

COMS 353: Contemporary Rhetoric

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➤➤ Text

353 Readings: available at Duplication Station
— see attached 353 Readings list (listed below as 353R).

➤➤ Objective

We will take a specific theoretical approach to the study of contemporary discourse. That perspective is highlighted in the initial essays (# 1, 2) on the 353 Readings list. Using that perspective, the goal will be to explore the rich variety of rhetorical expression current in our lives. The 353R list is not exhaustive with respect to the kinds of rhetoric we might examine. We will begin with that list and add to it as subjects arise that are of specific interest and value. Student projects, undertaken either singly or in groups as you wish, will focus on one or more of the areas such as the rhetoric of hate speech or terrorism, or that of civil discourse and will present findings/interpretations to the class.

➤➤ Assignments

The following will be adjusted based on the total number in class -- it may well be too ambitious for a small class to engage in as many reports as implied below:

1. Reflection Papers:

Rather than schedule formal exams, there will be four reflection papers. The initial paper will respond to the theoretical material attacking, defending, explaining, questioning the positions taken. As we move beyond the theory stage into the actual analysis, the schedule will include several 'reflection' due dates you have some flexibility in selecting the last three due dates in completing papers. The following principles will guide assignments:

- 1) you will write at least one of the reflections on "areas" that you have not personally investigated/reported on in class
- 2) you can choose which areas to write on among those being reported thus, you will have some control over your own time with respect to when you write. *These papers will be 4-5 pages maximum. (15% each/60% overall).

2. In-Class Reports:

These will be assigned in class - working either alone or in a small group, and drawing on the resources listed in the attached "readings" list, present an oral report to the class on what you have discovered, the questions you have about the kind of rhetoric portrayed in the essays, etc. This is an open-ended discussion on what characterizes the "area" under exploration. What you think about the nature of the discourse analyzed is as critical as what others have said. Of the "Areas" identified beyond the theoretical material, I would expect you to work on no more than 2-3 during the quarter for in-class purposes. As suggested above, we may have to adjust expectations with respect to how this section is handled (20% overall).

3. Research Project:
Working either alone or with a small group (3-4 total), select an "Area" for investigation. This may be one you have reported on, or one that you find of interest. The "Area" also may be one not on the current list, but do check to make sure it is OK (as in the rhetoric of music or the rhetoric of science). Working from a specific question you want to answer (as in "Under what conditions, if any, can hate speech be restricted?" or "What is the function of 'Whiteness' in conveying ideas to others?"), research the available literature and develop a paper that does more than just report what is "out there." Given the theoretical perspective, take a critical stance toward the issues being examined, and develop your own argument about the discourse. Working alone, the paper should be 8-10 pages, plus endnotes. Working in a group, the paper should be more extensive. Use an average of 5-6 pages per contributor (thus, a 3 person group would produce a 15-18 page paper). I expect a professional report, in the sense that it is typed, printed so as to be readable, edited for the more common spelling and typing errors, and is developed sufficiently to clarify your analysis. We will discuss specific "mechanical" issues in class. (20%)

➤➤ Course Policies

- A. Attendance will be expected; excessive absence, as in missing 3-4 sessions without cause (as in the case of a university sponsored event) would work against your final grade (as in dropping from a B to a B- or B- to a C+). Although this is a larger class than normal, attendance will be monitored; status as a "missing person" is not one you will want to earn.
- B. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams is not an option in this course. Plagiarism involves the submission of the words/ideas of others without appropriate attribution. This includes quoting a source without identifying the material used, borrowing phrases, key terms or ideas without attributing these to a source, using fictional resources, or submitting the work of another person as your own. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism will be addressed on a case by case basis; but may range from an "F" on an assignment/exam to expulsion from the university.
- C. Reading Assigned Material will be an expectation. You will be expected to have the material read by the time of each class; I take the approach of reducing the amount of reading in order to better assure that it is read well and understood clearly. Material from the text, as well as supplementary material, will be discussed during each session; you will be responsible for all text material, whether discussed or not.

➤➤ Tentative Outline

- 3/ 29 M HAND OUT SYLLABUS
- 3/ 31 W Lecture: The nature of rhetoric
- 4/ 5 M Critical/cultural Rhetoric 353R - # 1, 2
- 4/ 7 W (Continued)

- 4/ 12 M Organizing area reviews
- 4/ 14 W Individual/Group work day - Reflection #1 due
- 4/ 19 M Area: Hate Speech # 3, 4
- 4/ 21 W Hate Speech
- 4/ 26 M Area:Feminism # 5
- 4/ 26 W Feminism - Reflection paper due*
- 5/ 3 M Area: Gay/Lesbian/Transgender # 6
- 5/ 5 W Gay/Lesbian/Transgender
- 5/ 10 M Area: Whiteness # 7, 8
- 5/ 12 W Reflection paper due
- 5/ 17 M Area: African-American # 9, 10
- 5/ 19 W Area: Native American # 11 - Reflection paper due
- 5/ 25 M Area: Chicano/Latina/Hispanic # 12
- 5/ 27 W Area: Cross-Cultural # 13, 14 - Reflection paper due
- 6/ 1 M Area: Visual # 15, 16
- 6/ 3 W OPEN Day - Reflection paper due

Final Exam Week Paper Due during Final Exam hour

*there are more 'due dates' than necessary - reflects choice available - need to do 3 beyond the initial paper with at least one on an area you have not reported on in class. 353 READINGS. Those numbered are available at the Duplication Station for photocopying; those not so marked are listed as resources that may be located in the Library and examined as part of a search for information within a specific area.

►► Theoretical Framework

- * Goldzwig, S. (1998). Multiculturalism and the twenty-first century. *Southern Communication Journal*, 63, 273-290.
- * McKerrow, R. E. (1998). Corporeality and cultural rhetoric: A site for rhetoric's future. *Southern Communication Journal*, 63, 315-328.
- * McKerrow, R. E. (1995). Critical rhetoric: Theory and praxis. In Burgchardt, C. (Ed.), *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (pp.124-146). State College, PA: Strata. [originally published in *Communication Monographs*, 56, 91-111.
- * McKerrow, R. E. (1993). Critical rhetoric and the possibility of the subject. In Angus, I. Langsdorf, L. (Eds.), *The Critical Turn: Rhetoric and Philosophy in Postmodern Discourse* (pp. 51-67). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois Univ. Press.
- * Cloud, D. (1994). The materiality of discourse as oxymoron: A challenge to critical rhetoric. *Western Journal of Communication*, 58, 141-163.

►► Hate Speech/Terrorism

- * Whillock, D. E. (1995). Symbolism and the representation of hate in visual discourse. In Whillock, R. K. and Slayden, D. (Eds.), *Hate speech* (pp. 122-141).

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- * Muir, J. K. (1995). Hating for life: Rhetorical extremism and abortion clinic violence. In Whillock, R. K. and Slayden, D. (Eds.), *Hate speech* (pp. 163-195). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- * Zickmund, S. (1997). Approaching the radical other: The discursive culture. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Virtual culture: Identity and communication in cyberspace* (pp. 185-205). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ZA4201 v57.
- * Bello, R. (1996). A Burkeian analysis of the 'political correctness' confrontation in higher education. *Southern Communication Journal*, 61, 243-252.

➤➤ **Feminism**

- * Campbell, K. K. (1998). The discursive performance of femininity: Hating Hillary. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 1, 1-20.
- * Griffin, C. L. (1996). The essentialist roots of the public sphere: A feminist critique. *Western Journal of Communication*, 60, 21-39.
- * Palczewski, C. H. (1996). Bodies, borders and letters: Gloria Anzaldua's 'speaking in tongues' A letter to women writers.' *Southern Communication Journal*, 62, 1-16.
- * Dow, B. J. & Tonn, M. B. (1993). 'Feminine style' and political judgment in the rhetoric of Ann Richards. *QJS*, 79, 286-302.
- * Warnick, B. (1999). Masculinizing the feminine: Inviting women on line 1997. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 16, 1-19.

➤➤ **Gay/Lesbian/Transgender**

- * Smith, R. R. & Windes, R. R. (1997). The progay and antigay issue culture: Interpretation, influence and dissent. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 83, 28-48.
- * Reeves, C. (1998). Rhetoric and the AIDS virus hunt. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84, 1-22.
- * Brookey, R. A. (1996). A community like Philadelphia. *Western Journal of Communication*, 60, 40- 56.

➤➤ **Whiteness**

- * Nakayama, T. K. & Krizek, R. L. (1995). Whiteness: A strategic rhetoric. *QJS*, 81, 291-209.
- * Crenshaw, C. (1997). Resisting whiteness' rhetorical silence. *Western Journal of Communication*, 61,253-278.
- * Martin, J. N., Krizek, R. L., Nakayama, T. K., & Bradford, L. (1996). Exploring whiteness: A study of self labels for white Americans. *Communication Quarterly*, 44, 125-144.

- * Shome, R. (1996). Race and popular cinema: The rhetorical strategies of whiteness in *City of Joy*. *Communication Quarterly*, 44, 502-518.

➤➤ African-American

- * McPhail, M. L. (1998). From complicity to coherence: Rereading the rhetoric of Afrocentricity. *Western Journal of Communication*, 62, 114-140.
- * Orbe, M. (1994). 'Remember, it's always whites' ball': Descriptions of African American male communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 42, 287-300.
- * Lucaites, J. L. & Condit, C. M. (1995). Reconstructing equality: Culturetypal and counter-cultural rhetorics in the martyred black vision. In Burghardt, C. (Ed.), *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (pp.457-477). State College, PA: Strata
- * McPhail, M. L. (1998). Passionate intensity: Louis Farrakhan and the fallacies of racial reasoning. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84, 416-429.
- * Crenshaw, C. (1998). Colorblind rhetoric. *Southern Communication Journal*, 63, 244-256.
- * Stewart, C. J. (1997). The evolution of a revolution: Stokely Carmichael and the rhetoric of black power. *QJS*, 83, 429-446.
- * Jackson, R. L. (1999). White space, white privilege: Mapping discursive inquiry into the self. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 85, 38-54.

➤➤ Native American

- * Morris, R. (1997). Educating savages. *QJS*, 83, 152-171.
- * Morris R. & Wander, P. (1990). Native American rhetoric: Dancing in the shadows of the ghost dance. *QJS*, 76, 164-191.
- * Lake, R. A. (1997). Argumentation and self: The enactment of identity in Dances with Wolves. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 34, 66-89.

➤➤ Chicano/Latina/Latino/Hispanic

- * Delgado, F. P. (1995). Chicano movement rhetoric: An ideographic interpretation. *Communication Quarterly*, 43, 446-455.
- * Willis, J. L. (1997). "Latino night": Performances of a Latino/a culture in northwest Ohio. *Communication Quarterly*, 45,335-354.
- * Delgado, F. P. (1998). Chicano ideology revisited: Rap music and the (re)articulation of Chicanismo. *Western Journal of Communication*, 62, 95-113.
- * Delgado, F. P. (1998). When the silenced speak: The textualization and complications of Latina/o Identity. *Western Journal of Communication*, 62, 420-438.
- * Flores, L. A. 1996. "Creating Discursive Space through a Rhetoric of Difference: Chicana Feminists Craft a Homeland." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 82: 142-156.

➤➤ Cross-Cultural

- * Hasian, M. & Flores, L. A. (1997). Children of the stones: The Intifada and the mythic creation of the Palestinian state. *Southern Communication Journal*, 62, 89-106.
- * Lee, W. S. (1998). In the names of Chinese women. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84, 283-302.
- * Garrett, M. M. (1993). Pathos reconsidered from the perspective of classical Chinese rhetorics. *QJS*, 79, 19-39.
- * Hegde, R. S. (1996). Narratives of silence: Rethinking gender, agency and power from the communication experiences of battered women in South India. *Communication Studies*, 47, 303-317.
- * Fabj, V. (1998). Intolerance, forgiveness and promise in the rhetoric of conversion: Italian women defy the mafia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84, 190-208.
- * McKerrow, R. E. & Bruner, M. (1997). Argument and multiple identities: Contemporary European nationalism and environmentalism. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 34, 51-66.
- * Special section on communication practices in the Pacific Basin. (1992). *Communication Quarterly*, 40, 368-421.

➤➤ Visual Themes

- * Blair, C., Jeppeson, M. S., & Pucci, E. (1995). Public Memorializing in postmodernity: The Vietnam veterans memorial as a prototype. In Burghardt, C. (Ed.), *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (pp 564- 589). State College, PA: Strata.
- * Jorgensen-Earp, C. R. & Lanzilotti, L. A. (1998). Public memory and private grief: The construction of shrines at the sites of public tragedy. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 84, 150-170.
- * Edwards, J. L. & Winkler, C. (1997). Representative form and the visual ideograph: The Iwo Jima image in editorial cartoons. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 83, 289-310.
- * McKerrow, R. E. (1993). Visions of society in discourse and art: The failed rhetoric of social realism. *Communication Quarterly*, 41, 355-66.
- * Meister, M. (1997). 'Sustainable development' in visual imagery: Rhetorical function in the Jeep Cherokee. *Communication Quarterly*, 45, 223-234.
- * Armada, B. J. (1998). Memorial agon: An interpretive tour of the national civil rights museum. *Southern Communication Journal*, 63, 235-243.
- * Taylor, B. (1998). The bodies of August: Photographic realism and controversy at the national air and space museum. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 1, 331-362.
- * LaWare, M. R. (1998). Encountering visions of Aztlan: Arguments for ethnic pride, community activism and cultural revitalization in Chicano murals. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 34, 140-153.

➤➤ Grading Criteria for Written Work--ESSAYS, RESEARCH PAPERS, IN-CLASS EXAM RESPONSES

- F Answer reveals you really have no clue what is going on, or are so carelessly inattentive to matters of style as to write an incomprehensible response.
- D Answer reveals less than adequate understanding of theory, concept, or other relevant information. Answer may also misapply concept, use an inappropriate or weak example in attempting to clarify an explanation, or may ramble on in the hope that something will eventually hit the intended target. Answer also may be more or less on target, but carelessly or sloppily written/proofed.
- C Answer provides an on-target recitation of the correct material from the text or other sources being consulted. Answer meets the basic expectations with respect to number of outside sources, or other conditions of a specific assignment. The writing, while clear and comprehensible, is otherwise non-exceptional, or gives evidence of inattention to basic matters of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- B Answer is not only on-target, but is written in a clear, well-organized style, with few errors (and indicates attention given to correcting spelling or punctuation mistakes). In addition, examples illustrate thought beyond recall or recitation of a text's commentary and adds to the overall understanding of the theory, concept, or other materials being evaluated. There is evidence of having gone beyond the text to consult other sources of information that might be relevant.
- A Answer goes beyond that required for a "B" response to indicate critical analysis, offering evidence of a cogent, well-reasoned defense of a position or argument that is advanced relative to the object under consideration. In other words, the answer reveals a clear authorial voice in command of the material. In addition, the style is elegant, indicating careful attention to presenting a well-constructed, well-thought-out response that advances understanding, stimulates thought or is otherwise evidence of exceptional thinking.

Note: These standards apply as general guidelines for the evaluation of assigned papers, essays, etc. As should be clear, inattention to matters of style/format will result in a corresponding decrease in a grade, even when content is otherwise clear and on-target. As a further explanation of these criteria, consider the following comments: A "C" answer is a good answer -- it simply does not do any more than is being asked. A "B" answer is a better answer, but does not reveal depth of analysis that would be required to be considered exceptional. An "A" is an exceptional piece of work. Simply understanding the material is not the equivalent of an "A."