

Megan Simones

Professor Dojs

Courageous Communicator

22 April 2024

### Courageous Communicator Final Exam (Group B)

**Analyze the role of communication in promoting social change and resistance against oppressive regimes.**

In this day in age, I believe that it has become substantially easier to advocate for social change and resistance against oppressive regimes with the rise of technology. With these tools at our fingertips, it only takes a few clicks of a button and we become “social justice warriors” by changing our profile pictures to show our support for a specific cause. We go on social media and write a few statements to show our support for the victims of the situation.

While these can be good things, our actions can often rise from a place of fear. We are afraid of cancel culture which is so prevalent in our society today, or we are afraid that those in our social circle may judge us if we don’t stand up and promote social change. We need to advocate for social change because we believe in it ourselves and want our society to be changed for the better. And while it is good to show our support online, I would argue that simply doing that is not enough if we truly want to make a change and resist oppressive regimes.

In order to actually challenge a dominant narrative and promote action against it, we need to first do the research and learn about the issue and what we are advocating for. Then we can

utilize social media in a way that can effectively reach an audience; for example we can create a page to raise funds for the cause, organize rallies, etc. We should also go out and participate in rallies so as to become immersed in the community and be able to empathize with and understand the true needs of a community or group.

According to the document on principles of Catholic social teaching, we have an actual responsibility as members of the human race to stand in solidarity with the more vulnerable members of society, “no matter their racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences.” If a group of people is being unjustly attacked we have a responsibility as Catholics and as communicators to stand up and protect their rights. They are made in the image of God and therefore have inherent dignity that is worth protecting. We have a moral obligation to protect their dignity.

I think the members of the White Rose Resistance understood this idea very well. They lived in a period of extreme oppression against certain groups of people, and the consequences were very high for anyone who attempted to resist the Nazi’s agenda and defeat the narrative that this would “better Germany.” Their bravery through the creation and distribution of the leaflets sparked the beginning of a movement to create resistance and promote justice for those being terrorized by Hitler’s regime. They were specific in their language, not afraid to use harsh words to get the message across, and were unrelenting in their communication. They also gave the readers a clear call to action, which is something we should all do when promoting social change. At the end of the leaflets they would write, “Please make as many copies as possible of

this leaflet and distribute them.” Hans Scholl wrote in Leaflet II (in reference to the Germans), “But now, now that we have recognized them for what they are, it must be the sole and prime duty, the holiest duty of every German to destroy these beasts!” Their calls to action in these leaflets provided others with the encouragement they needed to stand against the oppressive regime.

However there came great risk with doing this, because they also opened themselves up to condemnation, isolation from their friends, potential imprisonment and execution, etc.. We ourselves face similar risks when we boldly stand up for a cause and make it known to a large group of people. We constantly face the risk of being canceled, losing friends, losing our jobs, and potentially losing our lives (although that is a more extreme consequence today). However, it will all be worth it if the rights and dignity of even one person can be restored through our communication.