

## Words the Most Like Things: Iconicity and the Rhetorical Text

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**T**HIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, in his classic essay "The Study of Speeches," Wayland Maxfield Parrish argued that critics ought to isolate and carefully evaluate the "content" of a speech. This "often difficult task" required separating "*what* was said from *how* it was said," a matter best done "by making a summary or précis of the speaker's thought which avoids the wording of the original."<sup>1</sup> Holding consistently to this dualism between wording and content, Parrish regarded style as "another" aspect of persuasion, something to be set off from the rest of the critical apparatus. The major elements of style—vivacity or "setting a thing before the eyes," metaphor, example, analogy, and narratives—were not matters of substance but of manner, and their function was to overcome indifference and distraction so as to hold the attention of the audience. Occasionally, the critic encountered "passages of sustained nobility and beauty," but these momentary highlights were not essential to the art; where they occurred they lifted "oratory into the realm of poetry," and they moved us through their "intrinsic aptness and beauty" in a way that was quite distinct from the "ideas and sentiments that inspired them."<sup>2</sup>

Parrish asserted these points with casual confidence, and he had good reason to do so. His categories and priorities fitted squarely within the prevailing orthodoxy: argument and style were distinct processes; argument represented the substance of rhetorical discourse; style was something added to this substance. Under the circumstances, of course, style did not attract much serious attention, and in 1957, Donald Bryant complained that there could hardly "lie occasion . . . to further depress the repute of style or to further relegate style to a more distant peripheral position than it has achieved in most professional rhetorical speculations." While critics sometimes invoked the more mechanical aspects of stylistic analysis, Bryant found that they almost always backed away from "the central questions" or struck "them but glancing blows in the twilight."<sup>3</sup>

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Obviously, things have changed. Elements that Parrish left at the periphery now are working their way toward the center of attention. Thus, for example, Walter Fisher has subsumed his quest for a rhetoric of good reasons within the framework of narrative;<sup>4</sup> Robert Ivie has asserted with casual confidence that, so far from being a mere ornament, metaphor rests at the base of the inventional process;<sup>5</sup> and Michael Osborn has suggested that depiction—the setting of something before our eyes—is the “soul of eloquence,”<sup>6</sup> a “master-term of modern rhetoric.”<sup>7</sup> Osborn, moreover, recognizes that his suggestion turns the old paradigm on its head. To promote depiction as master-term is to challenge “rhetoric’s own depiction as a study primarily of rational calculations. . . . This approach shifts the emphasis in rhetorical studies from that advanced state of awareness in which speakers devise complex arguments and proofs to defend well-considered positions.”<sup>8</sup> Instead, the more primitive force of image-generation controls things—not only absorbing much of the function of argumentation but also forming the base from which argument proceeds.<sup>9</sup>

All told, we are reaching the point where the manner of expression, the generation and use of symbols, has become the substance of our study, and argument appears as a supplement, as a surface maneuver added on to more basic modes of articulating a world view. This change in perspective is revolutionary, but the revolution is rather tidy and symmetrical. One generation dissolves metaphor within argumentative structures; the next reduces argument to a metaphorical base. One generation regards narrative as a supplement to analytical reason; the next frames inference within a narrative paradigm—and so on through the rhetorical lexicon. The opposition between form and content remains intact; only the valences attached to the terms have changed.

When viewed as the two sides of this form/content dialectic, the older preoccupation with invention and the more recent preoccupation with style prove to have an important common characteristic. Both deflect attention from the complex, variegated texture of specific rhetorical products and focus upon abstract, essentialized conceptions of the rhetorical process. That is, both have a strong tendency toward reductionism.

In respect to neo-Aristotelian rhetoric, this tendency led to an unexpected and disastrous contradiction built into the whole project. On the one hand, the neo-Aristotelians committed themselves to a radical particularism: the defining characteristic of rhetorical discourse was its responsiveness to specific circumstances, and the rhetorical perspective was “patently single,” devoted to communication with a particular audience.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, when they engaged particular works, the neo-Aristotelians filtered those works through their bias in favor of argumentative content, and since argument was conceived ultimately as an abstract, logical process, they were driven along a reductive trajectory which eventuated in an effort “to ‘uncover’ the essential (logical) structure of an argument—to *reduce* the manifest rhetorical appearance

to its underlying (real) form."<sup>11</sup> The result was to reconstitute texts in an abstract language alien to their own particular constructions. As Conley has put the point, these invention-oriented approaches abridged "speeches to their 'arguments' or 'strategies,' stating the speech, in effect, in ways not stated by the speech itself, throwing out everything but 'motive' and 'message content.'"<sup>12</sup>

From its first stirrings, the attack against neo-Aristotelianism recognized that the program encouraged mechanical abstractions and thus moved critics away from rather "than more deeply into" their subject.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, in general, the problem was not conceived as an internal contradiction that blocked critics from exercising their proper interpretative function. Instead, the revisionists stressed more encompassing problems that sanctioned a total shift in theoretical perspective or a redefinition of the proper object of study.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, efforts to escape neo-Aristotelianism often redirected attention from the single text toward larger discursive formations. The first of these efforts, the "history of ideas" approach sponsored by Ernest Wraga and his students, conceived public address as part of the broader movement of ideas across time. Viewed as popular and practical instruments for disseminating ideas, particular oratorical texts did not present the density needed for interpretive work.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the rhetorical critic either did not have an important interpretive function, or that function emerged only through the abstraction and aggregation of ideas from many texts.<sup>16</sup> Wraga's commitment to "ideational content" was not shared by proponents of the "social movements" approach, but obviously this approach also sought to conceive the material of criticism in terms of aggregates rather than single products.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, Edwin Black coupled his attack against the excessive rationalism of neo-Aristotelianism with an "alternative frame of reference" that located generic clusters of rhetorical discourse. And Black concluded that "critics can probably do their work better by seeing and disclosing the elements common to many discourses rather than the singularities of a few."<sup>18</sup>

Black accurately predicted the later course of scholarship, and the old interest in speakers and their isolated performances continued to recede. In 1971, Becker argued that rhetoricians needed to redefine their conception of "message" by understanding that the communicative process operated within a complex mosaic, and within this mosaic, "single message encounters" were an inadequate source for generating useful observations.<sup>19</sup> Restating the point more bluntly, Brockreide concluded that individual speech texts were "not an appropriate unit of analysis."<sup>20</sup> Moreover, two of the leading developments in the seventies and early eighties—the extension of genre theory and the growing interest in ideology—also reflected the trend toward using larger discursive formations as the base for critical inquiry.

In short, the revival of style occurred not only after the demise of the "rational world paradigm," but at a point when critical attention

had drifted away from particular discourses and toward such complex intertextual phenomena as social movements, genres, and ideologies. It is no wonder, then, that interest in style did not center on rhetorical texts but extended toward more general conceptions of the symbolic process—as in Fisher's interest in narrativity as ground for a philosophy of communication, or in Osborn's concern for depiction as a recurrent form, or in Ivie's effort to uncover a finite set of metaphorical structures informing a large number of related discourses.<sup>21</sup> Given the scope and the ambitions of these projects, a tendency toward formal reductionism was almost inevitable.

Reductionism is not necessarily an evil; in fact, it seems implicit in certain kinds of theoretical reasoning, and in the present case, it has established a number of competing perspectives for encountering something that the old rhetoric totally neglected—the long-term cultural and ideological force of symbolic formations. Thus, one outcome of current trends has been a better understanding of rhetoric as a symbolic process. Nevertheless, the tendency to reduce the surface content of particular discourses to formal structures also entails certain dangers. Attention to basic forms occludes the situated character of rhetorical discourse and its function as a practical mode of encompassing concrete social and political issues. And when not grounded within particulars, efforts at rhetorical interpretation rigidify along the axis of the form/content dichotomy, since interpretation finds its end in abstract regularities rather than in the complex interplay among representational content, discursive form, and the context of situation.

The persistence of the form/content dichotomy, then, has stifled attempts to generate grounded interpretations of rhetorical discourse. The older, neo-Aristotelian paradigm locates an appropriate ground for interpretation, but encumbered by a rigidly logical conception of content, it cannot account for the symbolic action displayed within the texts it attempts to study. The newer paradigms take us more deeply into the symbolic process, but they deflect attention from the particular texts which ground its manifestations. Between these two approaches, there exists a kind of textual criticism that views the rhetorical work, not as a mirror of reality, but as a field of action unified into a functional and locally stable product. An understanding of the integrity of this kind of product requires careful interpretive work, since although it generally lacks either the formal density of poetic discourse or the ideational density of philosophical discourse, it creates a complex structure of meaning by imbricating the formal and ideational dimensions of language. A rhetorical discourse, then, becomes a verbal construction that blends form and content into a concrete whole—a whole that assigns meaning to a region of shared public experience and solicits an audience to embrace the meaning it constructs.

This critical stance, sometimes called "close reading," has appeared only recently in our literature.<sup>22</sup> Within the last decade, we have

witnessed an increasing number of studies devoted to a single text<sup>23</sup> and several efforts to justify a more grounded approach to critical practice.<sup>24</sup> The whole development is still in its formative stages, but at least some common features are beginning to emerge. On this view, rhetorical criticism finds its end in interpretative understanding; such understanding locates itself in the full complexity of a particular transaction rather than in the discovery of abstract regularities or disembodied theoretical principles. While the critic must frame the discourse within its context, the focus of attention centers on the text itself and the rhetorical features embedded within it. These features combine to produce what Stephen Lucas calls a "textual context,"<sup>25</sup> an unfolding sequence of arguments, ideas, images, and figures which interact through the text and gradually build a structure of meaning. Rhetorical meaning, of course, is not autotelic; it is designed to reach outward to the world beyond the text and to guide the audience's understanding of and behavior within that world. Thus, in Thomas Benson's words, the critic inquires "into the states of thought and feeling an audience is invited to experience."<sup>26</sup> The critical stance, then, retains an audience perspective, but as opposed to neo-Aristotelianism, this perspective does not entail measurement of actual responses. Instead, the critical process seeks to explain how the rhetorical performance invites certain kinds of response. Working from the evidence within the text, the critic proceeds to make inferences about what the work is designed to do, how it is designed to do it, and how well that design functions to structure and transmit meanings within the realm of public experience.

By rejecting the neo-Aristotelian commitment to objective "content" and by contextualizing interest in symbolic processes, "close reading" disarms the tension between form and content and thus opens the way toward a more fluid understanding of rhetorical action. Nevertheless, rhetorical action is a complex business that occurs at several levels simultaneously. If it surfaces most clearly in specific discursive products, it also operates more broadly within the cultural and ideological formations that embed these products. A single-minded concentration on particulars, therefore, may tend to promote its own kind of formalism—readings that isolate the text and constrain interpretation within the orbit of the text's own constructions. Thus, the critic may succumb to a "local formalism" that seals the text from judgment about its long-range moral and political consequences. Robert Hariman has specified this problem: as critics become absorbed by the internal movement of the text, they may—perhaps unwittingly—bracket rhetorical time within the stable space of the text. Thus spatialized, the text can become an aesthetic object that loses contact with real historical time. In this way, our formal satisfaction with a rhetorical structure may obstruct our perception of larger problems in the social order. Hariman notes that while close reading assumes that "the audience will transfer the consciousness [sic] created (through temporal definition) within the text of

the speech into the world outside the text," there also exists a corresponding "inducement to substitute the satisfactions of the text for the labor of working in the world it supposedly describes."<sup>27</sup>

In principle, since the critic must ground the rhetorical text in a context, it seems possible to sustain a balance between the intrinsic and extrinsic dimension of the critical process. In practice, however, the effort needed to fathom the intrinsic workings of the text often sponsors an appreciative response and encourages the critic to accept the negotiations effected by it as something more than the construction of a partial and momentary closure. Given the direction of reading, there is a temptation to collapse the context into the text and to lose sight of any larger ideological horizon—a temptation which is especially strong when dealing, as close readers often do, with exemplary rhetorical works. Consequently, if close reading promises to dissolve the form/content dichotomy, it also threatens to alienate intrinsic and extrinsic approaches to rhetorical discourse.

But these two sets of oppositions do not have the same status. The form/content dichotomy imposes a rigidity which affects both of its two poles and consistently blocks efforts at grounded interpretation. In the case of extrinsic and intrinsic readings, we have something closer to a productive tension about the proper grounding for readings. Neither approach precludes the other, and it is not necessary to assume that the critical apparatus appropriate to one is inappropriate to the other. To the contrary, the close reading of specific texts often provides both data and methods for comprehending larger discursive formations, and shifting interpretations of cultural and ideological scenes open space for new readings of texts. The difference between the two approaches is mainly a matter of tendency and seems an inevitable and desirable feature of a discipline that, as Wichelns observed, studies discourses that hover in the margins between literature and politics.<sup>28</sup> If, because of differences imposed by training and temperament, the same people are unlikely to practice both kinds of reading, those who adopt different orientations are at least in a position to engage in dialogue.

In the remainder of this paper, we hope to contribute to this dialogue. Our objective is to further clarify an aspect of close reading and indicate its relevance for rhetoric as a cultural and ideological formation. As we have already noted, one of the assumptions of close reading is that meaning in a rhetorical work results from an interaction between discursive form and representational content. This interaction is specified in a phenomenon that contemporary linguists call "iconicity." After briefly explaining this concept, we will attempt to illustrate it through close analysis of passages selected from Edmund Burke's "Speech to the Electors of Bristol." And finally, using this analysis as a tentative base, we will speculate about the way such an approach to meaning might be extended to broader contexts.

## ICONICITY

An icon, according to semiotic theory, is a sign that has a nonarbitrary relation to what it represents. As opposed to a symbol, an icon is a representational mark (signifier) bearing an actual resemblance to whatever it signifies—as, for example, “a portrait signifies the person of whom it is a portrait not by convention only but by resemblance.”<sup>29</sup> A system of representation (a code), therefore, “is iconic to the extent that it imitates, in its signals or textual forms, the meanings that they represent.”<sup>30</sup> It is an accepted principle of contemporary linguistics that languages are symbolic codes. Except for a few onomatopoetic words, the signifiers of language are non-iconic; the relationship between words and meanings is arbitrary, the product of conventions adopted by users of a linguistic code. The form of the signifier does not imitate what it signifies, and so form bears only an arbitrary relationship to meaning.

Yet, as recent studies in the pragmatics of language indicate, this position requires modification when we deal with meaning above the level of individual words. While word meanings are conventional and arbitrary, we encounter a rather different situation when words are combined in phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and discourses. At these higher levels, “iconicity takes a ‘quantum leap’, the syntactic relations between words characteristically imitating relations between the objects and events which those words signify.”<sup>31</sup> In short, above the level of the word, discursive form often enacts representational content.

To illustrate this principle, we can refer to a simple example used by Lakoff and Johnson. To say that someone is “very, very, very tall” conveys a different meaning than if we merely say: “He is very tall.” In this case, iteration lengthens the sentence and changes its meaning even though no new semantic content is added. The change of meaning occurs because the form of the longer sentence iconically represents the person described. This imitative relationship occurs generally and ordinarily because of our expectation that “more of form is more of content”<sup>32</sup>—that is, the bigger the linguistic container, the greater the matter it must contain. (This observation has special significance for oratorical prose, since one of its dominant “stylistic” features, the heavy use of repetition, now seems to function not only as an aesthetic embellishment, or an aid to memory, but as a way of adding “content” to the discourse, and thus it assumes an argumentative function.)<sup>33</sup>

Leech and Short<sup>34</sup> identify three other, and somewhat more complex, types of iconicity: (1) chronological in which textual time imitates real time (the unfolding order of events in a text follows from and maps itself onto our temporal experience in the real world); (2) psychological in which syntactic order imitates psychological experience (the configuration of language in a text embodies states of mind and feeling that occur in real world experience); (3) juxtapositional in which placement of elements in a text imitates our general conception of psychological or locative relatedness (words that are grouped close together in sentences suggest connections and relations attached to other levels of experience).

This typology is not exhaustive, for, as Leech and Short observe, "the possibilities of 'form enacting meaning' are virtually unlimited." In this respect, iconicity has "a power much like metaphor: it rests on the intuitive recognition of similarities between one field of reference (the form of language) and another."<sup>35</sup> Thus, as in the case of metaphor, the functional uses of iconicity outstrip our capacity to describe them in theoretical terms.

Iconicity, then, is a principle more readily apprehended through an interpretative rather than a formal approach to discourse. Perhaps it is for this reason that, while the principle implicitly appears throughout the rhetorical tradition, it operates most notably in the work that places the greatest stress on critical interpretation—Longinus' *On the Sublime*. Longinus, of course, never explicitly names or discusses this principle, but he certainly understood its power, and he put this understanding to use throughout the treatise. And by briefly considering his critical practice, we can gain insight into how iconicity applies to the traditional objects of rhetorical criticism.

Relatively early in the treatise, as he explains how the proper combination of details may yield sublimity, Longinus cites a passage from Homer—a simile describing a great storm at sea:

He rushed upon them, as a wave storm driven,  
Boisterous beneath black clouds, on a swift ship  
Will burst, and all is hidden in the foam;  
Meanwhile the wind tears thundering at the mast,  
And all hands tremble, pale and sore afraid,  
As they are carried from under death.

In analyzing this passage, Longinus explains how its words are configured to depict and embody the experience it describes: Homer does not localize the danger, but "draws a picture of men avoiding destruction many times, at every wave." (That is, the wave-like structure of the syntax imitates what it represents.) More profoundly, the words are joined in a way that virtually hands the experience of terror over to the reader: prepositions are unnaturally joined in the phrase "from under death"; the line is "tortured into conformity with the impending disaster, and by the compactness of his language, he brilliantly represents the calamity and almost stamps upon the words the very shape of the peril."<sup>36</sup> Moreover, such effects are by no means limited to poetry; Longinus notes their presence in *On the Crown*, when Demosthenes describes how the Athenians reacted to news of the fall of Elatea.<sup>37</sup>

When Longinus turns to the figures, the iconicity principle becomes a key to his explanation of their force. For example, citing passages from Demosthenes' *First Philippic*, Longinus argues that rhetorical questions can amplify and extend content that would be thin when stated simply. Thus, this formal device can alter the meaning of a passage by adding bulk to it and rendering it "more convincing."<sup>38</sup> (Here Longinus displays an intuitive grasp of Lakeoff and Johnson's principle that "more of form is more of content.") Again, in treating the use of several figures at



once, Longinus explains how Demosthenes' combined use of asyndeton, repetition, and vivid representation yields an iconic representation of a physical assault. The uninterrupted succession of short, repetitive clauses beats on the consciousness of the hearers as though they were actual blows, and the speaker "achieves the same result as the assailant." The audience is startled, made to experience what the speaker says as though responding to the event rather than a mere verbal description.<sup>39</sup>

For present purposes, the most important section of *On the Sublime* concerns hyperbaton, the figure that encompasses deviations from the normal sequence of words or ideas. Longinus believes that this figure "is, as it were, the true stamp of living passion." When people undergo strong passions, he explains, they become disoriented, and their speech proceeds erratically, violating the normal patterns and sequences. "The best writers imitate this aspect of real life by means of hyperbata." Again, Demosthenes is the exemplar. He uses the figure not only to impart actuality and spontaneity to his discourse, but to lead the audience through an emotional development that seems to assume an extra-discursive reality. Through his prolonged hyperbata, he leaves ideas suspended, "piles up extraneous matter" in the midst of sentences, and reaches a point where he seems to have lost control of his speech. As they follow this orderly disorder, the auditors become panicked "lest his whole argument collapse as his realistic vehemence compels them to experience that danger with him; then, unexpectedly and after a long interval, he comes to the long-awaited conclusion at the end and the right moment."<sup>40</sup>

Much more could be said about the concept of iconicity and its prefigurations in the rhetorical tradition. Our present purpose, however, is not to explore all the ramifications of the concept nor to trace its history. And we think that we have said enough to establish the following points: (1) Iconicity is a regularly occurring phenomenon of language-use that reveals a cooperative interaction between form and meaning. (2) This interaction raises great doubt about any approach to rhetorical criticism that implicitly or explicitly sponsors a form/content dichotomy. (3) The concept of iconicity promises to have important applications in the interpretation of rhetorical discourse. We now want to give further support to this last point by illustrating the use of iconicity.

#### WORDS THE MOST LIKE THINGS: EDMUND BURKE'S ICONIC RHETORIC

In his "Speech at Bristol, Previous to the Election," Edmund Burke faced charges that he had neglected his constituents and voted against their sentiments on a number of crucial issues. Burke, however, did not respond by denying or excusing his actions. Instead, he spoke to endorse his own conception of the relationship between the representative and his constituents and to reaffirm his stance on the issues. In the

introduction, he announced this attitude and conveyed it most strikingly in this sentence:

The part I have acted has been in open day, and to hold out to a conduct, which stands in that clear and steady light for all its good and all its evil, to hold out to that conduct the paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises, I will never do it.<sup>41</sup>

The sentence is a powerful example of physical representation through language. Much of its power, of course, results from metaphorical depiction. The contrasting images of "open day" with its "clear and steady light" and the "paltry winking tapers" give visual presence to Burke's thematic opposition between judgments based upon "the nature of things" and judgments based upon the "humors of men." The light of open day is clear, natural, stable, and expansive. The light of paltry winking tapers is obscure, unnatural, unstable, and confined. These metaphors are nearly perfect visual representations of the theme. But there is something more at work here, for the syntax also has an iconic value.

Although relatively easy to comprehend, the sentence is quite long and rather convoluted. If we recast the sentence in a more usual word order, it might read: "The part I have acted, for all good and all its evil, has been in open day, and I will never hold out to a conduct which stands in that clear and steady light the paltry winking tapers of excuses and promises." This paraphrase, structured through two independent clauses of relatively equal length, offers less resistance to our comprehension, and in doing so, it changes our understanding of the text. Not only does the paraphrase lose the dramatic suspense of the original, but it also alters the progression of semantic values: our rewritten version moves from an image of stability (open day) to an image of instability (winking tapers).

Burke, however, by inverting the normal order through hyperbaton, frames the sentence between two points of semantic and syntactic stability (that is, "the part I have played has been in open day" at the beginning, and "I will never do it" at the end). In-between these poles, he places two rather long clauses that introduce elements of instability and invite the auditor to recognize and experience the perspective he rejects. At the syntactic level, these two dependent clauses cause the sentence to waver as they suspend meaning and violate the norms of ordinary syntax (the infinitives coming before the main verb). Burke controls this "disorder" and thus provides a degree of coherence through repetition and parallelism ("to hold out to a conduct" . . . "to hold out to that conduct"), but the auditor must still remain somewhat disoriented until the meaning is resolved in the final clause. Moreover, this syntactic development exactly parallels the semantic progression in the sentence: the syntax itself seems to flicker with irresolute complications just as Burke presents the key image of unstable judgment—the "winking tapers of excuses and promises." And then the final clause suddenly and decisively ends all irresolution. Everything stabilizes and becomes clear as Burke

makes a crisp, unqualified assertion in the first person—"I will never do it." In short, the form of the sentence directs the auditor's response in a way that powerfully influences its meaning.

One other aspect of this sentence deserves notice. While it begins and ends at points of stability, the extreme clauses are not quite parallel in syntax or rhetorical force. The first clause completes an independent meaning in ten words cast in the passive, while the last clause resolves the meaning suspended in the preceding dependent clauses and does so in five words arranged in the active voice. Thus, if, in one sense, the sentence circles back to its origin, there is also a sense in which it moves forward—shifting from the scene of past action to the person of the actor as he speaks in present time and commits himself to future conduct ("I will never do it"). The circle becomes a wheel, gathering forward momentum as it turns on itself.

This kind of enactment, based upon the imbrication of form and meaning, recurs throughout the speech, and in our view, governs the structure of the whole. On its surface, the speech is divided into five discrete sections. The introduction presents Burke's general theory of representation, which requires independent, stable judgment on the part of the representative, and hence a substantial degree of distance between the representative and his constituents. Or to put the point negatively, Burke argues that if representatives adhere too closely to popular opinion, their judgment becomes unstable, narrow, and servile, and hence incapable of serving the genuine interests of the people they represent. The other four sections then address the specific charges leveled against Burke—that he neglected his constituents (this point being connected closely with his position regarding the American War), that he voted against their interests in matters pertaining to the regulation of Irish trade, that he acted against their expressed will in supporting a bill for debt reform, and that he offended public opinion by endorsing measures designed to liberalize restrictions on Roman Catholics. The linear progression through these points follows the order of a well-behaved debater's brief. Yet, a careful reading of the speech reveals a more subtle and organic form embedded within it.

Burke structures each separate section so that it turns back to his original argument about the character and judgment of the representative. In respect to each issue, Burke shows that he exercised exemplary judgment and that the policies he opposed were flawed, because they were too much immersed in immediate circumstances and too closely connected with momentary whims of popular sentiment. Thus, Burke simultaneously justifies his positions through argument and presents a series of narratives that display his character. The narratives work repetitively to demonstrate how the speaker, in a variety of different circumstances, concretely enacted the kind of proper judgment he had described at the outset of the speech. As this organic pattern develops, its elements feed off one another: the arguments justify Burke's actions

in particular situations; these justifications cumulatively build an impression of stable character, and, in turn, as the orator establishes and vindicates his character, his character lends weight to the arguments. Moreover, since his character embodies the principles enunciated abstractly in the introduction, the whole development repetitively circles back to its point of origin. The text constructs a formal network of relationships that embody its meaning. The form iconically represents Burke's meaning.<sup>42</sup>

In analyzing the sentence from Burke's introduction, we noted a circular movement as the sentence progressed syntactically from stability through instability back to stability. We have just noted a similar kind of progression within the speech as a whole; in each of its sections, the movement from principle through material circumstances resolved itself in the same principles which Burke established as his starting-point. Moreover, there seems another interesting analogy between the microcosm of the sentence and the macrocosm of the discourse. Though the pattern of the sentence was circular, the circle exhibited directional movement—an advance from a passive description of the scene to an active assertion by the speaker. Within the speech as a whole, we can also detect a pattern of forward motion—one that involves the two major topics of deliberative rhetoric—the expedient and the honorable. Both topics are intertwined throughout the speech, but the balance between them changes as the speech proceeds. In the first two "narratives," the emphasis falls on the expedient; Burke stresses the way that the policies he opposed were self-defeating; because they were short-sighted, they worked against the nature of things and brought practical disaster to those who endorsed them. In the third narrative, however, the topic of the honorable emerges more clearly. Beauchamp's debt reform bill recommends itself equally as a practical solution to a problem and as a moral reform intended to eliminate injustices suffered by debtors. In the final narrative, considerations of honor achieve priority. Opposition to religious toleration is condemned less because it is unwise (though Burke argues that it is) than because it is inhumane. Those who support anti-Catholic codes do not simply harm themselves; they sponsor tyranny and cruelty. As Burke narrates his role in the debate about this issue, he displays a moral energy that has no parallel in the earlier sections of the speech. No longer operating on the basis of cool reason alone, Burke acts with zeal, warmth, and vigor, calling forth "every faculty" in his possession to defend a just reform against popular discontent and insurrection, and the section ends with a strong statement of moral principle. Thus, as the text unfolds, Burke transforms himself into a moral agent speaking on a still controversial issue and drawing from this issue abiding principles of moral and political conduct.

The progression we have just outlined is subtle and complex, and a full explication is beyond the limits of this paper. Nevertheless, analysis of a few representative passages can reveal some of its dimensions, and

as we examine these passages, we can complete our discussion of iconic form in the speech. Having already dealt with its manifestation at the sentence level and at the level of the discourse as a whole, we now turn to units of intermediate length, and it is at this level that Burke's artistry manifests itself most clearly.

Our first passage appears relatively early in the speech, in the section where Burke deals with Irish trade policy. Having argued that his view of the matter followed from "old, standing, invariable principle" (295), he proceeds to narrate what happened when the Parliamentary majority, reflecting momentary, popular attitudes on the matter, adopted a different course:

[1] The British Parliament, in a former session frightened into a limited concession by the menaces of Ireland, frightened out of it by the menaces of England, was now frightened back again, and made a universal surrender of all that had been thought the peculiar, reserved, incommunicable rights of England—the exclusive commerce of America, of Africa, of the West Indies—all the enumerations of the Acts of Navigation—all the manufactures, iron, glass, even the last pledge of jealousy and pride, the interest hid in the secret of our hearts, the inveterate prejudice molded into the constitution of our frame, even the sacred fleece itself, all went together. [2] No reserve; no exception; no debate; no discussion. [3] A sudden light broke in upon us all. [4] It broke in, not through well contrived and well-disposed windows, but through flaws and breaches; through the yawning chasms of our ruin. [5] We were taught wisdom by humiliation (296).

The opening sentence is extraordinarily long and divides into two main units marked off by a hyphen. The first unit achieves iconicity through parallel dependent clauses placed in medial position. The sentence wavers syntactically in the same way that Parliament vacillated. That is, in the gap between the subject and the main verb, the auditor is left suspended while clauses describing the machinations of Parliament shift in one direction and then the other. Then after Parliament is frightened back to its original irresolute course, we discover the result: "universal surrender." The second main unit specifies the magnitude of this surrender, and here iconicity is achieved through a "left-branching" construction—that is through incomplete clauses placed at the beginning of the unit. Deploying the "more of form is more of content" principle, Burke separates and enumerates each item surrendered, piling them atop one another in a succession of short clauses. The last item is the most important, and thus the form of sentence expands as Burke approaches it—the phrases become longer and three separate clauses amplify its significance. And just as the "sacred fleece" (i.e. the woolen trade) completes the pile, the whole structure suddenly collapses. This great long sentence ends with three simple words: "all went together." Sentence two (no reserve; no exception; no debate; no discussion.) reinforces the impression of an abrupt and total clash as its four exceedingly short, negative clauses reverberate in the ears of the audience.

The rapid, staccato movement conveyed through sentence two continues in sentence three, a very short sentence that rushes immediately

to attention. Yet, it also arrests attention, for, changing the whole line of development, this sentence introduces a new theme—the moral of the story. Having already experienced the frenzy of vacillation and the ensuing down-fall, the auditor, now iconically placed amidst the rubble of a collapsed structure, is prepared for sudden enlightenment, just as the English nation was at the time of the event, when a “sudden light broke in upon us all.” Sentence four ramifies this image, connecting it with the latent iconic structure built and leveled in the syntax of the preceding sentences. The moral is simple: irrational temporizing yields enlightenment, but only after disaster and through “breaches” and “flaws” which the “well-disposed windows” of stable judgment could have prevented. Nevertheless, lest the auditor miss his point, Burke restates it in more direct language: “We were taught wisdom by humiliation.” But even in this seemingly literal formulation, an iconic suggestion still persists in the last word, since to suffer humiliation is to be brought low.

A critic interested in condensing the speech to an outline undoubtedly could paraphrase this passage in propositional form. For certain purposes, this exercise might prove useful, but it would be a mistake to believe that this formal reduction specified the “content” of the passage. Nor would the mistake consist simply in the failure to incorporate the inventional force of the metaphors it contains. As our analysis reveals, the form and content of the passage do not operate at different levels; both merge within a pattern of meaning, and the meaning results from the interaction of all the elements—the themes, the images, the syntax and perhaps other things as well.<sup>43</sup> The meaning is an experiential gestalt—something, as McGee might say, that makes its actual presence felt and commands our attention.<sup>44</sup>

Before turning from this passage, we need to add one more comment about its meaning that is important within the larger context of the discourse. At this point, Burke fixes his attention on the topic of expediency. Unstable, narrow political judgment proves futile and harmful, but the harm is self-inflicted and largely material. As the speech progresses, the same rhetorical configurations reappear, but they assume new meanings as Burke broadens the range of his critique: political temporizing becomes a moral as well as a practical danger.

In the last and longest major section of the speech, Burke presents a history of anti-Catholic sentiment which culminates in the enactment of a statute in 1699—the statute he had sought to reform. Burke considers how and for what reasons this law was “fabricated,” and he explains that at the time there existed a party in the nation opposed to King William and the “system of the Revolution”:

[1] The party I speak of (like some among us who would disparage the best friends of their country) resolved to make the king either violate his principles of toleration, or incur the odium of protecting Papists. [2] They therefore brought in this bill, and made it purposely wicked and absurd, that it might be rejected. [3] The then Court party, discovering their game, turned the tables on them, and returned the bill to them stuffed with still

greater absurdities, that its loss might lie upon its original authors. [4] They finding their own ball thrown back to them, kicked it back again to their adversaries; and thus this act, loaded with the double injustice of two parties, *neither of whom intended to pass* what they hoped the other would be persuaded to reject, went through the Legislature, contrary to the real wish of all parts of it, and of all the parties that composed it. [5] In this manner, these insolent and profligate factions, as if they were playing with balls and counters, made a sport of the fortunes and liberties of their fellow-creatures. [6] Other acts of persecution have been acts of malice. [7] This was a subversion of justice from wantonness and petulance. [8] Look into the history of Bishop Burnet. [9] He is a witness without exception (301, emphasis in the text).

Thematically, the image of the legislative process as "sport" dominates the passage. This metaphor depicts the parties as passing the bill/back and forth, so absorbed in the game that they fail to comprehend the real consequences of their actions. (We are reminded of children amusing themselves by torturing a helpless animal—an image that Burke invokes more explicitly at the end of the section.)<sup>45</sup> Once again, however, the syntax of the passage foregrounds the metaphor and complicates and enriches its meaning.

Syntactically, the paragraph repeats the familiar progression from stability through instability back to a stable base. In this instance, the instability is conveyed not only by sentence structure but by increasingly vague referents to the agents in the scenario.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the first sentence, though quite long, is straightforward and immediately intelligible. Burke clearly identifies the agent to whom he is referring ("the party I speak of"); the parenthetical remark fixes the reference as it assigns an attitude based in contemporary politics, and this agent then consciously devises a strategy—makes a seemingly rational calculation based in the immediate political circumstances. In sentence two, this calculation results in an action, and the adverb "purposely" stresses the connection between act and motive. At the same time, however, Burke hints that we are witnessing a game where motive and action do not correspond on the surface. The first party has made the bill "wicked" not out of a desire to be wicked, but to outmaneuver the other party in a political contest. The much longer third sentence takes us into the game, and as we become involved in it, the agents become more difficult to distinguish and lose control of their actions. The sentence begins with a clearly delineated subject—"the then Court party"—but through the rest of sentence three and the first clause of sentence four the word "party" and all other descriptors of the actors disappear. Actions become more indefinite as "this party" and "that party" give way to a succession of "th" pronouns: "their . . . them . . . them . . . them . . . them." While the phonetic repetition lends structural coherence to these clauses, it becomes difficult to determine who is doing what to whom. The game seems to take control of the players, and Burke's syntax iconically represents the resulting confusion.

The third and fourth sentences contain other devices that create an impression of instability and loss of agency. In the former, the sentence

shifts in the middle as the Court party "turned the tables on them, and returned their bill to them stuffed with still greater absurdities. . . ." The first of these clauses contains a notable use of alliteration. The two "th" and the two "t" words tick and lisp off the tongue evenly, and they level out the clause. The cadence is consistent with the uniform, smooth surface of a table. But what is smooth is also slippery, and if the clause has a syntactic and phonetic integrity, it also suggests further movement—an anticipation that the table will turn yet again. In the next clause, the word "return" amplifies this suggestion, and we learn that the Court party reacts precisely as the other party did—it "stuffs" more absurdities into the bill hoping that it would embarrass the original authors.

The fourth sentence fulfills earlier anticipations: the bill, already having been passed to-and-fro twice, now becomes a ball, which is thrown in one direction and kicked in the other, and the balanced opposition of the first two clauses of the sentence imitates the movement of the ball. At this point, however, the pattern changes. If the vague pronouns of the earlier clauses made it somewhat difficult to understand who was acting, it was still clear that human agents did the throwing and kicking. In the third clause, the ball, which before was a bill, now becomes—significantly enough—an act, and this act not only serves as the subject of the clause but takes on a life of its own. Burke stresses the independent status of the act by inserting two clauses between the subject and main verb—clauses which explain that the act was loaded with injustices the parties had used for strategic purposes in the game but did not intend to pass into law. Yet, the act has such momentum that, contrary to the wishes of all "parts" and "parties," it went through the legislature. The fifth sentence summarizes the whole development, using the metaphor of "balls and counters" to mirror the action just described, and invoking the word "sport" to emphasize the legislators' callous indifference to "the fortunes and liberties of their fellow-creatures."

As in the earlier passage we studied, this paragraph moves through a temporal/causal sequence: unstable political action leads ineluctably to disaster—to a situation where events control the actors. And also as in the earlier passage, the sequence ends with a judgment. This judgment takes us well out of confusion, and the recovery of stability is heavily marked by Burke's syntax. The paragraph ends with four short, clear sentences of the same approximate length. Moreover, if we examine these sentences with care, we can note the artistry involved in maintaining their status as short, independent units. Sentences six and seven express adversative ideas that seem to invite connection into a single sentence through the conjunction "but." The separation of sentences eight and nine is even more striking. A more fluid and "natural" way of presenting Burke's point could be achieved through a single sentence, such as: "Bishop Burnet's history confirms this account without exception."



In both instances, however, Burke resists more fluid constructions, and he divides the sentences into a balanced series of four simple, discrete units. The resulting clipt style achieves maximum simplicity in the expression of each point, while the whole achieves solidity through the progression of evenly balanced short sentences. Each point stands in stable isolation while blending into a larger structure. The syntax here contrasts sharply with the convoluted sentences that describe the capricious, unstable judgment of the legislators, and it is from this stable base that Burke renders his own judgment. This pattern is hardly a coincidence. For Burke, syntax serves as the substrate of judgment.

In one important respect, as we have already noted, this passage does depart from the one we examined earlier. The later passage strongly emphasizes the moral dimensions of the issue. The legislators of 1699, like all others who impede enlightened religious tolerance, do not simply act unwisely; their blindness causes the enactment and perpetuation of tyrannical laws—laws that violate basic principles of liberty and humanity. This addition is important, since it gives the speech a sense of progressive development. The other main themes—Burke's character, the soundness of his policies, and the wisdom of his theory of political representation—circle organically through the text, gaining strength through their repetitive interconnection in Burke's arguments, images, and syntactic constructions. But as the expedient gives way to the honorable, the text exhibits a forward impulse. And Burke can rest his case by tying all its elements into a plea for justice:

When we were sent into a place of authority, you that sent us had yourselves only one commission to give. You could give none to wrong or oppress, or even suffer any kind of oppression and wrong, on any grounds whatsoever; not on political, as in the affairs of America; not on commercial, as in those of Ireland; not in civil, as in laws for debt; not in religious, as in the statutes against Protestant and Catholic dissenters. The diversified but connected fabric of universal justice is well cramped and bolted together in all its parts; and, depend upon it, I never have employed, and I never shall employ, any engine of power which may come into my hands to wrench it asunder. All shall stand if I can help it, and all shall stand connected (309).

Here Burke's prose iconically represents stability, but not at all in the same way that it is represented in his clipt style. As the speech advances to the moral plane, its expression must not simply identify parts but must connect the whole, and Burke responds accordingly: the elegant symmetry and balance of his syntax iconically reproduces the well cramped and bolted fabric of universal justice.

## CONCLUSION

Our analysis of the Bristol speech, though incomplete, is sufficient to demonstrate that Burke's style is not separable from the "content" of the discourse. Form and meaning are imbricated at every level—the sentence, the paragraph, and the discourse as a whole, and all the elements of Burke's rhetoric interact cooperatively to produce a structure

of meaning. This meaning, of course, is ideological, and while the ideology of the speech participates in a context of larger discursive formations and material conditions, it is also something represented within the tissue of connectives that the text constructs. In this speech, a political ideology evolves within the meaning of the text, and hence an ideological reading would require careful attention to the modes of articulation indigenous to the text.

Nevertheless, if we accept conventional wisdom, what is true for Edmund Burke hardly seems a secure base for generalization. Burke is almost universally acknowledged as *sui generis* among English-language orators because of his capacity to turn political discourse into literary art. Thus, while Burke's oratory commands admiration, it is regarded as so atypical as to have little relevance to the normal practice of public address.

This attitude, however, rests upon the assumption that literary and practical discourse are different in kind—an assumption which is no longer accepted universally and has come under increasingly sharp attack from a number of different directions.<sup>47</sup> As we have already suggested, the iconicity principle is itself evidence of the continuity between ordinary usage and literary language. The imitative representation of meaning through form is a resource used in all linguistic practices. Literary discourse “makes a special exploitation” of this resource, developing it to a higher degree and using it more systematically than other forms of discourse,<sup>48</sup> but iconicity operates in even the most mundane texts. This point is nicely illustrated by the British critical linguists, who have rejected the dualism of form and meaning and have explained how syntax “can code a world view without any conscious choice on the part of the writer or speaker.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, critical interpretation reveals subtly embedded ideological structures in such ordinary texts as newspaper articles and bureaucratic memoranda.<sup>50</sup>

If we abandon the form/content dichotomy in public address, Burke's status changes, and his oratory takes on renewed significance for critics. The literary excellence of his discourse seems to differ from more normal practice in degree rather than in kind. We can regard his oratory not as transcending the genre but as perfecting its resources. Since form is no longer abstracted (or subtracted) from meaning, the aesthetic dimension of his work now appears intimately connected with its political function. Thus, Burke offers a paradigm of rhetorical excellence—a touchstone which concretely embodies the potential of the art and exploits resources common to the art in an exemplary fashion. We do not mean, of course, that critics should mechanically and literally apply Burkean standards to other discourses. As Edwin Black explains, touchstones are “not models for copying,” but referents which can inform our expectations of “what rhetorical discourse ought to do” and of what it is “capable of doing.”<sup>51</sup> To use Burke as a touchstone, then, is not to confine the critic to eighteenth-century sensibilities, but to

sensitize the critic to potentialities realized only through their enactment in discourse. Viewed in this light, Burke's example shows us something that abstract theory disguises—the power of discourse to blend form and meaning into local unities that “textualize” the public world and invite audiences to experience that world as the text represents it.

## ENDNOTES

1. In *American Speeches* (New York: Longmans, 1954) 14; emphasis in the text.
2. *American Speeches* 17-18.
3. “Of Style,” *Western Speech* 21 (1957): 103-104.
4. Fisher first announced his position in “Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument,” *Communication Monographs* 51 (1984): 1-22. He elaborates on his conception of narrative in *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* (Columbia: U of South Carolina Press, 1987). Also see his recent paper, “Clarifying the Narrative Paradigm,” *Communication Monographs* 56 (1989): 55-58.
5. “Metaphor and the Rhetorical Invention of the Cold War ‘Idealists,’” *Communication Monographs* 54 (1987): 168.
6. “Rhetorical Depiction,” in *Form, Genre, and the Study of Political Discourse*, ed. Herbert W. Simons and Aram A. Aghazarian (Columbia: U of South Carolina Press, 1986) 79.
7. “Rhetorical Depiction” 80.
8. “Rhetorical Depiction” 97.
9. “Rhetorical Depiction” 82, and 99-100.
10. Herbert Wichelns, “The Literary Criticism of Oratory,” *The Rhetorical Idiom: Essays in Rhetoric, Oratory, Language, and Drama*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (Ithaca, NY: Cornell U Press, 1958) 35. This includes a reprinting of the essay which was published originally in 1925.
11. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard, “Introduction: The Field of Argumentation,” *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, ed. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U Press, 1982) xxi.
12. Thomas Conley, “The Linnaean Blues: Thoughts on the Genre Approach,” in *Form, Genre, and the Study of Political Discourse*, 73.
13. W. Charles Redding, “Extrinsic and Intrinsic Criticism,” *Western Speech* 21 (1957): 100.
14. For differing accounts of this development, see J. Michael Sproule, “The New Managerial Rhetoric and the Old Criticism,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 474-481, and Dilip Gaonkar, “Epilogue: The Oratorical Text: The Enigma of Arrival,” *Texts in Context: Critical Dialogues on Significant Episodes in American Political Rhetoric*, ed. Michael Leff and Fred Kauffeld (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1989) esp. 256-264.
15. See Ernest J. Wraga, “Public Address: A Study in Social and Intellectual History,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 33 (1947): 451-457.
16. Barnet Baskerville, “The Critical Method in Speech,” *Central States Speech Journal* 4 (1953): 1-5, and Thomas Nilsen, “Interpretative Function of the Critic,” *Western Speech* 21 (1957): 70-76. Gaonkar, “The Oratorical Text,” 260-262 provides a commentary on the “history of ideas” approach.
17. See, for example, Leland Griffin, “The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 38 (1952): 184-188; and “The Rhetorical Structure of the ‘New Left’ Movement: Part I,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50 (1964): 113-135. The latter essay moves decisively out of the orbit of the “history of ideas” approach and adopts a dramatic perspective.
18. *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: MacMillan, 1965) 177.
19. Samuel Becker, “Rhetorical Studies for the Modern World,” *The Prospect of Rhetoric: Report of the National Developmental Project*, ed. Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1971) 31.

20. Wayne Brockreide, "Trends in the Study of Rhetoric: Toward a Blending of Science and Rhetoric," *The Prospect of Rhetoric*, 125-126.

21. In his most recent statement about narrative, "Clarifying the Narrative Paradigm," Fisher explains that his primary concern is not rhetorical criticism but a philosophy of communication. In "Rhetorical Depiction," Osborn's interest in depiction as a "recurring form" (80) indicates an emphasis that is more theoretical than critical, a point which becomes explicit at the end of the essay (97-100; in his last sentence, he uses the word "theory" to describe the content of the essay.) It is interesting to compare this essay with the critical study, "I've Been to the Mountaintop": The Critic as Participant," that Osborn presents in *Texts in Context*, 149-166. Ivie is directly and fundamentally concerned with criticism, and no one can doubt the significance of his work in uncovering basic motives informing larger discursive formations; see, in addition to "Metaphor and the Rhetorical Invention of the Cold War 'Idealists'"; "Images of Savagery in American Justifications for War," *Communication Monographs* 47 (1980): 279-294; and "Metaphor and Motive in the Johnson Administration's Vietnam War Rhetoric," in *Texts in Context*, 121-141. Nevertheless, the explanatory power gained by concentrating solely on base metaphors also brings with it a strong tendency toward reductionism. For comment on this point, see Michael Leff, "Textual Criticism: The Legacy of G. P. Mohrmann," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 72 (1986): 386-387; Gaonkar, 273-275; and Barry Brummett, "Some Burkean Roads not Taken: A Response to Ivie," *Texts in Context*, 143-148.

22. See Martin J. Medhurst, "Public Address and Significant Scholarship: Four Challenges to the Rhetorical Renaissance," *Texts in Context*, esp. 35-37; and Gaonkar, 255-275.

23. Of the six case studies contained in *Texts in Context*, five are devoted to single texts: Stephen H. Browne, "Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*: The Pragmatic Basis of Rhetorical Judgment," 55-80; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "*La Pucelle D'Orleans* Becomes an American Girl: Anna Dickinson's 'Jeanne D'Arc,'" 91-112; Michael Osborn, "I've Been to the Mountaintop": The Critic as Participant," 149-166; J. Robert Cox, "The Fulfillment of Time: King's 'I Have a Dream' Speech," 181-204; and Celeste Michelle Condit, "Nixon's 'Fund': Time as Ideological Resource in the 'Checkers' Speech," 219-242. *Communication Reports* 1 (1988) presents a symposium on Lincoln's Second Inaugural, with four essays devoted to the interpretation of that speech: James Arnt Aune, "Lincoln and the American Sublime," 14-19; Ronald H. Carpenter, "In Not-So-Trivial Pursuit of Rhetorical Wedges: An Historical Approach to Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address," 20-25; Michael Leff, "Dimensions of Temporality in Lincoln's Second Inaugural," 26-31; and Martha Solomon, "With Firmness in the Right: The Creation of Moral Hegemony in Lincoln's Second Inaugural," 32-37. Among the other recent efforts at "close reading," we would note: Stephen E. Lucas, "Justifying America: The Declaration of Independence as a Rhetorical Document," in *American Rhetoric: Context and Criticism*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U Press, 1990); David Henry, "The Rhetorical Dynamics of Mario Cuomo's 1984 Keynote Address: Situation, Speaker, Metaphor," *Southern Speech Communication Journal* 53 (1988): 105-120; Stephen H. Browne, "Edmund Burke's *Letter to a Noble Lord*: A Textual Study in Political Philosophy and Rhetorical Action," *Communication Monographs* 55 (1988): 215-229; G. P. Mohrmann, "Place and Space: Calhoun's Fatal Security," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 51 (1987): 143-158; Bruce Gronbeck, "Ronald Reagan's Enactment of the Presidency in His 1981 Inaugural Address," in *Form, Genre, and the Study of Political Discourse*, 226-245; Joseph W. Wenzel, "The Rhetorical View of Argumentation: Exploring a Paradigm," *Argumentation* 1 (1987): 73-88; Michael Leff, "Rhetorical Timing in Lincoln's 'House Divided' Speech," *The Van Zelst Lecture in Communication* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1983); and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Stanton's the 'Solitude of Self': A Rationale for Feminism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980): 304-312. Also notable are such applications of this approach to documentary film and television as: Thomas Rosteck, "Irony, Argument, and Television Documentary: *See It Now's* Report on Senator McCarthy," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, in press; Martin J. Medhurst and Thomas Benson, "*The City: The Rhetoric of Rhythm*," *Communication Monographs* 48 (1981): 54-72; and Thomas W. Benson, "The Rhetorical Structure of Frederick Wiseman's *High School*," *Communication Monographs* 47 (1980): 233-261.

24. Conley, "The Linnaean Blues"; Leff, "Textual Criticism," and "The Habitation of Rhetoric" *Argument and Critical Practices: Proceedings of the Fifth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, ed. Joseph W. Wenzel (Annandale, Va., 1987) 1-8; Robert L. Scott, "Against Rhetorical Theory: Tripping to Serendip," *Texts in Context* 1-10; Stephen E. Lucas, "The Renaissance of American Public Address: Text and Context in Rhetorical Criticism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 74 (1988): 241-260; and Edwin Black, "A Note on Theory and Practice in Rhetorical Criticism," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 44 (1980): 331-336.
25. Lucas, "The Renaissance of American Public Address" 249.
26. Benson, "The Rhetorical Structure of Frederick Wiseman's *High School*" 235.
27. "Time and the Reconstitution of Gradualism in King's Address: A Response to Cox," *Texts in Context* 213.
28. Wichelns 41.
29. Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca: Cornell U Press, 1975) 16.
30. Geoffrey N. Leech and Michael H. Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London: Longman 1981) 233.
31. Leech and Short 234.
32. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 127-128.
33. This point was understood by Daniel Webster. See his letter to John Brazer, November 10, 1828, *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Correspondence, II 1825-1829*, ed. Charles Wiltse (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1976) 378-80.
34. 233-43.
35. 242.
36. *On the Sublime* 10. This quotation is from the translation by G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957). All citations refer to this translation, and we cite the traditional section numbers rather than pages.
37. *On the Sublime*.
38. *On the Sublime* 18.
39. *On the Sublime* 20.
40. *On the Sublime* 22.
41. "Speech of Mr. Burke at Bristol, Previous to the Election, Delivered September 6, 1780," *Select British Eloquence*, ed. Chauncey A. Goodrich (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963; rpt. 1862) 293. All future references to the speech are to this edition and are indicated in the text.
42. For a more detailed analysis of the structure of the speech, see Stephen H. Browne and Michael Leff, "Political Judgment and Rhetorical Argument: Edmund Burke's Paradigm," *Argument and Social Practice: Proceedings of the Fourth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, ed. J. R. Cox, M. Sillars, and G. Walker (Annandale, Va.: SCA, 1985) 200-208.
43. At the least, the patterns of rhythm and assonance in this passage also deserve careful attention.
44. Michael Calvin McGee, "A Materialist's Conception of Rhetoric," *Explorations in Rhetoric: Studies in Honor of Douglas Ehninger*, ed. Ray McKerrow (Glenview, Ill.: Scott Foresman, 1982) 23-48.
45. "We are all a sort of children that must be soothed and managed. I think I am not austere or formal in my nature. I would bear—I would even myself play in any innocent buffooneries to divert them [the people]; but I will never act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient creature whatsoever: no, not so much as a kitling, to torment" (310).
46. Here we are referring to an aspect of the rhetoric of the text that linguists call "cohesion." See Leech and Short, 243-254.
47. In our discipline, both Fisher's conception of narrative and Osborn's theory of depiction cast doubt on the traditional disjunction. Also see, Richard B. Gregg, "Criticism of Symbolic Inducement: A Critical-Theoretical Connection," *Speech Communication in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U Press, 1985)

43-49. For a brief review of the issue in linguistics, see Leech and Short, 10-40, and for literary criticism, see the introduction by Jane Tompkins in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1980) ix-xxvi.

48. Leech and Short 234, 254.

49. Roger Fowler, Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress, and Tony Trew, *Language as Control* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979) Chapter 10 "Critical Linguistics" by Fowler and Kress, 185; and also see 185-196.

50. Hodge, Kress, and Garreth Jones, "The Ideology of Middle Management," 81-93; and Trew, "What the Papers Say": Linguistic Variation and Ideological Difference," 117-156 *Language and Control*.

51. *Rhetorical Criticism* 67.

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