

DANIEL J. LASALLE

* Rice University * Jones College * 23 Sunset Blvd * Houston, TX 77005 * Tel: (845) 325.9916 *
Email: Daniel.J.LaSalle@rice.edu *

During a hike in the mountains of Croatia, I saw a sight that would change my life forever: Two men, one from the Croatian Parliament and the other from the Serbian army, sat around and joked about their wives. Two people from adversarial nations known for centuries of violence, bonded over the unbearable responsibilities their wives placed on them. After that day, I became convinced that the peoples of the world are all immensely more similar than different. It was this event that motivated my research under Dr. David Worth to blend communication theory, conflict resolution, and a variety of other disciplines to offer the most successful and comprehensive approach to post war reconstruction theory. Thanks to the resources of Fondren Library, I was able to produce an exceptional paper earning me an A+ for my supervised research class, which after further revisions will be submitted to the *National Communication Association*.

With abounding knowledge and expertise, Dr. Worth helped guide my research and the direction of my final paper. Although his supervision was invaluable, he could not provide me with the resources (nor the insight) to where I wanted my research to go. The resources of Fondren Library filled this niche, allowing me to locate a wide variety of literature, spanning multiple seemingly unrelated disciplines, to craft a truly novel and stunningly innovative thesis.

When I first embarked on this research project, Fondren Library provided all the literature Dr. Worth initially recommended. This occurrence may appear commonplace, since many Rice students are able to find the books they are looking for within Fondren's stacks. However, my books were far from typical. All the books by Dr. Eric Mark Kramer, an established but obscure rhetorician and continental philosopher from the University of Oklahoma, were available. Many of Kramer's books exceeded \$100 on Amazon.com, and discounted books from individual sellers were not an option given the impending complexity and time my research would demand. Unfortunately, none of the more popular philosophers provided the insight I needed for my research. Had Fondren Library not had these books, I would have been forced to utilize expedited shipping from costly corporate book sellers.

Fondren's access to books I already knew existed is just the tip of the bookshelf. Fondren Library provided the means to a plethora of useful primary sources. After researching the work and writings of Kramer, I began to scan for literature relating to the semiotics of physical space and cultural communication. Fondren Library was useful in two ways in this regard:

First, Fondren's rows and rows of books on continental philosophy, semiotics, and interactive communication theory provided me exposure to some of the best theorists I could have had access to while my thesis was in its baby stages. I was able to read the works of Max Horkheimer, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Michele Foucault and other greats.

Second, Fondren's A-Z List of Online Indexes and Databases and access to Lexus Nexus allowed me to access resources I never thought imaginable. These electronic resources granted

me the ability to access esoteric and arguably unconventional journals, such as the International Journal of Applied Semiotics, the Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution, and the European Journal of Cultural Studies. I was even able to access the official opinions of the governments of India and Pakistan regarding one another as well as the state of Kashmir by searching southern Asian newspapers. Such primary sources are arguably what made my research so commendable.

After such preliminary research, I crafted my thesis for the paper. In my paper “The Rhetoric of Disputed Lands: A Lesson from the Camp David Accords to Create Peace in Kashmir” I assert that the logonomic systems motivating the international behavior of India and Pakistan regarding Kashmir was remarkably similar to the conflict between Israel and Egypt, which brought about the Camp David Accords (1978). My conclusion offers a series of stipulations that a treaty between India and Pakistan must have for lasting peace to ever be reached in Kashmir. But, my debt to Fondren Library did not stop there.

To craft such a paper constituted an exceedingly daunting task. For my paper to be a success, I would have to integrate the seemingly divergent disciplines of conflict resolution, rhetoric and communication studies, international affairs, military strategy, and policy analysis. My paper consists of over 47 sources spanning every one of the above disciplines. I would not have been able to do this without the resources of Fondren Library. After weeks of research, I stumbled upon a wonderful collection of literature on conflict resolution. I read the published works of the Harvard Negotiation Project, reflections on Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, and found the book which provided the crux of my paper: *Getting to Yes* (1981) by Roger Fisher. In this tiny paperback, the author discusses his role as President Jimmy Carter’s chief negotiator in the Camp David Accords between Israel and Egypt. His mastery and use of devilishly simple conflict resolution techniques motivated me to look at the conflict in Kashmir in a similar light. Fondren’s databases connected me to the works of William Ury, Bruce Patterson, and other esteemed negotiators. Fondren also provided me access to scholarly criticisms of the actual Camp David Accord contract—not something you find on a typical news website or blog.

The last component of my research involved locating books on social semiotics of space and architecture, which took me to the Brown Fine Arts collections. Such literature on how people interact with different spaces provided the empirical evidence I needed to support the findings of the rhetoricians and negotiators.

The praise from my professor and the ongoing attempt to refine my theory for eventual publication was due to the guided efforts of Dr. Worth and my own hard work. However, the resources of Fondren provided the foundation for my scholarship. Had it not been for Fondren’s vast, conventional, and unconventional resources, my thesis and paper would never have come to fruition and ripen as successfully as it did.