The art of rhetoric as self-discipline: inquiries into spirit, sight, sound

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The art of rhetoric as self-discipline:
Inquiries into spirit, sight, sound

by

Anne Rypstat Richards

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Rhetoric and Professional Communication
Program of Study Committee:
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2003

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This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation of
Anne Rypstat Richards
has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signature was redacted for privacy.

Major Professor
Signature was redacted for privacy.
For the Major Program
for Annie and Danny
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation describes and embodies an ethically grounded method for structuring a program of rhetorical study. As a discipline, rhetoric is perhaps uniquely comprehensive, as Cicero suggests when he writes, “No man can be an orator complete in all points of merit who has not attained a knowledge of all important subjects and arts” (De Oratore, Bk. I, Ch. 6). Rather than attempting to delimit rhetoric, the dissertation offers a means of narrowing its scope for individual rhetoricians, namely by focusing on inner necessity and conscience in the approach to study. Rhetoric here is defined as a framework in which the author integrates the scholarly and artistic, public and private elements of her personality by inquiring into the influence of symbols on her life. By conceptualizing the art of rhetoric as a “self-discipline,” the author affirms the significance of all these elements and suggests that their harmonious blending will enhance the pleasures and utilities of discourse. Embedded within the dissertation are three articles that represent the author’s attempt to construct rhetoric in this manner. “Reconsidering Agency in an Era of Georeligious Upheaval: Women from Four Faith Traditions Confess” suggests how organized religions contribute to empowerment of the devout. “Argument and Authority in the Visual Representations of Science” considers the importance of the ethical appeal to science, and the ways in which visual representations appeal to audience prejudices in favor of knowledge constructed by the eye. “Possibilities for a Rhetoric of Music: A Metadiscursive Approach to Film” proposes thirteen categories of musical metadiscourse and hypothesizes that musical ways of knowing are as vital to the meaning of film art as visual and verbal ways are. Throughout the dissertation, personal and public, scholarly and artistic narratives intersect.
I sing the body electric,

The armies of those I love engirth me and I engirth them,

They will not let me off till I go with them, respond to them,

And discorrupt them, and charge them full with the charge of the soul.

Was it doubted that those who corrupt their own bodies conceal themselves?
And if those who defile the living are as bad as they who defile the dead?

And if the body does not do fully as much as the soul?

And if the body were not the soul, what is the soul?

—Walt Whitman
CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

She saw the prairie, flat in giant patches or rolling in long hummocks. The width and bigness of it, which had expanded her spirit an hour ago, began to frighten her. It spread out so; it went on so uncontrollably; she could never know it.

—Sinclair Lewis

[An orator] has not a knowledge of all causes, and yet he ought to be able to speak upon all. On what causes, then, will he speak? On such as he has learned. The same will be the case also with regard to the arts and sciences; those on which he shall have to speak he will study for the occasion, and on those which he has studied he will speak.

—Quintillian

Dissertation Organization

This dissertation contains three articles that are either published in or submitted to peer-reviewed journals in the humanities:

• “Reconsidering Agency in an Era of Georeligious Upheaval: Women from Four Faith Traditions Confess”
• “Argument and Authority in the Visual Representations of Science”
• “Possibilities for a Rhetoric of Music: A Metadiscursive Approach to Film”
Chapter One of the dissertation explores the objectives, theoretical approaches, themes, and methodologies of the articles. It also addresses my reasons for constructing a dissertation around them. Chapter Two (henceforth “Faith Traditions”), a cultural study of religious beliefs and their connections to individual agency, has been published in a slightly different form in the journal *Globalization*. Chapter Three (henceforth “Visual Representations”) is an ethnographic study of the visual rhetoric of science. Written in the spirit of Bruno Latour and Steven Woolgar’s *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*, the essay has been submitted to *Technical Communication Quarterly*. Chapter Four (henceforth “Film Music”), a rhetorical study of movie scores, has been submitted to *Rhetoric Review*. Chapter Five identifies the dissertation’s major findings, explains their significance, and proposes areas for future research. The three articles appear in the order in which they were submitted for publication.

The articles identify and attempt to help correct widespread misconceptions: that the notion of “false consciousness” has been banished from cultural theory; that scientists depend solely or primarily on logic; that music is incidental to film art. In each case, the article attempts to fill a “gap” in current scholarship in rhetoric and professional communication (see John Swales, chapter seven): research on organized religion is nearly absent from our journals; rhetorical research on visual design has tended to focus on function before interpretation; music remains a tertiary concern in most studies of multimedia. Finally, each article attempts to foreground a process that usually would go unremarked: certain individuals quietly go about articulating religious practice in highly personalized and potentially empowering ways as certain prominent cultural theorists dismiss religious practices *in toto*; by contributing to or detracting from an author’s authority, visual
representations influence the expert reception of the arguments of science; music constitutes a powerful but largely unrecognized language of film.

Because, broadly speaking, all three articles attempt to give voice to the “marginal,” their approach can be called feminist. In “Faith Traditions,” four women—a Baptist, a Teravada Buddhist, a Shi’ite Muslim, and a Reform Jew—explain how and why their religious practices are connected integrally to their senses of self. These participants, an African American and a Sri Lankan graduate student, an unemployed Iranian with limited English-language speaking abilities, and a housebound patient in the final stage of Parkinson’s disease, existed in spaces that were far from the elite academic and political circles of Stuart Hall or Edward Said, cultural theorists whose writings seem dismissive of religiosity. “Visual Representations” takes a feminist tack insofar as writers such as Sandra Harding (e.g., “Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What Is ‘Strong Objectivity?’”), Helen Longino (e.g., Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry), and Donna Haraway (e.g., Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature) have contributed significantly to ongoing efforts to demystify the “scientific method” and to bring to light a more comprehensive range of factors giving rise to scientific claims. “Film Music” also is feminist in approach; writers such as Julia Kristeva (e.g., “Woman’s Time”), Héléne Cixous (e.g., Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing), Nel Noddings and Paul J. Shore (Awakening the Inner Eye: Intuition in Education), and Martha Nussbaum (e.g., Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions) all have attempted to excavate the emotional foundations of human thought, belief, judgment, and even reason. The emotions long have been associated closely with music, and music as a form of self-expression plays an
increasingly marginal role in the educational institutions that reflect the values of U.S.
society.¹

While writing this dissertation, I consistently have asked myself what a rhetoric might
look like that brings out of the shadows not only imagination but also those aspects of the
personal that I have tended to ignore in favor of more useful things. I have not, on the whole,
addressed the types of issues that often are addressed in our rhetoric and professional
communication journals, let alone in my own PhD program, where our most recent
dissertations have focused on writing-across-the-curriculum. But I have failed to do so
intentionally, hoping to understand and to help others come to understand vital issues that to
some extent are peripheral to our discipline. I have been motivated in part, I admit, by a
mission civilisatrice.

I also have returned time and again to the “ancient debate” between philosophy and
rhetoric. Aristotle set the terms of that debate, and by invoking the distinction one accepts
his terms. But since at least the time of Sir Frances Bacon, traditional philosophy has been
challenged methodically and its founding assumptions disputed, so successfully that by now
little of the discipline’s objectivism is defended seriously. After summarizing the state of
traditional rhetorical theory, Susan Jarratt argues for reconceptualization of our discipline as
well. Militating for “a broader definition of ‘rhetoric’ and what counts as ‘rhetorical’
practice” (12), she cites Jeffrey Walker’s claim that lyric poetry is “the nearest relation to,
and indeed the precursor for . . . the later ‘rhetorical’ tradition” and that the lyric served as
“culturally and politically significant discourse” (140). Following in the tradition of

¹“The current round of [federal] budget cuts will lead to curtailment of programs depriving as many as 30
million students (more than 60 percent of those enrolled in K-12) of an education that includes music”
(American Music Conference).
"numerous feminist historians of rhetoric" who "have argued for the necessity of identifying rhetorical practices outside the boundaries of the named tradition," Jarratt finds strong support for her position in Page duBois’s research on Sappho, which "identifies ancient rhetoric as a contested field with no stable point of origin (167-76)" and "terms the self-referential texts of the rhetorical tradition 'metarhetoric,' freeing up 'rhetoric' for wider use."

Like these feminist historians, I feel it is an appropriate time to look back (as it was in Friedrich Nietzsche’s day!), past Socrates and Aristotle, to prior thinkers, i.e., to the presocratics, men and women\(^2\) who most accurately might be called inquirers. According to Richard McKirahan, their theorizing is best understood by means of the Greek word ἱστορία: HISTORIE, or “‘inquiry,’ a general term which is different from ‘science’ and ‘philosophy’ as we understand them in that it does not prescribe a specific subject matter or method” (75). Suggesting an enterprise larger in scope than our history, the word HISTORIE entailed active investigation—if not eye-witness examination—and knowing, not though synthesis of the wisdom of the ages, but through critical evaluation of nature and experience. Nietzsche writes that the presocratics, Greeks of “the tragic age” who first dwelt on these subjects starting in about 600 B.C.E., constituted the “pure types” for all subsequent philosophers (32).\(^3\) The presocratics were not, as is common practice in the disciplines today, constructing knowledge incrementally within an already-fortified edifice, though they were part of a loose tradition of inquiry, to be sure. For whatever reason they had the audacity to imagine Being anew. They speculated widely and wildly about the structure of

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\(^2\) Although no texts by Aspasia of Miletus survive, Athenaeus writes that she “was the specialist in sophistic learning and teacher of speechwriting to Pericles” (Bizzell and Herzberg 57) and that she was “Socrates’ teacher in rhetoric” (58). Plato and Plutarch allude to her importance as well.

\(^3\) From Plato on appear “mixed types.” According to Nietzsche, Plato himself “mingles the features of the regal exclusive and self-contained Heraclitus with the melancholy compassionate and legislative Pythagoras and the psychologically acute dialectician Socrates” (35).
the universe, the role of the gods, the place of humans, the possibilities for culture. They were unabashedly preoccupied with themselves and their places in the universe. It is their spirit that I have struggled to conjure while creating this dissertation.

**Themes**

The underlying themes of the essays—spirituality, sight, sound/music—have extensive histories in the Western thought tradition and can be traced at least as far back in the literature as Hesiod. The Greeks had addressed these subjects in depth before the delineation of rhetoric and philosophy by Aristotle or the appearance of the Sophists.

**Spirituality**

The ancient Greeks were preoccupied with sifting religious conceptions. Sappho of Lesbos, born around 610 B.C.E., likely participated in women’s religious festivals sponsored by the island’s shrine-complex, which housed the sanctuary of Hera, Zeus, and Dionysus (Walker 223). Sappho frequently addressed her poems to the gods, including Hera, the Muses, and Eros, but because of her own amatory disposition, treated Aphrodite as a favorite and confidante. That she was visited by the gods and spoke with them, as she describes in her poetry, was, “for Sappho undoubtedly reality,” writes Hermann Frankel. “She associates with the gods of her world as did the epic heroes. . . . For her the gods do not stand in another, separate space behind human existence (185). The presocratics who followed Sappho were more likely to demonstrate skepticism towards than respect for such anthropomorphic conceptualizations of divinity. Thales of Miletus demythologized physical processes, for instance, by claiming that earthquakes were the result of the literal movement
of water and not the handiwork of Poseidon. And according to Anaximander of Miletus, "that which truly is . . . cannot possess definite characteristics, or it would come-to-be and pass away like all the other things. In order that coming-to-be shall not cease, primal being must be indefinite" (McKirahan 47). Anaximenes of Miletus, too, broke with the anthropomorphic tradition, by asserting that the gods had nothing to do with creating or sustaining the universe. Xenophanes of Colophon “lash[ed] the Olympians with vigor and point[ed] the way to a rational theology” (60), claiming among other things that Hesiod’s “Theogeny” was impious because it denied the gods’ eternality. Pythagoras of Samos endorsed the doctrine of transmigration and claimed to recall a former life as a certain fisherman named Pyrhus; he dissolved further the barrier between gods and humans, for body and soul were separated according to his system, and all humans, animals, and plants had not only a physical form but an eternal essence. Pythagoras preached self-purification to his followers, the “akousmatikoi,” who embraced his beliefs, practiced his numerology, and honored his sometimes bizarre proscriptions. Dispensing with many of the revolutions in religious thought that had preceded him, Heraclitus of Ephesus, a man otherwise dissatisfied with many things, evidenced, like Sappho, respect for the gods and their rituals. In contrast, Anaxagoras of Clazomenae postulated the nous, or the cosmogonic “mind,” the “universal cosmic principle of change,” which “knows all things that are being mixed together and separated off and separated apart” and “sets in order all things” (221). Empedocles of Acragas believed himself to be a fallen god, or one of the daimones, and his worldview, which posited a universe governed by two forces—love and strife—echoed the Zoroastrian.
These thinkers, who lived between about 610 and 425 B.C.E., were, on the whole, deeply spiritual. They were, on the whole, deeply spiritual.4 One of the many qualities that makes them remarkable is their interest in creating religious systems that seemed more fitting to them—that would serve their own intellectual and emotional convictions and necessities more fully—than the established system(s). I encountered an echo of their integrity and optimism in the stories of the faithful women I interviewed while constructing “Faith Traditions,” who did not blindly follow traditions as laid out for them by parents, ministers, monks, mullahs, and rabbis, but instead took dogma under reasoned consideration, with seriousness, as they formulated religious worldviews that were more truly theirs. Indeed, spiritual belief, which has remained a lively topic during the 2,500 years since the presocratics, continues to provide fertile ground for inquiry.

Sense Perception

These same ancient Greeks posed impenetrable questions regarding the nature of sense perception, some of which, in various forms, recur in current debates concerning the possibilities and limitations of objectivity and subjectivity. In Sappho’s poetry, the highest purpose of the senses is to perceive the beautiful/the love object. So doing, the body is loosened, and the senses are overwhelmed, charmed, entranced, drunken (Frankel, and Synder passim); hypopoetic existence signals abandonment by the goddess of love. In sharp contrast, Anaximander viewed the senses critically, rejecting “some sense-based judgments in favor of others, and [appealing] to mathematical and logical considerations” to prove that the earth was stable at the center of the universe (McKirahan 40). Recognizing the limits...

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4 The ancient mind did not make our distinction between religion and science (McKirahan 257).
within which human perception takes place, Xenophanes observed that “if god had not
created yellow honey, [humans] would say that figs are far sweeter” (68). Heraclitus
believed that the senses could be put to appropriate use by the wise only, for “eyes and ears
are bad witnesses to people if they have barbarian souls” (118). He also observed that
inasmuch as nature must be interpreted, language should not be expected to be transparent.
Synthesizing much of the dialogue on perception that had come before him and thereafter
making an astonishing leap, Parmenides of Elea constructed “the first explicit statement of
the contrast between reason and the senses, which immediately became and has since
remained one of the focal points of philosophical discussion” (165). Although mortals see
plurality in the world, Parmenides considered the senses impediments to discovering the truth
about reality, which he believed to be One. Thus, by reason, he said, man approaches the
truth more closely than by sense perception. In Nietzsche’s words, both Parmenides and his
student Zeno of Elea took as the “starting point of their proof . . . the wholly unprovable,
improbable assumption that with our capacity to form concepts we possess the decisive and
highest criterion as to being and nonbeing, i.e., as to objective reality and its antithesis” (87).
Anaxagoras reasserted that the senses, though feeble, helped humans know the world.
Empedocles’s suggestion was not to privilege any of the senses, but to use each as effectively
as possible, knowing that truth would remain elusive notwithstanding:

Narrow are the means of apprehension spread throughout the limbs.
Many unhappy things burst in which blunt the thoughts.
People see a tiny part of life during their time
And swift-fated they are taken away and fly like smoke,
Persuaded only of whatever each of them has chanced to meet
As they were driven everywhere; but everyone boasts that he discovered the whole. (McKirahan 233)

On the spectrum of complete distrust of the senses to complete reliance on them, the presocratics evidenced a range of positions not unlike what readers might encounter today in the multifarious journals of rhetoric and of philosophy.

Image

"Visual Representations" and "Film Music" focus on how humans perceive certain technologies. The former concerns the interpretation by expert scientific readers of drawings, photographs, charts, tables, and other graphic artifacts. According to Heraclitus, "sight tells falsehoods" (McKirahan 118) although "eyes are more accurate witnesses than the ears" (119). Parmenides asserted that mortals are benighted because they accept as reality what they see. Anaxagoras’s paradox of color was meant to confirm that the eyes fail to see truly, for if a drop of black paint is mixed into a bucket of white, the color will change, but the eye will not distinguish this change until many more drops of black are added. In the spirit of these observations on the limited trustworthiness of visual sense data, "Visual Representations" asks why readers perceive photographs as more “truthful” than drawings and why readers are inclined to trust images before words.

Sound

"Film Music" focuses on the perception of musical compositions in multimedia. Zeno’s paradox of the millet seed, by demonstrating that one-ten-thousandth of a seed should be heard to make a sound but is not, supported Parmenides’s claims against the
senses—specifically, against hearing. The Pythagorians were dedicated to the study of music, for Pythagoras is credited with having discovered the intervals of the octave, fifth, and fourth. Today, music remains, for many, a rather mysterious human technology, and "Film Music" attempts to make sense of some of its effects, addressing questions such as why film audiences often fail to notice the role that music plays and why directors and composers tend to assume, like Heraclitus, that the eye perceives more accurately than the ear.

Methods

The articles themselves incorporate a variety of methods, including the ethnographic, the metadiscursive, and the cultural; the second half of this chapter is in a large part autobiographical (See "The Art of Rhetoric as Self-Discipline"). The dissertation as a whole might be called hypertextual, for it addresses both public and personal issues from professional and amateur perspectives within and between chapters, and incorporates poetry, music, fiction, visual art, and, of course, academic prose.

5 By taking a monochord (a one-stringed instrument), placing a finger directly in the center of the string, and strumming, a player creates a tone exactly one octave above the tone of the string plucked when loose. By placing a finger two-thirds up the string and plucking, the player creates a tone one fifth above the original tone. Finally, by placing the finger three-quarters of the way up the string and plucking, the player creates a tone one fourth above the original tone. These tones can be represented by the ratios 1:1, 1:2, 2:3, and 3:4, the denominators of which form the "tetractys of the decad" (because one plus two plus three plus four equals ten), by which the Pythagoreans "swore their most solemn oaths" (McKirahan 93). The tetractys also was known as "the harmony in which the Sirens sing." As "Film Music" mentions, these intervals were the main elements of Western sacred music up till the early Renaissance, when additional intervals were accepted grudgingly.
Ethnographic

Many of the procedures identified as essential to ethnographic field research by Muriel Saville-Troike, author of *The Ethnography of Communication*, were followed during the creation of “Faith Traditions” and “Visual Representations.” These techniques were

- **Introspection.** “Check[ing] hypotheses developed on the basis of [the researchers’] own perceptions with the perceptions of others, and against objective data collected in systematic observation” (119)

- **Participation-observation.** “Collecting data in situations in which [the researchers] themselves are taking part” (120)

- **Interviewing.** Asking research participants “questions which [usually] do not have predetermined response outcomes” (123)

- **Ethnosemantics.** “Discovering how experience is categorized by eliciting terms in the informants’ language at various levels of abstraction and analyzing their semantic organization, usually in the form of a taxonomy or componential analysis” (129)

- **Ethnomethodology and interactive analysis.** “Discovering the underlying processes which speakers of a language utilize to produce and interpret communicative experiences, including the unstated assumptions which are shared cultural knowledge and understandings” (130)

- **Philology.** “The interpretation and explanation of texts. Hermeneutics” (133)

In “Faith Traditions,” introspection on my part and on the parts of the women I interviewed played a role. In addition to describing the women’s beliefs, the article addresses my own religious background and biases. With the women, I attended a Baptist congregation and a synagogue on numerous occasions. Thus participation-observation also figured, as did both
interviewing and philology, the latter in regard to the analysis of approximately 60 pages of transcripts. Playing a role in the construction of “Visual Representations” were retroactive participant-observation (for I had once worked with the interviewee in his editorial office), interviewing, ethnosemantics (for I elicited definitions of techniques and of visual types from him), and philology, in regard not only to the transcripts but also to the visual texts.

**Metadiscursive**

“Film Music” incorporates a metadiscursive methodology. Eric Kumpf defines *metadiscourse* as those elements that aid writers in arranging “content by providing cues and indicators that both help readers proceed through and influence their reception of text” (401). Forms of visual and verbal metadiscourse appear in Figure 4.1; in Figure 4.2 appear the categories of musical metadiscourse (loosely based on Kumpf’s and William vande Kopple’s respective visual and verbal metadiscursive categories) constituting the methodological framework in which I analyzed film scores.

**Cultural**

Each article depends to some extent on the methods of cultural studies. According to du Gay and colleagues, five recursive processes that serve as controlling themes in such research are representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation. “Taken together, they complete a sort of circuit—what we term the circuit of culture—through which any analysis of a cultural text or artefact must pass if it is to be adequately studied” (3). “Faith Traditions” focuses on religious practitioners’ self-identifications and on how they “consume” their religious traditions and are “regulated” by them. “Visual Representations”
focuses on the graphical reproduction of reality and on how these representations are consumed and regulated by gate-keepers in the sciences. “Film Music” focuses on how aspects of film narrative are represented by music, on how these representations are consumed by an audience, and, to a lesser degree, on how they are produced.

**Autobiographical/Hypertextual**

The personal dimension of rhetoric often is neglected, de-emphasized, or subordinated to the public dimension. This dissertation celebrates a personal understanding of rhetoric by viewing it through a variety of lenses that considered together are unique to the author. The latter half of this chapter and many of the poetic intersections throughout the document refer to personal experiences that heretofore have been separate from my professional self. By incorporating them here, I have, like autocritographer Diane P. Freedman, engaged in “writing that challenged [apersonal/agonistic] argument as the preferred mode for discussion, questioned the importance of the objective and impersonal, and rather than aiming for a seamless, finished ‘product,’ characteristically made direct reference to the process by which it was accomplished” (3). By contributing artwork, fiction, and poetry to a document that normally is composed wholly of scholarly discourse, I have written in a genre “that opens the door to a richer variety of subject matter, and a proliferation of new forms” and that “binds disparate experiences together, blends differently timbred voices, allows the dead and the living, the fictional and the real, to occupy the same field of contemplation” (Tompkins xiv). Finally, by including music and visuals in this dissertation, I have created a multimedia text. For these reasons, I characterize the dissertation as “hypertextual” in spirit.
The Art of Rhetoric as Self-Discipline

Rhetoric has evolved from an art concerned exclusively with (spoken) words to one reflecting a broad spectrum of human activities. Plato defines *rhetoric* as the art of influencing the soul through words; Aristotle, the faculty of discovering in the particular case the available means of persuasion; Quintilian, the science of speaking well, or that art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end. But we reside in “a spiritual city, subject to sudden disturbances for which neither architects nor mathematicians have made allowance” (Kandinsky 31). Through the millennia, rhetoric has come to encompass much more than the ancients could have foreseen. In the sixteenth century, Listenius created a musical framework called *musica poetica*, which he founded on the oration. His work has been furthered by composers and music theorists, including Leonard Bernstein, who has lectured on figures and tropes in concert music (See *The Unanswered Question*). Visual images and graphic design are rhetorical commonplaces today. Recent issues of *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* include articles analyzing physical processes or sports activities (Fleckenstein, Fontaine, Hawhee).6

Usually with a nod or a bow to the ancients, a great range of subjects has, at one time or another, entered rhetoric’s tent; some have remained; others have departed and may return; others, unknown, approach.7 One well might ask how the rhetorician, faced with this crush of possibilities, is to define rhetoric for the purpose of formulating a course of study. My

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6 To be consistent, I should mention that last month *College Composition and Communication* published Herndl and Bauer’s article on the rhetorical and sociocultural significance of liberation theology.

7“’There will not be one feminine discourse, there will be thousands of different kinds of feminine words, and then there will be the code for general communication, philosophical discourse, rhetoric like now but with a great number of subversive discourses in addition that are somewhere else entirely. That is what is going to happen. Until now women were not speaking out loud, were not writing, not creating their tongues—plural, but they will create them, which doesn’t mean that the others (either men or tongues) are going to die off.’” (Hélène Cixous, *Newly Born*, 137)
own solution has been to conceptualize rhetoric as a form of *self-discipline* and to define it as a framework in which I can integrate the scholarly and artistic, public and private elements of my personality by inquiring into the influence of symbols on my life.

Lloyd Bitzer writes that a rhetorical "exigence is an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Cited in Goodwin 1). Bitzer also writes that many such exigencies are never acted on. I suggest that the rhetorician’s inner necessity is the primary exigence and ideally should determine which external exigencies give rise to rhetorical acts. But “rhetoric as the art of self-discipline” is not synonymous with “rhetoric as self-expression” or “rhetoric as Romanticism.” “Self-discipline” implies a dissatisfaction with the self in its “natural” state and suggests an effort to direct one’s impulses constructively according to a considered plan. This model insists on rhetoric’s humanizing functions: the rhetorician is engaged in self-reflection and open to discovering and exploring those topics that have the most powerful effects on her; equally important are her attempts to articulate personal interests in ways that she believes will contribute positively to her culture. Bearing in mind her experiences, aptitudes, needs, and desires, the rhetorician attempts to identify and to fulfill her obligations to society. Rhetorical exigencies arising from injustice, for instance, would not fail to be addressed by rhetoricians engaged in self-discipline. Rhetoric so conceived has many of the strengths of the “perspectivist” approach to criticism advocated by Ellen Messer-Davidow, for her approach to the limits of subjectivity and objectivity as theoretical postures.

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8 Often, of course, rhetoricians respond to exigencies that they are not inclined to, e.g., when WAC instructors are teaching in disciplines, or when editors are publishing on topics, that do not engage them.
would bring together, in processes of knowing, the personal and cultural,
subjective and objective—replacing dichotomies with a systemic
understanding of how and what we see. It would explain how we affiliate
culturally, acquire a self-centered perspective, experience the perspectives of
others, and deploy multiple perspectives in inquiry (88; cited in Simpson)

Taken together, the terms *self* and *discipline* frame a model of the art of rhetoric that
acknowledges the significance of the rhetorician’s inner life in choice of subject and mode of
treatment and that simultaneously requires on her part an authentic effort to make her activity
socially vital.

The aesthetic writings of Wassily Kandinsky, one of the founders of abstract painting
in the West, suggest that self-discipline so defined drives “true art,” i.e., constitutes the
artist’s *inner necessity*, whose source is threefold:

1. Every artist, as a creator, has something in him which demands expression
   (this is the element of personality).  
2. Every artist, as the child of his time, is impelled to express the spirit of his age (this is the element of style)—dictated by the period and particular country to which the artist belongs (it is doubtful how long the latter distinction will continue).  
3. Every artist, as a servant of art, has to help the cause of art (this is the quintessence of art, which is constant in all ages and among all nationalities). (52)

The three essays constituting the core of this dissertation in rhetoric and professional
communication were generated out of my own inner necessity—and no essay chooses as its
subject written discourse. This is an absence worth noting because graduate courses offered
on a regular basis in my rhetoric program concern writing, with the exception of a visual rhetoric course and occasional seminars on multimedia. I and my fellow students are expected to be interested mainly in words.

Everyone knows that words arrived latish in the first day when God said, “Let there be light” and he got what he’d hoped for and didn’t feel like returning it. So how did He create the Heavens and the Earth without saying a blessed thing? You may be thinking that the Divine Author probably didn’t feel compelled to record every last bon mot He uttered in regard to the original diurnal grind. But would One who reports in Numbers 31 that Moses and Eleazar’s booty was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep, and threescore and twelve thousand beeves, and threescore and one thousand asses, and thirty and two thousand persons in all of women that had not known man by lying with him; and the half, which was the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep; and the Lord’s tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen; and the beeves were thirty and six thousand, of which the Lord’s tribute was threescore and twelve; and the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred; of which the Lord’s tribute was threescore and one; and the persons were sixteen thousand, of which the Lord’s tribute was thirty and two persons consider the first words He spoke in regard to all His creation over-the-top or of questionable relevance? I think not. Somehow, that Being who mobilized infinite matter and all spirit on all existential planes managed without words.
And if I learned nothing else by studying rhetoric and professional communication, I learned that words are overrated. During the four years of my coursework, I faithfully unraveled the written discourse of organizations for profit and non, of academic disciplines, specialities, and subspecialities, of professional and amateur communities. Soon after completing the last final-paper of my life, and worn out from waiting for the joy that evidently would not come, I found myself, like Peggy Lee in ontological crisis, demanding, “Is that all there is?” In my struggle to fit into my rhetoric program, I had allowed myself to become separated from what I loved. I was like Penelope, too, waiting for the joy to come—but I was also unlike her, for she had before her mind’s eye, I am sure, the image of the beloved always. Altogether, six years passed before I arrived at a self-referential formulation of what is, at last, my “chosen” discipline.

Kandinsky’s construct of inner necessity now guides me as a practitioner of the art of rhetoric, in the following ways:

In regard to the first aspect of inner necessity, or what he calls that “something in [the artist] which demands expression,” issues of fundamental importance to me are reflected in the three articles that make up my dissertation. (1) From my eighth year, I have been fascinated with spirituality and organized religion, and I majored in religious studies as an undergraduate (See “What Does Hinder Me to Be Baptized?”). “Faith Traditions” is a cultural study of belief within organized religions and the connection of such belief to individual agency. (2) My mother, father, and stepfather were scientists, and I spent much of my childhood and young adulthood drawing and painting and briefly attended art school.⁹

⁹ Which, to be honest, I left because I felt I could not convey as effectively through images what I could through words. It seems to me now, however, that any method of expression to which I dedicate myself body and soul will seem lacking.
"Visual Representations" concerns images appearing in the literature of science. (3) I love music. With widely varying degrees of success, I have studied voice and played piano, organ, French horn, guitar, dulcimer, mandolin, penny whistle, and marimba. I have written more than 50 songs. This thoroughly amateur interest inspired me to undertake the rhetorical study reprinted in “Film Music.”

Two factors are especially important in regard to my historical moment and style, or Kandinsky’s second aspect of inner necessity—the way in which I “express the spirit of [my] age.” First, I am entering the Academy during an era in which the government of the United States has publicly announced plans for global dominance. This shifting political scene unsettles me, as it does a great many people, and also motivates me to attempt political writings (such as “Faith Traditions”) that I probably would not have undertaken under less incendiary circumstances. Second, as a student of rhetoric and professional communication and as a feminist, I believe that writing should be accessible and that it should strive, where possible, to recognize and to combat injustice. This conviction often sets me at odds with postmodernism (the dominant ideology of my “age”), especially of the extreme variety, which either strikes me as obscurant or seems endlessly to reiterate the claim there is no truth, surely a nihilistic move in a world where evil—and especially our own—must be wrestled with.

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10 Amateurs being also known as, in Wayne Booth’s words, “avocationists, connoisseurs, would-be or pre-professionals, leisure-timers, recreationists, hobbyists, or hobby-horse riders, dabbler, dilettantes, novices, freaks, nuts” (8).
11 In 1922, Leon Trotsky observed that “verbal radicalism, a policy of irreconcilable formulas which in no way lead to action, and consequently sanction inaction under the cloak of extremism, have been and remain the most corrosive element in the French working-class movement” (168).
Finally, regarding the assistance I might give my colleagues in rhetoric, Kandinsky’s third aspect of inner necessity, or how I might act as “a servant of art,” I hope to contribute to the awareness that music is rhetorical, that specialization is not the only direction for students of rhetoric to take, and that the personal has a place in the art of rhetoric.

It seems to me that the discipline of rhetoric can be conceptualized not only as an abstract body of knowledge about communication generally or persuasion specifically but also as a series of unique collections of philosophies, theories, methodologies, tools, and modes instantiated in individuals, i.e., bodied, practicing rhetoricians. The more varied the collection, the more able the rhetorician may be to make sense of her perceptions of the world, for, as Empedocles advised,

Look with every means of apprehension, in whatever way each thing is clear,
Not holding any sight more in trust than [what comes] through hearing,
Or loud-sounding hearing above the things made clear by the tongue,
And do not at all hold back trust in any of the other members,
Whatever way there is a channel for understanding, but
Understand each thing in whatever way it is clear. (McKirahan 235)

From his perspective, an interest in art, music, poetry, and spirituality; a disinclination to focus on a narrow set of subjects; and the study of alternative philosophies, theories, methodologies, tools, and modes that such predilections might require would not necessarily disadvantage the inquirer. This passage also suggests that the philosophical distinction between mind and body postulated by Parmenides is misguided, for “whatever way there is a channel for understanding,” that channel is an advantage to the inquirer. Empedocles states
an ancient rationale for triangulation, enjoining his students to allow the mind to question the
certainties of the senses, and the senses to challenge the mind’s cherished beliefs.

Turning again to the presocratics, one sees that they not only were addressing themes
of lasting value, but also were developing methods of inventing, arranging, and expressing
thought. Aristotle systematized these methods, but he did not create them. The
presocratics—scientists and oracles, philosophers and rhetoricians\(^\text{12}\)—regularly invented
through record-keeping, speculating, observing, being self-reflexive, measuring,
generalizing, associating, interpolating and extrapolating, contradicting, defining,
understating and overstating, identifying, analyzing difference, arguing both sides, and
generating principles, paradigms, patterns, theorems, reductions, paradoxes, metaphors,
similes, maxims, and analogies. They arranged their thoughts according to cause and effect,
extremes and intermediates, stages, processes, genealogies, Oppositions, proofs deductive and
otherwise, sequences, taxonomies, parallelisms, ratios. Their styles were at times
iconoclastic, satirical, skeptical, scholastic, rational, ornamented, polemic, prophetic. They
wrote philosophical treatises, religious manuals, and epic poetry.

These thinkers, who conducted their inquiries before the creation of the disciplines,
represented, for Nietzsche, the “republic of creative minds.”\(^\text{13}\) By coming to know ourselves
more fully and by regularly experimenting with our ways of thought, knowledge, and
expression, students of rhetoric and professional communication may also make a habit of
that wonder which was part of the daily diet of the presocratics, “dearest of all” thinkers to

\(^{12}\) Or neither scientists nor oracles, neither philosophers nor rhetorians.
\(^{13}\) He borrowed this concept from Schopenhauer, who contrasts the republic of creative minds with the republic of scholars.
Nietzsche, “the collective representatives of the eternal intuitive type, the discoverers of ‘the beautiful possibilities of life’” (3).
Intersections
Captain of *The Auspicious*

I come from a long line of sailors, but the bravest of all was my father. He was captain of *The Auspicious* and went down with his ship.

Whenever he came home, he wore an impeccable suit of navy and decorations from heads of state. He sagged a bit beneath their gratitude.

He was wounded in the Battle of Bull Horn, and I polished his wooden arm constantly. He gave me his watch because it kept slipping off.

We played Chinese checkers with his glass eye when mother wasn’t looking. When she wasn’t listening, we sang songs sailors like to sing

and he sat me on his knee and told tales about the squids who helped tie him to the mast during electric storms.

His hair was like old rope. His skin was red as sky at morning. I always stared at him because he was so beautiful

with his suit of navy, decorations from heads of state, wooden arm, glass eye, rope hair, sky skin.

The president was very sorry to hear about the hurricane. He sent his condolences. “A greater man,” he wrote, “Never was at sea.”
The Cinder Path

Clara kicked the can and swore while Judene watched beneath the laurel. From the farthest fence, mother was calling, “Anne, come home!” And I pulled off my shoe and tipped out the dust. Then the dogs came streaming along the generator and the two-by-fours—for in the walls of that city not a single leash rattled, and we chased their shadows down the cinder path, across the bridge over no creek, to the place from which the moon appeared to be the earth.

Later, the ash from its airless height came down and we slept, after wandering unlit streets into living rooms without a hello, and scrubbing in alien sinks, and kneeling before our almighty beds—and still we were wearing our wreaths of the smell of burning leaves.
Redundancies of a Singular Body

When one egg abandons the body
it’s a comfort
to know there are a half million left
just in case.

And it’s good to have the other
when one lung collapses
like a balloon behind a chair
and all that air wanting its place
would drown me otherwise,
vacuum that I’ve become.

The heart has too many chambers—
there is room for those who love me
and room for the rest.
(One eye misleads me, but I see.)

While one hand accepts all this
the other refuses.
One ear hears something coming
ever nearer, ever nearer,
the other ear hearing
nothing at all.
CHAPTER 2. RECONSIDERING AGENCY IN AN ERA OF GEORELIGIOUS UPHEAVAL:
WOMEN FROM FOUR FAITH TRADITIONS CONFESS

Based on a Paper Published in *Globalization*

Anne R. Richards

Abstract

This article describes how devout women from four faith traditions articulated religious belief to resist materialism and injustice and to serve their individual needs more fully. In short, the article illustrates how individuals can become empowered through and in regard to organized religion. As economic turmoil brought on by pressures to open local markets to the free flow of international goods and capital lead millions of workers around the globe to immigrate in search of stable employment, and as military conflicts leave others without means of support, education, or health care and in search of a safer life outside their native lands, traditions of religious belief that long have been located in specific regions are, along with their practitioners, being transplanted into foreign soil. The United States, especially, can be characterized as undergoing georeligious upheaval. Yet members of the academy often are inclined to dismiss religious belief as the quintessential intellectual confusion and in this attitude resemble prominent cultural theorists such as Stewart Hall or sociologists in the tradition of Emil Durkheim, who seem to embrace the concept of false
consciousness articulated by Karl Marx. In the wake of 9/11, and in light of U.S. plans to vigorously combat terrorism, a.k.a., religious movements reacting against Western economic and military might, religious belief is a topic that scholars minimize at our peril.

**Religion and the Academy**

Throughout the academy, a belief in the primacy of material phenomena enjoys the status of common sense. Yet many Western religions claim to proffer a means of resisting a banal or inimical secular hegemony constructed on materialist foundations. Elsewhere (e.g., Iran, Turkey, Tibet), organized religions are associated with dynamic political movements of resistance to economic or secular imperialism.

Diane Eck, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard University, writes that the United States is now a microcosm of the immigration-induced religious upheaval characterizing human experience during this era of globalization. Recognizing that multiculturalism has become an incontrovertible historical reality, Eck laments that “secular analysts” of difference all too often “leave religion completely out of the discussion, as if this new period of American immigration had no religious dimensions.”

But to those of us paying attention to the religious currents of America and the beginning of the 21st century, it is clear that any analysis of civil and political life will have to include religion along with race, ethnicity, and language. Here, as in multireligious societies throughout the world, difference is often signaled by religious language and symbol. (30)
The academy’s “secular analysts” are not alone in underreporting or marginalizing the significance of religious experience in contemporary life. Gloria Anzaldúa, poet, cultural theorist, and eloquent narrator of a spiritual journey reuniting her with aspects of the religion and philosophy of an ancient people with whom she identifies, praises the Aztec goddess Coatlicue, “the consuming whirlwind, the symbol of the underground aspects of the psyche, . . . the mountain, the Earth Mother who conceived all celestial beings out of her cavernous womb. Goddess of birth and death” (68). But at the same time Anzaldúa asserts that Catholicism and “other institutionalized religions impoverish all life, beauty, pleasure. The Catholic and Protestant religions encourage fear and distrust of life and of the body; they encourage a split between the body and the spirit and totally ignore the soul” (59). While objecting to the binary thinking that she believes characterizes white, European, heterosexist, male-dominated theory, Anzaldúa suggests that personally cobbled spiritualities such as her own, which is grounded in a now-defunct religious institution, are more authentic than spiritualities generated from the religious institutions of our own time, which are all-impoverishing. Perhaps she assumes that subscribers to organized religions have, by necessity, disempowered relationships with their own religions; I will examine this assumption in some depth later.

At least she is talking, frankly and provocatively, about religion. For an academician to attempt to engage in any such discussion, outside of religious studies classrooms and with the intention of regarding religious phenomena as respectable and believers as rational, can be to come up against a wall of hostility, as Anne Ruggles Gere, past president of the National Council of Teachers of English, realized when she and her daughter attempted to write a spiritual memoir:
I realized that current norms of personal writing, shaped as they have been by the values of the academy, militate against writing about religious experience. It is much more acceptable to detail the trauma of rape or abuse than to recount a moment of religious inspiration. Coming out as a Christian or an observant member of any faith can be as dangerous as making public one’s sexual orientation because the academy has so completely conflated the disestablishment of religions with secularizing higher education. (Branch et al. 46–47)

In Gere’s opinion, the lack of vocabulary with which to discuss not only religious experience generally but also conventional religious experience specifically, together with the lack of disciplinary interest in religious themes, has conspired to create a “DMZ” between her “own faith and the academy”:

I learned early in my career that it was better to keep some things to myself, especially religion. The first time I mentioned that I shared my life with a Presbyterian minister, a colleague did a double take and quickly changed the subject. As a new assistant professor, I wanted to ingratiate myself with senior professors in the department, so I stopped mentioning that I am a practicing Christian. Over the years this became a habit, and I have contributed to what George Marsden describes as the “near exclusion of religious perspective from dominant academic life” (6). (46)

Gere’s article appeared in the September 2001 issue of College English. This is a noteworthy conjunction. Exclusion of religious perspectives from the academy represents squandered opportunities to foster understanding among secularists and believers. Eck notes
that immediately after 9/11, "the impetus toward [religious] education and outreach was nationwide" (xvi), but why, one might ask, were religious education and outreach contingent upon the unfolding of that calamity? Reading her accounts of brutal retaliations against Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus after 9/11 and bearing in mind that religious hate crimes are fixtures of U.S. history, I must ask how much longer the academy can afford to neglect the ideological implications of a world supporting 130 million immigrants, most from regions less economically developed and more religiously active—let alone of a religiously untutored nation, our own, the most powerful in the world, receiving one million immigrants a year and containing millions of its own religiously active citizens.

This essay examines how four women from different faith traditions used organized religion as a meaning-making tool and as a method of constructing identity in the face of often-hostile secular ideologies. Two of the women were immigrants to the United States; one was an international student; one had been born in the United States. Their stories are part of the narrative of globalization, for a religious worldview characterizes the lives of vast numbers around the world, including not only the world’s immigrants, who are likely to increase in number as local economies fray beneath the movement of global capital (Chomsky 2002), but also their new neighbors, so often diverging from them in religious outlook, on whom they must depend for tolerance, good-will, understanding.

**False Consciousness: No Mere Footnote to Cultural Theory**

A concept derived from Karl Marx’s uncompromising materialism, *false consciousness* has been invoked historically to explain why individuals allow religion and other metaphysical figments to distract them from class struggle:
The phantasmagorias in the brains of men are necessary supplements also of their material life-process as empirically establishable and bound up with material premises. Morals, religion, metaphysics, and other ideologies, and the forms of consciousness corresponding to them, here no longer retain a look of independence. They have no history, they have no development, but men in developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter along with this reality of theirs their thought and the products of their thought. (Marx 9–10)

Stuart Hall, whose theory of articulation answers Marx’s challenge to study individuals “not in some fantastic seclusion and state of fixation, but in their actual empirically visible process of development under definite conditions” (Ideology 10), contests Marx’s assertions that (a) “in the social production of their subsistence men enter into determined and necessary relations with each other which are independent of their wills—production relations which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces” and (b) “the sum of these production-relations forms the economic structure of society, the real basis upon which a juridical and political superstructure arises, and to which definite social forms of consciousness correspond.” Rather, arguing from Gramsci’s theory of hegemony, Hall posits the existence of agency.

The theory of articulation asks how an ideology discovers its subject rather than how the subject thinks the necessary and inevitable thoughts which belong to it; it enables us to think how an ideology empowers people, enabling them to begin to make some sense or intelligibility of their historical situation,
without reducing those forms of intelligibility to their socio-economic or class location or social position. (*Postmodernism* 142)

Such a revisioning of Marx suggests that Hall would be sympathetic to the assertion that religious ideology, for instance, may empower individuals. And Hall does admit that “religion has no necessary political connotation,” reactionary or otherwise:

As we look across the modern and developing world, we see the extraordinary diversity of the roles which religious formations have actually played. We also see the extraordinary cultural and ideological vitality which religion has given to certain popular social movements. That is to say, in particular social formations, where religion has become the *valorized* ideological domain, the domain into which all the different cultural strands are obliged to enter, no political movement in that society can become popular without negotiating the religious terrain. (*Postmodernism* 143)

But although Hall acknowledges that religion has no fixed, determined, eternalized essence, he writes that it evidences, nonetheless, what he calls elsewhere “tendential alignments” and so can be fixed, determined, and eternalized sufficiently to be knocked about in these terms:

You can’t create a popular political movement in such social formations without getting into the religious question, because it is the arena in which this community has come to a *certain kind of consciousness* [emphasis mine]. This consciousness may be limited, it may not have successfully helped them to remake their history. But they have been “languaged” by the discourse of popular religion. They have, for the first time, used religion to construct some
narrative, however impoverished and impure, to connect the past and the present. (Postmodernism 143)

Ultimately, Hall’s attitude towards religion is not merely skeptical but negative; this can hardly be otherwise since, though differing from Marx in signal ways, Hall embraces materialism. “Marxism is surely correct, against all idealisms,” he writes, “to insist that no social practice or set of relations floats free of the determinate effects of the concrete relations in which they are located” (Ideology 45). And “ideological categories are developed, generated, and transformed according to their own laws of development and evolution; though of course, they are generated out of given material” (Ideology 44–45).

Why surely, and why of course? Realms of belief do resist these certainties. When I read Hall’s statement, I recognize power constructing its domain, excluding, in this instance, the religious as intellectually inept (“unsuccessful” and “limited”) and/or debased (“impoverished and impure”).

A key commentator in any discussion of religion and agency in the postcolonial context is Edward Said. Because Said, a Christian, has witnessed many of imperialism’s hardships firsthand and because he is intimately familiar with western prejudices against Islam, I expected to find him supportive of Islam and Islamic nationalist movements. A humanist and a student and critic of empire first, Said cites the “dangers of an untutored religious consciousness” (Culture 307) and describes himself as possessed by an “anti-clerical and secular zeal” (305). At times, he inserts religion as a loose moral equivalent to totalitarianism and imperialism: he writes, for instance, that during “the exhilarating heyday of decolonization and early Third World nationalism. . . . the appearance of various mullahs, colonels, and one-party regimes who pleaded national security risks and the need to protect
the foundling revolutionary state as their platform, foisted a new set of problems onto the already considerably onerous heritage of imperialism” (307). This critique echoes Lenin’s that “with regard to the more backward states and nations, in which feudal or patriarchal and patriarchal-peasant relations predominate, it is particularly important to bear in mind . . . the need to combat Pan-Islamism and similar trends which strive to combine the liberation movement against European and American imperialism with an attempt to strengthen the positions of the khans, landlords, mullahs, etc.” (27).

Quoting Ahmad Eqbal in a discussion of newly independent states in the world’s economically developing regions, Said refers to the populace’s “optimism” and “feeling of hope and power,” which he believes is in large part the result of “rationalism . . . the spread of the presumption that planning, organization, and the use of scientific knowledge will resolve social problems” (Culture 325). Like many academics, Said considers “optimism” and a “feeling of power” birthrights of rationalism and science, not of religion; not spiritual needs but the “brutality and indifference” of governments gives rise to “Islamic sentiment everywhere in the Islamic world” (Dispossession 392). Said’s distrust of religious forms is evident in the conclusion of The World, the Text, and the Critic:

To say of such grand ideas [as the Orient] and their discourse that they have something in common with religious discourse is to say that each serves as an agent to closure, shutting off human investigation, criticism, and effort in deference to the authority of the more-than-human, the supernatural, the other-worldly. Like culture, religion therefore furnishes us with systems of authority and with canons of order whose regular effect is either to compel subservience or to gain adherents. This in turn gives rise to organized
collective passions whose social and intellectual results are often disastrous. 

(290)

In short, it seems that the notion of false consciousness has not been banished from cultural theory, as Hall and certain of his colleagues have suggested. But to speak of Marx's base-superstructure analysis as an epistemological stepping-off place and not in the reductive sense that Hall disparages when he writes, 'The analysis [of ideology] is no longer organized around the distinction between the 'real' and the 'false.' The obscuring or mystifying effects of ideology are no longer seen as the product of a trick or magical illusion. Nor are they simply attributed to false consciousness, in which our poor, benighted, untheoretical proletarians are forever immured' (Ideology 39), then agency must have the potential to emerge from ideologies claiming a nonmaterial basis.

The prejudice held by many contemporary academicians against religious worldviews in some ways parallels the early anthropologists' against "primitive" societies. Sweeping assumptions of false consciousness are based at least in part on a debunked framework which demanded that standards of rationality be scientific and defined rationality in positivist terms. Science has in the past rejected all religion and metaphysics based on now-discredited standards. Voicing the usual criticism of logical positivism, Roger Trigg points out that the statement "the meaning of a statement [is] to be understood by the way it could be scientifically verified" cannot be verified scientifically. Indeed, positivism is widely acknowledged widely as a failed attempt to make "scientific rationality synonymous with rationality" (98).

One need not reject the possibility of false consciousness, mistakes, or deceptions in regard to religious belief. But the problem is a theoretical framework that systematically and
preconceptually favors scientific explanations and disregards on principle other explanations offered by participants. Trigg locates the roots of the academy’s prejudice against religion in a lingering positivism and in extreme forms of the sociology of knowledge. Sociological explanations often de-emphasize the importance of the reasons that participants in a social practice or discourse (here religious practice or discourse) have and give for their practices (39–41). For instance, sociologists often argue that certain rituals or religious practices create cohesion in society or lead to better functioning of social relations, and ignore or dismiss participants’ beliefs regarding the purposes of such activities, e.g., that they have a divine origin or significance. In this, sociologists follow in the footsteps of Emil Durkheim, who advised that social phenomena “be considered in themselves, detached from the conscious beings who form their own mental representations of them” (70).

Extreme/unqualified sociology of knowledge assumes the false consciousness of the people whose behavior it purports to explain. While writing this essay, I have attempted to respect the individual’s claim that her religion helps her live authentically by acting in opposition to prevailing structures of debasement and oppression. I have resisted the temptation to categorize any and all forms of religiosity as expressions of false consciousness and thus have avoided committing the reductive error of dismissing religious conviction as a potential source of agency.

Four Faithful Women Exercise Agency

In 1999, I interviewed four women about their religious beliefs. The main topics of the interviews were (1) the women’s class and religious backgrounds, (2) their personal commitments to their organized religions, (3) their feelings as religious people in the
academy and/or in a foreign country, and (4) their opinions about the relevance of their religious practices to their social behaviors. (See Appendix A for a list of the questions used during the interviews.)

I met each woman in her home or office for an hour or more, taped our conversations, and followed up over e-mail or through casual unrecorded conversations. The women each read numerous drafts of this essay and had opportunities to clarify and to revise the passages based on their interviews. Issues of availability and variety aside, I chose to study these women because I believed that they would be forthcoming. It was also important that none had ever proselytized to me. I avoided the more strident type of religious personality because I wanted to examine what people whom the academy would consider “rational” in most other respects believed. What the women said, then, about their organized religions should not be assumed to be typical of the opinions of members of organized religions. Nonetheless, as a close friend to many devoutly religious people, including those who do not necessarily have the credentials that the women I interviewed did, I am confident that deeper study of the interior lives of religious people from all walks will uncover the widespread reality of individuals empowered in regard to, as well as through, their religious institutions.

As stated, four women participated in this study. Lavinia was a 27-year-old African-American who belonged to an interdenominational full-gospel Christian ministry. She was earning her Ph.D. in education at a large midwestern university of science and technology. Regarding her own socio-economic background, Lavinia wrote privately to me that “through the years, [her] parents seemed to have jumped some economic brackets, but [she] would still not consider them 'comfortably' middle class.” I met Lavinia in a course on multicultural pedagogy, and I occasionally attended her church. Pavithra was a 32-year-old Sri Lankan
Theravada Buddhist who received her M.A. in English from the same university that Lavinia and I attended. Her father had been in the foreign service, her family was of the upper middle class, and she had been educated abroad at English schools. Pavithra’s parents were dead, she had no relatives in the United States, and she missed Sri Lanka a great deal. I met Pavithra in a linguistics course. Deborah was a 58-year-old Canadian Jew from Montreal whose family descended from the Ashkenazi. She had completed the required coursework for a Ph.D. in child development and remained comfortably A.B.D. Deborah was an old friend of mine whom I first encountered as she was presiding in her wheelchair, over a table of friends in a Japanese restaurant. She wore a flowing cherry-colored dress and hat, and her make-up and hairdo—most everything about her, actually, struck me as artistic. At the time of the interviews, Deborah was entering the last stage of Parkinson’s disease. Notwithstanding, she led an active social life and ran her own home, a neatly appointed ranch in a middle-class neighborhood in a small midwestern town. At her funeral, friends remembered her by reading aloud passages from these interviews. Massoumeh was a 60-year-old Shi’ite Muslim born in Tehran, Iran. Her father, a conservative Muslim, removed her from school after the sixth grade. As an adult she studied at night to receive her high school diploma and had earned the equivalent of a ninth-grade education when revolutionaries seized power in Iran and closed her school. Massoumeh is an in-law of mine.

A Working Definition of Religion?

In conducting and analyzing the interviews, I did not define religion ahead of time. Instead, I tried to allow alternative meanings of the word to emerge from the discussions,
though of course what I understood by the word did influence, if not shape, the problems I identified and the questions I posed.

In this essay, the word *religion* does not necessarily indicate theism. As a Theravada Buddhist, Pavithra entertained no such belief. And although Deborah grew up in a Jewish home and was “proud to be a Jew,” she also said that her parents “never talked about God” and that though she “want[ed] there to be a God. . . , [she wasn’t] sure there [was one].” Nor does *religion* necessarily indicate attendance at church/synagogue/temple. Pavithra, who considered herself a Buddhist; Deborah, who considered herself a Jew; and Massoumeh, who considered herself a Muslim, attended their places of worship only rarely. Pavithra stated, “I don’t go to temple and worship and do this mass hysteria.” And Deborah had chosen for private reasons\(^1\) to conclude her association with the small Jewish congregation of which she had once been a member.

As a Christian raised by a Unitarian and atheist, I will borrow Unitarian theologian Paul Tillich’s definition of *spirituality* and define *religion* in this essay as referring to “ultimate concern,” a definition supporting the ethically committed, politically minded personalities of the women I interviewed. In so doing, however, I recognize that I am placing my own faith system in a superordinate position and neutralizing many of the ambiguities and critical opportunities attending this very contested ideological site.

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\(^1\) Which she indicated she did not wish me to publish.
Articulating Religious Belief to Resist Secularism

Far from seeming paralyzed by false consciousness, these women claimed to use their religious beliefs to help them resist dominant ideologies. Lavinia summed up the relation between her beliefs and the ideologies of secular society as follows:

Religion is where my influence is from. Because, of course, the world, or television, or everything else that we have says that this [self-indulgent behavior] is OK; so where did I learn that this can be so damaging to your marriage, to you as people, to society in general? Well, through my religion. So anything that’s probably opposite from popular belief, I probably learned it from religion.

She illustrated how she had applied her religious beliefs to avoid office politics and concluded that, “when things began to get very messy, [my coworker] felt I was still supposed to be a part of that. No. I resist that; that’s not where I’m supposed to go.”

An academic and African-American woman, Lavinia nonetheless found herself resisting certain aspects of both multiculturalism and feminism. Regarding the former, she stated, “some things, while they look very similar to, [as if] they match up with God’s intention, or the Word of God, then when they start going off . . . way . . . getting way off . . . then, OK, I can’t go there.” As for feminism, Lavinia stated that she was “all for us . . . you know . . . us women being lifted up and not being abused, and being viewed as second-class citizens . . . and all those things.” But she felt it necessary to resist what she perceived as the extreme positions that “women have to be dominant and the head of the family and they don’t need—children don’t need their fathers.”
Lavinia was an attractive, charming² person and often felt the disadvantage of this in a culture so sexually driven. Again, she used religion to help maintain personal integrity in the social formation, or what Christians often refer to as the world:

I was in this other place, with my old paradigm, and trying to do things in the way that the world says we should do them. Into premarital sex with my boyfriend, and just “Looks good; do that!” All these things, just really tolerant, and letting any sort of evil into my life, anything that could destroy me. And I’m not knowing it. “OK, it’s wrapped in gold: It must be good.” And so, of course, what emerges from that, or who emerges from that, is a very fragmented person because you’ve been participating in all these things that are not for your good, not for your growth, do not provide any substance for you, no food, no nourishment.

Generally, she saw the social formation as requiring spiritual deconstruction. “It really helps if you’re spending time with God every day,” she said, “And you’re in His Word. It’s very easy to do, to have this love for people. But at the same time, it does help you resist, or not accept, things that are ungodly, and I don’t mean ungodly in this holier-than-thou sense, but I mean things that are damaging to us as people.” She was clearly resistant to the ideology of consumer culture:

Society is like . . . “OK, you want it? Go after it. It’s OK. You can have whatever you want. And that’s fine.” But everything . . . but the Word of

² For instance, when she arrived at this passage, she commented sweetly, “I didn’t know this was fiction.”
God says that everything that is good, or looks good, or . . . is not necessarily
good for you. So some things should be resisted.

Pavithra mentioned how pressured she often felt in the United States to adopt
industrialized modes of social behavior. In Sri Lanka, whose culture she described as
“predominantly covered with Buddhist philosophy or readings or understandings from the
religious tradition. . . . a person could take a few minutes off for another person, which I
don’t see happening [in the United States] as much.” When I turned off the tape recorder,
Pavithra spoke at length about her former boyfriend, a figure mentioned frequently in the
transcripts. He had broken off their relationship because she would not convert to
Christianity. Pavithra’s rejection of the arrangement provided further evidence of how
deply held spiritual beliefs can allow individuals to resist colonizing forces on an individual
as well as a societal level.

Deborah described how Jewish husbands had used religious tradition to ward off the
encroachments of secular society: “The Jewish husband was supposed to be a student
of—prayer—and a student of God’s work, and the wife was there to assist him—to take care
of all the things of this world and free him so he could be a student of God. That’s the whole
tradition.” Although the contemporary eye may perceive this tradition as lamentably sexist,
the flip side of the Orthodox arrangement was that Jewish women were, ideally, to be
entrepreneurs. Not surprisingly, Deborah concluded, “The way I was raised, the values, have
to do with how I feel very much that I have to control my own life.”

Like Deborah, Lavinia and Pavithra considered their spirituality a source of personal
empowerment. Pavithra, who believed in karma, said that she “[had] control over what may
happen in the future, if [she knew] how to think about those things [she was] thinking [in the
present].” And although Lavinia did not say that her religion allowed her to be in control, because she believed this to be a “man-centered” way of thinking, she provided me with numerous examples of how her religion allowed her to resist and described her life in a way that suggested a strong sense of empowerment: “I’m surrounded by God. And I am in Him, and He is in me.”

Articulating Religious Belief to Resist Injustice

Each woman evidenced “ultimate concern” not only for her own spiritual growth, but for injustice, and in various ways saw her religion as engaged in the positive transformation of society. Lavinia described how her religion led her to act in a loving way towards others: “In that closeness with God,” she stated, “you develop a love for people. So as far as societal . . . like socially constructed things like racism and sexism and all that kind of stuff, they become obsolete.” Massoumeh described how Mohammed attempted to help widows and young girls by asking wealthy men to marry them, at a time when these women would have starved to death. She also discussed how Mullahs had begun to create laws more sensitive to Persian wives, so that now, for example, if a husband wishes to take a temporary wife, he must receive his first wife’s permission. And without his first wife’s approval, he can no longer divorce her on the ground of barrenness or take a second wife for that reason.

Pavritha described how her belief in karma helped her resist thinking ill of, or doing ill to others:

I’ve had an ex-boyfriend . . . who I broke up, who I was thinking a few bad things. But I remember correcting myself and thinking, you know, that’s not

3 A Shi’ite practice much like prostitution in the West.
what I want, that’s not how I want to think, and that’s because of how I perceive my religion, or what religion means to me, because it has taught me that even a bad thought is something that (a) it’s not good, (b) it’s not justified, and (c) it would be the same if somebody else did the same to you, so it has the ability to come back to you, so why are you doing this to somebody else?

Deborah narrated how a mutual friend, also a Jew, challenged a teacher who had, in a large lecture class, used the racist expression “to jew someone down”: “He stood up and confronted her,” Deborah said, “And she was very defensive. But, I mean, that’s the state of things. You know, she, an educated Ph.D. in sociology—sociology of all things.”

**Resisting Elements of One’s Organized Religion**

All four women were resisting not only secular forces but what they considered oppressive or debasing forces present in their respective religions. Notwithstanding, each woman stated that her religion was extremely important to her, and the two I asked stated that they could not conceive of a situation in which they would renounce it. Deborah had grown up in a family that was engaged in a give and take with Orthodox Judaism. Although he had wanted to be a Rabbi, Deborah’s father had to work on the Sabbath, “so he couldn’t go to synagogue. So he felt exceptionally guilty. But he was a member [of the synagogue] and all that.” Deborah’s mother, although she kept a kosher home, “celebrated all the holidays as set out in the culture and in the religion,” and “welcomed in the Sabbath on Friday nights, at sundown, with a prayer and a joyful prayer and the lighting of the Sabbath candle. . . . religiously, every week, on time,” had nonetheless refused to marry Deborah’s
father unless he gave up his plans to become a Rabbi. “She said she’d been a Rabbi’s daughter: she knew how hard it was, the life was [on the wife].” Deborah, on becoming an adult, chose to attend a Reform synagogue, which had a more feminist slant and allowed, for instance, the bat-mitzvahing of girls. “It’s not Orthodox,” she said. “Girls never had any recognition [in Orthodox Judaism]. The wife was there to help the husband.” Deborah felt it necessary to break with the orthodoxy of her parents and grandparents in part because she felt that in that tradition women literally “do not count. . . . In order to pray in a synagogue, you have to have ten men as a quorum. You [women] cannot pray alone.”

Pavithra and Lavinia both had a great deal to say about mainstream approaches to their faiths. According to Pavithra, for “the majority of Sri Lankans who are Buddhist, they follow this mass Buddhist philosophy that goes on in the country, and they meet in the temple and worship the statues. . . . Everyone goes to temple on full moon days. But I don’t do that”:

The rest of my family, they’re very much . . . public religious type way.
You’re seen in the temple, you go to the temple, your usual thing, you say prayers, they rattle it off every single day, I’m sure it doesn’t even make sense what they’re saying, probably, to many people. They just say it for the sake of saying it.

She disapproved of this type of religiosity, calling it “mass hysteria.” “I don’t follow that,” she asserted: “That is not my idea of religion” (emphasis mine). Lavinia made similar remarks about the Christianity in which she had been raised and which she was expected to follow as an adult. Indeed, the first thing Lavinia said in her interview was that she was “aware that religion—and just the word carries different connotations for different people,
and even in my beliefs, and my spiritual growth, when I think of religion, I think of more like rules, regulations, kind of legalism, ceremony, pomp and circumstance. . . . But usually, when I’m talking about my faith, I’m talking about it more as my relationship with God.” For Lavinia, as for Pavithra, tradition could be a retarding factor in a person’s spiritual development, for it could “hold you back and keep you from growing.” And so Lavinia had stopped participating in a church where tradition was, for her, too great a focus. She believed that “the majority of believers or people who claim to have a religion are really walking in or are operating in the old paradigm, where God is somewhere way up there, unrelatable, unidentifiable, really not having a relationship [with Him].” The church Lavinia attended as an adult was “just the bare bones, the bare basics of following Christ without all the politics and the religion and the tradition that sometimes takes the focus off God, with all of that.”

But it was Massoumeh, surprisingly to me—since I had always supposed and still do suppose that she is a conventional Muslim, whose interviews seemed to indicate the most resistant, empowered relationship with her religion.

Although she once attended the mosque regularly in Iran, Massoumeh stopped doing so as a young wife “because every women talking about husband, clean home” there. After the revolution, she resisted numerous policies of Shari’a. For instance, she did not “agree with mullah[’s prohibition of sexy television] because you must give to children everything and then [let them decide not to watch].” In her own home, she permitted such viewing. Nor did she agree with the idea that girls could marry very early because it was sanctioned by the Qu’ran: “I don’t like that,” she told me, “because maybe that was good time Muhammed life. No yet.” In the presence of her husband and son, Massoumeh stated that she believed

\[4\] n.b. these women also were resisting.
Persian women had been treated unfairly under the religious laws, arguing for a woman’s right to divorce if her “husband was angry and hit her.” Massoumeh had raised her daughter so that she was able to attend a university; the younger woman is now a successful architect and city planner in the midwestern United States. Massoumeh did not agree, either, with fanatical Islamic attitudes towards “kill people [in holy wars]. I don’t like; is not my religion” [emphasis mine].” In the face of theocratic despotism, she and her husband sold their home in order to send their son out of Iran when he became eligible for the draft. In summary, Massoumeh claimed, and I believed her, that “Anything I don’t like, I never tell is my religion; I need religion because I like that religion I feel.”

**Conclusion**

Much of what I have just written can be read as a capitulation to false consciousness. But by recognizing materialism and its ideological offspring as one set of generative views among many, members of the academy may have much to gain in terms of enriched theory and practice. The possibility is worth considering that the ascendancy of materialism in the West may have peaked at least for some time. “Just as the end of the Cold War brought about a new geopolitical situation, the global movements of people have brought about a new georeligious reality” (Eck 4):

Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims are now part of the religious landscape of Britain, mosques appear in Paris and London, Buddhist temples in Toronto, and Sikh gurdwaras in Vancouver. . . . In the United States [add] to India’s wide range of religions those of China, Latin America, and Africa. Take the diversity of Britain or Canada, and add to it the crescendo of Latino immigration along
with the Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Filipinos. This is an astonishing new reality. We have never been here before.

How long the academy will continue to underestimate the religious implications of globalization is a question that should concern us. The academy’s longstanding prejudice against religious forms will not be rooted out easily, however, for it serves at least two inevitable purposes. First, to consolidate power and to thrive as an institution, the academy must untiringly assert what it is not. If this involves “a world system of barriers, maps, frontiers, police forces, customs, and exchange controls” (Said, Culture, 307), we need not be surprised:

Every culture requires the existence of another, different, and competing alter ego. The construction of identity—for identity, whether of Orient or Occident, France or Britain, while obviously a repository of distinct collective experiences, is finally a construction in my opinion—involves the construction of oppositions and “others” whose actuality is always subject to the continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their differences from “us.”

As for the second inevitable purpose served by the prejudice against religion, Said observes that the “modern empire requires, as Conrad said, an idea of service, an idea of sacrifice, an idea of redemption. Out of this you get these great, massively reinforced notions of, for example, in the case of France, the mission civilisatrice. That we’re not there to benefit ourselves, we’re there for the sake of the natives” (Pen 66). In the paternalistic phrases of cultural theorists usually so enlightened and open minded, the religiously attuned academic senses a residual desire to witness to the Truth.
Acknowledgments

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This paper is dedicated to the memory of D.L.

*Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies.*
Intersections
The Reception

Josephine von Hessen woke before the alarm went off and stumbled to the east end of her bedroom. She was unsteady in the mornings and had been for about four years. Before he died, her doctor had told her not to worry about this new infirmity—she was just getting old.

She looked out the window. To the east, Mrs. Brown’s yard was dark. It was only 4:45, but, to the west, the Franklins’ lights were already on. Panting, she lumbered downstairs and took her coffee cup from its hook. The phone rang.

“Morning, Jo,” Mrs. Franklin’s voice cracked.

“Morning,” said Mrs. von Hessen, waving to the stooped figure in the window across the west lawn.

“I can’t sleep,” her friend continued. “Should I come over now?”

“There’s no hurry.”

Actually, Mrs. von Hessen was nervous already. Ashur Mendelsohn, Prodigy Prize winner and author of a half dozen popular volumes of erotic poetry, was bringing his wife to campus that evening for a reading and then to the von Hessens’s home for a reception: Mrs. von Hessen’s husband was chair of the English department at Burlingame College.

Mendelsohn’s letter, which she had reread a dozen times before squirreling it away in her copy of The Caress, had explained:
September 12, 19—

Ashur Mendellsohn
1220 Queen’s Court
Boston, MA

Dear Fred:

As you know, Karis grew up in Burlingame. She’s fond of the place and has always wanted me to give a reading there. December 17th through 19th we’ll be in town for a wedding.

Since you’ve asked me a number of times, I thought I’d let you know I’m available to give a reading the evening of the 19th. Feel free to contact me at home, before the end of October if you’re interested.

A.M.

“Did I tell you,” Mrs. von Hessen asked her friend later that morning, as they ground hazelnuts for macaroons, “That Hampton just cancelled Mendellsohn’s reading?”

“No!”

“Parents complained. You know Tullamore cancelled last year... And ISU. What really surprised Fred and me, though, was Penn—they should have known better.”

“They certainly should have,” agreed Mrs. Franklin, holding out for inspection a plate heaped with what looked like dirt.

Mrs. von Hessen believed that during his stay, Mendellsohn would see how Burlingame, though small and obscure, cherished the intellectual life. She hoped he could be persuaded to love the town as his wife, Karis, evidently did. Maybe he could be brought back again, for a residency; maybe he would provide the English department with a scholarship. Of course a new building would be out of the question. He was a poet, after all,
not an engineer like Don Henderson, who retired from the college to found Burlingames Corporation and now was sitting on a fortune acquired from selling malevolent computer software. She frowned. “Don’t stir,” she said, snatching the spatula from her friend.

As Mrs. von Hessen rolled out the pastry for potato dumplings, Mrs. Franklin read aloud from Mendellsohn’s books, and the women steeped themselves in his tortured love for Karis. Although the other continually interrupted herself to sigh over this or that “tragic” or “profound” passage, Mrs. von Hessen had already decided that Ashur Mendellsohn was overrated.

After the first few years of her own marriage, Mrs. von Hessen concluded that she had been a schoolgirl and a sentimentalist, and, with a profound gratefulness towards the source of this insight—her husband, ceased to think about love. She set about developing her considerable intellect, earning a Master’s Degree in French after her one son moved away; but she chose not to study for the Ph.D. Fred needed her at home. By that time, his career had reached the stage where it would consume them both. Thus, now, at her age and in her station, at the long end of an unexceptional marriage, it was impossible for her to take the romantic figure of Mendellsohn seriously. She soon realized that, in fact, it was not his work but his wife that interested her.

“I saw a picture of her in Parade,” said Mrs. Franklin. “She looks likes Anna Magnani, but not so busty. It’s what she’s been through, her suffering, that makes her interesting, don’t you think? Personalities nowadays are so boring. I can’t wait to meet her
in person,” and, pointing to the slim volume, “How do you think she feels about this, though? She probably doesn’t like it. I know I wouldn’t.”

Mrs. von Hessen pursed her lips.

“I mean, having him write about her mental illness and her . . . body like that,” explained the other, her voice cracking as it habitually did, in an unconscious parody of old womanhood. “Like that poem about her shaving in the bathtub—”

“There’s nothing wrong with that.”

“No, of course not. I suppose. I’m wrong. I don’t know about these things. You know me. Still, I’d be embarrassed.” And Mrs. Franklin gasped.

“What?” asked Mrs. von Hessen, the spoonful of prune butter poised over its dumpling.

Mrs. Franklin shook her head. “Nothing, no, no, nothing,” she said, scowling.

It seemed to Mrs. von Hessen that her friend was trying to stifle a grin. “Betty!”

“Yes. I mean, well, I suppose, Jo, you’ve thought about Mrs. Brown?”

The widow Brown lived directly to the east of the von Hessens, in a cottage that a hundred years earlier had been an outbuilding on their lot. She was a craftsy type and for every season and holiday created a sprawling, yard-engulfing tableau of figures cut out on the jigsaw in her garage. This tool had belonged to her late husband, who when supreme had forbidden her to touch it or anything in their shed. Thus the amateurish appearance of many, or actually all, of Mrs. Brown’s progeny. There were cupids for Valentine’s Day, bunnies and eggs for Easter, bowers and brides for June, football players and cheerleaders with green
pompoms for homecoming, dozens of other creations, all homespun and irregular, painted in
violent hues, and bound like Houdinis in chains of lights. All year long the yard looked like
a particularly offensive Christmas display—except at Christmas, when it looked like the
midway of a state fair.

Mrs. von Hessen feared that her neighbor was preparing something especially
monumental: she heard the shrilling of the saw all day and some nights as late as the ten-
o’clock news. The day before the reception, the widow had been installing wooden reindeer
as Mrs. von Hessen drove into her own driveway. She had nodded, without looking or
smiling, to a waving Mrs. Brown and that same evening after dinner had marched up the
street. Beside the eight reindeer stood eight grinning elves. In the center of the lawn,
upstaging Santa’s helpers, was something gigantic wrapped in a white sheet.

On the morning of the reception, Mrs. von Hessen had put on a coat and earmuffs
and, feeling lightheaded, shuffled to the curb. In Mrs. Brown’s yard were thousands of white
bulbs spread leprously on wooden reindeer and elves, throughout shrubbery and trees—and,
center stage, a morbidly obese Santa holding a Bible on whose pages an uneven hand had
written, “Don’t Take the Christ out of Christmas!” Facing him was a floodlight that Mrs.
Brown would turn on with the rest of the light show, just in time to welcome the
Mendellsohns.

Neither Mrs. von Hessen nor Mrs. Franklin attended the reading; there was too much
to do yet at the house, they were at their ages slow of pace, and after two days of nearly
continual preparation, slower than ever. The first guests to arrive were their old friends Dr.
and Mrs. Strand, who informed them that there was a long line at the signing and that the Mendellsohns were probably going to be late.

The doorbell rang and rang, house and curbs began to fill, people began letting themselves in, and still the Mendellsohns did not arrive. The reception had begun officially at five, and it was six-thirty. The guests were talking about how Mendellsohn was known for not always showing at events in his honor. This was news to Mrs. von Hessen, whose legs began aching fiercely upon hearing it. Finally, Dr. von Hessen called Karis’s aunt.

“They just got back from the signing and left ten minutes ago,” he reported to his wife. “They should be here any minute.”

But the Mendellsohns did not arrive, and at seven-fifteen, the von Hessens’s guests started saying good-bye.

“Sorry, Jo,” apologized Dr. Strand.

“Maybe something happened to her. I hear she’s been ill,” suggested Mrs. Strand helpfully.

Dr. Strand had just started down the walk when he halted, turned to his hosts, and pointed to the east. “When did they turn that on?” he snorted.

At nine o’clock, Mrs. von Hessen, Mrs. Franklin, and their husbands were slouched at the kitchen table. The last guest had left nearly an hour before. The men were smoking, and together the four had finished off the last two bottles of wine, a block of Havarti, and a box of melba toast. Mrs. von Hessen stood up and tottered for a moment beside the table.

“That Jew,” she slurred, “was born in a barn.”
“Shouldn’t you be getting to bed, Jo?” Mrs. Franklin suggested feebly. “I can come by in the morning bright and early.”

“If I wanted—”

And the doorbell rang.

They stumbled in a mass towards the front door, which Dr. von Hessen opened. Standing on the front step was a short, grave looking man in his early sixties.

“Mendellsohn!” cried Dr. von Hessen. “Good to see you! Come in! This is my wife, Josephine. I don’t believe you’ve—”

“Mr. Mendellsohn,” said Mrs. von Hessen, “It’s so nice to meet you.”

The four stepped aside.

“Where’s Karis?” asked Mrs. Franklin.

“I can’t but a minute,” Mendellsohn said. “She’s in the car.”

“In the car?” repeated Mrs. von Hessen.

“I need to get her home.”

“But I want to meet her,” said Mrs. von Hessen.

“Another time. She’s exhausted.”

“Ah,” said Mrs. Franklin, knowingly.

“I want to meet her!” repeated Mrs. von Hessen, rather too loudly.

“They assured me the reception would be exquisite. I apologize for having missed it, but the day just slipped through my fingers . . . How can I thank you enough for going to all this effort?”

“It was our pleasure,” said Dr. von Hessen, increasing the grip on his wife’s arm.
"You’re too kind," Mendellsohn said, with a sigh whose meaning was not entirely self-evident to Dr. von Hessen, who was the most sober of the group. "You know," the poet continued, "It was the strangest night. We’d finally found your place after heading out the wrong way on Ridgetop and then going back and forth on Ninth Avenue instead of Ninth Street a while. And we were standing in front of that yard there, gathering our wits—when the old lady came out of her garage. It was, of all people, Karis’s high school art teacher. Won’t be able to think of her name now. Karis was thrilled, and she asked if we could quick see her workshop, and I said yes, thinking we’d stay just a minute.

"She started talking about how she planned her displays, and about Karis’s school, and Karis was cold, so we went inside, and in the middle of a story about some classmate who mixed heroin with Pepsi and killed herself because her husband was fooling around, I fell asleep.

"Poor Karis has no sense of time, but, well, there’s really no excusing it, I realize. I should never have sat down. Still, I’m glad they had a chance to talk, because it turns out the old lady’s quite lonely and depressed herself. Her son lives in Phoenix.” He coughed. “My wife has been ill lately. I worry. But it was a wonderful evening for her, and honestly, I can’t help feeling that in the big scheme of things that’s what matters. And we have you to thank for the pleasure, Mrs. von Hessen. She’s fast asleep, you see—poor lamb. What a strange night."

Mrs. von Hessen felt her husband’s hand slip to her waist, to steady her.

And Mendellsohn said good-bye, and left.
Destruction of cities and deliberate, acknowledged war on noncombatants were concepts shocking to the world of 1914... The burning of the Library, said the Daily Chronicle, meant war not only on noncombatants "but on posterity to the utmost generation."

—Barbara Tuchman, The Guns of August

The Library

Leuven was burning.
The burghers kindled skyward
with geese and hay and the cathedral door.
Everything circled the refulgent town.
But we were miles from there
and the drunken soldiers
torching the last brick houses one by one.

And what of the library in the clothmaker's hall,
I asked, the seven hundred illuminated manuscripts,
the thousand incunabula,
the spirits hovering in rafters
or spilling past brothers on stone benches
chill as the banks of the Dyle?

La bib—began Brother Jude
then closed his mouth
and bowed his head.
(Not to sound the barbarian.)
I passed the bread. He could say
They've burned the church.
The other wouldn't come.
And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: 
and the Eunuch said, See, here is water. . . .
—Acts 8:36

What Does Hinder Me to Be Baptized?

1.
When I was eight, mom started working
in a starch processing plant.
When she came home from work her car was dusty and stank.
My babysitter, Mrs. Stark, didn’t like me.
After school, I’d run down the street
to Mrs. Rock. She believed in Jesus Christ.
I’d heard of him from Mrs. Stark.
“Holy Christ,” she’d say,
“Jesus Jenny,” and “Jesus H. Christ.”

Mrs. Rock took me to the Calvary Baptist Church.
On their walls were pictures
of a kind Jesus: Jesus talking to children,
Jesus gathering lambs, Jesus knocking on the door
that was really my heart. Thursday nights,
we played Bible games of “Sharks and Whales,”
“Kick the Can,” and “Soda Pop Suck.” I was pretty good.
One night I prayed, “Jesus, please accept me
as your personal savior.”
I was so excited the day I got baptized.
Mrs. Rock stood by the pool and waved.

2.
We moved, and I was lonely,
so mom enrolled me in a group called
Friendly Unitarian Church Kids.
The first night they were reclining
on bean bag chairs in the church kitchen,
reading “Saint Joan.” Afterwards, eyes closed,
they listened to the mad scene from “Lucia.”
They explained they were selling
donuts every Sunday, at quite a markup, to go sailing that summer.
The conversation was interesting, but most of adolescence I was nostalgic for red velvet upholstery, sobbing people being coaxed up the aisle, hymns about Christian soldiers, the old rugged cross.

3.
I spent all my free time in college with a widow named Naomi. On walks, at dinner, in Wal-Mart, she'd talk about how He died for me. She sighed and prayed and wheedled and got me to join the First Pentecostal Church of God of America. And for her, I got baptized again. It seemed the Christian thing to do: she was so worried about my being a Unitarian.

Incredibly short Pastor Perpperdyn had to touch me, of course (my cross to bear), to lower me into the faux river bed of painted marble in the plaster stone sanctuary with the behemoth prop that would have needed an Atlas, not a Christ, to carry. Then he gazed heavenward. “Have we got a deal for the little lady,” he said, I believe. Naomi wept.

4.
A month after the divorce, Brother Wiler knocked on my door. He asked if I had inner peace. I definitely did not. Brother Wiler tutored me for two years with many colorful tracts and pamphlets. And I went door to door with him as he explained the Truth to householders. God answered my prayers, and we never met any Unitarians.
But I kept dreaming Brother Wiler was chasing me through a burning sanctuary, groping me. So I never attended all six weekly meetings regularly though I know that would have made a big difference. Looking back, I figure I would have gotten baptized again if Brother Wiler just hadn’t been so damned persistent.
CHAPTER 3. ARGUMENT AND AUTHORITY
IN THE VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF SCIENCE

A paper to be published in Technical Communication Quarterly

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Abstract

The focus of workplace communication research on visual rhetoric has tended to be the efficient and unproblematically "effective" functioning of visual texts. By suggesting ways in which the visual representations of science are construed by expert readers, this essay responds to a call within our discipline for more critically focused contributions to the study of visual literacy. A former editor-in-chief of the American Journal of Botany was asked to explain his interpretation of visuals appearing over an 80-year period in that journal; his responses illustrate how visual explanations testify to their creators' authority and how, once established, such authority actuates the rational arguments of science. Rhetorical appeals within and arrangement of visual texts are considered, as is the persuasive power of legends and captions.

Introduction

Visual representations in scientific publications predate the earliest pages of the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society. In addition to providing means of
displaying large quantities of data and of illustrating complex mechanisms, the art of visual
design invests scientific research articles with a persuasive power that remains largely
naturalized outside the field of rhetoric and to a great extent within it. Because the
importance of visual design to scientific argument has become evident to rhetoricians and
professional communicators relatively recently, and because we have tended to characterize
visual design as serving functional rather than interpretive ends, research articulating how
images are constructed and read is needed (Salinas [169]; see also Wickliff and Bosley, and
Walker). This essay, which examines a former editor’s reactions to the rhetorical strategies
evident or implicit in visuals appearing over an 80-year period in the *American Journal of
Botany*, illustrates how visual explanations testify to their creator’s authority and how, once
established, such authority actuates the rational arguments of science.

**The Foundational Importance of Visual Representations to Science**

Visual representations of nature always have been inseparable from science because
they make it possible for scientists to interact with complex phenomena in an essential way.
In Bruno Latour’s view, the spectacular capacities of science do not flow from a unique ways
of thinking, but rather from an especially efficient way of *seeing*; this efficiency is the
outgrowth of an interpretive method focused on reading visual representations of nature.
“Scientists start seeing something once they stop looking at nature and look exclusively and
obsessively at prints and flat inscriptions,” he states. “In the debates around perception what
is always forgotten is this simple drift from watching confusing three-dimensional objects, to
inspecting two-dimensional images which have been *made less confusing*” (“Drawing” 39;
emphasis his). To illustrate, Latour cites Elizabeth Eisenstein's observations regarding Brahe’s study of planetary motion:

> It was not because he gazed at night skies instead of at old books that Tycho Brahe differed from star-gazers of the past. Nor do I think it was because he cared more for “stubborn fact” and precise measurement than had the Alexandrians or the Arabs. But he did have at his disposal, as few had before him, two separate sets of computations based on two different theories, compiled several centuries apart, which he could compare with each other. (The Printing Press 624)

Latour asserts that “the discrepancies proliferate[d], not by [Brahe’s] looking at the sky, but by [his] carefully superimposing columns of angles and azimuths. No contradictions or counterpredictions could ever have been visible. Contradiction . . . is neither a property of the mind, nor of the scientific method, but is a property of reading letters and signs inside new settings that focus attention on inscription alone” (“Drawing” 43–44).

Because Latour and Steven Woolgar's text *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts* focuses on how the products of laboratory technology—namely, increasingly symbolic artifacts, or *inscriptions*—are put to work in creating meaning (or, in their provocative parlance, in *constructing facts*), it is of special relevance to my study of the rhetoricity of illustrations published in a scientific journal. Inscriptions cannot be considered simple “representations of natural order” (Lynch and Woolgar 5), for they are extraordinary devices that “scientists laboriously piece together, pick up in their hands, measure, show to one another, argue about, and circulate to others in their communities.” Visual representations appearing in contemporary scientific journals such as the *American Journal*
of Botany are usually based on inscriptions produced by apparatuses serving and immured in the culture of science, yet it is the rare viewer of these representations who reminds himself that what he sees "are not 'natural objects' independent of cultural processes and literary forms." Although discarding the key logical positivist assumption of direct appeal to foundational forms of sense experience has led, in many disciplines, to a reassessment of the extent to which science can represent reality, visual representations still may appear to describe nature more fully and accurately than words can do—if not "reproduce" it (see Barton and Barton). If only things were so simple! None of us occupies a suprasubjective vantage point, but we are, nonetheless, inclined to trust our own eyes. Thus, Michael Lynch and Woolgar point to the need to "disclose how [inscriptions] are more than simply 'representations of natural order'" (5) if sociologists are to find them relevant topics of study. A similar disclosure makes inscriptions relevant to students of rhetoric.

Authority and Visual Representations in Science

Latour considers in numerous essays the issue of persuasion in science and concludes that scientists' primary maneuver is that of "mobilizing, in defense of their own claims, the authority of others. . . . Who will win in an agonistic encounter," he asks, "between two authors and between them and all the others they need to build up a statement S? Answer: the one able to muster on the spot the largest number of well-aligned and faithful allies" ("Drawing" 23; emphasis his). Latour characterizes the rhetoric of science as that which is "able to mobilize on one spot more resources than the older [rhetorics]" are:

[In science] any average man starting off a dispute ends up being confronted with masses of resources, not just 2,000 but
tens of thousands. So what is the difference between rhetoric, so much despised, and science, so much admired? (Science in Action 61)

The argument from authority, a type of ethical appeal, is at the heart of introductory sections of articles published in all disciplines of science (as it is in articles published in the discipline of professional communication). Like Latour and Charles Bazerman, John Swales sees this strategy as a hallmark of what currently is considered competent science. But scientists do not limit their appeals to authority to introductory sections. Dorothea Thompson notes that in results sections, one of seven commonplace rhetorical strategies is that of “agreeing with preestablished studies” (111). Andy Hopkins and Tony Dudley-Evans find that the discussion sections “of articles and dissertations appear to be judged less on the actual results presented than on the way the writer relates them to previous work in the field” (cited in Berkenkotter and Huckin 119). Small wonder that stories are told of authors who craftily muster themselves as allies (Paul and Charney)!

Yet, according to Latour, allies need not be colleagues: scientific arguments routinely use visual representations as appeals to authority. This occurs when visual representations based on inscriptions created in the laboratory are mobilized to support a claim within a scientific research article. In citing Gaston Bachelard’s assessment of science as a projective—rather than an objective—endeavor, Latour means to say that scientists are not working directly with nature, but with a variety of nature that they have modified and arranged for the purposes of their own studies. Data can undergo dozens, hundreds, even thousands of reifications before they assume their final form in a published visual representation. Thus, when an apparatus creates an inscription based on chemicals from rat
brains, in appealing to this inscription a scientist no longer is talking simply or necessarily foremost about rat brains. All these reifications are undertaken at the author's behest, for the author's purposes. Latour and Woolgar argue compellingly that at the point of publication any claims about nature that are made based on an inscription are in larger part about the inscription, which they consider an artifact with primarily ethical aims.

Whether authority or logic provides more of the rhetorical grist for the research article mill is an issue worth considering. Indeed, "our experiences with created images show us that it is time to reevaluate our belief in what we 'see.' As creators of visual representations, technical communicators need to become especially concerned about the ethical implications of their work with visual elements" (Allen 88). Might authority, as Latour claims, undermine the logic of science? What ethical appeals are being pressed in visual arguments? What logical strategies are being used? How dependent are such strategies on the prior establishment of authority? The remainder of this essay describes original research addressing these questions.

**Methods**

This essay discusses visual representations appearing over an 80-year period in the *American Journal of Botany (AJB)*. The *AJB* is the premier botanical journal in the United States and publishes mainly the results of original research. In an era of specialization, the *AJB* has remained generalist. Many specialty botanical journals publish only tables and graphs in their articles, but because the *AJB* publishes all manner of papers, a broad range of illustrations is the norm. I chose the *AJB* in order to study a field—botany—that (1) to my knowledge had been studied infrequently by rhetoricians and (2) would provide a wide
variety of visual examples. I also was motivated to undertake this study because I served, from 1989 to 1992, as assistant editor of the journal and am well acquainted with its former editor.

The study was based on an examination of visual representations published in the first three articles in each of the nine volumes 1, 10, 20, 30, 40 50, 60, 70, and 80 of the AJB. These volumes cover the period 1914–1994. The following were considered visual representations: drawings, photographs, ideograms, diagrams, bar graphs, bivariate diagrams, and cladograms.

I interviewed Dr. Nels Lersten, former editor-in-chief of the AJB (1989–1994), for approximately three hours over two sessions and transcribed the tapes. Our interviews concerned the uses and constructions of the visuals at hand. Lersten is a botanist specializing in plant microscopic structure who in addition to having edited the AJB had served as treasurer of the Botanical Society of America (publisher of the AJB), edited The Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Sciences for seven years, and authored 110 articles published in refereed journals. The interviews took place in 1998. In the five intervening years, Lersten has become an emeritus professor at Iowa State University and has just completed a forthcoming textbook titled Sexual Reproduction in Flowering Plants: Emphasizing Economic Species (Iowa State Press/Blackwell Publishing). Lersten is well qualified to suggest how insiders in the field of botany would have created and interpreted the visual representations we examined. He has had the opportunity to comment on the final versions of this essay, and I have attempted to incorporate his many helpful suggestions.

I begin the discussion of the interviews by examining those appeals made by authors of visual representations and focus on how logical arguments are contrived from data that
have been arranged extensively. I conclude by considering how issues of authority complicate the logical arguments of science. As a scientific editor for nearly 20 years, I find the visual representations in the AJB remarkable mainly in terms of the frequency with which they occur, and I believe that my conclusions about them are relevant to disciplines outside botany.

Types of Visual Representations in the *American Journal of Botany*

The illustrations studied exemplified the rhetorical appeals: beautiful illustrations gave the viewer pleasure; novel illustrations suggested that the creator was at the forefront of her discipline and so contributed to her authority; thematic illustrations embodied the principle or argument in question.

The Beautiful

I consider the drawings reproduced in Figure 3.1 (Yuncker) to be examples of illustrations with a comparatively strong aesthetic appeal. The early articles I examined depended much more on the abilities of professional botanical illustrators than the later articles did; to the extent that drawings are more appealing to the viewer than tables, charts, or graphs are, the earlier journals may be said to have been more artistic.

In the early 1990s, the journal had begun to publish full-color visuals. Where a four-color process is used, photomicrographers with a developed sense of the visually beautiful have an advantage because the dyes and stains they choose in preparing their work will greatly affect the impressions their visual representations leave on the viewer. Electron microscopy, whose original output is in black and white, also is an aesthetically challenging
medium because authors are expected to colorize their micrographs. Creating a stunning electron micrograph or photomicrograph is a coup for any author because his slide may shore up a sagging text or, in the best event, be splashed on a journal cover.

Lersten suggested that its full-color cover was useful to the *AJB* because the journal might be losing readership to more specialized journals, and the opportunity to publish an illustration in such a prominent venue might attract respected authors to submit their work to the *AJB*. Otherwise, he seemed unsympathetic to the impetus that had driven members of the Botanical Society of America to abandon the journal’s traditional colored-cardboard cover.

When I asked what the new cover photographs contributed to the journal, Lersten responded that they constituted, in his opinion, a public relations gambit. For this scientist at least, the pathos of visual representations might not have been a strong appeal. Speaking of the pathos of science more broadly, however, I have heard more than one scientist state that the elegance of a concept is the strongest proof of its truth; that is, all else being equal the beautiful may have the final word in science.

**The Novel**

The interviews suggest that the creators of scientific illustrations are well advised to be aware of current trends, for, as Lersten stated, “those people who feel they’re on the cutting edge of everything, using the newest technology to pursue the kinds of questions that require new tools, they would tend to look down their noses on someone who’s not using the newest thing that’s come along.” He explained how all manner of illustrative technologies, though involving a good deal of inefficiency and extra work at the time of introduction into the repertoire, in their own days were considered “cutting edge” and so produced precisely
the kinds of visuals that readers demanded from a flagship journal such as the *AJB*. Over the last 50 years or so, photographs, transmission electron micrographs, and scanning electron micrographs have been perceived at various times as providing an especially true representation of reality. But "If you look at the early journals up through the middle eighteenth century or so," Lersten told me, "Everything was just words... In the nineteenth century, people said, ‘Wow! A drawing!’"

**The Thematic**

Data represented in the visuals studied were of three general types: *raw* data, or data that had been interpreted loosely for the viewer; *summarizing* data, or raw data that had been simplified further; and *tendential* data, or data that presented a clear trend. At times, the visual representations of tendential data embodied the thesis of an article.

The three types of data form a continuum from the potentially ambiguous to the very interpreted. In short, the movement from displays of raw to tendential data usually indicates a movement towards qualitative assertions. The more thoroughly data are squeezed, arranged, and packaged, the more persuasive they become. Not surprisingly, Lersten defined *qualitative* somewhat dismissively, as meaning "not precise; it simply shows a tendency or trend." Yet he also stated that as an editor, he expected the fruit of an author’s labors to be such assertions. Data not being shaped towards interpretive ends he considered "dumped." Before examining how tendential data in visual representations can embody the theme of a scientific research article, I will describe briefly the less rhetorically processed forms.
Raw and Summarizing Data

*Raw data* in the visuals we examined were usually presented in tables and in drawings or photographs, and sometimes in series of either. Figure 3.1 is a striking example of this type. Here, 31 figures (most incorporating numerous drawings; only one page of five reproduced) are provided of the South American species of *Cuscuta*. Lersten clearly was impatient with this type of presentation: as editor, he tended to reject large sets of raw data not so much because they took up too much space but because it would be “difficult for the reader to make sense of them.” But Lersten was only one editor in *AJB*’s long history, and raw data were by far the most prevalent type in the sample overall, perhaps because visual representations based on these data were comparatively easy to design and yet fulfilled an important rhetorical function by seeming to “reproduce” reality for the viewer—and sometimes abundantly.

*Summarizing data* in drawings, ideograms, or tables were often presented ingeniously. In Figure 3.2 (Bakke and Erdman), a multivariate diagram summarizes raw data appearing in the table reproduced in Figure 3.3. But not all summarizing illustrations were derived from data tables. In Figure 3.4 (Stewart and Bamford), two rows of photomicrographs of chromosomes are placed above three rows of ideograms. Lersten explained that the ideograms were drawings summarizing important features of the data. In Figure 3.5, the author (Evert) has “taken this kind of cellular depiction and reduced it to symbols. So [the little dots] represent a series of one kind of cells; the solid line represents another kind of cell; and [the dashed lines] represent another kind of cell.”

In Figure 3.6 (Stevenson and Popham), the authors have represented the course of vascular bundles in the plant stem. If the reader follows a segment of the stem from bottom
to top, she encounters the bundles in the order in which they appear on this map.

Summarizing data such as these prepare the reader for the author's thesis, which likely will be framed in terms of tendential data. Insofar as representations of summarizing data are more difficult to devise than representations of raw data and yet lack the persuasive power that representations of tendential data have, it is little wonder that there were only a handful of examples of summary data in the sample, and none after 1974. This type of representation simply may be less rhetorically economical than either of the other types.

**Tendential Data**

Illustrations displaying tendential data were the types that Lersten, as editor of the *AJB*, had been looking for. When discussing the *Cuscuta* drawings (Figure 3.1), he explained, "this kind of information would be conveyed more precisely by a table or by a drawing in which you use the drawings to illustrate a trend. . . . It's incumbent on the author to arrange things in such a way to convey—to help the reader, not just dump a bunch of figures on them." He then specified how the drawings might have been arranged and augmented in a way acceptable to him. "In other words," he concluded, "the drawings would show something in and of themselves, but they would be arranged in such a way that they would form a pattern that supports your hypothesis." His remark that the object of the representation of tendential data is to help prove one's hypothesis makes the obvious point that scientists regard data highly when they have been arranged to constitute a logical argument. One such illustration published in *AJB* appears in Figure 3.7 (Beck and Caponetti)—gross photographs that are part of an article on plant physiology. These eight photographs, which represent the effect of certain chemicals on ferns, appear in an article entitled "The
Effects of Kinetin and Naphthaleneacetic Acid on in Vitro Shoot Multiplication and Rooting in the Fishtail Fern. The photographs are powerful “direct evidence,” as Lersten described it, of the authors’ claim regarding the relation alluded to in the title of their article.

When I asked Lersten whether he could recall the *AJB* or any other journal’s using a cover photograph that invoked an argument, he responded that the *AJB*’s covers usually were chosen for their beauty or novelty. He did state, however, that thematic covers were par for the course in the two large-circulation prestige journals *Science* and *Nature*, in which the “so-called cutting edge or major discoveries would be described.”

In light of the noteworthy decrease in the *AJB* in the numbers of representations of raw data published since the 1960s, the noteworthy increase in representations of tendential data seems to parallel Bazerman’s findings that the rhetorical sophistication of scientific text has been increasing.

**Argument and Authority in Visual Representations of the *American Journal of Botany***

**Arranging Nature**

If we consider, in light of the long history of the laboratization of science, Bazerman’s painstakingly documented claim that scientific texts are becoming more rhetorical (*Shaping passim*), it may occur to us that scientists have come to rely more on rhetoric the more they have come to incorporate mediating processes into their research. Put another way, it may appear that scientists have been obliged to refine their use of suasion the
farther they have moved from making straightforward observations regarding the natural world.

Scientists “are routinely confronted by a seething mass of alternative interpretations. . . actual scientific practice entails the confrontation and negotiation of utter confusion” (Latour and Woolgar, *Laboratory Life*, 36). Notwithstanding, authors of scientific research articles publish the most carefully constructed visual representations that they can: the reader does not normally have access to the most ambiguous illustrations authors have been able to devise. Nancy Allen identifies data selection, emphasis, and framing as factors that have impinged on the “objectivity” of visual representations since long before photographic or computer technologies entered the scene (88–89). To what extent visuals in botany strain verisimilitude is a murky area and one that Lersten aluded to a number of times during the interviews. His first reference was in regard to how drawings are open to what he called “nature faking.” This interesting term he defined as

distorting reality. In other words, you see a flower that is supposed to have five stamens, and for some reason you find six. And that interferes with what you want to present, so when you make your drawing, you simply eliminate the sixth one and show five. Or you have a preparation that’s kind of a very poor preparation and you can’t quite see what you think you’re supposed to see, so you make a drawing that has in it what you think is supposed to be there rather than what is there.

I asked Lersten where he first had heard the expression “nature faking.” His source was a documentary he had watched many years ago about Walt Disney’s “nature movies, where they would presumably watch wild animals doing things and you found out later that
they really had a set-up; in other words, an animal supposedly hunting something else, but actually the prey had been set out in such a way that the animal would come right out.”

Nature faking in Walt Disney, as in botany, is possible because someone has come between the observer and nature; that person is, respectively, the maker of documentary films or the maker of visual explanations. Eugene Provenzo records a notorious instance of nature faking published in February 1982 in the *National Geographic*, whose editors “moved the Giza Pyramid so that it would fit better in its cover photograph” (179; cited in Allen 88). Indeed, “so common are these practices that photographers say virtually all published photos are altered” (Allen 88). Photography, as Lersten indicated in his story about Walt Disney, is just as open to nature faking as the next representational method. For instance, if I decide to photograph the flower with five stamens, go out to the garden to pick it, and find that the one I’ve picked happens to have six stamens, then I throw out the offending flower and keep searching until I find a flower with the “right” number of stamens. When pressed, Lersten mused that he did not believe nature faking in botany was “a widespread thing. All I want to say is that it opens the possibility. . . . because you’re adding another step, you see.”

From 1954 on there has been a pronounced decline in the number of drawings reproduced in the pages of the *AJB*, and since the 1940s there has been a pronounced increase in the number of photographs. In light of the widespread perception that a photograph is truer to nature than a drawing is, and in light of the fact that photographs therefore are less likely than drawings to conjure the specter of nature faking, it may be that authors of visuals published in the *AJB* have become more consciously rhetorical.
Using Legends and Captions to Authorize Visual Claims

Because it can set up expectations about what the viewer is about to see, or clarify and explain what he already has seen, the legend or caption can play a crucial role in shoring up or undermining an author’s claims. This interview excerpt concerning Figure 3.2 is illustrative:

**RICHARDS:** It’s unusual to me that there are no amounts [provided on the figure].

**LERSTEN:** It looks as though when you get to the top of this—

**RICHARDS:** The water culture roots graph—


[Long pause] I don’t know. It’s hard to... you really have to read the text to get any idea of this at all. My idea is that you’re looking down on top of these plants growing in either water or sand, and I would think that this is an increasing amount—

**RICHARDS:** Like the bottom axis KNO₃?

**LERSTEN:** I guess so. But I don’t know whether this means increasing amount [laughter] or... I just don’t know [laughter].

Here, by providing perfunctory labeling for his visual, the author botched an opportunity to make an ally of his inscription.

Lersten identified two schools of thought regarding the labeling of visuals: “One is that a caption is supposed to stand by itself. You’re supposed to be able to look at the illustrations, and the captions are supposed to tell a story that’s almost independent of the text. . . . [the other is that] you shouldn’t waste a lot of space on descriptions. They’re
supposed to be absolutely bare bones, and . . . you need to read the text to find out about much of what’s in the illustrations.” Lersten felt that his own approach was located somewhere between these two poles and that legends and captions were being written more frequently in the balanced manner he advocated.

As the interview progressed, however, he seemed to align himself with those who wrote captions and figures to tell a story independently of the text. He even spoke in favor of including methodological information in figures and captions. On coming upon Figure 3.8 (Barton and Teeri), I noted how unusually long the caption was. Lersten’s response was, “These folks have decided to . . . Oh, this is in my business [the figure had been published while he was editing the journal] . . . Here you get lots of information, and I like that.” Lersten’s preference for redundant methodological detail is in keeping with Charles Taylor’s observation that among scientists “full disclosure of details is thought to offer a hedge against unanticipated or unrecognized errors in experimental procedures” (72).

Note how the table in Figure 3.9 (White), from the year 1914, blends modestly into the text and how different this is from Figure 3.8, which was published during the final year studied. When I asked Lersten what he would have done if he had been the editor of AJB when Figure 3.9 came across the desk, his first response was, “Oh, I would tell them they would have to put it on a separate sheet, each of them.” In the language of Latour and Woolgar, by creating tables on separate sheets and thereby adding to his reserve of autonomous visual allies, the author would have contributed to his own ethos in much the same way as he would have done by writing a figure legend that repeated the argument of the visual, or by citing a colleague whose claims supported his own.
Allaying Doubt Regarding Visual Representations

by Invoking the Author’s Good Name

All representations of reality are open to doubt at all times. Perhaps the fundamental question is whether we believe the author is presenting us with a snapshot of nature that is accurate. Can the author be trusted? Lersten was quick to wrap up a discussion of nature faking in one of the visual representations we examined by appealing to the author’s good name.

Figure 3.10 (Esau et al.) is a peculiar illustration: On the strip labeled 21, slipped in between two photomicrographs, is a drawing. Not only is it the one drawing among eleven photomicrographs, but at the time of its publication such interlarding was technically difficult to do. I asked Lersten if the drawing, which was a simplified and enhanced representation of what appeared in the photomicrograph to its left, could have been an instance of nature faking. He responded at first, “No, not nature faking. But, well, what they thought was the photograph was not quite explanatory enough, and so they put a drawing in to show the parts that were not easy to see.” He considered for a moment, then said, “Well, yes, you could argue that this is nature faking. What you’re doing then is depending on the reputation of the investigator. And these two people, these three people, were top-notch people. So they would not be open to doubt on that.” The notion nature faking has taken on another meaning in this discussion. Here it refers not to a dubious scientific technique, but rather to an indispensable one. Respected authors fake nature astutely and in such a way as to provide useful information to the reader, and their reputations are not diminished as a result, but enhanced. Once the reputation of the author has been established, the reader expects her to simplify or expand, arrange, set-up, and otherwise alter and “fake” nature. In fact, it is
difficult to imagine what the activities and purposes of science would be in the absence of such practices.

Now, how does an author go about acquiring such a good name that if the logic of a certain procedure or assertion seems questionable, the doubter will be inclined to shrug off his doubts, as Lersten and I did in the case of Esau et alia’s drawing? By doing so much good research that it becomes impossible for the doubter, finally, to take his own concerns seriously? Perhaps. But this suggests a weightier question, namely, what really is good science, outside of the reputation of the author? To this I might reply that good science is done according to the scientific method. But then I am responding in tautologies, and besides: how do I know that the research has been done according to the scientific method? In the vast majority of cases, because the author tells me so.

One way that an author can establish her integrity is by presenting large sets of raw data or numerous sets of summary data. From these data she comes to no certain conclusion, makes no explicit claim, engages in no evident persuasion. The data appear to be neutral and the author to be comfortable in the knowledge that the reader will interpret them as she sees fit. This strategy is not as unproblematic as it may sound, because the author risks alienating the reader, who resents being asked to do too much theme-spinning himself, as Lersten indicated when he described large data sets as “dumped.”

But at least one author we studied took full advantage of the opportunity to prove his technical competence beyond a shadow of a doubt. Evert’s visual representations (98 figures and a handful of tables of raw and summary data) left Lersten and me shaking our heads in disbelief, and not a little awe. I quote from the interview, as we have just finished discussing figures 1 through 52 in Evert’s text:
LERSTEN: You see this is again looking at this thing from yet another aspect, which is quantitative measurement. . . .

RICHARDS: So this is not summarized . . . because he has all 48 in there.

LERSTEN: No, it isn’t. And I don’t know why . . .

RICHARDS: So 53–61; more longitudinal sections; light microscopy.
Wow. 62–29. Come to think of it, this was definitely the longest paper I looked at. More of his . . .

LERSTEN: Yes.

RICHARDS: More.


Who will be surprised to read that Evert is well-respected? When I asked Lersten if Evert was an important person in the field, he replied, “Oh, yes. Oh, yes. . . . He’s the acknowledged leader in the area that he works in. So there’s no doubt about that.”

Data sets of the type Evert provided attest not only to the author’s disinterestedness and to her claim of having done the work, a rhetorical function Lersten alluded to more than once, but also to her technical competence. Thus, sets of nontendential data pave the way for her to interpret, speculate, or fudge, should she wish.

**Conclusion**

The rhetoric of science remains a contentious topic because any talk of persuasion in scientific discourse continues to disrupt commonsense notions of the correspondence between scientific representation and reality. Because visual representations have been crucial to the evolution of the scientific project, and because scientists are among the most
powerful professionals acting in and on the world, it is incumbent on our own discipline to acquire "an understanding of visual rhetoric that sees images as configurations that are designed and critically read" (Salinas 170).

Inscriptions are purposively constructed artifacts reflecting the interests of their authors and so must never be granted outright correspondence to nature; cultural components embedded in visual representations must be made transparent to the viewer if she is to have the opportunity to exercise logic freely in regard to them. The current study has provided evidence of how visual representations in the field of botany are constructed by expert authors and interpreted by expert readers. It also has suggested how complex the relations can be among the rhetorical appeals in the scientific research article. This phenomenon is evident in the interviewee's acknowledgment of the problematic of representation.

I will hazard the proposition that, generally speaking, the expert reader of scientific research is inclined to believe in the integrity of its author. If I am correct, there are at least four likely reasons. First, the pedagogical approach of the sciences has tended to be an approach that Thomas Kuhn, himself a scientist, characterized as "narrow and rigid . . . probably more so than any other except perhaps in orthodox theology" (166). In such an environment, successful practitioners will have strong incentives to conform to disciplinary norms and thus are likely to be perceived as trustworthy by peers. Second, the peer review system seems empowered to eliminate dubious scholarship from public view. Taylor has noted, for example, that "the rhetorical authority granted peer review [in the cold fusion debacle] functioned as a regulatory discourse that sustained the community's position of epistemic privilege" and that, "As Frank Press, president of the National Academy of Sciences, saw it, peer review practices were central to the cultural authority of science" (73).
Third, because systematic verification of research results would paralyze their enterprise, scientists are inclined to accept, in an essentially pragmatic move, the reliability of peers. Finally, the average scientist has passed through an intensive apprenticeship in which he has been educated, mentored, trained, and supervised in light of the values of his disciplinary culture. As a direct result, he attempts to enact intersubjectivity, i.e., to prevent personal bias and wishful thinking from distorting his research results, and to remain open to the claims of colleagues who disagree with him. Although most rhetoricians (and, indeed, most scientists) will concur that aperspectival objectivity is impossible, to be fair we must acknowledge the average scientist’s concerted efforts to achieve an attitude of impartiality with respect to the subject of study. These four factors may contribute to the not occasional willingness of scientists to accept ethos as a foundation or even substitute for logos. The scientific community’s varied and elaborate rhetorical means of obscuring this tendency reminds me of science’s far remove from the dialectic of Plato or from Aristotle’s certain knowledge (see de Romilly) and of its grounding in the pressing questions of everyday life.

A number of areas for further research have been suggested to me by those who have influenced this project, as well as by the data, which at times spoke eloquently for themselves. These areas include the rhetoric of drawings and photographs in botany and other scientific texts; projected reality in science (a.k.a., nature faking); and the influence of pathos on the construction and interpretation of visual representations in the scientific research article.
Acknowledgments

I thank Barbara Couture, Carol David, and Dorothy Winsor for their generous advice regarding this paper. I also thank Nels Lersten, ideal colleague and friend.
Figure 3.1. An example of aesthetically pleasing raw visual data (Yuncker).
Yuncker: South American Species of Cuscuta
Figure 3.2. Insufficiently explained visual data that fail to further a textual argument (Bakke and Erdman).
Fig. 1. Diagrams showing relative yields of tops and roots.
Figure 3.3. Raw data from which summarizing data in Figure 3.2 are derived (Bakke and Erdman).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution Number</th>
<th>Before Growing Cultures</th>
<th>After Growing Cultures</th>
<th>Total Dry Weight</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Sand</td>
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<td>RtS1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>6.79</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>5.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>6.44</td>
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<td>Shive’s R5C2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
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<td>(1.75 atm.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>6.47</td>
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Figure 3.4. Raw (above) and summary (below) data (Stewart and Bramford).
Figure 3.5. Summarizing data (above) can be refined into further summarized data (below) (Evert).
Fig. 17, 18.—Fig. 17, Analysis of tier I. Drawings a–g of A illustrate the tier in transsections taken at levels indicated by the positions of a–g in B. In A, parenchyma cells are with nuclei; sieve elements numbered; companion cells stippled. In B, the numbered solid lines represent sieve elements, the dotted lines companion cells, and the frequently broken lines parenchyma cells. Assemblages are indicated, in part, by horizontal lines which connect related cells. A, ×300.—Fig. 18. Analysis of tier II. Details as given for Fig. 17, except that in A, tannin is represented in some parenchyma cells with black areas. A, ×300.
Figure 3.6. A comparatively rare, complex representation of summarizing data (Stevenson and Popham).
Fig. 11–12. 11. Diagrams of transverse and longitudinal views of vascular transition from a petiole to the stem. 12. Diagrams of a portion of the inner ring of vascular bundles in an internode.
Figure 3.7. Beck and Camponetti use photographs to illustrate the theme of their article.
Figure 3.8. Barton and Teeri (1993) provide detailed table caption.
Drought resistance: gas exchange and photosynthesis—Whole plant photosynthetic responses to the imposed drought support the contention that relative drought resistance increases from higher to lower elevation pine species. Carbon dioxide uptake of the three higher elevation species decreased to less than 25% of well-watered controls (day zero in Fig. 2) by the 16th day of drought and to zero by day 29. In contrast, the lower two species showed levels above 50% of controls on day 16 and still exhibited positive CO₂ gain on day 29 (Fig. 2). Accordingly, the interaction term between elevation position and days since watering was negative and significant (i.e., slopes decreased from higher to lower elevation species; Table 1; Fig. 3a), indicating increasing resistance to drought from higher to lower elevation species. When soil moisture, instead of days, was used as the independent variable, the interaction term was not significant (Table 1), however. Soil moisture was measured on only six of the seven dates, which may account for the different outcome.

We examined the extent to which differences among species in drought tolerance (continued physiological activity in the presence of increased water stress, Levitt, 1980) led to differences in drought resistance by testing for a relationship between the elevational position of species and the slopes of CO₂ uptake as plant water potential decreased during the drought (i.e., interaction term; see Materials and Methods: Statistical analyses). To avoid unwarranted extrapolation along the independent variable, we confined comparisons to the range of plant water potentials common to all species (> -2.5 MPa). Although species differed somewhat in this ability at low water potentials (around -2 MPa; Fig. 4), overall, the ability to maintain CO₂ uptake despite decreasing water potential was unrelated to elevational position (Table 1; Fig. 3b).

In the three previous sets of analyses, CO₂ uptake was expressed on a per-plant basis. Using CO₂ uptake per unit total biomass or per unit needle mass modified the results very little (Table 1). For CO₂ uptake per unit total biomass over days, the P-value for the interaction term did increase from smaller than 0.05 to 0.07 (Table 1).

The main differences among species in the responses of plant water potential to the drought appeared on day 29 (Fig. 5). Whereas the two lower elevation species experienced no decrease (P. leiophylla) or only a moderate decrease (P. discolor), the water potential of the three upper elevation species dropped precipitously, in most cases to the minimum detectable by the pressure bomb (~4 MPa). These differences show up as a strong significant relationship between slope and elevational position (interaction term negative; Table 1; Fig. 3c). A significant decrease in slope with decreasing elevational position of species was also found when percentage soil moisture instead of days was used as the independent variable (Table 1).

Percentage soil moisture seemed to decrease over time similarly for all species, and the slope of decrease was unrelated to elevational position of species (Table 1; Fig. 3d), although percentage soil moisture seemed unusually high in P. leiophylla containers at the end of the experiment (Fig. 6).

Differences in biomass allocation among species—To assess differences among species in biomass allocation and in absolute biomass, we used data from the plants harvested during the gas exchange measurements, because plants were sampled at equivalent ages for each species. Species differences in biomass allocation, as well as absolute biomass, in the survival experiment were very similar to those in the gas exchange experiment and are not presented.

Biomass allocation changed very little during the drought. Only P. discolor, the most drought-resistant species, exhibited a shift in allocation to roots and away from above-ground organs. This change was significant for roots
Figure 3.9. White’s (1914) tables vanish into the text.
Cruciferae by artificial parasitization with Phytoptus, and, according to Hus (1908), Molliard caused the formation of double flowers by mechanical irritation. From these facts, one may conclude that double flowers may result from many different causes.

In Nicotiana, petalody arose in at least two dozen plants of four or five hybrid families on which observations were being made for other purposes. The pure species from which these hybrids were derived, while under observation for five years, never developed petalody. Further, this abnormal condition was never observed in F₁ hybrid generations, although thousands of flowers were examined.

Two of these abnormal plants were self-fertilized, and the progeny, grown under approximately the same environment as the mother plant, reproduced the character, showing it to be a hereditary and not an induced phenomenon. One of the races was derived from an F₂ segregate of N. langsdorffii × N. forgetiana. The expression of the character in the stamens was very variable. Table 1 gives a general idea of the extent of this variability among the different flowers of the mother plant. The progeny, over 100 in number, all possessed the abnormality. The throats of the corolla tubes in some plants were, however, almost packed with anomalous stamens; while in others, perhaps only a single stamen was malformed. An examination of the progeny plant by plant for differentiating characters showed that segregation in flower color, habit of plant, leaf shape, etc., had occurred, indicating that the mother plant was heterozygous for a large number of factors.

The other race of these anomalous stamen-bearing plants was derived from selfed seed of a plant which appeared to be N. langsdorffii grandiflora. The variability of the abnormal character is shown in Table 2. In 1912 under the same field conditions, 70 plants were grown from selfed seed of this mother plant. The inspection of these 70 plants showed the parent to have been homozygous in all its
Figure 3.10. Esau and colleagues create a drawing when a photograph will not make their point.
Fig. 11-22.—Fig. 11-12. Phloem and adjacent parenchyma of Botrychium sp. rhizome in transverse (fig. 11) and longitudinal (fig. 12) sections. (The xylem was to the right in both sections.)—Fig. 13. Part of sieve element of Davallia fijiensis in longitudinal section showing callus cylinders (black dots) in the sieve areas. Callus stained with lacmoid, photographed through red filter.—Fig. 14-15. Longitudinal sections through phloem of Polypodium californicum. Parenchyma cells with nuclei in fig. 14. Callus cylinders appear as white dots in sieve areas in fig. 15.—Fig. 16-18. Longitudinal sections through secondary phloem of Pyrus communis showing entire sieve element (fig. 17) and sieve areas in surface view on a lateral wall (fig. 16) and on an end wall (fig. 18). Note close similarity in degree of differentiation of sieve areas in fig. 16 and 18.—Fig. 19. Transection of phloem of Vitis vinifera showing two sieve areas with connecting strands in sectional view.—Fig. 20. Longitudinal section of sieve-tube member from secondary phloem and row of three com-
Intersections
Self Portrait (1983)
The Old Haunts

I am like the Neanderthal pacing
at the whirlpool by the bend
in the Danube, remembering Lepenski Vir,
its trapezoidal huts and stone hearths,
piscine sculptures, cemeteries.
He has lost to something small and is puzzled.
Dinners no one eats are like that,
and money,
dogs that won’t stay,
children
(almost deaths, sort of miracles),
the little hauntings.
They came from the East
with their emmer and einkorn wheat,
their barley and goats
and stole the fertile alluvium,
the upland basins,
anything to remind them of Ov_e Polje.
They built a hydroelectric plant,
and the whole thing’s underwater anyway.
But I say I am like the Neanderthal
because we both dreamt about fish.
Driving the children to school today
I thought I saw a trout in the road.
It was a piece of wood.
Song

for my father

With eyes that beheld me on the first day of it all, you observed my coming and going, observing you.

I loved parts of you better than the fine places of my husband’s body.

Your legs were dried to a sheen, long, lumbering logs of petrified wood, cylinders of bronze.

The flesh forgot your knuckles, and your hands were filigrees of bone.

You guttered to a shoal of scuttled toes. Your gown was trimmed with garnets.

Your scalp was a cap of scales, your mouth a churchyard of ruined stones.

I beheld what I loved and what loved me and burned and scattered it.
The purpose of film music is not to be noticed for itself. Its great usefulness is the way in which it performs its role without an intervening conscious act of perception. It is most telling when the music registers upon us in a quiet way, where we don’t know it’s actually happening.

—David Raksin

... that maxime of all Professions; Ars est celare artem.

—John Dryden

Abstract
In an effort to develop rhetorical vocabulary for discussing music in multimedia, I generate categories of musical metadiscourse from visual and verbal categories already identified by researchers in rhetoric and professional communication. I propose thirteen categories of musical metadiscourse in film—emphasis, chunking, expense, silence, first
impressions, attraction, conventions, heft, consistency, counterpoint, point of view, connectives, and narrative line—and provide numerous examples from film. I occasionally discuss the history of Western music to clarify or to deepen the analysis and conclude by reflecting on the significance of film music to the unified work of art.

**Beyond Random Notes**

Two Aprils ago, I was parked in what counts as a traffic jam in Ames, Iowa. A freight train was making its leisurely way through the center of town, and on either side of the tracks cars were slowing to a halt. I turned on the radio, rolled down my window, and settled in for the familiar wait. As the ties rattled and the wheels churned, I found myself imagining whimsical animals, people, actions: our local channel, which was conducting a tribute to the century’s one hundred most influential composers, was broadcasting the music of Carl Stalling (1888–1974), matchless composer for cartoons.\(^1\) The train was long, and I had time to think. Why, I wondered, was I “seeing” images and narrative sequences? Might Stalling’s music be as evocative as the prose of my favorite authors? Might claims that music is abstract and nonrepresentational, or that its effects are emotional and defy rational explanation, be simplistic? Might music play a more fundamental role in conveying communicative intent than the field of rhetoric and professional communication has grappled with thus far? So it was that I resolved to undertake research on the rhetoric of music thanks to the Chicago and Northwestern. Four months later I was navigating a series of less pastoral traffic jams on U.S. Highway 10, on the way to Warner Brothers’ Stalling Archive at the

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\(^1\) best known for his work at Warner Brothers
University of Southern California. What I learned that summer inspired me to write this essay.

But what does music have to do with rhetoric? To start, the Renaissance philosopher Listenius introduced *musica poetica*, a rhetorical framework that continues to play a role in musicology to this day. Boethius, Augustine, Nietzsche, and Adorno, among others, have written extensively on music. In film studies, music often is studied from a cultural perspective. And given that the World Wide Web, television, radio, and film incorporate musical elements; that the making of music in the West has come to depend on a complex of communications networks as well as on an enormous lexicon of conventions recognized in the main by even the least “musical” listener; and that film and multimedia are receiving serious attention from rhetoricians, it seems to me that my own discipline’s drought of interest in music is as inexplicable as it is regrettable.

I assert in this essay that composers heed a highly evolved sensitivity to rhetorical concerns that is central to film scoring. By contrast, commentators on music have argued for several hundred years that knowledge of rhetoric evidently is unnecessary for composers. By the Eighteenth Century, rhetorically inspired views of music composition already were being exchanged for the view that “music was a language in its own right, independent of any verbal text” (Whittall, 87) and thus independent of rhetoric. Arguing against the usefulness of rhetorical theory to studies of musical production, Mishtooni Bose asks, “Who benefits?”

Whom does rhetorical analysis benefit? Does it primarily enable the evolution of critical theory, then [sic] [during the Renaissance] as now, rather than compositional or performance practice? Rhetorical terminology provided—and, it would seem, still provides—an aesthetic vocabulary, a
critical language with which to discuss musical affectivity, but much danger lies in the latter-day engrafing of a rhetorical carapace on to a piece of music, for it is notoriously easy to analyse a piece rhetorically, without necessarily proving that it was composed according to similar rules. While they may have value for the modern performer, the rules of rhetoric cannot also provide reliable material for the formulation of an authentic theory of production.

(emphasis mine, 20–21)

I hope to demonstrate in this paper that Bose’s remarks are overly general. First, she has, early in her essay, limited “the rules of rhetoric” to elocutio as defined by colleagues advocating an elaborate rhetorical system to explain English lute music. After constricting rhetoric’s scope in this way, Bose concludes that musical production cannot be explained reliably in rhetorical terms. Yet musicians, who have been teaching each other how to compose for centuries in the West (See, for example, treatises written by relatively recent composers such as Arnold Schoenberg [1874–1951] and Leonard Berstein [1918–1996]), have been addressing not only elocutio but countless topics that would fall within the greater canon.

It is in some respects strange that Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), quintessential iconoclast, should acknowledge art music’s need for “a speculative system.” Lacking this and “a well-defined order in cogitation, music,” he writes in his Poetics, “has no value, or even existence, as art” (117). George Burt, composer of both film and concert music,² notes that film music is produced by artists aware of rhetorical exigencies: “When confronted with a

² I have assumed while writing this essay that compositions for the concert stage and for the movie theatre both can arise from the Western art music tradition and that one type of composition is not necessarily “higher” than the other.
question about film music,” writes Burt in *The Art of Film Music,* “experienced film composers invariably say: ‘It depends on the situation’” (viii). Specifically,

Music has the power to open the frame of reference to a story and to reveal its inner life in a way that could not have been as fully articulated in any other way. In an instant music can deepen the effect of a scene or bring an aspect of the story into sharper focus. It can have a telling effect on how the characters in the story come across—on how we perceive what they are feeling or thinking—and it can reveal or expand upon subjective aspects and values associated with places and ideas intrinsic to the drama. Further, music being a temporal art, an art that takes place in time (as does film), it can have an enormous impact on the pacing of events, moving things along when needed, dwelling on something that requires attention, accenting this or that instant or event to help bring out the various connections and divergent points of view.

(3,4)

Like expert writers considering issues of technical and disciplinary appropriateness, expert film composers are attuned to the ways in which “even subtle melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic changes in the music, not to mention the orchestration, can make an enormous difference in achieving a sense of rightness” (17).

In addition to taking steps towards reclaiming rhetoric as integral to an authentic theory of musical production in the context of film, this essay foregrounds the relation

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1 Burt’s book has been indispensable to my research and is referenced throughout this essay.
between music and meaning-creation in multimedia texts, to suggest that music is not necessarily incidental but can be central to film meaning.

**Thirteen Categories of Musical Metadiscourse in Film**

According to one useful but excessively simple model, communication consists of two elements: meaning and form. (Disentangling communication in this way is not where I plan to end up, but I would like to begin here.) *Metadiscourse* is a term associated with the second element. According to Eric Kumpf, “Metadiscourse helps writers arrange content by providing cues and indicators that both help readers proceed through and influence their reception of text” (401). Kumpf and William Vande Kopple have examined metadiscourse in visual and verbal media, respectively; my categories of musical metadiscourse are very loosely based on their categories. *Musical metadiscourse* refers to musical ways of knowing that readers of this essay will possess. Even complex musical works heard within multimedia can be understood and fruitfully discussed by rhetoricians possessing a shared inclination towards music appreciation. For the sake of argument, let us pretend for now that the verbal and visual elements contain the meaning, or propositional content, of film and that the musical element helps convey so as to deepen, primarily through clarification or complexification, that meaning. Let us imagine, in short, that the main function of music is to contribute to film’s reception as a “considerate text” (cf Kumpf 401). Figure 4.1 presents thirteen categories of musical metadiscourse. It will be evident from the definitions that these categories overlap to some extent.

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4 Research on the rhetoricity of sound effects would contribute greatly to an understanding of meaning in multimedia. The topic is beyond the scope of my essay.
Mechanical Metadiscourse of Music

Two of the first four categories of musical metadiscourse (emphasis/auxesis, chunking, expense, and silence), which I label "mechanical," are based on Kumpf's visual categories for which I could imagine corollaries in music. I conceptualize the mechanical metadiscourse of music as having an important technical function.

Emphasis/Auxesis

In verbal rhetoric, auxesis refers to a word chosen for its ability to convey meaning in addition to that conveyed by an alternative, more neutral-sounding choice, e.g., murder instead of kill. The terms emphasis/auxesis refer to the ability of music to highlight or to accent a passage on film.

There exists in music theory, and especially that of the Baroque era, a daunting body of research on musica poetica, or the classically rhetorical analysis of music. As well-known a figure as Leonard Bernstein lectured in 1976 on the usefulness of rhetorical terms such as anaphora, zeugma, inversion, antithesis, and auxesis to composers of art music. In addition to the type of incremental auxesis (whereby brief musical phrases are augmented tonally) Bernstein analyzes in passages from Beethoven’s Sixth (Pastoral) Symphony (Six Lectures, 162–169), there are innumerable ways that composers achieve musical accents in film scores, including the following, mentioned by Burt:

- sustained chords,
- contrasting melodic lines,
• resolution,
• high point of melodic line,
• low point of melodic line,
• change in orchestration, and
• repeated rhythmic figures.

Creation of unintended emphasis/auxesis is a concern for film scorers. If an unintended musical accent occurs when an actor puts a spoon of oatmeal in her mouth, the audience may become convinced that the oatmeal has been poisoned. If an unintended accent occurs when an irrelevant mutt wanders onto some corner of the screen, the audience may suppose that the animal is rabid, supercanine, or in some other way more than trivial to the unfolding drama. Additionally, scorers can create unintentionally comic effects by rhythmically punctuating an actor's movements. A strategy deliberately pursued in cartoons and strictly avoided in other film genres, "Mickey Mousing" (like all musical accents) is achieved or averted by scorers' paying close attention to timing, or cue, sheets. These documents, which break down the action of a scene into fractions of a second, indicate actions as specific as "Mary picks up spoon." "Puts spoon in oatmeal." "Spoon to mouth." "Eating." The potential for problems with emphasis/auxesis is vast insofar as every fraction of a beat of the musical text is destined to be read in light of verbal and visual texts.

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5 "the satisfactory following of a discordant chord (or of the discordant note in such a chord) with a concord or less acute discord" (Kennedy 527).
Chunking

Like the use of paragraphs to contain related words and phrases in a written text, a musical framework can help contain visual fragments on film. Film music is used to "chunk" many and varied visual images—say a shot of a park, two lovers on a bench, a pair of eyes, a hand, a bird, the lovers embracing, a policeman walking his beat, distant traffic, etc.—in a single scene. Without music to create an impression of relatedness among disparate images, viewers would find it taxing to make sense of a film: they might wonder whose eyes were watching what, the latent purpose (evil or benign?) of the hand, the significance of the bird, the intention of the policeman towards the lovers, whether the traffic indicated a change in scene, etc.

Burt provides an example of a use of musical "chunking" that echoes the convention of dividing books into chapters. Early in The Best Years of Our Lives (1946), Homer, a recently discharged soldier whose hands have been blown off during the Second World War, is en route to his small-town home, from which he has been absent for many years. A number of scenes intervene between his flight and his arrival on his front lawn. Each scene is poignant, but his reunion with his family and girlfriend clearly is meant to have an especially moving effect. According to Burt, this is achieved because the composer, Hugo Friedhofer (1902–1981), binds (or "chunks") the earlier scenes musically. His score does not participate fully in creating an emotional effect until the front yard scene, when the score alters significantly to focus audience attention squarely on the pathos of the hero’s situation.
Expense

Just as annual reports of Fortune 500 companies tend to be glossy four-color affairs created by leading advertising agencies or public relations firms, certain films are intended to add to the luster of the studio that releases them. (See also “First Impressions.”) Most if not all texts created by corporations are meant to influence public opinion for the better, but certainly there are texts with more than their share of the display about them.

_Cleopatra_ (1963), a vehicle for Elizabeth Taylor in her heyday, also was intended to reflect on the prestige of 20th Century Fox. The film began shooting in England, but sunshine was rare and incessant rain resulted in constant repairs to the lavish sets. A total of ten minutes of film was salvaged from that multimillion-dollar false start, and the production was moved to Cinecittà in Rome. There the film languished while hundreds of actors and technicians remained on salary. By the time the film wrapped, its cost had soared to the equivalent of well over $200 million in today’s dollars. In fact, _Cleopatra_’s budget surpassed _Titanic_’s (1997)—a mere $215 million, split between Fox and Paramount!

_Cleopatra_ “nearly bankrupted Twentieth Century Fox Studios. Elizabeth Taylor earned a $1 million salary for the production [plus $7 million in overtime], a record salary for an actress to that point in time. . . . _Cleopatra_ featured the biggest production budget to that point in motion picture history” (buy.com). In this excessive context, music would need to participate in the creation of an atmosphere of opulence if not decadence. And according to Christian Clemmensen, “The score for ‘Cleopatra’ had been produced in proportion to the film, allowing [Alex North (1910–1991)] the luxury of composing for and recording with an orchestra of unprecedented size.” Burt records how North incorporated in his score “a part for a double bass saxophone [an instrument very rarely seen, let alone heard], a monstrous
instrument over six feet long.” A musician at the recording session remarked that if this rarity “ever fell off its supporting stand, it would waste about eight guys” [240]. Altogether, the “massive” score included “51 cues totaling 151 minutes” (Lace 1).

Independent films have a very different musical texture from epic films originating within studios. An extreme example is The Blair Witch Project (1999), a movie “made by five struggling film makers for ‘the cost of a new car,’ marketed [originally] via the internet and shot in eight days on ‘arcane’ technology—with stars, gore, nudity, special effects or even a feasible storyline” (Triple J Film Reviews). This film incorporated music only twice: during the closing credits and briefly during the film action, when a car radio was turned on.

The amount of money to be spent on a film tends to have an especially obvious effect on the score. The elaborate sets, costumes, and props of epic films usually have an inexplicable corollary in monumental orchestral arrangements. This expectation is purely conventional. Recreating the “reality” of a by-gone era will, understandably, cost money . . . a gladiator will need his coliseum, Cleopatra her palaces and pyramids, Ceasar his battlefields and ships . . . but what does a huge string section have to do with any of that?

Silence

The average 90–120 minute film includes only 30–40 minutes of music (Burt), just as the average page contains a great deal more white space than print. And like the mainly-empty printed page, which the reader perceives as fraught with information, the mainly-musically-devoid film is likely to be perceived as music-laden.
Typically, scorer and director work together to determine in which scenes music will be included. The choices they make are crucial, for each time music enters or leaves a scene, an accent is created. (See “emphasis/auxesis.”) Dialogue-intensive scenes are much less likely to contain music than scenes without dialogue, for the audience finds it difficult to focus on conversation and music simultaneously, as any high-school student knows who has tried to talk during a rock concert or listen to his walkman in the halls during a break between classes. In the early period of film, when no dialogue was heard at all, music was ever present—played by an organist or orchestra. As heard dialogue became more important, music was more likely to be perceived as intrusive and it became increasingly necessary to create a single, standard score fine-tuned to verbal and visual media and allowing for music’s absence or near absence when appropriate.

As has been alluded to, movies need not contain much (or any) music. The acclaimed films of Abbas Kiarostami (1940–) contain very little music outside of source music (music that seems to emanate from a prop) or music played during closing credits. *The Wind Will Carry Us* (1999), which takes place in the rural countryside, a scene evoked powerfully by the sounds of children, workers, streams, insects, birds, and animals, is extraordinary in its eloquent use of sound effects and musical silence, and I am inclined to suggest, based on what I have seen in this great director’s work, that ambient sound can have as powerful an effect as music on the reception of film as art.

**Interpersonal Metadiscourse of Music**

The next three categories defined in Figure 4.1 (*first impressions, attraction*, and *conventions*) are labeled “interpersonal” and are based on Kumpf’s earlier research on visual
and verbal metadiscourses. I consider interpersonal forms of musical metadiscourse to be linked more clearly to influencing, persuading, or pleasing the audience.

First Impressions

The opening titles can accomplish a great deal in regard to literally setting the tone for a movie. Hearing the James Bond theme as the titles roll, the audience is disposed to witness thrilling action, graphic violence, titillation, cool, and gadgetry. Epigraphs, forewords, and exordiums play similar roles in written or spoken texts. Similarly, readers who pick up *Cosmopolitan*, its cover perpetually graced with one of a series of jaded, half-clothed models, expect to learn about sex and the city. Scholarly books in rhetoric and professional communication often begin with the author’s biography in order to convince the reader in advance that the enclosed ideas will be worth considering.

As its title suggests, the Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen film *When in Rome* (2002) is set in the Italian capitol, where the spunky Angelinas have arrived to begin a summer internship in a fashion house. Instead of relying on a pseudo-Italian score to set the mood, the film opens with the B-52 hit “Roam.” This insider’s pun informs the middle-class, teenaged American viewing audience that it is not about to be tricked into watching a Historychannelesque episode or an art film about elitist brats taking a Grand Tour, but are being welcomed into a narrative they might find relevant and fun. (See “Attraction”; and “Locational,” under “Conventions.”)

First impressions can disrupt the film narrative when the audience is not disposed to hear music “appropriately” in the context of the film. As Siegfried Kracauer explains, although “a few bars of [Felix] Mendelssohn’s [1809–1847] Wedding March suffices to
inform the spectator that he is watching a wedding,” these same few bars can “remove from his consciousness all visual data which do not directly bear on that ceremony or conflict with his preconceived notion of it” (142; cited in Burt). And needless to say, if his own marriage has failed/is failing miserably, the spectator might not react to “The Wedding March” in the way the scorer and director hope.

Attraction

Like journalists, who depend on a provocative headline or photograph to inspire the audience to read their features (after buying their newspapers), and like publishers who use serif fonts, extra leading, and ample margins to design a text that appears welcoming, scorers can use music to draw viewers into the film drama.

*L.A. Story* (1991) uses this strategy on the scenic level. The hero’s love interest plays the tuba. At one point the hero is standing outside her door and hears her play a well-known melody from the cartoons. He knocks on the door, and the tuba falls silent, the last two pitches of the melody unplayed. The love interest opens the door, and an atmosphere of unease suffuses the brief conversation that follows. When the hero takes his leave and the door has shut behind him, he hears, almost immediately, the tuba playing those last two notes from behind the closed door.

James Bond fans look forward to the series’ cutting-edge titles. But Bond films sometimes open with a prolonged action sequence. Five or more minutes into the story, immediately after 007 has skied off a cliff, made love in a speeding vehicle, or saved a respectable portion—though not, of course, the entire—world (that comes later), the credits
begin to roll, along with the Bond theme, and the audience prepares to be entertained to the hilt.

Burt describes how one composer—David Raksin (1912—)—used a single theme to draw the audience into the unfolding of an entire film. *Laura* (1944) is a murder mystery about a beautiful young woman who seems to have risen from the dead, appearing to the detective who has been hired to solve her case and who subsequently falls in love with her ghost. The “Laura Theme,” one of the most famous from the Golden Era of Hollywood and the second most-recorded popular song ever (after Hoagy Carmichael’s “Stardust”), was played only in fragments until the close of the film. This interesting technique, which Burt describes as “resolutus interruptus,” “may be attributable,” he writes, “to the nature of the final scene in which I think the music is saying farewell to Laura” (173). The “Laura Theme” is less an example of the effective use of leitmotivs as an example of the extraordinary reworking of one theme to comment on all of a film’s situations and dramatis personae. (See “Commentary.”)

**Conventions**

There are countless conventions associated with written texts and visual images, a number of which have been noted already. Musical conventions in film scores have been arrived at over time by repeated associations between a verbal or visual idea and a musical structure. The effect that Carl Stalling’s music had on me as I waited for the freight train was precisely of this type. If I had not already heard his music hundreds of times associated with the anarchic antics of Bugs, Daffy, Tweetie, and Sylvester, I would not have “seen” what I did that afternoon or felt so much like laughing out loud. This huge category of interpretive
metadiscourse can be broken down in an infinite number of ways; I discuss “psychological” and “locational” conventions and briefly critique conventional approaches to film scoring.

**Psychological Conventions in Film Music.** Psychological conventions in film music are intended to evoke an emotional state in the listener. Theories about the connection between music and emotion are among the oldest in the history of Western music. The ancient Greeks believed that the Dorian mode\(^6\) encouraged chastity and fortitude; the Phrygian mode, violence; the Mixolydian mode, tender restraint and mournfulness. Music theorists of the Elizabethan era also imagined something recognizably meaningful in certain purely musical patterns.

Thomas Morley [1557–1602] offers precise technical advice on how to achieve particular emotional effects: “When you would express a lamentable passion, then must you use emotions proceeding by half notes, flat thirds, and flat sixths, which of their nature are sweet, especially being taken in the true tune and natural air with discretion and judgement.” He continues in the same passage to explain how the use of accidentals “may fitly express the passions of grief, weeping, sighs, sorrow, sobs, and such like.” (Cited in Wells 521–523)

Many Baroque and Classical composers believed in the psychic powers of keys: \(^7\) for instance, George Frederick Handel (1685–1759) wrote “Joy to the World” in the key of D major, the key associated with joy; Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) wrote his “Pastoral” Symphony in the key of F major, the key associated with restfulness and peace, and his

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\(^6\) The musical modes were sets of tones (T) and semitones (S) formalized in various arrangements; the Phrygian mode, for instance, consisted of the arrangement T, S, T, T, T, S, T.

\(^7\) The difference between a musical mode and key is that a key always consists of one set of tones and semitones; each key then begins on the pitch from which it receives its name (e.g., A, B, C, D).
“Missa Solemnis” in the key of D minor, the key associated with sombreness (Carl O. Bleyle personal communication). To avoid what they believe to be the negative psychological effects of music, many parents will forbid children from attending Marilyn Manson or Insane Clown Posse concerts. These same parents may listen to New Age music in order to relax emotionally and physically after a stressful day.

My impression from watching films is that scorers have a variety of beliefs about the psychological effects created by music. But it is safe to say that major keys are much more likely to be heard during a scene in which the hero or heroine is happy; and minor keys, during times of trouble. Another widespread use of musical conventions in film is dissonance or atonality in ambiguous or dangerous situations.

**Locational Conventions in Film Music.** Music also can be used to evoke a general sense of location. Such a conventionalized use of music is part of the Western art music tradition, which contains many compositions featuring horns to evoke the hunt; tympani, storms; flutes, arcadia; harps, running water; etc. Film music that attempts to create a sense of location can do so through a range of strategies on the continuum between realism and fantasy.

An example of a musical score that attempts to evoke its dramatic setting realistically is *The Cadfael Chronicles* (1994), a British Broadcasting Corporation series based on the novels of Ellis Peters. These tales are set in Twelfth Century England in the Abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul, Shrewsbury, during the Civil War between the armies of Maude and Stephen.

*The Cadfael Chronicles* are set in a location (a religious institution) where and during a time (the Middle Ages) when music composition was in ferment. Monophony, or a sole
voice, had been the norm in Christian sacred music until approximately the middle of the
Ninth Century. As described in two treatises (Musica enchiriadis and Scolia enchiriadis) on
“planned music,” or organum, the form of sacred music that evolved from monophony
consisted of a chant melody, named vox principalis (principal voice), and one, two, or three additional voice parts derived by duplicating the chant melody in parallel motion. . . . The duplicate voice was called vox organalis (organal, or planned voice). (Stolba 64)

That is, after the Ninth Century, a type of parallel vocalizing was permitted in sacred music.
In The Cadfael Chronicles, monophonic chant usually is heard, but occasionally parallel vocal lines in intervals of fourths or fifths also are included—a fine point, but one that suggests an interest on the parts of director and scorer in achieving accuracy for a musically educated audience, perhaps at the expense of enjoyment for those who might have preferred “ancient” sacred music less jarring to contemporary ears. (The music of Johannes Ockeghem [1450–1495]) or Josquin des Prés [1450–1521] might have been more pleasant for the majority of viewers, who would not have noticed the anachronism.)

On the other hand, the recent Hollywood film A Knight’s Tale (2001), set in Fourteenth Century Europe, relied not on organum, but on Queen (“We Will Rock You”) and David Bowie (“Golden Years”). The score of Moulin Rouge (2001) is even more experimental in its use of ironic anachronisms and reconstructions.

Film music frequently is used both realistically and poetically within the same film. In Casablanca (1942), jazz music is associated with Rick’s Café Américain, a realistic use of film music insofar as the audience could conceive of hearing exactly such music played in such a café. (“You Must Remember This” was a song that had been in circulation for some
time when the film was released.) Likewise, one might have heard French or German citizens in such a situation singing one of their patriotic songs. One would not, however, have heard French Moroccans singing or playing the theme—a hodgepodge of Oriental musical evocations—poetically associated with their own locale.

**Problems with Conventions in Film Music.** It goes without saying that filmgoers tend subconsciously to accept many problematic conventions on the verbal and visual levels; likewise with the musical. Scorers are trained in a technology- and math-centered discipline that only recently has begun to admit women or people of color, and the chauvinistic quality of this training is inescapable.

A quick conscious listen to popular films will demonstrate how certain instruments are associated with female characters, and other instruments with male characters. But being collaborators who depend on the approval of directors, who in turn depend on the approval of producers and studios, who in turn depend on the approval of the public, scorers are unlikely, for instance, to score vulnerable feminine types with trombone and kettle drum, or abusive macho types with flute and harp (or, for that matter, generic love scenes with screeching dissonances, or generic battle scenes with schmaltzy lounge music). Still, it is important to be aware that these conventions are busily at work in most of the films ever produced.

Burt's otherwise evenhanded book suggests how naturalized the use of gendered scoring is in Hollywood. Alex North, composer for *The Misfits* (1961), a vehicle written by Arthur Miller for his wife Marilyn Monroe and co-starring Clark Gable, Montgomery Clift, and Eli Wallach, is quoted discussing music he had created for Monroe's character. North explained that he had tried to write "a simple lonely theme for Roslyn" (Burt, 130) for the first act. Regarding the first and second acts, North wanted to "hear a thin, angular kind of
musical statement during those moments of reflection on Roslyn’s part, and no significant statement until the last third of the picture” (131). But in the third act, in Burt’s words, “the men are locked into a struggle with the wildness of the mustangs, and with the meaning of their own lives”:

North recalls that for this section he “tried to go above the personalized music and do something in a more universal sense—man’s triumph over nature, man’s attempt to prove virility—the music had to take on the form of greater abstraction and detachment.” In a most emphatic way, North’s energetic score for this long sequence works within the firm belief that something of an overriding or grandiose nature is taking place. . . . He writes a fully concerted movement for orchestra that enlarges upon the deep sense of release underlying not only this moment but also the significance of the sequence in the context of the entire film. For these men, the time for action, not words, has finally arrived. (131–132)

Although it is important to recognize that North was writing music to reflect the poetic intent of the director, John Huston, the gendering of film scores is very likely to occur automatically as a result of the culture in which films are produced, i.e., regardless of directorial input.

The score for *Casablanca*, which I cite throughout this essay as exemplary in many ways, nonetheless complements a racist script in troubling ways. “You Must Remember This” is first heard played by Sam, the Black jazz singer of Rick’s saloon. Throughout the film, Sam starts/stops playing music for Rick and Ilsa upon request, functioning, one might argue, as a live jukebox. (See Figure 4.2.) The viewer also is given to understand that Sam
is performing all the piano music that underscores all the dozens of conversations that the
(overwhelmingly) White people interacting in Rick’s bar are having. Sam, as a Black
musician, functions almost wholly as entertainer to the White characters/White viewing
audience. Indeed, the first song he is heard singing is the racist anthem “Shine.” (See Figure
4.3.) His marginalization in the script\(^8\) is reflected by his disempowered relation to the music
he contributes to the film.

Poetic Metadiscourse of Music

The six final categories of musical metadiscourse defined in Figure 4.1 (heft,
consistency, commentary, point of view, connectives, and narrative line), which I label
“poetic,” refer to issues that Kumpf mentioned and that Vande Koppel labeled as either
“interpersonal” or “textual.” I have set these six categories apart under a new heading not
used by either rhetorician because I hope by doing so to highlight how music can be crucial
to audience reception of the unified work of art—or, in Richard Wagner’s [1813–1883]
terminology, Gesamtkunstwerk.

Heft

According to Kempf, an example of a document with significant “heft” in terms of
visual metadiscourse is the telephone book from one of Chicago’s major suburbs. Readers
who not only look at but pick up, say, an introductory anatomy textbook may get the visual
as well as the physical impression that they have a lot to learn. Burt addresses how music

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\(^8\) He is portrayed as happy to follow Rick all over the war-torn world, to be underpaid by him, and to entertain
no ambitions beyond serving him.
and visuals in film contribute to each other’s effect such that both “voices” become more powerful simultaneously: “Interaction is the key aspect: Music has an impact on film, and film on music. Whether or not we are conscious of this, it is through interaction that the full force of their combined effect comes into play” (6). The “force” of this “combined effect” is especially obvious in films such as Les Parapluies de Cherbourg (1964) or Moulin Rouge, which although constructed around slim or clichéd plots nonetheless have unusual power to move because music underscores most dialogue. And this is to say nothing of the sublimity of opera. I use the term *heft* to describe the geometric expansion of meaning made possible by the application of music to words, a phenomenon recognized by Richard Wagner:

> The characteristic distinction between the word poet and the tone poet consists in this: The word poet has concentrated an infinitude of scattered moments of action, sensation, and expression—only cognizable by the understanding—to a point the most accessible to his feeling; now comes the tone poet, and has to expand this concentrated, compact point to the utmost fullness of its emotional content. (207)

Although Wagner focused on the relation of words to music, his observations also are pertinent to the relation of the musical to the visual elements of multimedia.

**Consistency**

Chapters and subheads in written documents are consistent visual forms that are part of a reader’s everyday experience. The use of parallel construction and of first-, second-, or third-person pronouns throughout a text are consistent verbal forms. As rhetoric began reclaiming its prestige with the rediscovery of Cicero, a loose rhetoric of music began to take
shape, focused on musical and verbal consistency within the song, or *aria*. In 1597, Morley admonished composers to make music parallel to textual meaning:

> You must have a care that when your matter signifieth ascending, high heaven, and such like, you make your musicke ascend: and by the contrarie where your dittie speakeith of descending lowness, depth, hell and others such, you must make your musicke descend. (Cited in Wells 524)

Many readers will be familiar with the aria “Every Valley Shall Be Exalted,” from Handel’s *Messiah*, in which the phrase “and every hill and plain made low” descends, “the crooked” jolts, and the “straight” “the rough places,” and the “plain” are sustained. The African-American spiritual “Deep River” illustrates some of the same rhetoricomusical principles discussed by Morley and applied by Handel, Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623), and others: the introductory phrase “Deep river” descends precipitously, and the phrase “my home is over Jordan” contains the freely soaring “over.”

Early film music was focused on so-called “parallelism,” or the attempt to echo on the musical level what the audience witnessed on the visual level. That is, early in the history of film, consistency between music and image was expected. When a character died in a silent film, the accompanist played music conventionally associated with death; when a character was frightened, the accompanist played music conventionally associated with terror, etc. Scores were, for a fairly brief period, extemporized by organists or pianists employed by theatres, and performances likely consisted of an idiosyncratic jumble of classical, popular, and original music. To help accompanists choose appropriate music, entrepreneurs soon began selling fake books of well-known music for “antic” scenes, “misterioso” scenes, “tragic” scenes, etc.
It should take little effort on the part of the movie-going public today to identify those moments in a film when the score seems to be “repeating” what is being shown on the screen. Love scenes, death scenes, horror scenes are among the many generic situations likely to find a “parallel” expression in film music. (See “Conventions.”)

**Commentary**

As both the discipline of film composition and the audience’s understanding of disciplinary conventions matured, so-called “counterpoint,” or music that “foreshadows, undercuts, provides irony, or comments upon situation or character” (Kalinak 26), i.e., music that does not attempt to create an effect parallel to that being created by image or dialogue, became more important and parallelism came to be perceived as clumsy. This relatively evolved category of musical metadiscourse refers to film music that attempts to complicate whatever effect dialogue or visuals are having. Corollaries in verbal metadiscourse are figure legends, table headers, and phrases beginning “e.g.,” “c.f.,” or “on the other hand.”

In his discussion of source music, Burt uses as an illustration the scene from *Blazing Saddles* (1974) in which the newly hired, insouciant—Black—sheriff, dressed in a gold suede pantsuit and sporting Gucci saddlebags, rides into view on a color-coordinated horse. “In the background,” writes Burt, “we hear a sophisticated swing-band arrangement of ‘April in Paris.’ Suddenly the Count Basie Orchestra (wearing tuxedos) comes into full view” (70). The music for this scene is, I believe, even more interesting in light of the way it pokes fun at, or comments on, White racism. For instance, the music provides a hyperbolic fulfillment of racist beliefs regarding the inseparability of Blacks from “their” music and fashion. It also underscores the juxtaposition of a cultured Black man with the White men’s arid, seemingly
cultureless environment, indicating by way of one the most audacious arrangements of the Swing era, the value of Black art. White racism is shown to be ludicrous since, after all, Count Basie loves and is loved in Paris while the White cowboys (assuming they have heard of Paris) are smugly certain that their “hunt-'em-down-and-smoke-'em-out” lifestyle is vastly superior.

As mentioned, in the early days of movies musicians improvised accompaniments. One of Carl Stalling’s first positions was with Kansas City’s Isis Theater. His early training in choosing music to play at appropriate moments during silent films proved indispensable during his tenure as composer for Warner Brothers brothers. Anyone who visits the Warner Brothers archive and examines Stalling’s original cartoon scores will notice that he notates them with the shorthand he would have used when accompanying the silents. Decades earlier he would have used parallelism to achieve a (melodrama)tic effect in serious films; as a composer for cartoons, he used the same shorthand but was intent on achieving hyperbolic, bathetic, ironic, i.e., contrapuntal, musical effects.

Point of View

Authors clarify characters’ points of view through strategies including first- or third-person narrative voice and dialogue. Film music, too, can give the audience insight into characters’ situations, but the greater the number of characters appearing in a scene, the more challenging it is for the composer to make clear whose story the music depicts. Pudovkin’s The Deserter (1933) contains “the gloomy pictures of a demonstration of defeated workers [that] are synchronized with an uplifting music, which he inserted with the firm conviction that it would drive home the unbroken fighting spirit of the defeated, and make the audience
anticipate their ultimate triumph.” Regrettably, it is unclear whether the factory owners or the workers are meant to be associated with the music (Kracauer 141; cited in Burt).

At times, film music renders a complex tableau comprehensible. The music incorporated in Casablanca's first scene at Rick’s is a superb example of the way music can clarify point of view, even in scenes including many actors with distinct personalities who are engaging in a broad range of behaviors. The audience first sees a customer leaning against a column and muttering, “Waiting, waiting, waiting. I’ll never get out of here.” Next, a couple at the bar: an aristocratic woman trying to sell diamonds, but her Middle Eastern buyer cannot pay her what she had hoped. Next, two Frenchmen discussing clandestine political activity who recoil automatically when two Nazi officers walk by. Next, a refugee talking to a man who plans to smuggle him out. A table of Asians comes into view briefly before a man at the bar downs his alcohol with a relish that surprises even the Russian bartender. These characters—different in class, nationality, language, enterprise—have one thing in common: they all are refugees trying desperately to escape Casablanca. Throughout this evocative passage, Sam has been singing “Shine,” a song whose lyrics linger on a derogatory racial term that links the characters ironically by suggesting that their prospects are as bleak as those of the “bootblack” of the song. (See “Commentary.”) Notice that at the same time, Sam’s literal position as a Black person with far bleaker prospects for independence are sidestepped. (See “Problems” under “Conventions.”)

Film music can also clarify authorial point of view by creating the effect of an “aside” in drama or of attitude markers in verbal metadiscourse (Vande Kopple, cited in Kumpf, 403), which include words such as “doubtless” and “regrettably.” For instance, should the viewer be inclined to suppose that Casablanca is a paean to Yankee ingenuity, gumption, and
self-sacrifice, it might be worth considering the oddity that credit for the composer, Max Steiner (1888–1971), rolls as “The Marseillaise” begins and that the film concludes with the same foreign strains. I also find it interesting that Steiner introduces the themes associated with the Germans when the director’s (Michael Curtiz) credit rolls. (If the viewer has not subjected the film music to an analysis of leitmotivs, the conjunction will not be evident.) Perhaps this is no coincidence, as Curtiz was infamous for having slight regard for the well-being of his coworkers. It may be difficult to imagine, but several of his actors were said to have “died during the climactic flood sequence [of *Noah's Ark* (1929)], reportedly because Curtiz, hoping to incur genuine panic in his performers, had failed to inform them that they'd be deluged with literally tons of water. Most leading actors despised the dictatorial Curtiz” (Yahoo 1).

**Connectives**

At a whole-text level, composers use leitmotivs to indicate the recurring relevance of a dramatic theme, much as a savvy writer repeats at strategic intervals the main idea(s) of her essay or underpinnings of her argument.

Midway through *Casablanca*, the Czech underground leader, Victor Lazslo, instigates a musical duel between Nazi officers and French expatriots. This scene was part of the script and an aspect of the film over which Steiner would have had little control. The popular song “You Must Remember This” was not his own, either. But he was able to weave these melodies, which might otherwise simply have been grafted onto the action, throughout the film as leitmotivs in imaginative ways, creating new associations and meanings for the film images.
At least four musical themes are used to create an elaborate “musical carapace” to complicate, intensify, and even obscure the unfolding action. “The Marseillaise,” “You Must Remember This,” and musical passages associated with the Gestapo and Casablanca are heard throughout the film. (See Figure 4.4.) The use of musical themes or topoi in *Casablanca* is intentional and should lay to rest concern that an attention to rhetorical principles cannot be cited confidently as an explanation of composer’s choices.

**Narrative Line**

Narrative line, or plot, may be furthered in verbal texts in any number of ways, including the use of a generic story structure such as the *Bildungsroman*; the presence of compulsions, mysteries, or quests; or the creation of a dramatic arc. Visual texts have their own strategies for making narrative line explicit. Western religious paintings may use perspective, facial expression, conventional indication of movement, and symbol. Perugino’s (1469–1523) “The Virgin and Child with Saints” not only contains a representation of the Madonna and child, the story best-known and best-loved in his day, but also representations of four lesser-known saints. St. Apollonia holds a set of forceps, the instrument used to remove her teeth in an unsuccessful effort to make her renounce her faith. Like verbal and visual artists, the best scorers have an intuitive understanding of the power of narrative and can create musical texts that contribute to the audience’s reception of the film as story on multiple levels.

*Casablanca*, which I have referred to throughout this essay, consistently appears in top-ten lists of the greatest films of all time. Perhaps it is Steiner’s score that bumps the film out of the excellent category and into the extraordinary. What can be learned from the use of
leitmotifs about the meaning of the story is extensive. (See Figure 4.4.) Moreover, the source music does a great deal of foreshadowing, a plot device few novels are without. When Rick looks for a place to hide the letters of transit stolen from the murdered German officers, Sam sings, “Who’s got trouble?” When Rick places the letters in the piano for safekeeping, Sam sings, “Who’s unlucky?” And when the unrefromerable black market kingpin (the richest, greediest, most mercenary man in Casablanca) arrives, Sam sings “Who’s got nothing?” When Ilsa walks into Rick’s for the second time, Sam is singing “It had to be you.” I believe that an expert on the songs of that era would recognize the source music heard in Casablanca as a treasure-trove of omens and clues.

Steiner also creates a musical “external skeleton” (Kumpf 410), which in verbal metadiscourse refers to tables of contents/figures/illustrations, etc. As mentioned, Casablanca contains at least four main themes. Three of these have political associations—“The Marseillaise” and themes associated with the Germans and with Casablanca. Constructed upon these three themes, the opening credits “forecast” their reappearance as developed musical concepts later in the film.

To provide just one more example of how music can be used to contribute to the narrative power of film, at the conclusion of The Bridges of Madison County (1995), after the heroine’s ashes are scattered, the camera focuses on the rural countryside. The score is unobtrusive, reflecting perhaps, if it reflects anything, the ambivalence of the children who fulfill their mother’s last request. The camera comes to focus on a dirt road, and for a brief period there is silence. Then the musical theme associated with the star-crossed lovers begins, and the hero’s pickup truck appears from behind the near hill and begins slowly up the road. Not only does music in this instance recall the relationship that has been the focus
of the film (see “Connectives”), but it separates the new passage from the preceding one, set in the present day (see “Chunking”), thus indicating that the narrative has been moved back in time. The musical theme can also be understood as repeated to make a point with significance for the whole film: because the theme’s last echo is associated with the driving off of the lover’s truck, it may occur to the audience that this conjunction serves as a musical/visual indication that his “haunting” of the Iowa countryside has concluded.

**Meaningful Music in Multimedia**

In 1986, Alex North became the first composer to receive an Academy Award for lifetime achievement in the film industry.⁹ At the public ceremony, “North said that he attempts to meet ‘the demands and needs of the story conflict and of the interrelationship of the characters involved and, hopefully, to add a personal comment’” (Burt 3). This eminent composer’s modesty about the importance of his art to film is typical of the members of his profession.¹⁰ Most film composers will insist that the essential aspect of film is what is seen on the screen—not the music, and even less so the composer’s style. Their attitude reflects Nietzsche’s distinction between lyric and epic poetries, both of which originally were sung: in the epic, text was to have dominated its musical, now forgotten settings.

According to early film music theory, both parallelism and counterpoint rely on a “lead voice” (the image) to which the “secondary voice” (the musical score) must adjust. Parallelism and counterpoint have figured in my discussion of musical metadiscourse so far.

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⁹ Perhaps this award is evidence of a change in attitude towards the significance of music in multimedia.
¹⁰ This type of modesty is not to be confused with the personal type, which was, in fact, atypically characteristic of North.
Burt acknowledges that counterpoint in this sense remains a powerful metaphor for theorists of film music:

Many writers allude to contrapuntal relationships between music and film. In music, counterpoint evokes the transfer of attention from one voice to another as an enrichment of the total experience. . . . Still, this momentary transfer of attention in no way mitigates our preoccupation with what is on the screen. Under the best of circumstances, [music] substantiates what is on the screen by filling in where dramatic extension is required. (Burt 6)

This is a curious metaphor. Notice that music is not compared to *image*, but to *film*, and by implication is external to the unified work of art. Why not, instead, consider the unified work of art as constructed potentially of four main elements—images, words, music, and ambient sound—and each element as having the potential to carry the weight of poetic intent?

Why might such a prejudice against the potential significance of music within film, and in favor of image, arise? Perhaps the fact that film originally was “monophonic,” i.e., an exclusively visual medium lacking even an improvised musical accompaniment, has contributed to the longstanding devaluation of film music. That so many of the early composers to become prominent in Hollywood were classically trained in the Romantic tradition and had strong opinions about the fundamentally emotional power and purpose of music might also have contributed. That music automatically was marginalized as a nonrepresentational language has been proposed by contemporary theorists such as Kathryn Kalinak, who writes that early film music theory was grounded in Enlightenment privileging of eye over ear in matters of Truth perception. According to Kalinak, because early film-
music theorists assumed that the eye experienced reality in an unmediated, Objective, way, music’s usefulness was in amplifying or intensifying the already-grasped, visually overdetermined meaning.

Whatever its roots, the early theoretical framework ostensibly dedicated to film music not only ignored but was on the way to erasing the contribution of music to the meaning of film. Even those “great men” of Hollywood’s Golden Era felt the theory’s chilling effect. Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957), for one, a key Twentieth Century composer, died assuming that his work in film had already been forgotten.11

By contrast, contemporary film music theory, indebted to Adorno’s work on ideology, rejects outright the notion that the film image reproduces reality:

Reversing the terms of the nineteenth century’s equation of sight with objectivity and sound with subjectivity, Adorno and [Hanns] Eisler argue that visual bias in advanced capitalism is the result of the way society constructs reality through material goods. The eye “has become accustomed to conceiving reality as made up of separate things, commodities, objects.”

(Kalinak 27)

Author of the “first serious theoretical study of film music in English since Eisler and Adorno” (Kalinak 35), Claudia Gorbman suggests that the main work music does in film serves the interests of capitalism. Recalling the earliest use of film music in drowning out the clatter of the projector, Gorbman concludes that film music’s object is to create in the audience a quasihypnotic state. When this is achieved, the listener becomes an

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11 An album of selected passages from his film compositions was released only in 1972, the first of its kind. Within a year it had reached the top of the classical music charts.
“untroublesome social subject” lulled into accepting filmic ideology uncritically. Although such a conclusion may seem far-fetched, it is a fact that Musak initially was marketed as “the security system of the seventies” (Kalinak 35), that white noise is piped into many offices to create untroublesome working subjects (or a “tranquil environment”), and that New Age music is incorporated into some styles of therapy.

The terms of Gorbman’s comparison are compelling. Both easy listening music and film music operate as part of a larger field of reference, whether it is a shopping mall, the dentist’s office, or narrative film. Both forms of music are regulated by a controlling context which determines its presence or absence, the interruption of a store’s background music to make announcements, for instance, or the diminished volume of scoring under a film’s dialogue. Neither easy-listening nor film music is created to draw attention to itself, and neither demands the listener’s undivided attention. Most important, both easy-listening and film music accompany, and in fact, drive away unpleasantness. Music encourages us to consume whether products or images and makes consuming effortless. Easy listening soothes the anxiety of the dentist’s office and the guilt over spending, “its purpose to lull the individual into being an untroublesome social subject.” Film music also holds displeasure at bay, warding off the tension of film’s ghostly images and “uncertain signification,” as well as distracting the spectator from a recognition of cinema’s material and technological basis. Thus film music operates in a way similar to easy-listening music. It functions, in short,
ideologically, “to lull the spectator into being an untroublesome (less critical, less wary) viewing subject.” (Kalinak 35; passages cited from Gorbman)

Ironically, while asserting that film music has been disregarded as a result of Enlightenment inspired biases and that its contribution to film art must, therefore, be reassessed, prominent contemporary theorists see film music as functioning in a rhetorically and aesthetically debased way.

Taken together, it seems that theorists of film music, from the earliest days of the medium up to the present, have tended not to consider music’s contribution to film as pivotal in light of the whole work, or Gesamtkunstwerk. Film music has been, for most theorists until just recently, an embellishment that at times evolves into the substantive. Contemporary film music theorists Gorbman and Kalinak have hypothesized that music’s aims and effects in multimedia are, like Musak’s, subliminal/controlling.

By contrast, I suggest that musical metadiscourse in film is inherently no more nor less pernicious than verbal or visual metadiscourse in written texts. I have attempted to demonstrate that when film music is subject to a rhetorical analysis the profound ways in which it interacts with and shapes meaning in film can be made transparent. Like verbal and visual metadiscourses, film music obviously affects the reader’s interpretation of the text and thus participates in making meaning. Indeed, the main purpose of film music is not metadiscursive if one defines metadiscourse to mean “a vehicle for conveying content/meaning”: metadiscourse is a habit of forming what is being said and thus cannot be separated from what is being said. Moreover, music is not a purely abstract/nonrepresentational medium, for music, just like visual images/symbols or verbal utterances, can be associated with concepts, actions, and things.
I conclude with a metaphor from the annals of Western sacred music that will, I hope, suggest to the reader how significant music can be to film. In the very earliest movies, the image was the sole medium, or “voice”; thus, film might have been called “monovocal” or “monophonic” before music, dialogue, or ambient sound was heard. The reader will recall that when music first was added to film, it tended to have a repetitive, or parallel, function in regard to the image. Thus, purely visual, monovocal film gave way to a multimedium in which musical accompanists attempted to “parallel” the image, through the exploitation of the audience’s lexicon of musical associations, to create a kind of duplicate voice (vox organalis), an elementary form that, no doubt on account of its limited aspirations, could be improvised live on a wide scale. Later, film music took on elaborate contrapuntal functions, interacting as a distinct “voice” within film and thereby creating a “polyphonic” multimedium. By the time film had been established as polyphonic in the sense I mean, the composer had been invented, “monophony” was long dead, and parallel motion in regard to the vox principalis no longer sufficed to interest the increasingly sophisticated composer/audience.

The reader will recall that in Twelfth Century sacred music, “composition had begun to replace improvisation. Choice was a factor in creating the original voice: parallel, oblique, and contrary motion were intermingled” (Stolba 71). If Western music had not evolved beyond a sole voice/monophony, Bach, Beethoven, Basie, and the Beatles would be beyond the comprehension of even the most musical listener. I suggest that in films whose composers are gifted and rhetorically adroit, their art may be as crucial to the audience’s
experience and enjoyment of a film as polyphony is to the audience’s experience and
enjoyment of a popular song or a string quartet.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to the very gracious George Burt for spending an afternoon with me
one August afternoon in 2001 and talking to me about the rudiments of his profession. Any
errors in this text are, needless to say, entirely my own. I encourage those who are interested
in embarking on this entertaining line of rhetorical research, to read Mr. Burt’s The Art of
Film Music. I thank Warner Brothers for allowing me to examine the Carl Stalling Archive,
housed at the University of Southern California. Finally, I thank Scott Consigny for
reintroducing me to Casablanca and for encouraging me to conduct this dissertation research
on film music.
Mechanical
- Emphasis/Auxesis—Use or omission of a musical accent.
- Chunking—Use of music to fuse or to clarify boundaries between filmic passages.
- Expense—Cost associated with the production of a score.
- Silence—Suspension of the musical score or rests within it.

Interpersonal
- First Impression—Initial response of the audience to a score.
- Attraction—Audience interest/engagement resulting from a score.
- Conventions—Audience expectations regarding film music.
  - Psychological—Composition in appropriate keys, modes, etc.
  - Locational—Composition appropriate to a physical place, historical time, etc.

Poetic
- Heft—Layering of a musical element that deepens filmic meaning, as when music is joined to dialogue; not in the merely additive sense.
- Consistency—Use of music to support visual or verbal meaning.
- Commentary—Use of music to complicate or to throw into question visual or verbal meaning.
- Point of View—Use of music to help resolve or to engender audience doubts regarding character attitudes and perceptions.
- Connectives—Use of music to link relatively distant filmic segments.
- Narrative Line—Musical contributions to the story or plot.

Kumpf’s Visual Metadiscourse Categories
First Impression, Heft, Convention, Chunking, External Skeleton, Consistency, Expense, Attraction, Interpretation, Style

vande Kopple’s Verbal Metadiscourse Categories
Textual: Connectives, Code Glosses; Interpersonal: Illocution Markers, Validity Markers, Narrators, Attitude Markers, Commentary

“All right, Sam.”—Rick

“Some of the old songs, Sam.”—Ilsa

“Play it once Sam, for old time's sake.”—Ilsa

“Play it Sam; play 'As Time Goes By.'”—Ilsa

“Sing it, Sam.”—Ilsa

“Sam, I thought I told you never to play...”—Rick

“Stop it. You know what I want to hear.”—Rick

“You played it for her; you can play it for me.”—Rick

“If she can stand it, I can!”—Rick

“Play it!”—Rick

“I'll have Sam play 'As Time Goes By'; I believe that's your favorite song.”—Rick

Figure 4.2. Requests received by Sam to play (it) again/not to play (it) again, in *Casablanca.*
VERSE
Happy Jack, known around the town as
"some" bootblack, never worried tho' he
worked like sin, he had a grin
guaranteed to bring the business in.
Ev'ry day, when they'd ask him how he
got that way, he would tell them "If you
envy me, just try my recipe."

CHORUS
Shine, away your bluesies,
Shine, start with your shoes-ies
Shine each place up, make it look like new,
Shine your face up, wear a smile or two.
Shine, your these or thosies,
you'll find out that everything will turn out fine.
Folks will shine up to ya, everyone will howdy-do ya,
you'll make the whole world shine.

VERSE
Rain or shine, he would say things were
goin' fine, you could always see his
smiling face, same old place,
bein' broke to him was no disgrace.
What a mob, hangin' round to watch him
on the job, standin' on the corner
all day long, they'd
listen to his song.

CHORUS (New Lyrics)
'Cause, my hair is curly,
'Cause, my teeth are pearly,
Just because I always wear a smile,
like to dress up in the latest style,
'Cause I'm glad I'm living,
take trouble smiling and the world is mine,
I'm a lucky fella, got the sun for my umbrella,
that's why they call me “S-H-I-N-E.”

Figure 4.3. “Shine,” by Cecil Mack and Lew Brown.
Marseillaise
- Opening titles, “Music by Max Steiner” and Producer
- Shot of sign over the Palais de Justice, “Liberté, égalité, fraternité” (minor mode)
- Arc de Triomphe; flash back to lovers in Paris
- Train station as Rick leaves without Ilsa (minor mode)
- Meeting at the prefect’s office between Louis and Strasser (minor mode)
- Louis tells Rick, “You’re not only a sentimentalist, you’re a patriot.”
- As Louis throws away a bottle of Vichy water after Rick has shot and killed General Strasser
- Rick saying he’ll disappear to Brazzaville (“Free French” Equatorial Africa)
- Rick and Louis walking into fog at end of film

German Themes (a complex of melodies and structures)
- Opening titles, “Directed by Michael Curtiz”
- French policeman notifying colleagues to be on the lookout for murderers of German couriers
- Occupation of Paris by Germans
- In train station as Rick prepares to leave
- After dueling patriotic songs (“Duetschland Uber Alles” is heard woven throughout Strasser’s conversations.)
- After Rick double-crosses Louis, who double-crosses Rick by informing Strasser
- Strasser’s dead body carted off
- Plane with Ilsa and Lazslo aboard departing

Casablanca/Blue Parrot Theme(s)
- Opening credits, Casablanca title and most credits
- Beneath announcer’s voice, “With the coming of the Second World War . . . “ (minor mode)
- SS Plane arriving with general Strasser
- Market scene with parrot being carried by
- Inside the “Blue Parrot”
- The “Blue Parrot’s” owner speaking to Lazslo and Ilsa
- In the “Blue Parrot” when Rick goes to sell his café

Figure Four. Major musical themes heard in Casablanca.
"You Must Remember This"

- Sam playing for Ilsa
- During introductions among Ilsa, Lazslo, Rick, etc. (minor mode)
- Sam plays for Rick at his request in the Café Américain
- During Rick’s flashbacks to Paris
- Ilsa’s note telling Rick she would not leave Paris with him (minor mode)
- Ilsa’s first return to Rick—arrival and departure
- Ilsa going to Rick’s with Lazslo the second time
- Ilsa asking, “Victor, why don’t you tell me about Rick?”
- Lazslo asking Ilsa, “When I was in the concentration camp, were you lonely?”
- Ilsa leaving for Rick’s
- Ilsa threatening to shoot Rick
- Their embrace
- After they make love
- Ilsa telling Rick, “I can’t fight it any more.”
- Rick telling Karl to take Ilsa home
- Laszlo picked up by the Vichy French
- Louis coming to Rick’s to double-cross Lazslo
- Rick telling Ilsa to “please trust me” in regard to who would be leaving Casablanca with her
- Rick threatening to kill Louis
- During the argument between Rick and Ilsa about who is going to go on the plane
- During Ilsa and Lazslo’s walk to the plane
- Louis telling his officers, “Major Strasser’s been shot; round up the usual suspects.”

Figure 4.4. Continued.
INTERSECTIONS
The Last Leper Colony

(Springtime in the Nagashima Garden of Love and Life)

The iron bell tolls and I follow
its tone down the path, past the sanatorium
to the pond where the disinfecting station was.
Mice, pine needles scatter.

Chieko lowers a bowl
in water, to separate
blood-red beans.
Sag-face traps koi in a wooden bucket.

Ichiai prunes a tree of twisted wire,
white twigs extending.

It is four o’clock, and the pines send syrup
into the air, blowing aloft, away.

On the island’s promontory I stand facing the city.
Yesterday at dusk, there were cranes again
bridging over two by two to roost inland
in shallows with ten thousand others.

This morning they rose together gurgling
with earth’s sweetness. Even I heard them.
White Ball

On the roof outside your open window
the wrecking ball strikes the old wing—
not fifty yards away, but we barely hear.
   It’s the dialyzers, the deafening sea
   of blood circulating.
   In the bed by yours a man
   floats on billowing sheets.

   the moon drifts out on morning sky

   It’s six, about supper time,
   and the crickets are cirricking
   behind us on the broad lawn.
   I’m hanging a little behind you,
   watching your shoulders, your great legs
   bent in the leaves.
   You’re searching for something
   and mother is calling.
   I’m waiting.
   My heart is heaving
   the tide of crickets,
   and you are holding up

   my white ball
“Encore un Chapelet Ai” (See Appendix C)
CHAPTER 5. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Major Findings

This dissertation has been constructed around three articles:

• “Reconsidering Agency in an Era of Georeligious Upheaval: Women from Four Faith Traditions Confess”

• “Argument and Authority in the Visual Representations of Science”

• “Possibilities for a Rhetoric of Music: A Metadiscursive Approach to Film”

The major findings of these articles are as follows: (1) Despite avowals that there is more to cultural studies than a vulgar obsession with the material, major theorists continue to disregard and to disparage religious ideologies that claim to have a nonmaterial basis and that individuals identify as tools of their own empowerment. (2) A scientist’s authority (ethos) not only influences the reader’s willingness to consider her argument but at times can be counted on to effect persuasion when logical means fail. (3) In film, music can be as important to the reception of meaning as either image or dialogue and can both intensify the audience’s emotional experience and make explicit contributions to the narrative.

The dissertation has suggested a means of narrowing rhetoric’s scope for individual practitioners, namely by focusing on inner necessity and conscience in the approach to study. By conceptualizing the art of rhetoric as “self-discipline,” I have acknowledged the personal and public uses of rhetoric and suggested that their harmonious integration in the life of the rhetorician will enhance the pleasures and utilities of discourse. Finally, I have defined rhetoric as a framework in which I am attempting to integrate the scholarly and artistic,
public and private elements of my personality by inquiring into the influence of symbols on my life. This definition indicates how crucial interdisciplinary study is to me and points, once again, both to a time long ago when rhetor and rhetorician were expected to be one and the same, and to the possibilities for reinvigorating our discipline by infusing it with marginalized practices.

**Significance**

As stated in the introduction, the articles are unusual in the context of the Iowa State University Rhetoric and Professional Communication Program because none takes writing as its subject. The most groundbreaking article of the three is “Film Music.” So far as I am aware, metadiscourse has not been used as a framework for exploring film music before. Moreover, not a single recent article in any of our major journals has appeared on the topic of film music. Although the major religious institutions of the day are powerful organizations with persuasive objectives, articles on organized religion nevertheless also are extremely rare in the rhetoric and professional communication literature. “Faith Traditions” represents a place from which colleagues might begin to examine their own convictions about the worthiness of this topic of study. (The rhetoric of religion—like that of science—can be studied fruitfully whether or not one is sympathetic to the attendant ideologies.) Finally, “Visual Representations” provides an in-depth look at how ethical and logical appeals interact in the interpretation of scientific representations; the fact that a prominent biologist is the subject of the interviews contributes to the article’s value.
Future Research

As a nontraditional dissertation in rhetoric and professional communication, this collection of essays leaves in its wakes far more questions than it answers; at most, each article represents an exploration. And because there is so little written on the rhetoric of music, that article in particular suggests a great many possibilities for future research.

Religion

"Reconsidering Agency in an Era of Georeligious Upheaval: Women from Four Faith Traditions Confess" follows neither the rhetorical tradition associated with sacred texts time out of mind, nor the hybrid technique used by George A. Kennedy in *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. Kennedy notes that "there is now a substantial body of scholarship applying the concepts of classical rhetoric and the techniques of modern literary criticism to both the Old and New Testaments" (138). His research, an example of this type of interdisciplinary scholarship, identifies the "fundamental rhetorical technique of the Old Testament" ("assertion of authority" [138]), "the most characteristic form of extended speech in the Old Testament" ("'covenant'" [140]), the significance of proclamation as distinct from persuasion in the New Testament, ways in which the New Testament resembles the Old, etc. His method differs significantly from mine in that (1) I do not consult a sacred text, (2) I acknowledge religiosity, from a point of view less "neutral" than his, as a living phenomenon, (3) I focus on audience rather than text, and (4) I attempt to locate my participants culturally. My article is hermeneutic, however, for

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1 This body of research focuses on the literary and rhetorical criticism of sacred texts, not on religious belief as it functions within organizations or as a sociocultural phenomenon.
it represents a close reading of interview transcripts; and it is rhetorical, for it attempts to
discover what factors have persuaded the participants to remain within their faith traditions
while modifying them. "Faith Traditions" approaches the subject of organized religion from
a cultural studies viewpoint. (1) It also is possible to explore organized religion and the faith
of individuals from a more traditionally rhetorical viewpoint such as Kennedy's, for instance,
by analyzing the religious talks given at the various places of worship, instrumental music
used to enhance the experience, lyrics of the music or of passages read aloud by groups of
attendees or by individuals, iconography in homes and places of worship, the aesthetic of the
sacred places themselves. (2) One might also address the possibility that there is a master
narrative regarding religion that is provided by high-profile academic males. If so, are
faithful academic women such as Anne Ruggles Gere engaged in writing counternarratives in
the feminist tradition? (3) What is the role played by religious dogma in the lives of
individuals? (4) Thinkers such as Meister Eckhardt defy the categorization of Christianity as
rigid, etc. Gere and Anzaldúa's positions are very different; is there a spectrum of
approaches to religious dogma that could be discovered from among current writers on the
topic? (5) The essay refers to religious hate crimes in the United States but does not
elaborate. These are, I suspect, usually also racist events, e.g., the destruction of Black
churches both in Birmingham during the Civil Rights era and the series of fires in the 1990s,
the destruction of synagogues, the murder and harassment of Sikhs and Muslims after 9/11,
the internment camps in Guatánemo Bay (likely to become death camps for certain
fundamentalist Muslims). How can the tools and methods of rhetoric be used to address
these issues? (6) U.S. citizens certainly have received a degree of religious (usually
Christian) upbringing. What is lacking in this upbringing such that so many remain unaware
of the reality of other religious traditions? (7) The term “empowerment” is used in a positive sense in the article although many people who wreak havoc on the world might also be called empowered. How has this concept been/can this concept be deconstructed so as to make it more useful to students of rhetoric? (8) Religious diversity is as much a part of cultural diversity as ethnicity, race, and class. How and why are religious beliefs and practices being marginalized in the discipline of rhetoric and professional communication? (9) Organized Christianity creates vast amounts of literature, e.g., *The Watchtower* and the *Awake!* of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, or the more generic *Guideposts*. What rhetorical strategies do these publishers use? How do their strategies compare to the strategies, say, of business or technical writers? (10) What types of dialogues are being undertaken between members of different religions? (11) What do religious figures, e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, gain and what do they lose as a result of articulating religious belief to political movements? (12) How are institutions affiliated with religion different from those that are not? (13) Do any organized religions embrace the notion of false consciousness as explained by Marx?

**Visual Representations**

(1) “Argument and Authority in the Visual Representations of Science,” a respectful approach in the main, does not address the history of graphic practice in the sciences. What is the role of racism, sexism, and classism in the findings of scientific practitioners and in their readings of visual images and imagery? What light do such tendencies throw on their
enterprise as a whole? (2) Individuals routinely ignore the actual appearance of objects before them and instead rely upon autonomic processes and culture to interpret these sights for them—for instance, individuals interpret perspective and planetary motion in ways that are, respectively, the product of experience/instinct and education. How might this normal approach to interpreting visual data in the world affect the reading of visual representations? (3) Is Latour's overarching metaphor of "rhetoric as warfare" useful, or does it point to a crucial failure in analysis? (4) What happens when there are two divergent opinions about an artifact—the author's and the participants—put another way, how should the researcher handle those moments when disciplinary cultures collide? (5) What types of rhetorical strategies are used by illustrators and photographers in botany and other sciences? (6) What is the significance of projected reality in science (a.k.a., nature faking)? (7) What is the influence of pathos on the construction and interpretation of visual representations in the scientific research article? (8) Computer modeling and virtual reality are three-dimensional images "made less confusing" for the viewer; how do these compare to the two-dimensional images that are the focus of Latour and Woolgar's work?

**Film Music**

"Possibilities for a Rhetoric of Music: A Metadiscursive Approach to Film" provided one possible way of addressing film music rhetorically. The categories were intended to provide future researchers with either usable concepts according to which they might analyze

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2 Carl von Linné's *Systema Naturae* was articulated by scientists to confirm the existence of racial differences that are discredited today; Robert Froman addresses the issue of how science (retroactively labeled "pseudoscience") has fueled racism in the United States (*Racism*, Laurel, New York, 1973). I. A. Newby has also written extensively on this issue. His "Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Negro Thought in America, 1900–1930" describes the role that the scientific community has played in perpetrating racist dogma.
film scores themselves, or a sense of the types of rhetorical approaches that might be used in future studies. At this moment, the rhetorical study of film music is under-researched. Possibilities for future research seem to me to be infinite, but I mention a few here:

(1) What is/has been the role of the director in the creation of film scores? (2) What is the role of silence in film scores (case in point: the last fifteen minutes of “High Noon”)? (3) What effects can the use of a single song whose lyrics are known to the audience and which can therefore comment “wordlessly” on film action, have on the audience (e.g., Dmitri Tiomkin’s “Do Not Forsake Me” in “High Noon”)? (4) In what ways is classical music used in film scores (e.g., Mendelssohn’s music in Max Rhinehardt’s film “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” [1935])? (5) What is the effect of rock and roll compilation scoring on audience reception of films? (6) What have been the roles played by musical performers of color in Hollywood film? (7) What degree of independence is enjoyed by film composers now, and how does it compare to that in the past? (8) How do composers and directors collaborate? (9) What is the role of disturbing music in film, i.e., music that would seem deliberately not to turn the spectator into an “untroublesome viewing subject” (e.g., Bernard Hermann’s [1911–1975] music in “Psycho” [1960])? (10) What types of information are not conveyable through film scores? (11) Do film composers find themselves falling back on certain techniques to heighten visual meaning? Verbal meaning? (12) In what ways are speech and sound effects connected to musical scores? (13) What part do film scorers play in the recording of films? How do they collaborate with sound engineers, if at all? (14) What strengths does music have as an art form that visual and verbal arts may not? (15) What might an understanding of film scoring contribute to the art of web design, if anything? (16) How is music used in video games such as “Myst” and “Riven”? (17) What process do film
composers use when they compose? (18) Do they consider themselves artists, technicians, or professionals, and why? (19) Under what circumstances is “aleatoric” (chance) music used and why? (20) Do composers attempt to understand the “poetic intent” of a film? If so, what type of adjustments might it lead them to make? (21) What are the connections between opera and scoring for film? (22) What are the cutting edge technologies in scoring today, and how important is technology to the art of film music? (23) What is the status of women in the film scoring industry?

* * *

I may develop this dissertation into a book that would elaborate on the concept of rhetoric as self-discipline and on the connection between this concept and the articles I have published here or elsewhere. In writing such a book, I would elaborate on key ideas for future research mentioned in this chapter, draw more widely on personal experience, incorporate more visual representations and music, and expand my interests and inquiries to other types of sense perception. Publishing such a collection on-line would be a challenging project and would help me develop as an author of hypertext.
INTERSECTIONS
reconstruction

In the box between two worlds
was an atom

one day it destroyed the city

in the rubble we found a body
we knew was ours
no one else recognized it

we rowed out to the place
where two rivers meet

and cast it overboard
and watched the stem
grow down

axis
of worlds that might have been

then we built everything again
exactly as before
beneath the same simple sky

how changed it all was

did I tell you
I had not known myself
The Little Boat

Here is the boat, at last, the little boat bound
for the other land of shady boughs,
sleep extolled by crickets, distant mowers,
a car or two driving idly by.
Though you are right:

it is not so small after all. Still, embark, if you please,
for the place of shady boughs, for an island—
did I say an island?—a better place at any rate, of peace,
mangoes, sand white as sails,
without words.

Get in the boat, and I will push you out
to meet waves portending kind currents,
always kind, to the place I promised.
(It is there, really, as real as the realest dream,
darkest shade, your love for me, mine for you.)

You must go, as it turns out, friends,
And I am sorry. Off to the island of peace
with you, and stay there.
For my part, I will do, perhaps,
the remembering.
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR “FAITH TRADITIONS”

(1) Background

- What is your religion, and how would you describe that religion to someone who does not know about it? What does it mean to you?
- Describe your family’s economic background.
- Describe your religious heritage.
- Tell me about your religious holidays.

(2) Personal commitment to organized religion

- What role does religion play in your life?
- How religious do you think you are?
- How important is your religion to you?
- Does your upbringing or your thoughts about life that might have trickled down through the filter of your religion ever enter into how you’re handling daily life?
- Can you imagine any circumstances under which you could give up your religion?
- Tell me about the strengths and weaknesses of your religion.
- Are there any ways in which you feel some separation between yourself and your religion? Is there some place in which you feel you’re a little bit on your own?

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1 Not all questions were asked of each participant.
(3) Feelings as a religious person in the academy and/or in a foreign country

- Do you ever feel the lack of your religious environment [as an immigrant]?
- How do you think Christians generally feel about you [as a non-Christian]?
- What part of your identity do you think associates most with the way things are done back home?
- Is there any way in which your views—your spiritual, religious, inner life views, conflict with the way things are done in the United States?
- Under what circumstances could you imagine that your views, your spiritual views, could become the dominant worldview? Is there any way that that could ever happen? What would have to change?
- Why do you think that the dominant, popular worldview is not the same as your own spiritual views; what do you think is going on?

(4) Opinions about the relevance of religious practice to social behavior

- Does your discomfort with society [assuming she has indicated a discomfort] come from society, or does it have anything to do with your religious belief?
- Tell me about [religious artifact in interview space].
- What difference do you see between the worldview of people [in your home country] and the worldview of the people here in the United States, or do you see any difference?
- Is there any way you could characterize the values of people [in your home country] compared to those of people here in the United States. Or is there any difference?
Let’s just talk about this one specific aspect of U.S. culture—which is this kind of regulatedness and focus on career and achievements. In what ways do you or do you not embrace that in your life? Do you value the way things are done at home more in any way?

Do you see a difference between public and private religion?

Does spirituality for you in any way include resistance to exterior forces?

Injustice, for instance. How does your spirituality accommodate that?

Does being religious help you resist certain trends in contemporary culture?

How do you feel that being religious has changed you as a person?
APPENDIX B:

ARTICLES STUDIED FROM THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF BOTANY


Yuncker, T. G. “Revision of the South American Species of Cuscuta.” 10(1923).


Herrick, Ervin M. “Seasonal and Diurnal Variations in the Osmotic Values and Suction Tension Values in the Aerial Portions of Ambrosia trifida.” 20(1933).


Swanson, C. A. “The Effect of Culture Filtrates on Respiration in Chlorella vulgaris.” 30(1943).


APPENDIX C: ACCOMPANYING COMPACT DISK
AND RELEVANT TECHNICAL INFORMATION

This compact disk (CD) is designed to be played on a standard CD player.
REFERENCES


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I was fortunate to have a committee of extraordinary teachers who have been supportive of all my research interests. If Scott Consigny had not saved my scholarly skin and agreed to chair my committee, I would still be editing reports about hog manure. His kindness should go down in the annals of something more important than this document. My twenty-year friendship with Carol David means the world to me. I thank her for sharing the pleasures of teaching writing in the classroom, the writing lab, and the multicultural learning community; learning about abstract art; and getting to know Herbert, Ted, and Ivy’s. Donald Payne was the first teacher to encourage me to pursue my research in the rhetoric of sound. Like all the papers I have ever shared with him, this dissertation benefited greatly from his superb critique and editing. I thank Jane Davis for being such a close reader; for opening new worlds to me; for expecting me to open my ears, eyes, and mind; and for introducing me to James Baldwin, magical thinking, and “Survivor.” I also would like to take this opportunity to ask her please never to feature me in an essay on academic values. No teacher can be more generous with his students than Bob Bollinger has been with me. Without Bob, I would know even less than I already do about postmodernism, feminism, and the dark side of liberalism; and thanks to him, I have heard of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*. God bless you every one!

Annie and Danny Apatiga, you make me proud to be a mother.

Parviz Omidvar and Maryam Soleimani, you have generously embraced this *divouneh*.

Laura and Barnett Cook, my beloved and loving parents, thank you for everything.

*Iraj Omidvar, what can I say?*
VITA

Education

Dissertation: “The Art of Rhetoric as Self-Discipline: Inquiries into Spirit, Sight, Sound”
Thesis: “Writing the Grammar Manual Academic English for ESL Students”
Recipient Iowa State University’s Research Excellence Award

Academic Employment Experience

1999–2003. Assistant and then Associate Director of Assessment and Curriculum,
Multicultural Learning Community. Iowa State University.
1998. Director of Accounting Department Writing Laboratory, Accounting Department,
Iowa State University.
programs, including Iowa State University Freshman Composition Program; Iowa State
University Intensive English and Orientation Program; Iowa State University Continuing
Education Program; Des Moines Area Community College Continuing Education Program in
Ames, Des Moines, and the Mitchellville State Penitentiary for Women.

Publications

Forthcoming. With Jane Davis. “Assessing a Multicultural Learning Community,”
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2002.
Abstract accepted. “Catherine Benincasa and the Rhetoric of Reproof.” For an anthology on
the arts of medieval rhetoric, Richard McNabb and Clyde Moneyhun, editors.
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“Entering a Multicultural Composition Community.” Lore: An e-Journal for Teachers of
“Ethos and Social Action: Reasons and Methods for Stressing Praxis in the Writing
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Academic English for ESL Students. 1984. (A manual for the ISU Writing Laboratory)
With Carol David and Margaret Graham. “Three Approaches to Proofreading.” Writing
Laboratory Newsletter. 1984.
Words

sails gravid
gallants flying
maneuvering ethereal
they are launching

arms loft
ambiguous
nonetheless you wave
as if in reply

the flags
and signals
the fleet
are gliding out

how soon
your ear loses
sight of them (and
the heart

a speck
the final
towed
ting)