Welcome & roll call

Instructor info (in brief)
Primary email: sean.zdenek@ttu.edu
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Webcam: My webcam is now open through Yahoo IM
Virtual office hours: Thursdays 4-6 p.m. on Yahoo IM

Syllabus, schedule, WebCT

Rhetorical artifact
• Brief overview of some rhetorical methods
• More questions to ask and a list of possible artifact ideas
• Artifact roll call: Karen, Peter, Erika, Sally, Lennie, Kim

Roundtable session (overview and example)
• Sample roundtable exercise
• Sample artifact: Zell Miller’s speech at RNC 2004 (text & video)
• Sign-up sheet (email me 2-3 dates and/or methods on which you’d like to present as our roundtable leader)

Homework
• Read Campbell (on e-reserve), Kuypers Ch. 4, and Benson Ch. 8
• Review readings from Week 1 on “traditional criticism”: Kuypers Ch. 5, Benson Chs. 1 & 9
• Post reading response for Week 2
• Sign-up for Roundtable session

Icebreaker: What is rhetoric?
• Read through this list of Definitions of Rhetoric.
  o Take 5 minutes on your own to mark the definitions that
    ▪ You agree with
    ▪ Are contradictory
• Are problematic (i.e. worthy of critique or clarification from a theoretical perspective you’re familiar with)
• Are similar to each other – i.e. what are the recurring themes, issues, topics?
• Are appropriate in some contexts and not in others (explain)
• Intrigue you as worthy of class discussion
  o Now move to a sub-room for 7-10 minutes: last name B-D in Antimetabole Room; last name E-G in Paralipsis Room; last name H-Ka in Dianoea Room; last name Ke-S in Traductio Room. Compare your notes—introduce yourselves first—and then be prepared to summarize your discussion for the whole class.
  o Move back into the main classroom and de-brief us on what you discussed.

Readings on scope and nature of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism
(Bazerman, Kuypers Chs. 1-3, Schiappa)

Your role: jump in when you can, share with us what you find interesting, problematic, confusing, challenging, good/bad, etc. about the readings.
Goal: To simulate a really lively and fun discussion that gets us all thinking more deeply and, perhaps, differently.

Kuypers Ch. 1
• Scope & definition of rhetoric (Bill, Sara, and all)
  o Hollow words and flashy language (Kuypers p. 1)
  o Flowery language (Kuypers p. 1)
  o Narrower definition (Kuypers pp. 5-6) or all-encompassing definition (Bazerman p. 281 and Kuypers quoting Foss)
  o Is rhetoric limited to strategic uses of oral and written communication? Or can it encompass “any message regardless of the form it takes” (Kuypers p. 5)?
  o Is rhetoric too big?
  o Kuypers: moving from rhetor’s intentions to audience’s impressions. Consensus meaning vs. vague symbols
• To what extent can rhetoric be used to promote unethical behavior?
  o Kuypers (p. 9) only mentions unethical uses of rhetoric in passing. What do you make of this? Does rhetoric serve the good for the most part?
• Where does your artifact fall along this continuum from narrow definition to all-encompassing definition?
• How well does your artifact interface with the key terms in Kuypers Ch.1? Persuasion, strategic, intentional, probability (not certainty), goal-oriented, informative
• What’s the future of rhetoric?
  o Are there fewer places for public deliberation? Mass media, civic voyeurism (Kuypers p. 10)?
Kuypers Ch. 2
- Tip: Use Kuypers “three stages of the critical act” to put together your seminar paper
- What to include in your writing: description, analysis, evaluation (p. 20)
- Important role of critic’s personality/subjectivity
- Critic in control, not the method (p. 16)
- Strengths and weaknesses of using an established method (p. 19)
- Big challenge: developing your own theory
- How do you strike a balance between using a method as a guide and being controlled mechanically by it?

Edwin Black, “On Objectivity and Politics in Criticism” (Kuypers Ch. 3) (Pam, Kendall, and all)
- What role does politicized criticism play in rhetorical criticism? Should the critic be primarily interested in social activism and justice? Should the critic make his/her political convictions explicit?
- How can a critic be excessively objective?
  - Penultimate paragraph (p. 32): What is Black telling us about all the methods of criticism we’ll cover this term?
- Good criticism is supposed to surprise readers. What surprised you while doing the reading for this week?
- How do we know when we’re being surprising in our own critical essays? How do we avoid the “stock responses” that Black associates with impersonal and objective criticism?

Selzer, “Rhetorical Analysis” (Bazerman Ch. 10) (Barbara, Charlotte, and all)
- Rhetoric: for performing speeches/texts and interpreting them
- Two approaches: textual and contextual
- Textual = Traditional/Aristotelian (5 canons)
  - We’ll talk more about traditional criticism next week (Kuypers Ch. 5, Benson Chs. 1 & 9, Campbell)
- Rhetorical figures (style canon) – see http://rhetoric.byu.edu
- Which approach do you prefer in the context of your artifact?

Cool down
- What one thing do you take away from the readings and discussion this week? What stands out for you?
- Where are we going from here? Traditional criticism, second persona, situational perspective
• What did you want to talk about that we didn’t?