peace is that at the founding of the Iroquois nation, the feuding clans buried their weapons, including hatchets, under the Great Tree<sup>15</sup> leading to the trope “bury the hatchet.”<sup>16</sup> Aspects of the origin story continually appear in Iroquois speeches and will be identified later.

The White Pine became such a symbol that it was eternalized on the wampum belts of the Iroquois confederacy. The belts, embroidered from wampum beads carved from shells, held characters that depicted scenes, stories, and agreements, and could either be black (indicative of war), white (indicative of peace), or a more nuanced combination of both black and white. These belts served two primary purposes in effective oratory: to record historical occurrences given that there was no written language, and to ceremonially facilitate relations and ensure the keeping of promises and pledges.<sup>17</sup> These belts are sacred, and the wampum “writers” were said to be “talking” their thoughts into the wampum belts. The characters, sometimes compared to Chinese characters because they are understood consistently across dialect, had definite meanings and could be later read with confidence.<sup>18</sup>



Both the origin story and the wampum belts had significant presence in speeches delivered to European settlers. The nature of negotiating across cultures and languages lends itself to confusion, and because there was no written language, responsibility fell on the appointed sachems to remember events and preserve stipulations of treaties. The sachems had methods to assist them in this role including the arranging and exchanging wampum belts that “represented the public archives”<sup>19</sup> and stood for specific clauses of treaties. The specificity and use of the wampum belts contributed to the sense of detailed attention the Iroquois devoted to negotiations. Francis Parkman noted that the French, Dutch, and English were “never more astonished” than by “the precision with which, before replying to their addresses, the Indian orators repeated them point by point.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Johansen, Bruce Elliott, and Barbara Alice Mann, eds. 2000. 136

<sup>15</sup> Johansen, Bruce Elliott, and Barbara Alice Mann, eds. 2000. 35

<sup>16</sup> George-Kanentiio, Doug. 2000. 65

<sup>17</sup> Johansen, Bruce Elliott, and Barbara Alice Mann, eds. 2000. 327

<sup>18</sup> Johansen, Bruce Elliott, and Barbara Alice Mann, eds. 2000 327

<sup>19</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*. Boston. 29

<sup>20</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 29



As stated above, good orators required skill, practice, articulateness, and effective rhetoric. Parkman said of the men who were selected by the women of their clan to speak on behalf of the native nations, “Nature and training had fitted them for public speaking, and they were deeply versed in the history and traditions of the league. They were in fact professed orators, high in honor and influence among the people.”<sup>21</sup> Practice and knowledge, however, is not what I believe made these speeches effective. Metaphors drawn from the natural and embodied realities available to the orator and the listeners are essential components of what makes Kiotsaton and Canassatego’s speeches successful. These comparisons make any situation tangible, precise, and also emphasize urgency by conjuring familiar and relatable images from the every-day natural world. It was this use of the fourth available means of persuasion; connection to nature, that separates these speeches from mere talks into a speech that successfully ignites its intended change.

Several examples of symbols taken from natural and familiar occurrences that were used in native speeches were documented in Francis Jennings’ book *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*. I present them here because they clearly illustrate the types of images from nature that become symbols fit for demonstrating relationships and convincing opposition.

#### *Antlers*

This is a symbol associated with leaders of peace. A sachem, when inaugurated into office, was crowned with antlers. If people feared a leader was not succeeding, they would speak of *dehorning* him.

#### *Clouds*

“Trouble or threats that overshadowed interrelationships. To *dispel the clouds* was to remove the cause of trouble.”

#### *Path or Road*

“When the path was *full of brambles or fallen logs*, communication was poor and disputes existed. To *sweep the path clean* was to eliminate obstacles to friendship. To *cause great boulders to fall into the path* was a threat to break off relations.”

#### *Tree*

An important and complex symbol of peace and protection. Trees of peace can be planted (commence a new peaceful relationship), can fall accidentally or through neglect, or be uprooted by war, can spread shade, or be raised up.

#### *Wood’s Edge*

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<sup>21</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 29

“Protocol demanded that friendly visitors stop at the wood’s edge before entering a village. *To be at the wood’s edge*, therefore, was a manner of announcing one’s readiness” to enter a treaty council.<sup>22</sup>

This miniature glossary exemplifies the types of words and images that serve to express the status of relationships between groups. Metaphors such as these that make exceptional connections between the conflict at hand and the available, easily embodied occurrences around them such as the edge of the forest, the growing tree, and the darkening clouds, are an integral part of what makes these speeches effective.

Only with the origin of oratory, the middlemen such as translators and transcribers, and the history of the Iroquois, as well as the prevalence and importance of nature-based metaphors in mind, it is possible to analyze and explicate the two Iroquois speeches.

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Writings by Francois le Mercier and others Jesuit missionaries to New France were compiled by Francis Parkman into a book, *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*. This book recounts events from 1634-1670 through a historical perspective. The nineteenth chapter, titled *Peace*, delineates the order of related events that ultimately led to the confirmation of peace between the French settlers and the Iroquois nations.

Parkman posits that among the Iroquois, “The ease and frequency with which a requisition seemingly so difficult was fulfilled afford a striking illustration of Indian nature, on one side, so stubborn, tenacious, and impracticable; on the other, so pliant and acquiescent.”<sup>23</sup> These oppositional aspects resulted in surprising back-and-forth between the French and Iroquois, and the speech examined here represents a recommencement of a time of peace.

In this particular circumstance, Kiotsaton, chief of the Iroquois at the time, came to Quebec at the end of May, 1644, to hold council regarding a triangular exchange of three Iroquois men captured by Algonquin warriors and the French. The men were taken by Algonquins in a rage of war when many other Iroquois were killed, but the three captives were eventually given to the French in return for gifts -- namely alcohol. This speech serves to thank the French Governor of Quebec for keeping the captives safe and returning them to the Iroquois,

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<sup>22</sup> Jennings, Francis. 1995. *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press. 115-119

<sup>23</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 28

and to reprimand the Algonquins for slaying “our warriors in the spring”<sup>24</sup> and leaving “the scene of the fight where the prisoners were taken.”<sup>25</sup>

The physical setup of these negotiations with settlers also speaks to the intention behind oratory, despite never writing out the speech itself. Parkman describes that on one side of the “parched area of the fort, where awnings were spread to shelter the assembly”<sup>26</sup> was the French governor of Montreal, Charles de Montmagny, whom the Iroquois called “Ontonio” and other settlers. Beside them Iroquois were sitting or lying on sheets of spruce bark, and across the way, were the Algonquins. In the middle was an open space decorated only with two poles and a line between them on which the wampum belts would be hung. The physical arrangement of the talk represented the relations between the parties in that the French and the Iroquois, who were reaffirming their alliance, were beside each other, and the Algonquins who were at odds with the Iroquois, were isolated on the other side of the circle.

This opening passage of Kiotsaton’s speech is remarkable because of how well it encapsulates components that Nancy Duarte identifies as imperative to good speeches.

The speech opens with this:

Ontonio, give ear. I am the mouth of my nation. When you listen to me, you listen to all the Iroquois. There is no evil in my heart. My song is a song of peace. We have many war-songs in our country; but we have thrown them all away, and now we sing of nothing but gladness and rejoicing.<sup>27</sup>

To begin with, Kiotsaton clearly addresses the target of this section of the speech. Addressing him directly by name, Ontonio, conveys respect, a sense of directness, and makes the responsibility of the following requests clear. Interestingly, Ontonio is not the given name of the governor of Quebec, but is rather the Iroquois word for “Great Mountain,” a translation of his actual French last name “Charles de Montmagny.”<sup>28</sup> Ontonio, then, is more of a beloved nickname that establishes intimate connection and further strengthens the impact of the speech.

The direct address at the very beginning and throughout the speech likely contributed to its success, but the next sentence also demonstrates the literal, image driven, easily embodied metaphor that successfully takes something abstract and complex and pins it to something

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<sup>24</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 140

<sup>25</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 140

<sup>26</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 139

<sup>27</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 140

<sup>28</sup> Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000.

immediate. The request to “give ear” is concrete, and because the verb “give” indicates a willingness to do so, it is not read as a demand to listen, but rather a simple nudge to allow for an avenue to be heard. The following sentence clarifies the reason for this: “I am the mouth of my nation.” Without using complex language of representation or fancy titles to claim respect, Kiotsaton simply states that he speaks on behalf of the entire nation and establishes parity.

The last sentence in this introductory paragraph is also significant. Without using specific words to denote the difference between past and present, Kiotsaton renounces old ways and reiterates the present, better version. This is the first specific instance in the speeches I examine in which an orator compares a time of worse conditions to a time of blissful, better conditions -- the format that Nancy Duarte claims is the “secret structure of great talks.”<sup>29</sup> The line “we have thrown them all away” is similar to the origin of the American colloquialism “bury the hatchet” which comes from the Iroquois Confederacy creation story in which the clans literally threw away weapons and tools of evil.

Later in the speech, when Kiotsaton is reprimanding the chief of the Algonquins, Piskaret, for requiring that the Iroquois captives walk alone unescorted, he says, “The prisoner whom you sent back to us suffered every kind of danger and hardship on the way.” The transcriber, Francois le Mercier of the Jesuits, notes that Kiotsaton silently dramatized the hardship, and writes as if it were stage directions written for a performance:

Here he proceeded to represent the difficulties of the journey in pantomime, so natural, that no actor in France could equal it. He counterfeited the lonely traveller toiling up some rocky portage track, with a load of baggage on his head, now stopping as if half spent, and now tripping against a stone. Next he was in his canoe, vailing trying to urge it against the swift current, looking around in despair on the foaming rapids, then recovering courage, and paddling desperately for his life.<sup>30</sup>

While Nancy Duarte would probably not recommend pantomiming a section of any speech, I have no doubt that this physical expression of the difficulties the unescorted captive faced helped convey the severity of the Algonquin actions and likely contributed to their agreement to re-establish peace. Le Mercier says it himself; Kiotsaton was “so natural, that no actor in France could equal it.” That Kiotsaton’s attention towards and use of the natural world is commended by

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<sup>29</sup> Duarte, TED Talk.

<sup>30</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 139

this Jesuit missionary speaks to the importance and impact of conjuring the natural world in an oration.

You would have said that he was cutting down trees, hacking off branches, dragging away bushes and filling up holes. Look! exclaimed the orator, and when he had ended this pantomime, the road is open, smooth, and straight; and he bent towards the earth as if to see that no impediment remained. There is no thorn, or stone, or log in the way. Now you may see the smoke of our villages from Quebec to the heart of our country.<sup>31</sup>

Here, le Mercier inserts between Kiotsaton's translated words "And to confirm his words, he hung another belt on the line." The metaphor of an open road of communication is common and potent metaphor in Iroquois oratory. One source traced it back to a speech delivered in 1743 in Lancaster by Canassatego to Maryland commissioners<sup>32</sup> with evidence suggesting there were literal roads around Lancaster, Pennsylvania that became loci for conflict over goods and territory.<sup>33</sup> However, the metaphor is seen in this speech in 1644 as well as elsewhere in Iroquois rhetoric. Canassatego is quoted in several of Ben Franklin's writings saying that the road of communication "could become blocked by the logs, brambles, and boulders of misunderstanding," and needed to be periodically swept clear of obstacles. One way to do that was through revisiting or formulating a treaty council.<sup>34</sup> Kiotsaton used his body in relation to naturally occurring phenomenon in nature such as the tendency for a pathway to get overrun and need maintenance to sustain easy travelling between two destinations. This metaphor the relationship between the Iroquois and French settlers in Quebec is an excellent example of the ways in which embodying and applying images from nature can increase the efficacy of a persuasive argument.

Some scholars suggest that tools such as these metaphors and pantomimes were used to compensate for using a language that does not have words for abstract concepts such as justice, truth, or beauty. These critics suggest that figurative language reflects the "poverty of thought"<sup>35</sup> among the Iroquois, and that they must use direct, face-to-face, and personal modes of leadership in order to have any influence on their followers because they had no method of abstract, impersonal communication. I would argue that the enactment is neither negative nor uncivilized.

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<sup>31</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 141

<sup>32</sup> Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000. 115

<sup>33</sup> Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000. 128

<sup>34</sup> Gustafson, Sandra M. 2000. 128

<sup>35</sup> Clements, William M. 2002.

Rather, its kinesthetic connection of words and action led to effective rhetoric that succeeded at igniting the change orators intended to achieve. The exceptional use of the natural and embodied world in the delivery of the speech is clear. I believe Kiotsaton's speech exemplifies the ways in which directly calling upon the physical and natural experiences of the target listeners makes communication powerful and successful.

Ultimately, in this speech by Kiotsaton to the Algonquins and the French in Quebec, the orator compared the less than ideal present to a blissful future of peace, identified the responsible parties with the capability to make change, and relied heavily on symbolism and ritual of nature-based metaphors. The speech was successful. Parkman notes

Two days after, another council was called, when the Governor gave his answer, accepting the proffered peace, and confirming his acceptance by gifts of considerable value. He demanded as a condition that the Indian allies of the French should be left unmolested, until their principal chiefs, who were not then present, should make a formal treaty with the Iroquois in behalf of their several nations. Piskaret then made a present to wipe away the remembrance of the Iroquois he had slaughtered, and the assembly was dissolved.<sup>36</sup>

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The second speech, by Canassatego, was delivered about a century later in Pennsylvania, but there are a remarkable number parallels with Kiotsaton's speech above. Most notably, part of this speech was directed towards the Lieutenant Governor George Thomas with the intention of re-affirming peace after a miscommunication of land rights, and a later component of the speech reprimands the Delawares, a neighboring tribe, for "misbehaving" by burning down the houses of white settlers. However, this council occurred beneath the backdrop of the impending war between the English and the French. The governor prompted:

*BRETHREN*, We cannot but congratulate ourselves that your Coming should happen at a Time when we are in daily Expectation of a War being declared between the King of England, and the French King, well knowing that should such a War happen, it must very sensibly affect you, considering your Situation in the Neighbourhood of Canada. Your Coming and this Juncture is particularly fortunate, since it gives us an Opportunity of mentioning several Things that may be necessary to be settled between People so strictly and closely united as we are. --An Union not to be express'd by any thing less than the affectionate Regards which Children of the same Parents bear for each other, as conceiving ourselves to be one Flesh and one People.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Parkman, Francis. 1867. 141

<sup>37</sup> Franklin, Benjamin. 2005. *Pennsylvania, and the First Nations: The Treaties of 1736-62*. University of Illinois Press. 70

This passage by the white governor of Pennsylvania exemplifies two of the three strategies that made Kiotsaton's speech successful. He addresses the people of the six nations affectionately and directly with "Brethren," and he compares *what is* to *what could be* by acknowledging that "should such a war happen, it must very sensibly affect you" but that if they solidify their alliance to each other, they could "conceive ourselves to be one Flesh and one People," presumably to stand together in war and defeat their enemy. However, Governor George Thomas does not use any metaphors -- based in nature or not -- and I believe there is a stark difference in tone and impact because of the formality and imprecision.

Canassatego, at the end of this speech, responded

*BRETHREN*, We thank you for your kind Speech: What you have said is very agreeable to us; and to-morrow when we have deliberated on the several Matters recommended to us, we will give you our Answer.<sup>38</sup>

The request to take time to deliberate is evidence to the care and thought that went into considering each part of the proposed treaty, and the following day, Canassatego spoke again.

*BRETHREN, the Governor and Council, and all present*, According to our Promise we now propose to return you an Answer to the several Things mentioned to us Yesterday...The utmost Care therefore ought mutually to be taken by us on both Sides, that the Road between us be kept perfectly clear and open, and no Lets nor the least Obstruction be suffered to lie in the Way; or if any should by Accident be found, that may hinder our free Intercourse and Correspondence, it must forthwith be removed. *To enforce this, We lay down a String of Wampum*. In next place, We, on our Part, shall enlarge our Fire that burns between us. We shall provide more Fewel to increase it and make it burn brighter and clearer, and give a stronger and more lasting Light and Warmth.<sup>39</sup>

Canassatego continued the conventions of addressing the targeted listeners directly and comparing the less than ideal *what is* to the better *what could be*, but the first full sentence defies the strategies of using embodied natural images. The first sentence, beginning with "According to our Promise" is alienatingly formal, but it is also and imprecise. I was surprised to see the obscure word "Things" used by an Iroquois orator because of its amorphous nature, but I was then relieved upon continuing to the next paragraph that returns to the rhetorical strategy of calling upon the available and familiar natural occurrences. I believe the formality and imprecision is a result of time period and contributes to the efficacy of the speech because of the expectation of the listeners, but that the actual beauty of the speech that makes it successful is the

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<sup>38</sup> Franklin, Benjamin. 2005, 71

<sup>39</sup> Franklin, Benjamin. 2005, 72

reference to the road of correspondence and to the fire. The road was already discussed in reference to Kiotsaton's speech, but the fire, has many potential meanings. This listing in Jennings's glossary is here:

*Fire*

1. A place of habitation. A family *kept its fire* where it lives
1. A formally designated location for treaty councils, as Onondaga was where the Iroquois League had its council fire, and Albany was for a long time where the fire burned for treaties between the Iroquois and the English colonies
2. A symbol of unity: *to eat across the fire*.
3. *To cross the fire* was to change sides.<sup>40</sup>

In this case, Canassatego is calling upon parts of each presented meaning; a brighter fire can make the place of habitation warmer, brighter, and more welcoming, it can make the road of communication more visible, it can be a symbol of unity. Each of these work together to take a common and natural phenomenon, fire, and use it to send a clear message of alliance and partnership between the Pennsylvanians and the Iroquois nation.

The component of this speech directed towards the Delawares begins like this:

*COUSINS*, Let this Belt of Wampum serve to chastise you. You ought to be taken by the Hair of the Head and shaken severely, till you recover your Senses and become sober. You don't know what Ground you stand on, nor what you are doing. Your Cause is bad; your Heart far from upright; and you are maliciously bent to break the Chain of Friendship with our Brother Onas and his people.<sup>41</sup>

Here again, we see the precision of Canassatego's feelings towards the Delawares. Many people can identify the feeling of wanting to shake someone by the hair to set their mind straight. Also, while I don't have a specific association with an "upright heart" I recognize how a tilted heart would be dangerous and lead to malicious behavior. The Chain of Friendship is also evoked, which, Jennings's glossary asserts translates literally to "arms linked together," and is a symbol of alliance.<sup>42</sup> "The Ground you stand on" is another image based in the physical and available natural world. The treaty took place in Philadelphia, a city that had not made treaties yet with the Delawares. This little passage is chock full of examples of physical, easy to embody, and nature-based images that are used to persuade the Delawares to treat and commit to better behavior.

Despite being delivered one hundred years and six hundred miles apart, the two speeches delivered by Iroquois leaders to the governors of respective colonies exemplify strategies orators

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<sup>40</sup> Jennings, Francis. 1995. 118

<sup>41</sup> Franklin, Benjamin. 2005, 80

<sup>42</sup> Jennings, Francis. 1995. 114



used to persuade opposition to agree to a new set of rules to live by, securing a better future. These strategies include addressing the targeted listeners directly, comparing *what is* to *what could be*, and most importantly, making metaphors of the embodied and tactile natural occurrences and applying them to groups in dialogue with each other.

Taken together, these two speeches, then, suggest an important rethinking of Aristotle's "available means of persuasion." Perhaps the addition of "naturalistic" to ethos, pathos, and logos, would strengthen the ability of 21st century students to secure a better future through oratory. Kiotsaton and Canassatego were able to persuade the governors of their respective neighboring colonies to agree to a new set of rules to live by that promoted peace and respect. They were able to do this by addressing authority directly, clearly outlining the differences between the imperfect present conditions and the ideal future, and most importantly, constantly evoking the natural world in a way that was easily embodied.

Many students today, like the native americans in the 17th and 18th century, are facing unjust conditions imposed by powerful groups that don't understand their realities. Many students also believe that they can fight for change virtually, through videos, posts and writings over the internet. The success of the orators examined in this paper suggest that we too, could persuade our opponents to live by a better set of rules if we could evoke and embody connections to the naturalistic world. I would venture that even for those who grow up in urban environments without exposure to pristine nature, metaphors and images based in the natural are the most effective tool for persuading others to join an orator in working towards a more just future.

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