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ComS 168/ Spring 2014

March 4, 2014

Annotative Bibliography

The following annotative bibliography should help serve those looking for a dynamic interpretation of the ways identity is constructed within rhetoric, especially that of a feminist perspective. The following articles both look at how identity works in communication and social movements, as well as how a limited viewpoint on identity serves as a limitation of your criticism. While the entries may seem to be quite different in their subject matter they all speak to the ideological aspect of rhetoric. The ideologies of the speaker, or rhetor, are defined within the identity they associate with, or the presence they create, thus leading them to their intentions for the rhetoric. But as Crenshaw reminds us in her article about the feminist critic, ideologies go beyond that of the rhetor and become fastened in the choices of the critic.

This bibliography holds within it a variety of interpretations of how identity is used in rhetoric, how it functions in social movements, and how it is a social construction, as well as a fluid and personal interpretation. This collection is an attempt to showcase and draw connections between different theorist and critics to show that the psychological nature of communication cannot be removed from the study of rhetoric. It is important to remember that humans communicate because of unmet needs or the devotion to issues; therefore the motives and personal ideologies are never separate from artifact. Often one’s identity stems directly from the ideologies and values that one holds. I think that the articles represented here serve as a reminder that the cultural assumptions and social constructions can never be removed form a piece of rhetorical text. By discovering which perspectives are created by the presence or those that have been left out, the critic can better understand both the motives of themselves and the rhetorical actor. By understanding the fragmentation of identity in which our society lives in, we can better understand the rhetoric that comes out of that society. Rhetoric is not isolated within itself; it is a culmination of all that has been experienced, all that is interpreted, and all the history that predates it. Rhetoric, in the words of Perelman’s critics, is “a psychological concept.”

**Citaion:**

Poulakos, T. (1987). Recovering the voices of the text: Rhetorical criticism as ideological critique. Conference Proceedings -- National Communication Association/American Forensic Association (Alta Conference on Argumentation); 1987 *Argument & Critical Practices*, p39-44, 6p.

**Abstract:**

This article attempts to show how the political, social, and cultural components of a situation cannot be removed from the rhetoric. In other words, the social implications of the rhetoric are not separate from the language used. The author states that it is a critics’ duty to ask how the rhetorical artifact is maintaining existing power structures or challenging them. Rhetorical criticism can open up both the ideological and utopian voices within the piece.

Poulakos uses Isocrates', the Panegyricus to demonstrate the ideological critique. Poulakos uses the historical situation of Athens at this time to understand the political, social, and cultural implications of the epideictic first half of oration. Poulakos found that the narrative of the Hellenic nation was used to predict the possibility of an expanded and solidified Athens; thus, combining the contemporary viewpoint that Athens was independently strong, with that of the emerging realities of the economic state of Athens, the need for interdependence.

This critical look at how ideologies are present in rhetoric can help us better understand how to approach rhetorical practice. The social situations surrounding the author at the time of creation cannot be separated from language of the rhetoric. It is in the specific context of the rhetoric that we find the motivations and rationale of the rhetor.

**Citation:**

Raaberg, G. (1998). Beyond fragmentation: Collage as feminist strategy in the arts. *Mosaic (Winnipeg)*, 30(3). University of Manitoba, Mosaic, p. 154-174.

**Abstract:**

The collage artistic form has been debated as post-modern dribble and an aesthetic form capable of demonstrating a political statement. Raaberg gives examples of a variety of different feminist artists and shows how their contribution to collage in mixed media has been able to give political statements. Her examples include Miriam Schapiro’s work in femmage, Nntozake Shange’s contribution to multicultural perspectives through dance performance, Barbara Krugers’s combination of images and words to pack a punch, Kathy Acker, forcing conflicting elements into relationships together, and Yvonne Rainer’s mosaic film form that calls into question the formation of identity as a fragmentary assemblage. These examples highlight how the collage format can create a distinct rhetorical argument in a variety of different medians.

Raaberg demonstrates that the feminist use of collage can be used as a healing process in order to understand the construction of one’s identity. By using collage forms to represent both the dominant culture’s perspective and the new construction of social organization, this rhetorical devise is able to cast a different viewpoint to its audience. While some argue that the collage was used heavily in post-modern art and therefore, is unoriginal as a political statement, Raaberg proposes that due to the historical nature of the woman’s place in society, the collage is a useful tool to artistically show the fragmentation of identity for women.

The article should remind critics of the very important role that the context plays in rhetorical criticism. Although it may be useful to compare a form, e.g. the collage, to all like it, one should not allow for the dominant idea to dictate how it’s analyzed and what we think.

**Citation:**

Whalen, S. & Hauser, G. A. Identity arguments in new social movement rhetoric. *University of Colorado at Boulder*. National Communication Association/ American Forensic Association (Conference on Argument), p. 439-446.

**Abstract:**

Whalen and Hauser demonstrate in their essay what a New Social Movement is in comparison to the old. The purpose for this article is to show how social movements form and function when there is such a vastly different community in today’s society. By explaining that the social actors of today’s movements vary in many ways—including: class, political affiliations, and religious standings—they are able to show that social groups are forming more towards issues of identity and less on ideologies and class struggles. The authors attempt to outline what elements are present in one of these new movements. Because actors in social movements may very far in distance, unlike old social movements where there was a sense of community, all practice is personal. Interest and commitment is closely related to one’s own personal attempts at self-actualization through collective action. The personal need to identify one’s self and to connect with others based on that identity is what the article shows to be the motives of New Social Movement theories.

The article shows that while the old elements of social mobilization may be gone, social movements have transformed into a new form of action that spans across the nations. These movements have been characterized as combining the individual narrative along with the collective need. The authors use the multi-cultural movement to represent a successful situation.

**Citation:**

Crenshaw, C. (1997). Women in the Gulf War: Toward an intersectional feminist rhetorical criticism. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, (8), p. 219-235.

**Abstract:**

The rationale of Carrie Crenshaw is to suggest a better way of critically analyzing text to show the significance of what is present and what is absent in relation to the dominant ideology of the United States. Crenshaw looks at the media’s representation of women in the Gulf War. What this analysis shows us is how the prominent representations of women in the military give preference to the white, heterosexual, US citizens. Crenshaw shows how feminist critiques that look purely at the differences represented between men and women, leaves out the differences among women. She demonstrates the shortcomings of this type of analysis and proposes that the means to correct this is a sensitive intersectional feminist rhetorical criticism which follows all of the pluralizing differences in women to find their intersection.

The critique on feminist critique is that it preferences white, heterosexual, middle-class women, and assumes that this struggle is universal for all women. Crenshaw’s fix for this problem is to examine all the way women are marginalized to come to substantial interpretation of the text. Her fix is a commitment to the diverse experiences of all women.

**Citation:**

Sheeler, K. H. (Nov. 2007). Feminism for Stupid Girls: A Feminist Rhetorical Critique of a Popular Song by Pink. *2007 Conference of the National Communication Association*. Indianapolis, IN.

**Abstract:**

Sheeler’s article shows how the rhetoric of music helps to shape people’s understanding of themselves and their realities. She uses a feminist critic, through the example of the once very popular song, “Stupid Girls,” by Pink, to show how patriarchy must be constantly produced and reproduced to maintain its dominance as an ideology.

Sheeler uses the work of feminist theorists, bell hooks and Sonja Foss to depict what feminism is and defines it according to hooks’ as, “…the struggle to end sexist oppression…” (p.7). By defining feminism, and looking at the goals it attempts to reach Sheeler sets up the rest of the essay by giving her a way in which to critic the song. By maintaining that feminist criticism challenges dominate perspectives to show that every individual has the capacity to claim their own agency, she positions herself to make a critic on the words of the song as well as the images associated with it.

Sheeler looks at the wording within Pink’s song to show how *girl* is used in a negative fashion, both as a symbol of naiveté, and of being possessed like property, indicating their lack of control in their own lives. While Pink shows the negative way females are represented in the media she offers no counter images, only the advice as to not be a stupid girl. The alternative images she shows in the video are highly unlikely for most women, including a female football player. Sheeler shows how the techniques used in this song both maintain and challenge feminist ideology.

**Citation:**

Tucker, R. E. (Nov. 2001). Figure, ground, and presence: A phenomenology of meaning in rhetoric. Quarterly Journal of Speech, 87(4). *National Communication Association*, pp. 396-414.

**Abstract:**

*Figure, Ground, and Presence* is an attempt to clarify the term presence in regards to Chaim Perelman’s New Rhetoric. The purpose is to show how this crucial term can be understood and used within rhetoric. Perelman has been criticized for being ambiguous in regards to the explanation of this term and because the notion of presence is a psychological concept. Tucker attempts to bridge the gap that these criticisms point out to bring about an understanding of presence.

Presence is created by the rhetorician, it is a part of the presentation, and can be understood as the emphasis placed in the rhetoric. Tucker shows through a series of ambiguous illustration that meaning within the image is in the control of the viewer. These ambiguous figures exemplify the idea of presence because it is the emphasis the viewer places that gives them meaning, like it is the emphasis given by the rhetorician that gives meaning to an artifact.

Tucker explains, that all language is ambiguous, that it creates meanings from experiences that have a variety of different perceptions. Because language is ambiguous it can be used in many different ways to bring an idea, concept, or value to mind. While rhetoricians morph language into the meaning they want the audience to take away, they are creating presence. It is the “stand-out-ness” of the artifact that is the presence that the rhetorician has created.