ETHOS: A SURVEY FROM CLASSICAL RHETORIC THROUGH DECONSTRUCTION

BY

MICHAEL A. CRONIN

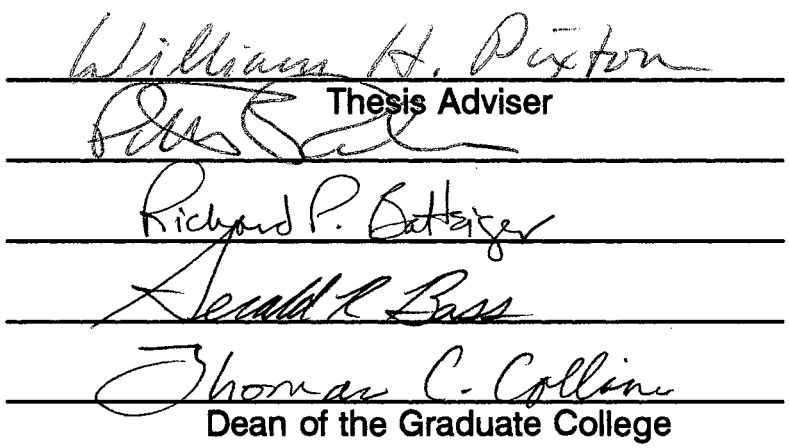
Bachelor of Science
Northeast Missouri State University
Kirksville, Missouri
1978

Master of Arts
Northeast Missouri State University
Kirksville, Missouri
1979

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
July,1995

ETHOS: A SURVEY FROM CLASSICAL RHETORIC THROUGH DECONSTRUCTION

Thesis Approved:



Thesis Adviser

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation would not exist without the encouragement and guidance of Dr. William H. Pixton. If any of us are lucky enough to complete our education having one good teacher, we are truly fortunate. I found in August of 1979 one such teacher--Dr. Pixton--and I hope to follow in his footsteps, stumbling no doubt in the effort, but better off for having tried it.

To him I dedicate this work.

I am also indebted to the ceaseless efforts of Professors Batteiger, Rollins, and Bass--fine men all--who each in his own way gave me help. Dr. Batteiger introduced me to the scholarship of rhetoric; Dr. Rollins taught me how to tough it out, to stand tall under fire; and Dr. Bass showed me the expertise of a distinguished educator.

Also, I would like to thank Northern Oklahoma College, which supported me beyond the call of duty in this endeavor. Without Doris, Ron, and Joe, I would have had neither the time nor the money to

pursue this task. Without Debbie--my coach and colleague--the hum of technology would remain forever silent.

Last, but always first, is my family. As a hard-minded scientist, Jane, you taught me how to think in a straight line and hammer down the loose ends of my ideas. And I promise to keep secret your truths of our world beyond, of that dimension that lies within our grasp, yet eludes, forever. To Kerry, Jordyn, and Jake, I say this: carry forth with pride, integrity, and compassion in your pursuits of excellence and leave your signature on this world, or another.

Mike Cronin

Stillwater, Oklahoma

July, 1995

PREFACE

This dissertation makes no grand claims for the final truth involving the study of rhetoric. In fact, I question to what extent it is innovative, insightful, or original. Much of what follows stands on the rich heritage of our discipline; my role, primarily, is to review the long history of rhetoric and to remind my readers that we do indeed reinvent the wheel at every turn. As my rhetoric professor, Dr. Batteiger, once said, "composition has a history, but no memory." This observation broadly serves as the foundation for this study. It also humbles me. If I bring to this work any advantages that the young guns of academia--those razor sharp minds full of new-found theory--do not have, it is this: age and experience. In the high noon of life, and with twenty-something teaching years under my belt, I know that what goes around comes around. I have been in the business long enough to have hit the second wave of what was thought to be the tempests of new theories that, in retrospect, were ripples of thought that come and go with the current of time.

Presently, and perhaps as always, confusion reigns supreme in our discipline. What is our subject matter? How should it be taught? Who

should teach it? Answers are as varied as the number of people asking them. Read any journal, attend any conference, and talk with any two English teachers and ample evidence exists as to the theoretical swamp we find ourselves in. At a recent English conference I attended, diversity prevailed. Sessions ranged from "Cultural Diversity," to "Women's Studies," to "Correct Writing." To add to the confusion, other fields seem to be "invading our territory," fields such as psychology, sociology, linguistics, and business. Rhetoric, it would seem, has no proper subject matter.

I contend, however, that despite the proliferation of theories and the confusion they have wrought in some areas, certain rhetorical principles remain unchanged. Despite how we twist our discipline to fit any number of aims, rhetoric, as defined by Aristotle, is as relevant now as it was in ancient times:

> Rhetoric is the faculty of discovering in the particular case all the available means of persuasion. It has no special subject matter (Cooper xxxvii).

Lane Cooper's translation of Aristotle lays further groundwork for the purpose of rhetoric in discussing the difference between "inartistic" and

"artistic" proofs. Inartistic proofs are external to the persuasion: "witnesses, confessions, and contracts are external to the art of speaking" (xxxvii). In contemporary terms, inartistic writing may also include the kind of voiceless prose that supposes an understood writer "outside" the piece, as well as the kind of prose where the writer is previously known by the audience. In either case the reader can make certain assumptions without any real sense of "realizing" the writer. The argument, as it were, is known prior to the reading.

But of greater importance to contemporary writing is Aristotle's idea of "artistic" proof. With artistic proofs, the writer must invent his own methods of appeal, independent from any outside point of reference. Most writers, lacking the benefit of a reputation that precedes them, must create their own "artistic" proofs, or, as in the case of the voiceless prose of the bureaucracy, cause such proofs to hover above the piece unchallenged because of the very aim of the discourse, as in contracts, policies, and manuals. Not having reputations nor desiring voiceless prose, writers must invent from within their texts their own available means of persuasion, as Cooper states, by "evincing through the speech a personal character that will win over the confidence of the listener;

engaging the listener's emotions; [and by] proving a truth...by argument" (xxxviii). We have, in other words, three means of artistic proofs: ethos, pathos, and logos.

Of these three proofs I have chosen ethos as my topic for this dissertation. Although other areas within rhetoric are worthy of study (certainly pathos and logos deserve renewed attention), and although Aristotle's larger framework of rhetoric comprising invention, arrangement, and style renders indefinite new possibilities for study, I nonetheless maintain that ethos is the essential foundation for the study of rhetoric. With this assertion, I will clarify and categorize the role of ethos as it was established and as it has evolved from classical rhetoric through deconstruction.

This survey will first introduce the general status of ethos in contemporary rhetoric. I will next establish the classical roots of ethos as they were established in the works of Aristotle, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero. I will then trace these roots to modern rhetoric, particularly as they appear in post-1963 rhetoric, arguing in the process that during the period 1875-1963 ethos had disappeared. Additionally, I will comment on the role of ethos in deconstruction. Also,

I will include a chapter on pedagogical applications of projecting ethos in expository composition. And finally, I will conclude my study with some observations about the future directions of our discipline.

My overall objective, throughout this study, is to reestablish the firm foundation upon which rhetoric is built: the foundation of self.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Introduction: Where's the Ethos?

I celebrate myself, and sing myself
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you

Walt Whitman

I sit on this warm May day in my office at Northern Oklahoma College, petrified at the screen that lies blank before me. Struggling, I type one word at a time in my attempt to write the most important paper of my life, the significance of which paralyzes my thoughts. But plunge on I will, and if my readers will bear with me, they may come away knowing something they didn't know when they started. At the least, I promise the readers will get a strong dose of my own ethos.

Like every writer, I want to be heard. This desire, though, demands that I rise to the occasion to which I speak, that I present myself credibly to a community of scholars who know well my topic, and that my consciousness, inhibited, will ultimately turn outward where we together may arrive at a new understanding of ethos. For now, as Peter Elbow

suggests in his Writing With Power, I am "closing my eyes as I speak" (50). Before I hone in on the specifics of my paper, I would like first to discuss the general status of our profession today, for to pluck ethos from the vastness of rhetoric is to distort its central role in the epistemological evolution of its significance in Composition pedagogy (I attribute the upper-case "C" to Stephen North).

The year 1963 marks the birth of composition as we know it today. The 1963 CCCC, attended by Wayne Booth, Edward P.J.Corbett, Francis Christensen, Richard Young, Richard Larson, Ross Winterowd, and numerous others, changed the course of the way we viewed composition. Before 1963 and the explosion of research that ensued, writing was relegated to the basements of English departments where underqualified teaching assistants, without methodology, would hack away the best they could. Composition had no proper subject matter, as Aristotle once said about rhetoric. A student of that era, I remember the fog called Comp I where I wrote in the darkness of having no subject, purpose, or audience. I wrote mindlessly and weeks would pass before my papers were returned with one mark: a circled letter grade.

I remember, though, the difference a few years made. In the late 1960's I reluctantly enrolled in a rhetoric course taught by an English professor. His approach was Christensen's generative rhetoric. For the first time, someone taught me how to write, how to craft my sentences, and how to subordinate my thoughts. I became an English major after that course. Then, in graduate school, I encountered a hard-nosed Director of Composition who insisted upon the mastery of James Kinneavy's triangle and Booth's stance. Suddenly, writing had reference and purpose, a concreteness upon which I could hang my ideas.

Armed now with structure, the triangle, and the stance, I was well on my way to generating prose with some confidence and a modicum of mastery. Equally important, the CCCC conference of 1963 provided insight into the teaching of our discipline.

But something was still missing. Where's the ethos? At a 1990 Southwest Regional Conference of English, I listened to a speaker talk about "engagement." To me the term sounded squishy, a rehash of the mid-sixties expressionistic writing that wreaked havoc under the guise of poetic license, under what Edward P.J. Corbett terms "creative self-expression [before] the student had a self to express and a facility for

expressing it" (xi). This speaker, though, seemed different and his message made sense. In the triangular scheme of composition, he maintained, novice writers invariably emphasize the content, ignoring in the process any notion of self or audience, or ethos and pathos. He further claimed that even experienced writers tend to refrain from projecting themselves as people writing to people.

This observation triggered my thinking. I have long noticed that student writing is largely barren of any sense of self. Rarely do I see an "I," personal narratives, or a personal perspective of any sort. I went back to Booth and Kinneavy and reconsidered the triangle and the stance. In Booth's conceptual framework, writers must situate themselves in the writer's stance: subject, purpose, and audience. With Kinneavy, writers must situate themselves within a triangle: ethos, logos, and pathos.

Booth and Kinneavy made solid contributions to the teaching of writing. However, problems arise. Pixton notes that "the triangle provides little information about how writers vary the emphases on the components (writer, audience, reality, and text) during the writing process, and about how they determine the existing distribution of

emphases" (263). As Booth suggests, the writer's stance must balance itself with the communications triangle--a balance that is precarious for most writers. Collapsing from any angle, the stance is skewed: ethos exclusively results in an "entertainer's" stance; pathos exclusively results in the "advertiser's" stance; and logos exclusively results in the "pedant's" stance (142). As Kinneavy suggests, the writer's framework balances on a triangle of classical origin, specifically Aristotle's ethos, logos, or pathos. With these proofs in mind, I could better see the distortions that surface in composition. Ironically, most writers assume the pedantic stance, emphasizing logos as the mainstay of their composition. Distance and objectivity distinguish the bulk of writing where the writer disappears in vapors of third-person pronouns, passive voice, and cold, stilted prose announced by the infamous phrase "in today's modern society."

My question remains: where's the ethos? Some of the pedagogical practices of the mid 1960's stressed ethos to the point of poetic expression, an expression void of audience and subject. According to Corbett, a kind of "closed fist" rhetoric dominated the 1960's that was characterized as "gregarious, coercive, and non-

conciliatory" (vii). Corbett goes on to say that writers, "instead of attempting to ingratiate themselves with an audience, deliberately attempt to shock, to exasperate, even to alienate an audience" (vii). Ethos in the 1960's was exploited as a vehicle for protest. Writing teachers, responding to this political agenda, promoted ethos to the exclusion of subject or audience. Or, to the extreme of political activism, writers were encouraged to express a sort of nothingness under the guise of self-expression. Bizarre assignments--"describe the sound of one hand clapping" or "describe clouds and their symbolic relationship to the writer"-- illustrate such meaningless prose.

Rhetorical schools of thought had no classification. Teachers, consequently, taught without an awareness of a rhetorical conceptual framework.

James Berlin's "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class" provides such a classification. These useful classifications that place schools of rhetorical thought in perspective include the following: cognitive rhetoric, expressionistic rhetoric, and social-epistemic rhetoric. Furthermore, within his classifications, the issue of ethos becomes paramount in his discussion of ideology. According to Berlin, "rhetoric is regarded as

always already ideological," and therefore "a rhetoric can never be innocent" (477). The implications of these premises are vast. Within Berlin's classifications, writers bring forth their values in composition, and these values must be reflected in their ethos. Berlin does not advocate, however, that we embrace ethos to the exclusion of audience or subject. Instead, he places ideology within these three broad appeals and implies that such classification clarifies the writer's ethical role. Though his distinctions defy neat chronological order, Berlin maintains that we currently stress cognitive rhetoric, a science-based discourse that has roots in current-traditional rhetoric and its Aristotelian foundation (a foundation that time has distorted, as I will show in Chapter Three). Berlin further states in "Rhetoric and Ideology," that "current traditional rhetoric with its positivistic epistemology and its pretentions to scientific precision" dominated nineteenth-century rhetoric (481). Additionally, "cognitive rhetoric has made similar claims to being scientific" (481).

Berlin's definition of cognitive rhetoric closely resembles Richard Young's definition of current-traditional rhetoric. Richard Young's definition is useful:

> The emphasis [is] on the composed product rather than the composition process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis) (qtd.in Berlin, "Current-Traditional Rhetoric..." 1).

With these emphases, the writer's ethos is clearly diminished (perhaps to almost total self-effacement) in the name of disinterested scientism.

In addition to Berlin's points about cognitive rhetoric, Berlin discusses expressionistic rhetoric. He defines it as a mode of discourse where, in its extreme form, the "existent is located within the individual subject" ("Rhetoric and Ideology" 484). The aim of this mode is to view rhetoric as an art, as a "creative act in which the process--the discovery of the true self--is as important as the product" (484). With roots in Plato, this rhetorical school blossomed in the 1960's with proponents like Ken Macrorie, Walker Gibson, Donald Murray, and Peter Elbow. Arguably, to a fault, ethos became the sole domain of rhetoric. No longer constrained by the conventions of standard English or inhibited by the dictates of current-traditional rhetoric, writers were free to explore and

express their inner feelings without the constraining influence of an audience peering over their shoulder. In other words, expressionistic writing neglected the reader.

Ethos thus balances between the ideological neutrality of a scientific, external reality and the value-laden subjectivity of an internal reality as perceived differently by each writer. On the one hand, the writer almost vanishes amid the facts and calculations of the text. On the other hand, the writer is all there is. These extremes demonstrate, for now, the polarities of objectivity and subjectivity that generally distinguish composition.

Berlin does, however, in "Rhetoric and Ideology," advocate a compromise of sorts in his discussion of what he calls social-epistemic rhetoric. Not objective, not subjective, this rhetoric, as the name implies, involves an interaction between writer and reader and is epistemological in that it generates knowledge as "an area of ideological conflict....[that] supports economic, social, political, and cultural democracy" (489). Ethos within this context, though, demands that writers know their values relative to their culture's values. Basic to this knowledge are three questions Berlin raises: "What exists? What is good? And what is

possible?" (479). Though such questions undoubtedly stimulate writers' thinking, and though such questions may reveal writers' ideology, I have found that the depth of these questions digs a deep hole that buries the best of writers, blurring, rather than clarifying, their ethos. Novice writers frequently lack the sophistication of thought needed for this type of introspective writing.

Berlin's middle ground of social epistemic rhetoric, as discussed in "Current Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice," places ethos as derivative of the writer's strong sense of self--intellectually, politically, and culturally. Unlike the diminished role of ethos in current-traditional rhetoric where "the thesis exists outside the writer...rather than something that grows internally," ethos in the social-epistemic sphere of thinking is the reflection of a sophisticated mind (4). This emphasis sharply differs from the ethical considerations of classical rhetoric as defined primarily by Aristotle and Plato and also differs from the creative considerations of expressionistic rhetoric where "truth" is relative to the individual.

Such positioning, however noble, may be too ideal and beyond the grasp of most writers. Though I agree that writers must discover and

express their "ideological claims" (Berlin, "Rhetoric and Ideology" 477), writers at any level must begin developing their ethos in more fundamental, practical ways. Linda Flower's influential writer-based prose approach espouses ethos as the foundation of writing. Like Berlin, and like the advocates of expressionistic rhetoric, Flower maintains that writers must be at the center of composition. But Flower does not endorse the loftiness of Berlin and the creativity of expressionism; instead, she sees ethos more as a developmental technique that motivates writers to go beyond "the simple act of self- expression" (19). Though steeped in psychological language, Flower views the development of ethos (Flower never uses this term) as a cognitive stage in the writing process. Stating that communication is "egocentric" (20), Flower contends that writer-based prose begins the natural development of writing that must ultimately "transform to a reader-based prose" (20).

The point here is that in contemporary rhetoric two extremes of ethos surface, both similar in placing ethos at the center of composition, but diametrically opposite in their purpose. With Berlin and fellow advocates of a social-epistemic rhetoric, as well as advocates of expressionistic rhetoric, ethos exists for writers to discover. Knowing

"competing versions of reality" (Berlin, "Rhetoric and Ideology" 477), these writers enter the rhetorical arena armed with a strong sense of their identity and with the implied confidence to express it. With Flower and fellow advocates of cognitive rhetoric, ethos is a method of discovery, of "verbal expression written by a writer to himself and for himself" (19). The difference is significant: ethos in social-epistemic, and, to a lesser degree in expressionistic rhetoric, projects an ethical portrait, more consciously than not, to a reader. Ethos in cognitive rhetoric reflects, more subconsciously than not, the emerging personality of the writer without regard to readers. For Flower, ethos is practical; for Berlin, ethos is ethical.

Thus far, I have summarized the current status of ethos in contemporary rhetoric, and in doing so I have no doubt suggested through unintended digressions and ambiguity the extreme difficulty of defining precisely its terms or purpose. Prior to the rhetorical revolution of 1963, ethos remained a diminished aspect of the classical pisteis, surrendering its impact to the appeals of pathos and logos. Under the broad classification of current-traditional rhetoric that has dominated rhetorical theory since the late nineteenth century, ethos has

been largely situated "outside" in an external, positivistic, science-oriented realm of perception. In Berlin's phrase, in current-traditional rhetoric, ethos was "out there" since the inception of English composition at Harvard in 1875 ("Current-Traditional Rhetoric..." 3).

With Kinneavy's "The Basic Aims of Discourse," Booth's "The Rhetorical Stance," Berlin's "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," Flower's "Writer-Based Prose," and numerous other rhetorical theories that have flourished since the revolution of 1963, ethos has perhaps reclaimed the prominence given it in classical rhetoric, where its position, as Nan Johnson asserts, was that of an "integral force of cultural cohesion [which affected] changing attitudes in western society" (114). I propose that ethos has regained in the past thirty years a more dominant role than it has been given under the influence of current-traditional rhetoric.

The purpose of this study is not, however, to quibble over ideological differences that separate current-traditionalists from expressionists from "new rhetoricians" from poststructuralists. Within these schools more similarities exist than differences. We tend to reinvent the wheel at every turn. Nor does this study promise any

definitive and final solution to the "proper" role of ethos in contemporary rhetoric. I stand humbly on the broad shoulders of those who have devoted their lives to advancing the field of rhetoric to the discipline that it has become today: an emerging force that is defining its own proper subject matter.

Rather, the purpose of this study is to analyze classical, modern, and poststructural rhetoric in terms of classifying the role of ethos in each of these broad areas. My analysis will involve primarily the distance between writer and reader within each period discussed. And from this discussion, I will distinguish between character and personality as these traits pertain to ethos. Based on this analysis I will explain ethos and its pedagogical applications to the freshman composition course.

In attempting to situate the role of ethos in contemporary rhetoric, I find it necessary to survey its significance in the three broad areas that I have identified. In this effort, Chapter Two discusses ethos as defined by classical rhetoricians, with Aristotle and Plato the locus of my discussion. Their definitions, antithetical in most respects, serve both as a foundation and a framework from which any discussion of ethos emanates. I will further cite Quintilian's

and Cicero's contributions to the refinement of ethos. Additionally, I will discuss the contemporary interpretations of classical ethos in the works of Corbett, Yoos, Lunsford and Ede, Crowley, Johnson, and others. Central to my discussion of classical ethos is the moral character projected by the writer as either instilled or created, ideal or real.

Chapter Three discusses ethos from a modern perspective. Post current-traditional in its emphasis, this chapter details the influence of Kinneavy, Booth, Christensen, Young, Elbow, Larson, Berlin, Corder, and a host of others who comprise The New Rhetoric (a slippery term) that emphasizes, among other significant issues, the role of ethos in contemporary rhetoric.

Pivotal here is the shift from objective standards of classical morality ("absolute" in Plato's case) to the more subjective, ideological definitions that writers bring to the text. Morality, or ethics, becomes less a concern than the "voice" projected from an individual writer. At the risk of over-generalizing and over-simplifying, I contend that the writer's ethos as an extension of a personality takes precedence over the more classical sense of character.

Chapter Four discusses the role of ethos in post-structural rhetoric. Though I have written at some length in this present chapter about the revolution of composition that began at the CCCC in 1963, there was a second revolution that took place at Johns Hopkins University in 1966, which introduced to America, among others, Roland Barthes, Michael Foucault, and Jacques Derrida. Ethos, at best, becomes ethereal; at worst, it dies: "the modern text...is read in such a way that at all its levels the author is absent" (Barthes 143). For Foucault, the author "disappears" and is "outside" the text; the point is reduced to the question, "what matter who's speaking?" (193). Influenced in large part by the existential angst of Nietzsche, poststructural rhetoric is ambiguous in its treatment of ethos. Though Barthes makes clear distinctions between "writerly" (ethos) and "readerly" (pathos) prose, much of poststructural rhetorical theory is murky on the issue of ethos. As Jane Tompkins notes, poststructuralists deny that writing has "free-standing subjects, free-standing objects, or a free-standing method" (734). Whether or not poststructural theory and its insights on ethos will alter the course of composition remains to be seen.

I continue in Chapter Five with some pedagogical applications of the writer's projection of ethos in composition. Contained in this discussion are classical and contemporary considerations of the distinctions between ethos and ethics. I have included in this chapter student samples of writing that I have collected in my classes this year.

I conclude in Chapter Six with a summation of the three major classifications discussed in this paper: ethos is located in classical, modern, and poststructural rhetoric. And I also comment on the future directions that ethos occupies in freshman composition.

Chapter II

Classical Rhetoric: Voices from the Past

Rhetoric is a strategic art which facilitates
decisions in civil matters and accepts the
appearance of goodness as sufficient to
inspire conviction
Aristotle
(Johnson 98)

The supreme object of a man's efforts in public
and private life must be the reality rather than
the appearance of goodness
Plato
(Johnson 99)

Some sage once said that we are either Aristotelian or Platonic in our thinking. The purpose of this chapter is to establish a general framework that connects classical and contemporary rhetoric. Aristotle, of the two, is far more direct and practical in his discussion of ethos. Defining ethos as the speaker's ability to "evince through the speech a personal character that will win the confidence of the listener," Aristotle establishes the foundation of ethos (Cooper xxxvii). This foundation invites contemporary interpretations as to differences between character and personality.

These modern interpretations, from my perspective, include numerous dichotomies--real and perceived; practical and ideal; genuine and feigned--all suggestive of what I have referred to as character and personality. If ethos is, as Aristotle says, the most potent proof in discourse, and if ethos is the "evincing" of a particular self to an audience, writers must struggle with their projection of self, or, at the very least, be aware of the differences between character and personality. These terms, I suggest, are not synonymous, and at the crux of this dichotomy lies the essence of ethos as defined by Aristotle and Plato.

Aristotle implies that character is a matter of the appearance of moral excellence, and that such an appearance has specific attributes that are directly linked to audience. Ethos, or the self, can or cannot be sincere. Essential to Aristotle is the idea that rhetoric is a means of persuasion, a pragmatic strategy, that draws from the audience the desired response--the aim of the discourse, as Kinneavy claims.

Does Aristotle's pragmatic strategy distort the distinction between ethos and ethics? Might ethos be defined as personality and ethics as character? Is ethos, as Aristotle implies, a morally neutral term that feigns the virtues he lists as they relate to character?

George Yoos, in his "A Revision of the Concept of Ethical Appeal," asserts that we have "mixed up" the distinction, and, as a result, we have reduced the "important differences and distinctions among moral, immoral, and non-moral appeals [that] are altogether ignored in discussions of ethical appeal" (41). Further stating that Aristotle's rhetoric "invites pretense" and that his emphasis is on "feigned ethos," Yoos proposes that we put ethics back into ethos (41).

Although Yoos raises a noble question, such inquiry perhaps better belongs in the realm of religion or philosophy. Aristotle, to my understanding, does not promote a theological or philosophic position, but instead offers rhetoric as a practical strategy of persuading people. In this sense, Aristotle's ethos is a neutral, not moral, term. Such a distinction is important as I lay the framework for contemporary rhetoric, and ethos' central role in it.

Within this discussion of the connections between classical and contemporary rhetoric, I must first give credit to Dr.Batteiger's comment that "composition has a history, but no memory." Though our discipline has firm roots in its two-thousand-year history, students of composition--I am included here--tend to view contemporary issues

isolated from their original sources. Pedagogically amnesic, we awaken each day to engage in what Stephen North has generally discussed as being a kind of "methodological warfare," a fight to stake our claim in what would seem to be the new territory called composition.

We are, it seems, in a state of confusion regarding recent theories, textbooks, and language about pre-writing, writing, and revision. Brainstorming, mapping, free-writing, and the pentad enjoy popular currency. Standard organization with its emphasis on an introduction that ends with a thesis, a main body that supports that thesis, and a conclusion that reasserts that thesis appears in most textbooks. And expression, the elusive quality of effective writing, comes in many guises--from the exactitude of grammatical correctness, to the strength of clarity and conciseness, or to the eloquence of tropes that tap with poetic meter.

All of this confusion is over a battle that has already been fought.

In summary, these basic concerns fall under what has become Aristotle's triad of rhetoric: invention, arrangement, and style. As Corbett shows in his 1965 landmark text Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, composition can be taught without some of the current,

confusing methodologies. Contrasting the old style of rhetorical activity ("the open hand") with the new style ("the closed fist"), Corbett implies that the old style is the best style (vii). He proceeds to caution modern writers who fail to follow the precepts set forth by Aristotle:

> No system, classical or modern, has been devised that can change students suddenly and irrevocably into masters of elegant prose, but the ancient teachers of rhetoric, refus[ed] to be impressed by the notion of creative self-expression until the student had a self to express and a facility for expressing it (xi).

Conservative and rigorous, Corbett wrote the definitive text that asserts the classical value of modern rhetoric.

For the most part, though, these contemporary clarifications address general rhetorical principles, precepts that discuss the aims of discourse in terms of invention, arrangement, and style. Though Aristotle spoke at length about the role of ethos in rhetoric, time might have misinterpreted his discussion of the importance of character in composition.

A similar fate of misinterpretation has befallen Plato. Though he, like his student Aristotle, espoused the essence of ethos, time has both

dimmed and distorted his central ideas on the subject. Plato believed in absolute goodness, an ethereal quality that self-destructs because mere mortals cannot obtain it. Therefore, writers attempting to espouse the principles of Plato find themselves in an intellectual quicksand where they are swallowed up. The contemporary theories of Elbow, Ken Macrorie, Richard Larson, and, to a lesser degree, Booth and Christensen have roots in Plato's theories.

Based on these ideas, the purpose of this chapter is to clarify misinterpretations involving ethos from its origins in classical thought. By including the distinctions between Aristotle and Plato, I would hope that rhetoricians could clarify their philosophies concerning the teaching of composition.

Whether Aristotelian or Platonic in our thinking, such classification will provide a conceptual framework in which I will discuss the classical roots of ethos. In addition to the differing definitions given by Aristotle and Plato, I will also include the ideas of Quintilian and Cicero that closely align themselves to their predecessors, though with noteworthy distinctions.

My intent throughout this study is to discuss ethos as it pertains to character and personality, and as it has evolved from classical times to the present. In doing so, I owe some debt to Hong Liu's master's thesis entitled "The Semantics of Old and New Rhetorical Terminology: A Close Examination of Ethos," which examines ethos as "anchored by normative and utilitarian poles" (4). In her examination of ethos, Liu concludes that ethos, per se, has not substantively changed since its inception in the classical works. She contends that, though various definitions of ethos have evolved over time, the semantics of the term remain much the same. Her conclusion, given the framework of normative (ideal) and utilitarian (practical) extremes, is that ethos has shifted from an ideal to a practical expression of self. Liu implies that "environmental changes" and "technology" have contributed to a "downfall of rhetoric" (1), that normative aims have given way to utilitarian aims, though in cases the two overlap. Though I generally agree with this thesis, I maintain that ethos as an expression of self is largely determined by its ideological purpose, by its expression of character, or by its expression of personality.

These distinctions that I believe constitute the essence of ethos as determined by the ability of the writer to reach the reader go beyond what Larson calls "the penchant for dividing discourse into kinds and classes that theorists and teachers of rhetoric have displayed in the last two centuries" (203). Though I am aware, of course, that what I propose in this study is yet another method of classification, I am convinced that the core of composition, from classical rhetoric to modern discourse, is rooted in the "expressive" apex of Kinneavy's communication triangle. As Larson suggests, "among those less well known [methods of classification] is one that classifies discourse as 'subjective' and 'objective'" (204). Larson further states that "this principle of division also holds that pieces of discourse are either made up primarily of details to the senses and direct interpretations of those data, or primarily of ratiocinative constructs" (205). In other words, as I interpret this division, the "interpretive" approach involves the writer's personality, while the "ratiocinative" approach involves the writer's character. Ideology, values, and perception by their nature pervade the personality realm of ethos; logic, reason, and conception by their nature pervade the character realm of ethos. In saying this, however, I must make clear that

I am not displacing ethos with logos, especially as my distinction applies to the objective realm. This focus remains within the apex of the "expressive" corner of the communications triangle. From whichever perspective, writers express themselves as they transcribe their versions of reality.

For Aristotle, the primary purpose of rhetoric was to persuade, and to use "all the available means" to do so. These means include the presentation of self as being "just, courageous, liberal, temperate, magnanimous, sagacious, magnificent, gentle, and wise" (Cooper 47).

For Plato, who was ambiguous and paradoxical in large part, the primary purpose of rhetoric was to project an "external moral standard" (Adams 11). Locating reality in what he called "ideas" or "forms," rather than in "appearances" (Adams 11), Plato, in contrast to Aristotle's emphasis on audience perception, is less certain. But Plato insists on a reality that is independent of our perceptions of it.

Ethos, as defined by Aristotle, "is the most potent of all the means of persuasion" (Cooper 9). Though Aristotle believed that persuasion (arguments) included the pisteis of ethos, pathos, and logos, he implied that ethos is the distinguishing element of effective discourse. As

Cooper states, "the distinction is between convincing the audience by process of reason and convincing them by your character" (236). As established, persuasion is central to the aim of Aristotle's rhetoric. Good character is defined by the specific attributes that Aristotle assigns, presenting itself as virtuous, noble, and above reproach (Cooper 46).

Essential here is Aristotle's metaphysics of ethos. Character remains outside, external to the argument at hand. Specifically, inartistic proofs are external to the persuasion. In contemporary terms, inartistic writing includes the kind of voiceless prose that presupposes an understood writer "outside" of the piece. Artistic proofs, on the other hand, are of greater importance to contemporary writing. With artistic proofs, writers must invent their own methods of appeal, independent from any outside point of reference.

With these artistic proofs, writers can create the perception of good character. The problem with artistic proofs is that good writing does not necessarily have to come from good people. Using Aristotle's lists of favorable attributes, malevolent writers can create an ethos of good will that will win over an unsuspecting audience. My contention, at this

point, though, is not to quarrel with the moral ramifications of either Aristotle or Plato, but rather to expound upon their differing meanings of ethos. However difficult it is to separate the moral and rhetorical aims of both Aristotle and Plato, at this point in my discussion I must reiterate the principal differences of each as they apply to ethos.

Nan Johnson is very helpful here. She says that Aristotle's rhetoric is a strategy that "facilitates decisions in civil matters and accepts the appearance of goodness as sufficient." In Plato's rhetoric, however, the ethos evident to the listener "must be the reality rather than the appearance of goodness." Plato further proposes, Johnson adds, that "the true aim of oratory should be the 'moral good,' not merely persuasion as an end in itself" (Johnson 98-99).

These distinctions between "appearance" and "reality," and between "persuasion" and "goodness," are pivotal in differentiating Aristotle from Plato. Given the polarities of Aristotle's "appearance/persuasion" and Plato's "reality/goodness," ethos as a measurement of character and personality becomes clearer in the realm of distancing writers from their audience. Aristotle's ethos is somewhat detached. Plato's ethos is somewhat engaged.

My intention, however, is not to subordinate Aristotle's conception of ethos to Plato's conception. Rather, my point is that, given Aristotle's notion of reality from which writers attempt to portray themselves, ethos is the character created between writers and readers. In rendering this portrayal of character, writers create their ethos in accordance with the appearance of virtues (justice, courage, wisdom, gentleness, etc.). The character of the writer is, therefore, projected to the audience. Writers may or may not actually possess the virtues that they espouse.

Plato's conception of ethos is steeped in his insistence that writers seek not to mirror conventions of character, but instead seek to create their own version of it. As Johnson states,

> Plato's stipulation that the [writer] be truly virtuous must be understood in terms of his general philosophy and ethical orientation. His belief that the Good represents an ideal is fundamental to the view that the [writer's] virtue be obvious in thought and deed (99).

Reality as subjectively determined by writers seeking goodness in their discourse is antithetical to Aristotle's reality as determined by writers

seeking persuasion in their discourse. Ethos is created in Plato and is invented in Aristotle. In the extreme, ethos is authentic in Plato and is feigned in Aristotle.

Paradoxically, though, Plato's insistence upon the subjective portrayal of the writer's internal vision of reality defies the very act of composition. Truth (reality), as it were, is beyond the realm of human understanding and thus cannot be communicated. As Jasper Neel points out, "Plato undeniably condemns writing" (1). Neel further quotes from Plato's "Seventh Letter":

> Any serious student of serious realities will shrink from making truth the helpless object of men's ill-will by committing it to writing. In a word, the conclusion to be drawn is this; when one sees a written composition...one can be sure, if the writer is a serious man, that his book does not represent his most serious thoughts; they remain stored up in the noblest region of his personality (1).

Are rhetoricians to take this statement literally? If so, at best, composition is relegated to an inferior form of thinking; at worst, it should not exist at all. I would argue, though, that Plato is pleading for the kind of authentic ethos that writing by its very nature inhibits

in large part. The distance between the writer's "noblest region of ... personality" and the discourse produced indicates what I would call an engaged voice rather than Aristotle's "appearance" of virtue, given the aim to persuade a given audience by using all means available.

I do not mean to imply by these rather dichotomous generalizations that Plato's concept of ethos is too noble or ethereal for mortal transcription, or that Aristotle's concept of ethos is too practical and results only in feigned authenticity. However, I am suggesting that the origins of ethos are directly linked to Aristotle and Plato and that Aristotle is the more "distanced" of the two. This comparison must include some discussion of the philosophical assumptions that underlie the differences between Aristotle and Plato, as well as those between Quintilian and Cicero which will follow later in this chapter. These assumptions, furthermore, must involve ethics and the aims of discourse as they pertain to the role of ethos.

Curiously, one major distinction in the role of ethos between classical and modern rhetoric involves the definition and purpose of ethos as a means of rhetorical appeal. Modern rhetoricians, myself included, search for voice in expository prose in fairly mechanical ways:

we count first-person pronouns; we value the personal narrative; we emphasize writer-based prose (at least initially); and we ask for personal engagement. Though these modern emphases will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, I find it relevant at this point in my discussion of ethos in classical rhetoric to discuss the schism between aspects of ethos that began, as I will illustrate, in classical rhetoric, but have widened as is evidenced by the bulk of personal writing that may express personality, but little character. Students, freed with poetic authority to express themselves--to engage their voices--to inject pizzazz into their prose--frequently embarrass the most seasoned among us with their unabashed accounts of their first sexual experience, of their last bout with inebriation, of their praise of the drug culture and their personal involvement in it, or of their hatred of certain races, creeds, or religions. Such confessionals (a generous term given the connotation of guilt that some writers fail to see) place the modern rhetorician in the dilemma of rewarding or admonishing writers for expressing ethos in place of ethics in their prose. To advise modern writers to be themselves, to show their pulse in an expository essay is to invite, sometimes, honesty without

ethics, at least the virtues of ethics as classically defined by Aristotle, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero.

Can non-virtuous people be virtuous writers? Is there a distinction between ethos and ethics? Though the ethics and aims of discourse are not directly germane to the purpose of this paper, I find it nonetheless necessary to mention in my discussion of classical rhetoric--and the rhetorics to follow--the differences between ethos and ethics. As Johnson states:

> An examination of the historical significance of ethos in rhetorical theory is a particularly effective means of clarifying directions in modern rhetoric because definitions of the role of ethos have been linked traditionally to definitions of the aims of persuasion and the obligations of rhetorical education (98).

Central to this clarification is the difference between the aims of Plato's and Aristotle's rhetoric. The rhetorician, Plato argues, "should be a philosopher, not a panderer, and should aim to lead the souls of his [readers] to the 'knowledge of ideas,'...[and] not merely to belief or pleasure" (Johnson 99). True goodness and virtue, not the appearance, are essential to Plato's rhetoric. Writers, in other words, have a moral

function that transcends strategies for appeasing audiences. With this purpose, truth and audience acceptance may not merge. Ethos, with the added dimension of ethics, is the projection of a moral voice, of "moral values which will enable [the writer] to improve the character of the community" (Johnson 99).

In contrast, Aristotle has a more practical view of the aim of rhetoric. In Aristotle's view, "morality is not an absolute" (Johnson 102), but is rather a "pragmatic strategy which serves practical wisdom...the rhetorician need not be virtuous" (Johnson 103). Nevertheless, Aristotle is careful in enumerating the objective criteria for which an audience will deem a writer virtuous. The writer must appear to be just, courageous, magnificent, gentle, and wise. The emergence of ethos remains at the core of Aristotle's means of persuasion. Interestingly, Plato never mentions ethos, though implied throughout Gorgias and Phaedrus is Plato's emphasis on an ethic from a genuine writer who seeks to change mens' souls.

Such moral classifications, as tempting as they are to the discussion of ethos, tend, however, to entangle the distinctions between the objective and subjective distances of voice in rhetoric. I

would concede that Yoos' assertion of the conflation of ethos and ethics invites philosophic inquiry that is beyond the specific scope of this paper. And I would agree that the gist of Yoos' points concerning ethics casts a shadow over Aristotle's insistence upon a knowable world characterized by objective virtues that the writer can, if need be, "morally" project with "immoral" aims. From Plato's absolutely moral position, hypocrisy best captures the ethical essence of Aristotle, though I think that this generality--even though I offer it as my own--is harsh in that Aristotle views rhetoric as a strategic means of discovery and not as a search for transcendent truth. For Yoos, however, Aristotle's ethos allows writers "to distort the audience's perception of their own personal qualities" in achieving their aim of persuasion. If persuasion is the aim of rhetoric, if the "generation of ethos manipulates trust to get contentions accepted," then Yoos' harsh conclusion must be considered: "ethical appeal in rhetoric is basically unethical and dishonest. A bizarre shift in nomenclature in the history of rhetoric has led us to call such appeals ethical" (57). Though Yoos refrains from any direct discussion of Plato, I infer that Yoos' contention that ethos must include ethics would embrace Plato's "true" aim of rhetoric. Ethos is, according to Yoos,

"the method whereby the philosopher and his pupil free themselves from all worldly encumbrances in the pursuit and eventual attainment of absolute truth...so long as the virtuous rhetor keeps the audience's best interests at heart" (58).

These two voices from the past--Aristotle and Plato--provide a solid rhetorical foundation upon which modern composition can position itself. Aristotle is pragmatic and objective, viewing writing as a means of persuasion carried out through the use of all means available. Ethos (granted Yoos' contention that ethos is morally ambiguous) is the most powerful of the pisteis of ethos, pathos, and logos, and seeks to present the writer as possessing certain positive traits.

Plato, conversely, is idealistic and subjective, viewing writing as a means of spiritual transcendence, even though he paradoxically condemns writing as a removal from an internal reality that goes beyond our efforts to transcribe it. The writer and audience, teacher and student, join in a common search for truth, and in Yoos' implications, ethos and ethics merge, for writers must be truly virtuous people seeking causes greater than themselves.

Like Plato in many respects, Cicero, the great Roman orator, believed that writers should be great people and that ethos should reflect the genuine character of writers (I substitute the word "writer" for "speaker" throughout this work). Unlike Aristotle, however, Cicero does not assign specific attributes to "goodness." Relevant to my discussion of ethos, however, is Cicero's "compromise" (my word) between Plato's idealism and Aristotle's pragmatism. This compromise, though ambiguous, is nonetheless stated with reasonable clarity in the following passage:

> Feelings are won over by a man's merit, achievements or reputable life, qualifications easier to embellish, if only they are real, than to fabricate where non-existent (Of Oratory 240).

Sincerity is preferable to fabrication, though implicit within the above passage is Yoos' assertion of Aristotle's "feigned ethos" (Yoos 42). Moreover, Cicero is much more direct about the importance of ethos when he states that good style and diction can make writers "appear upright, well-bred and virtuous men" (Of Oratory 240). Cicero seems to combine the rhetorical essence of both Plato and

Aristotle in that he prefers "goodness" to be the true core of the writer, though, more practically, he stresses various techniques that render the appearance of goodness. Cicero seems to acknowledge, if not answer, the moral quagmire implied in Plato and Aristotle involving eloquence and character. In other words, in response to my earlier question, non-virtuous people can project Aristotle's attributes of character. Cicero, accordingly, embraces both the ideal and practical aspects of rhetoric. Yet, his philosophy is aligned more with Aristotle's than it is with Plato's.

Conversely, Quintilian, the last great rhetorician of the classical period, is more of a disciple of Plato than he is of Aristotle. He essentially equates ethos with Plato's idea of transcendental goodness:

> Since an orator [writer] is a good man,
> and a good man cannot be conceived to
> exist without virtuous inclinations,
> and virtue...the orator [writer] must
> above all things study morality, and
> must obtain a thorough knowledge of all
> that is just and honorable, without which
> no one can either be a good man or an
> able speaker [writer] (353).

Although Quintilian, like Cicero and Aristotle, specifies throughout his work the practical necessities of speaking well, his focus, like Plato's, remains centered on moral goodness--not the appearance of goodness, but the reality of goodness. For Quintilian, only good people can be good writers, and good writers should be "at once of eloquence and of morality" (353). Of interest here is that throughout the works of Quintilian I encounter his own ethos. Unlike the other classical writers I have read, Quintilian projects a sincerity that parallels his ideas on rhetoric and the writer. Lacking the loftiness of Plato, the cynicism of Aristotle, and the ambiguity of Cicero, Quintilian reads most like an authentic writer speaking to a person.

In conclusion, in my discussion of ethos in rhetoric, I have found it necessary to trace its tenets to the major classical works of Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian. Though this attempt has been brief--skimming the surface as it were--it shows clearly, I believe, that contemporary rhetoric has deep roots in these major voices from the past.

I will now shift to a discussion of contemporary ethos, emphasizing, as I proceed, that current discussions of ethos have correlations in

classical rhetoric. I will also show in the following chapter that much of the rhetorical philosophic differences among contemporary rhetoricians, I believe, can be better understood if we understand the evolution of ethos as it is distinguished by character and personality.

Chapter III

Modern Rhetoric: Assertion of Self

There is what I would call a certain rubber-gloved quality to the voice and register typical of most academic discourses--not just author-evacuated but also showing a kind of reluctance to touch one's meanings with one's naked fingers
Peter Elbow

As discussed in Chapter Two, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian made notable contributions to the importance of ethos in discourse. All believed, in varying degrees, that ethos was inseparable from discourse, that the character projected in communication was the strongest element of persuasion, and that ethics comprised an essential dimension to the effectiveness of discourse. I contend that Plato and Quintilian advocate ethos that virtually equates writer with discourse. Furthermore, Aristotle and Cicero advocate ethos that partially removes the writer from discourse (that is, writers are more at liberty to create an ethos separate from their own ethos). In sum, these classic voices combine to promote the importance of ethos in discourse. These voices, however, were silenced in the last century.

For chronological convenience, I will date the death of ethos in 1875 when Harvard reinstituted rhetoric as a subject proper. Influenced largely by the works of Blair, Campbell, and Whately, Harvard began what is today termed current-traditional rhetoric. This rhetoric, as previously discussed, emphasizes discourse as defined by classification of modes, by analysis of words, sentences, and paragraphs, and by punctuational and grammatical correctness. Given Kinneavy's four-element triangle--writer, audience, reality, and text--as a point of reference, subject matter dominates current-traditional rhetoric with its emphasis on, as Berlin states in "Current-Traditional Rhetoric...", an "external world existing independent of the mind" (1). With the philosophic assumption that writers could "capture" Aristotle's conception of a static and external reality, the writer's primary aim of rhetoric was to duplicate a rational universe. Though style became important, invention diminished, since the world, as it were, already existed external and separate from any individual's interpretation of it.

Rhetoric, viewed as a conduit between a perceiver and an external, objective reality, was thus stripped of invention. Equally important, and pivotal to the purpose of this paper, was the irrelevance of ethos. Writers

were not to invent their interpretations of the world, but were rather silenced by the "scientific exactitude" (Berlin 1) of the world molding them. A writer's character, ethics, voice, or ideology were encumbrances to the cold-eyed view of objectivity.

The question becomes, then, what happened to ethos under the guise of a current-traditional rhetoric that purports to embrace classical principles, especially those of invention, arrangement, and style that come directly from Aristotle?

Robert J. Connors, Lisa Ede, and Andrea Lunsford in their "The Revival of Rhetoric in America" provide an interesting insight into the history and evolution of classical rhetoric, especially as it directly affects the role of ethos in written discourse. Essentially, rhetoric declined in the nineteenth century. As noted earlier, the influences of Blair, Campbell, and Whately altered the direction of writing instruction from its classical emphasis on invention, arrangement, and style, to an emphasis on style alone, though with some attention to arrangement. Students were to bring to writing classes their presumedly preconceived ideas and were then instructed in the proper arrangement and style of presenting them.

Invention was truncated. This truncation is directly attributed to the teachings of Peter Ramus, who "ordained that rhetoric should offer training in style and delivery," and that "subject matter [was to be] derived from considerations of etymology" (Lanham 89). Lanham goes on to say that "rhetoric thus becomes, for Ramus, largely a matter of verbal ornament of style" (89).

As Connors, Ede, and Lunsford point out, "the major function [of rhetoric] in the classical period was as a synthetic art which brought together knowledge in various fields with audiences of various kinds; its goal was the discovery and sharing of knowledge" (3). But nineteenth-century cultural trends shifted the rhetorical emphasis away from discovery. Knowledge became specialized within the domain of economic interests that flourished in the Industrial Revolution of this period. Additionally, student enrollment "doubled in the last quarter of the century, [and] teachers had to contend not with a small group of students...but with large and increasingly unwieldy classes" (Connors, Ede, Lunsford 3). For purposes of practical expedience, teachers had to develop measurable standards for essay evaluation, standards that

understandably stressed correctness in terms of grammar, mechanics, and punctuation.

Finally, and ironically, another factor that contributed to the birth of current-traditional rhetoric (or the decline of classical rhetoric) was the establishment of English departments that saw not rhetoric as their primary mission, but rather literature. Francis James Child, Harvard's chairman of the English department, "built a powerful academic department, one based almost exclusively on literary scholarship. It was this Harvard model which predominated in American higher education...in spite of attempts to hold to a more classical rhetorical model" (Connors, Ede, Lunsford 4).

Current-traditional rhetoric, under Blair, Campbell, and Whately's emphasis on style, and under the nineteenth-century trends toward industry, increased student enrollment, and Harvard's preference for literature as the discipline of choice became the dominant rhetoric that still largely prevails today. Students write in response to literature, and it would seem that the literary essay forced rhetoric to endorse a simplified argumentative writing. Ethos, despite efforts to resuscitate it, is lost as in this example taken from a 1978 article entitled "Technology As A Form of

Consciousness: A Study Of Contemporary Ethos":

> Technology can be provisionally defined as the manipulation of the contingent and local to achieve material results, to distinguish it from science as the study of the universal to achieve verifiable understanding [of] the rhetorical character of science which is dependent upon the abstracting and symbolizing inherent in human knowledge and upon the communication necessary to achieve verification (Miller 228).

I am somewhat amazed. Is this passage a preposterous illustration of prose gone awry? Not really. I took this wording from an article written by an English instructor who included the words "consciousness" and "ethos" in the title. Upon further inspection I found the pronoun "I" only three times in a text that invokes Aristotle, ethos, character, and communication. I also found that her average sentence length, as taken from a sampling of three paragraphs, was thirty-three words, and that one of her longer sentences exceeded sixty words. Perhaps most startling is her thesis:

> Ethos, as a disposition which, when held in common, comes to seem 'right' or 'ethical' or persuasive, is an index of culture. Our technological culture should be expected to give rise to an ethos of technology (Miller 228).

This writer is distanced. Granted, my claim here may be anecdotal and I realize that one case does not make a valid point. But I nonetheless find it significant that an English teacher wrote this in her discussion of ethos. Surely a perusal of "non-English" contemporary discourse would support my point that not much ethos exists in current-traditional rhetoric. This kind of sterile, distanced ethos seems to saturate current-traditional prose. I maintain, however, that contemporary rhetoric is at a significant crossroads. On the one side are the advocates who embrace what they consider the "traditional" approach to writing, a tradition steeped in classical rhetoric. On the other side are the advocates of various "new rhetorics" who proclaim that the ancient paradigms of rhetoric no longer suit the needs of modern composition. This dichotomy, though, is imbricated by basic misunderstandings concerning classical and contemporary rhetoric. Current camps need not contend for their stake in the new territory called modern rhetoric; however, I think we need to

clarify the distinctions between the current-traditionalists and the new rhetoricians and find the common ground that unites far more than it divides. I assert that ethos is at the crux of the crossroads, and once we can "relocate" its role, we will have that common ground that we have sought since the Composition Revolution of 1963---primary of which is the reemergence of ethos.

Historically, as I established in Chapter Two, ethos was the essential, defining element of classical rhetoric. Though Aristotle and Plato held different positions on the ethics of ethos, and though Cicero and Quintilian further expounded upon the role of ethics given the extremes of Aristotle and Plato, ethos remained at the core of their discussions. Tradition thus established the significance of ethos. Tradition, however, aided by the observations of Ramus and by the general movement of nineteenth-century trends, partially betrayed the importance of ethos by eliminating invention from the classical triad of invention, arrangement, and style. This triad was originally Aristotle's pentad of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Without invention, writers are denied their own importance in discovering ideas. Current-traditionalists, as oxymoronic as the term implies, are clinging to

a distorted, or at least misunderstood, idea of what is traditional in rhetoric. Arrangement and style have survived the passage of time, prospering, in fact, across the gamut of classical, modern, and poststructural rhetoric. These features are reasonably teachable, learnable, and will remain, I would think, uncontroversial as entities of composition. And I say this without disparagement.

We have made great gains in the teaching of grammar, of organization, of style, and of invention as it applies to heuristics in terms of problem-solving strategies that have influenced composition theories these past few decades. But ethos remains nebulous, blurred in the distinctions between character and personality. Though Connors, Ede, and Lunsford in their "The Revival of Rhetoric in America" attribute the general loss of ethos to industry, increased student enrollment, and the discipline's emphasis on literature (47), I would concur that only their first point--industry--has any real philosophic, attenuating validity (more students and literary emphasis are logistical, not philosophic, concerns). The Industrial Revolution, and the assembly-line products it produced, mirrored the manner in which we viewed the world. As Berlin notes in

"Current-Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice," reality for current-traditionalists is "rational, regular, and certain....Meaning thus exists independent of the perceiving mind, reposing in external reality" (2). Thus with the explosion of science and technology--the extensions of industry--we tend to view the world with objectivity, with an externality that distances us as writers in our attempts to communicate with an audience that should see the same world we do. Understandably, with this paradigm, arrangement and style prevail. The world is already invented. This pre-existent world denies, though, the writer's role in it, excepting his ability to transcribe it in an orderly and correct manner appropriate for a standardized audience.

Before I badger much further the loss of ethos in current-traditional rhetoric, I need to concede an important point: not all discourse needs the presence of a living, breathing writer. Great discoveries--cures for cancer, solutions to the world's wars, ideas about hunger and poverty--can be communicated void of character, personality, voice, tone, or ethos. Hovering above, far outside the text, the ethics of such subject matter would certainly imply an intelligent, compassionate, and concerned individual, but whether or not this person announces himself

with anecdotes, first-person pronouns, or a stance that promotes credibility beyond his power to reason is irrelevant. We can profit from this voiceless prose. But this voiceless prose exemplifies Aristotle's ideas of inartistic proofs, a kind of writing that comes from "an outside authority." My focus in this paper, however, centers on the role of ethos in expository writing as it applies primarily to developing writers, writers who must rely on artistic proofs, a challenge of the first order. And though I may hedge a bit on my concession, I question whether or not the greater scientific discoveries would have happened if those thinkers had not first sharpened their minds by rendering experience--experience steeped in personal observation--rather than merely explaining "objective reality" with their ethos removed from Kinneavy's communications triangle.

This relinquishing of self under the guise of objectivity is central to the rise of current-traditional rhetoric. As I have indicated, English composition, as it was first conceived at Harvard in 1875, was viewed primarily as a service course to the business and scientific disciplines that dominate academia. Matters of ideas, style, expression, and ideology were left largely to the literature courses. Composition had

virtually no proper subject matter. Students brought "outside" knowledge to the writing classroom where their objective was to present existing information with proper organization and correct grammar. Invention was ignored; consequently, ethos was neglected since scientific knowledge and business knowledge were deemed ideologically neutral. The point of writing was not to question or discover or to "know thyself," as Emerson implored, but was rather to record with as much precision as possible logical and rational explanations of an unchanging universe. Rhetoric fell on bad times. Without a curriculum of its own, the role of ethos remained somewhat vague through the better part of the last century. As Virginia Burke remarks, "there is chaos today [1965] because since the turn of the century composition has lacked an informing discipline, without which no field can maintain its proper dimensions...or its very integrity" (3). Even more pointedly, Richard Young, in discussing the decaying influence of current-traditional rhetoric, cites the following statement Wayne Booth made at an MLA convention in 1964:

> Of all the causes of our rhetorical shoddiness, the only one that you and I have much chance of doing anything about is our shoddy rhetorical theory and our shoddier teaching thereof (326).

The revolution in rhetoric had begun. More apt, the revival of rhetoric as rooted in Aristotle, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero was well underway in the plethora of the New Rhetorics. Ethos, with all of its classical implications, took on a more significant role in the communications triangle: the self emerged.

This rediscovery of ethos, however, does not diminish the significance of academic discourse. Nor does ethos surrender itself entirely to the 1960's neo-Platonist school of expressionistic rhetoric that all too often relegated writing to the superfluous act of describing the sound of one hand clapping, or of splashing readers with one's feelings about life with a license to disregard form and grammar. This revival of ethos in rhetoric--though admittedly exploited in various ways--reasserted the self as constituting one of the three Aristotelian means of persuasion. Though I may leap to a simplistic conclusion, ethos after 1963 began to resume a more significant role.

Peter Elbow, one of the leading advocates of the reassertion of ethos in rhetoric, enumerates several significant points about the uses and abuses of ethos in academic discourse in his article "Reflections on

Academic Discourse". Defining academic discourse as the "discourse that academics use when they publish for other academics," Elbow proceeds to defend "the language of the academy" (135). We need, Elbow implies, to teach the kind of standardized writing that the business world expects from college writers--prose characterized by its current-traditional emphases on correctness, organization, and subject matter. This brand of writing is voiceless in that its purpose is to convey academic or bureaucratic information. Even though we may view this kind of discourse as ineffective writing, students need, as Elbow states, to know it for the "papers and reports and exams they'll have to write in their various courses throughout their college career...if we don't prepare them for these tasks we'll be shortchanging them" (135).

The transition between current-traditional and New Rhetoric thus presents a dilemma of sorts: we must teach students "to play the game" of a business world that all too often rewards what we call ineffective, voiceless writing while at the same time we must teach that writing has a subject matter of its own that emphasizes ethos as a defining characteristic of effective writing. Students, to their dismay, get a mixed message about what writing involves. Still largely uninformed about the

theories and techniques of Kinneavy, Booth, Christensen, Elbow, and a host of others who have shaped a new rhetoric, many teachers stress prose without ethos. My own department syllabus shows the degree to which we still cling to current-traditional, "academic discourse." This passage comes from our introduction to Composition II:

> English Composition II is designed to prepare students for written communication needs in their other college courses, as well as in their business and professional communications....The practical, the accurate, and the acceptable means of communicating as an educated person will be stressed.

To reinforce these goals we add a complete page of standards of correct usage with point deduction penalties for violations. Additionally, we prohibit contractions and insist upon "the third-person approach (one, he, it, they)." Furthermore, we emphasize the rhetorical modes of development: classification, process, definition, comparison, cause/effect, and argumentation.

No ethos here, excepting, of course, what the writer specifies, or what the teacher dictates.

But Elbow maintains, and I agree, that this kind of academic discourse has its place. Much good can be said of current-traditional

rhetoric. Correctness counts. Elbow contends, however, that students need "non-academic discourse" as well. This kind of discourse makes certain assumptions about the role, or the place, in which writers place themselves. Elbow's first point is that students should write because they want to, not because they are forced to. Stating that "very few of our students will ever have to write academic discourse after college," Elbow views good writing instruction as determined by "whether it makes students more likely to use writing in their lives" (136). Specifically, this kind of writing goes beyond the academic discourse required in business, industry, and science--beyond the type of distanced discourse that distinguishes some contemporary writing. Elbow talks about the kind of writing that includes letters, journals, stories, poems, and writing in the public realm for "informal circulation or even serious publication" (136). The assertion of self, the projection of ethos, becomes the driving force of inspired, personal writing.

Few of us would argue that most of our students like writing, that they come to class eager to learn, to explore, and to express themselves. They come, as a generality, because it is a requirement. But to excuse these students as the products of the paradigmatic shift that largely

shaped current-traditional rhetoric with its emphasis on a rational universe is to abrogate the role of the writer in composition. As I established earlier, Francis James Child, Harvard's chairman of the English department, built, in 1875, a "powerful academic department, one based almost exclusively on literary scholarship" (Connor, Ede, Lundsford 4). Literary scholarship tends to diminish composition scholarship.

We tend, as a profession, to know our literature and understandably to teach it. Composition tends to be perceived as the "grunt" work of graduate assistants. Rhetoricians, as a result, are nearly impossible to find. As a personal case in point, I had the recent experience of interviewing applicants for a composition position that my English department advertised. I talked with people who had impeccable credentials: advanced degrees, years of experience, numerous publications, and active participation in state and national English organizations. But to an applicant, all had degrees and experience and interest in literature. What composition they had taught had been done years ago in graduate school. Rhetorical theories, names, and strategies were foreign to them. One applicant in particular sticks out: she had a

Ph.D. from a private university and three pages of publications. When I asked her about rhetoric, she replied that although she had never really considered it, she thought that it sounded like a good idea. When I asked her about how she would teach composition, she said, with hesitation and confusion, that she supposed her students would respond to the literature she assigned. Reluctant to push my point, but curious to know, I asked her in what manner her students responded to literature. She said they "critically analyze" the pieces using the "proper terminology" and with the "correct form and usage appropriate to a literary response." This literary-based rhetoric, as I would call it, was not intended to generate ideas, to function as a mode of invention for self-exploration, but was rather a substitution of literature for composition. Literary analyses are valid and essential--for literature courses--but they do little for composition courses unless they are used as a means for teaching writing.

My personal digression here supports, I think, Elbow's contention that writers are denied their motivation, their voices, when bombarded with academic discourse. Additionally, this anecdote shows that academic discourse is not something "out there" in business

or science, but is on the upper floors of our own departments. If we are not careful, we will find ourselves speaking our own jargon.

Elbow, maintaining that we need to motivate students by allowing their personal expressions (academic discourse largely inhibits this), argues further that we as composition teachers must take a "larger view of human discourse" (136). This larger view, as noted earlier, must take into account the difference between explaining and rendering. Perusals of textbooks establish Elbow's point: composition is generally defined as "expository prose" with subsequent attention on matters of description, narration, and argumentation. The point, tacit or not, is that writers are to explain, to expose, a rational and external world through rhetorical modes that stress subject matter and, to a lesser degree, audience. Little, if any, mention is made of ethos, of the writer's own sense of self in the rendering of his or her version of a particular subject.

Most important in Elbow's discussion of the drawbacks of academic discourse is his third point that the use of such writing "often masks a lack of genuine understanding" (136). Ironically, "we need nonacademic discourse for the purpose of helping students produce good academic discourse" (Elbow 136). Ethos, in this context, serves as a heuristic, as a

method of invention that allows students to explore first what they know (or seem to know) best: themselves. Claiming that "many students can repeat and explain a principle in physics or economics...but cannot simply tell a story of what is going on in the room or country around them on account of that principle," Elbow makes a valid point, creating, in effect, an analogy between rote learning and cognitive insights--or, in the jargon of educational psychology, between declarative and procedural knowledge (136). As Elbow further states, "students distance themselves from experiencing or really internalizing the concepts they are allegedly learning" (136).

Without dipping further than I need to--or am able to--into educational psychology, I nonetheless surmise that writing in the past century largely reflects our epistemological insistence upon viewing the world as a static, rational, and observable entity separate from the person seeing it. Writers, therefore, are not involved in the making of knowledge, but are rather conduits between the externalities of existence and an audience who either accepts or rejects discourse on the criterion of good or poor representation of "common reality." If this premise has any validity, then I would further argue that invention is truncated from

the triad of Aristotle's rhetoric since "reality" is already invented. Without invention, I would further argue that ethos becomes mute.

Ethos, then, in contemporary rhetoric, is seeking to reassert itself in writing. Current-traditionalists, citing Aristotle and Cicero as their pedagogical antecedents, claim correctly that their revival of arrangement and style is imperative in their teaching of composition. I would contend, however, that they largely neglect the ethos that both these classical orators espoused as essential to effective communication. Their world was not as objective as some current-traditionalists would have it.

Conversely, various proponents of the New Rhetoric, claiming Plato and Quintilian as their pedagogical antecedents, oversimplify these classical orators' ideas concerning the subjectivity of a "reality" that is determined exclusively by the individual perceiver. Contemporary ethos thus equivocates between Aristotle and Plato. Perversions of either viewpoint can yield ineffective results: discourse becomes poetic expression that narrowly considers subject and audience or it becomes pedantic prose that solely considers subject.

Thus far I have surveyed the general status of ethos in contemporary rhetoric and have indicated that ethos defines itself

differently in accordance with a particular rhetorical orientation.

We are currently positioning ourselves somewhere between the paradigms of current-traditional rhetoric and the New Rhetorics. I have, furthermore, indicated that though current-traditional practice is the dominant mode of teaching, its deemphasis of ethos as a persuasive technique in discourse is not in keeping with the classical heritage of rhetoric as established by Aristotle, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero. They all asserted, in varying degrees, that ethos is the foundation of effective communication. This diminishment of ethos in current-traditional rhetoric has produced, in part, the kind of sterile, academic prose that Elbow addresses: prose designed to accommodate the rising science and business concerns of post-1875 American society; prose designed to facilitate the growing number of students that crowd our classrooms, making standardized evaluations necessary; and prose designed to appease literature teachers seeking analysis as a means of composition.

On the other hand, the various new rhetorics that have emerged since 1963 have attempted to establish composition as an independent discipline with its own unique curriculum that approaches writing as a teachable and learnable craft. As Stephen North says in his definitive

text The Making of Knowledge in Composition, prior to 1963 and well into the decade that followed, we had no graduate programs in composition, a course that was often described as the "ghetto" or the "stepchild" of English departments. Composition was "something that had to be taught--or, perhaps endured. But it was not perceived as a discipline or a field, as a subject matter suitable for graduate study" (i).

We now stand poised to combine the best strategies from classical rhetoric and its current-traditional adaptations, and the eclectic strands of new rhetorics (with roots also in classical rhetoric) that have in common the reemergence of ethos as a primary force in effective writing.

Pivotal, though, to this reemergence of ethos is the nagging question of when ethos becomes excessive. In the perfect rhetorical worlds of theorists ranging from Aristotle to Kinneavy to Booth, ethos plays a significant role in the communications triangle, comprising one-third of the persuasive means available to the writer. But as Booth points out, "perversions of the rhetorician's balance" occur when the writer distorts his discourse by "unbalancing" through over-emphasis on pathos (the "advertiser's stance"), on logos (the "pedant's stance"), and on ethos (the "entertainer's stance"). Booth goes on to explain this third

imbalance as the "willingness to sacrifice substance to personality and charm" where "the speaker's voice can lead to empty colorfulness" (144). And as Pixton points out in his discussion of Booth's rhetorical stance, "the rhetorical stance is not the stance of the entertainer, who uses personal information excessively to call attention to himself or herself, rather than using the information moderately to enliven the meaning" (265).

My point is that the reemergence of ethos plays a significant though not a central or dominating role in the new rhetorics. This qualification, I think, is necessary to my discussion of ethos in the light of the important contributions of Flower, Shaughnessy, and even Barthes (who will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four), among others, who advocate in varying degrees the centrality of ethos in what Flower calls "Writer-Based Prose." Though developmental in its pedagogy, this prose is a "verbal expression written by a writer to himself and for himself" (19). Flower implies that writers, as they mature, will become less "egocentric" in their efforts to communicate to an audience. But her pedagogical intention is clear:

> Writer-based prose is a workable concept which can help us teach writing. As a way to intervene in the thinking process, it taps intuitive communication strategies writers already have....It helps writers attack this demanding cognitive task [with] confidence that comes from an increased and self-conscious control of the process (20).

Within this psychological, pedagogical context, ethos is central (not merely significant as Booth and others suggest) in expository prose. This ethos-as-a-mode-of-personal-expression is perhaps most pronounced in Mina Shaughnessy's 1977 Errors and Expectations.

Noting that beginning writers need to "assert their individualities in a variety of ways" (280), Shaughnessy argues effectively that for novice writers, "academic writing is a trap, not a way of saying something to someone" (7). She implies throughout her book that writers need to draw from their own experience before seeking to appeal to a wider, more "academic" audience, writing teachers included. Peter Elbow extends this ethos-as-pedagogy line of thinking by referring to Flower's writer-based prose as "weak writing at first...that can help us in the end to better writing than we would have written if we'd kept readers in mind

from the start" (51). In Writing With Power, Elbow says that "writer-based prose is sometimes better than reader-based prose" (51).

Perhaps. But my discussion of ethos as the reassertion of self must avoid the perversions of Booth's "entertainer's stance" and the pedagogical emphases of Flower's, Shaughnessy's, and Elbow's personal stance, for, in my analysis, though the entertainer's stance may be amusing and the personal stance may be instructive, neither serves the balance that I strive to establish. At the extremes in contemporary rhetoric, we have the dry, sterile "pretzel prose" of Elbow's discussion of academic discourse--writing that I would classify as projecting "canned" character; at the other end we have the kind of writer-based prose that promotes the self to the exclusion of subject and audience--writing that I would classify as "projected" personality.

As I explained in Chapter Two, the classical rhetoricians--most notably Aristotle and Cicero--advocated an ethos that positioned ethical appeal within the larger framework of logos and pathos (or subject and audience). And, as I have drawn that strand of thinking through post-1875 rhetoric, a period I identified through the research as the beginning of current-traditional rhetoric which diminished the importance

of ethos, I find in post-1963 rhetoric the reassertion of ethos that balances itself between the extremes of character and personality. Specifically, I have alluded to the major contributions of Booth, Corbett, and Elbow. Each, along with other modern theorists, has helped shape the role of ethos in contemporary rhetoric; and each, with the possible exception of Elbow, has striven for the balance between character and personality.

The revival of ethos in rhetoric, as I have indicated throughout this paper, is closely linked with the "rhetorical revolution" of 1963. Rhetoricians were then, in Richard Young's phrase, "working on the margin," seeking to define a discipline that had long been neglected, a discipline that belonged "if anywhere, in speech departments." Young further maintains "that composition was not a proper academic discipline at all but merely a service that English departments performed, often with reluctance" (325).

More pointedly, Virginia Burke asserted in 1965 that "there is chaos today because since the turn of the century composition has lacked an informing discipline, without which no field can maintain its proper dimensions...or its very integrity" (Burke 5). With this renewal of interest

in all facets of rhetoric--facets rooted in Aristotle's triad of invention, arrangement, and style--ethos, an integral aspect of classical rhetoric, resurfaced after a century of silence.

The problem, though, with the renewal of ethos in rhetoric, with the reassertion of self in writing, lies in its ethereal nature. Beyond the classical definitions that I reviewed in Chapter Two, and beyond the mechanical methods that numerous writers have discussed, methods that effectively include first-person pronouns, personal narratives, anecdotes, and the thoughtfulness of good grammar and organization, what else does ethos involve? Is ethos in the text or not? Contemporary theory is divided on this issue, and in Chapter Four I will clarify the two camps of thought--the "neo-traditionalists" (my term) of post-1963 discussed in this chapter, and the poststructuralists, whose thinking has rattled conventional ideas of locating ethos in writing, ethos, they claim, that announces the death of the author.

For now, however, and for the balance of this chapter, I will synthesize the ethos that I think characterizes contemporary rhetoric. In seeking some sort of consensus, I have analyzed Jim Corder's and James Berlin's writings on the topic and have concluded that each

promotes the revival of ethos in composition, and that each advocates a middle-ground presence between writer and reader. Of interest, also, is their own ethos in their discussions of ethos. Although their themes are similar, their voices are not. Corder, by my classification, projects personality; Berlin, by my classification, projects character. Although I find it difficult to separate content from ethos (which alone substantiates the ethereal qualities of ethos), I will nonetheless plunge on, using as my broad criteria both classical and neo-traditionalist attributes of ethos that I have discussed in this paper thus far. Specifically, I will first be as objective as possible in looking at the language, the personal anecdotes, first-person references, and other grammatical/stylistic nuances that each writer uses. Second, and with admitted subjectivity, I will attempt to determine their classical sense of ethical appeal. Who "best" portrays himself, as Aristotle advised, as "just, courageous, temperate, magnanimous, sagacious, magnificent, gentle, and wise"? (Cooper 47). Who, dare I say, is Cicero's "good" man?

For purposes of this analysis, I have chosen Jim W.Corder's "Hunting for Ethos Where They Say It Can't Be Found" and "Argument As Emergence, Rhetoric as Love," and James Berlin's "Rhetoric and

Ideology in the Writing Class" and "Current-Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice." Again, I have chosen these articles because both writers are contemporary rhetoricians, both discuss ethos, and both promote in the content of their discourse a distinct ethos. The differences lie in their own voices--in how they say what they say--more than in what they say.

The most obvious and immediate contrast is found in their titles: Corder projects a personal, humorous, and even provocative touch by titling his one piece "Hunting for Ethos Where They Say It Can't Be Found." The contraction itself denotes informality. "Hunting" also suggests a certain bemusement about what he sees as the poststructuralists' insistence on the idea that the "author is dead." Additionally, the pronoun "they" sets up a tongue-in-cheek quarrel between himself and the poststructural thinking he addresses in his essay. Corder's other title, "Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love," evinces an even more personal touch, invoking the language of the 1960's.

In stark contrast, Berlin's two articles are titled in a straight-forward, matter-of-fact manner: "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class,"

though accurately reflecting the thesis of his article, gives no hint of humor, irony, or the type of mock argument that Corder reveals in his titles. Similarly, "Current-Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice" renders no personal flavor about Berlin's attitude toward his subject.

Corder's titles are personal and inviting. Berlin's are not. Equally significant, their respective introductions differentiate their personal involvements. Corder's "Hunting for Ethos" begins with an anecdote about "an ancient tool [that] holds down a stack of papers...in the corner of my office." In the introduction of his "Argument as Emergence" Corder includes such phrases as "we're always standing some place in our lives," and "we tell our lives and live our tales, enjoying where we can, tolerating what we must."

Berlin, consistent with the distance suggested by his titles, begins his "Rhetoric and Ideology" with this sentence: "The question of ideology has never been far from discussions of writing instruction in the modern American college." His tone and language suggest formality: "It is true that some rhetorics have denied their imbrication in ideology...in various manifestations...in addressing competing discursive claims." This same crisp, distanced tone is evident in his "Current-Traditional Rhetoric": "For

nearly a century, teachers of composition have been dominated by a paradigm, a set of tacit assumptions which has determined how they define and carry out their activities in research and teaching." Corder says, "I've been quarreling with myself...foolishly, often trying to serve my own interests." In his search for ethos, Corder "wanted to imagine that I was writing another gloss on Aristotle, trying to learn what he meant in what he said about ethos." In Berlin's search for ethos, he states that "two of the three bases of persuasion in Aristotle's Rhetoric, the ethical and emotional appeals, are foreclosed altogether by the rational, mechanistic epistemology."

In addition to personal anecdotes, formality of language, and the tones of each writer that all combine to establish differing ethos, an approximate count of personal pronouns further establishes the distinction between the personality of Corder and the character of Berlin. In looking at the first five-hundred words of each of their articles, I counted the following first-person pronouns (I, me, my, we, myself): Corder: 33; Berlin: 3.

This disparity is telling: Corder talks about himself; Berlin does not. Two related questions arise, what does the reader know of the writer?

Does this knowledge--the expression of ethos--reinforce the writer's discourse? Booth, as discussed earlier, addresses "corruptions" of the rhetorical stance, and, most relevant to ethos, what he terms the "entertainer's stance--the willingness to sacrifice substance to personality and charm," which can lead to "empty colorfulness" (146). Does Corder cross this line? Here is a sampling of what the reader knows of Corder from reading his "Hunting for Ethos" and "Argument as Emergence": he has three children; he is "not known as a writer"; he drinks wine; he can be a "damn fool"; he asks his students "dumb questions"; he was born in West Texas; he did graduate work at the University of Oklahoma; he was "poorly taught" in rhetoric; he "misspent ten years as department chairman"; and he "wrote citations [that] were printed prettily and were read aloud at a party for faculty members," an act about which he says, "the hell with it."

In contrast, a sampling of Berlin's "Rhetoric and Ideology" and "Current-Traditional Rhetoric" reveals virtually nothing about the writer's personality. Relevant here, though, is the classicist view of ethos as an ethical projection of character (as distinguished from personality--a modern, perhaps distorted notion of ethos). Clearly, Corder's writing

bristles with personality; Berlin's does not. And, by general classical definitions, Corder projects certain Aristotelian virtues--justice, (he sounds fair), wisdom (he sounds smart), and gentleness (he sounds modest)--but arguably not others--courage (he did work he didn't want to), magnificence (he's too modest), and temperateness (he drinks too much). Of course, Corder creates such an ethos. But nonetheless if Corder is put to the classical test of ethos, he subjects himself to such judgments. Similarly, if he is put to Booth's test of the rhetorical balance, he may come dangerously close to the "entertainer's stance." My point, though, is that Corder's ethos is personable, and whether or not this involvement is a positive or negative factor depends largely upon the audience--a point I will discuss in detail in Chapter Four. Berlin, conversely, reveals little of himself. His prose, in Booth's scheme, comes dangerously close to the "pedant's stance." His character supports the classical virtues in that the reader senses Berlin's courage, gentleness, and sense of justice. The reader can, of course, infer from the content that Berlin is wise and sagacious. As with Corder's personable ethos, the judgment of Berlin's more distanced ethos

ultimately lies with the reader, at least in the poststructural theories that I will discuss in the next chapter.

At some risk, however, I feel obliged to answer the question I asked at the outset of this brief analysis: who "best" portrays himself as the "better" person? Given the parameters of classical and contemporary definitions of ethos, I think that both writers miss the mark: Corder falls slightly short of Aristotle's ideal virtues, though Cicero would applaud his sincerity. Plato and Quintilian would admire his personable ethos though they would frown upon his pedestrian ideals. Berlin's ethos is removed in the classical rhetorical sense of ethos. And his "pedant's stance" has Elbow's "rubber-gloved quality" typical of "most academic discourses," the antithesis of Corder's "entertainer's stance" that contains a bit too much of "empty colorfulness."

Both writers, despite their own differing ethos, promote in the content of their discourse mixtures of character and personality, mixtures that distinguish effective rhetoric. For Corder, ethos includes these considerations:

> It is more important for us to ask just how character is revealed in language, or just what qualities of character in particular reveal good sense, good character, and good will....But since ethical argument appears to be contingent upon a presence emerging in discourse, the real voice [is] of a genuine personality ("Hunting" 300).

For Berlin, ethos includes these considerations:

> A rhetoric can never be innocent, can never be a disinterested arbiter of the ideological claims of others because it is always already serving certain ideological claims....The liberated consciousness of students is the only educational objective worth considering ("Rhetoric and Ideology" 477).

These rhetoricians, though opposite in their own ethos, tap at the core of the role of ethos in contemporary writing: writers must assert themselves and cannot do so with ideological neutrality. Writers, ideally, should position themselves between the externality of Aristotle's objectivity and the internality of Plato's subjectivity. If polarized, writers run the risk of being either too distanced or too personal. "Neo-traditionalists"--those writers discussed in this chapter--have drawn

from the past in developing what I think is an effective ethos that balances the self with subject and audience.

Such a balance, however, becomes precarious in the poststructural theories that have developed concurrently with the "neo-traditionalist" strand of rhetoric. In the writings of Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida--along with their American counterparts--ethos takes on a new meaning. In Chapter Four I will discuss the role of ethos in poststructural theory.

Chapter IV

Poststructural Rhetoric: Is the Writer Dead?

What matter who's speaking?

Michel Foucault

As I have suggested thus far in this study of the evolution of ethos from the classical period to the present, the presence of self in writing has been largely cyclical, rather than progressive in any chronological sense. Ethos, with its roots firmly planted in Aristotle, Plato, Quintilian, and Cicero, is reinterpreted by the cultural and intellectual trends of a given period.

For centuries ethos thrived as a dominant mode of appeal and perhaps as the most powerful of all means of persuasion. Historically, the principal argument among rhetoricians has not concerned the place or the power of ethos, but rather the objectivity or the subjectivity of the writer's rendering of reality. Meaning resided in the writer. Spanning the spectrum of time from classical to modern rhetoric was the question of involvement concerning the authenticity of the writer's perception of his world. With Aristotle and Plato at either end of the objective-subjective

continuum, subsequent rhetoricians have staked their positions at points between the two. With this dichotomy rhetoricians generally fell into two camps of thought: Neo-Aristotelian or Neo-Platonic.

Such division of thought, however, applied more to literature than to rhetoric. Writers were thought more to be authors, and readers were thought more to be critics. Personal exposition--essays--has not received the same attention as literature has. And for centuries critics drew a clear line between the two. This line, in addition to highlighting distinctions between rhetoric and literature, has contributed to the perceived superiority of literature, which has a history that sustains itself as an academic pursuit, giving credence to the belief that literature is a discipline worthy of lofty study. This observation of literature steeped in tradition with its own proper subject matter perhaps accounts for its esteemed position in English departments. We stress not readers of writers, but critics of literature. Whereas rhetoricians struggle in their efforts to locate and sustain a conceptual framework, literary critics have established a solid ground from which they can "locate" reality. M.H. Abrams, for instance, writes with authority in his classifications of literature, classifications drawn from the criterion of "orientation," or where

the critic finds a literary work: 1) in the nature it copies; 2) in the audience it finds; 3) in the author; or, 4) in its own verbal structure. As he states more simply, literature can be classified as either mimetic, affective, expressive, or objective (Adams 1).

Though these distinctions are as rhetorical as they are literary, and though ethos could be clearly traced through this framework, rhetoricians tend towards timidity in staking their rightful claims. As I will propose in this chapter, however, literary and rhetorical theory merge in poststructural thinking to form a powerful new method that adds a new insight to rhetorical analyses that break down the traditional barriers between literature and rhetoric. Poststructuralism gives rhetoricians their rightful role in English departments, a role that has long been diminished in this century.

However, before I proceed with my discussion of poststructuralism, I must first admit to two huge obstacles that stand in the way of a lucid discussion. First, poststructuralism defies lucidity; and second, applying poststructuralist theory to the evolution of ethos in rhetoric is no small task. Yet, having scraped and scratched my way through the darkness of poststructuralism, I believe with conviction that somewhere in this

quagmire of thought lies the essence of ethos in contemporary theory. And though the term "deconstruction," an offshoot of poststructuralism, has an explosive ring of finality to it, it tends, as I have come to understand it, to synthesize rather than destroy the theories that have preceded it. Obscure yet elucidating, poststructuralism forces us to look anew at the way we think, write, and read. Like a Gestalt picture, the longer we stare at it the greater the chance that it will snap in to complete focus. We see it both ways. Deconstruction is like this.

What then is this deconstructive link between writing and reading and how is ethos affected by it? Though this theory is generally a reaction against structuralism--a reaction that I will more fully explain later in this chapter--for now I will digress to relate a personal understanding of deconstruction (a species of poststructuralism) and how this understanding became apparent in the classroom.

For years I have taught an Introduction to Literature class, and for years I have left the course with the frustration that my students did not understand me, or, of greater significance, the text they read. Despite my efforts to "liberate" their thinking, to give them full reign in exploring the various ideas that good literature renders, I invariably found myself in

the same hole each semester. Students did not think for themselves; instead, they tried to second-guess the author's intention coupled with my interpretation of what I thought was the author's intention. This double-barrelled imitation produced papers twice-removed from any kind of personal response that would enhance the "understanding and appreciation" (the course's objective) of literature. However ostensibly I stated that I wanted their interpretations, their responses, and their personal engagement, to them the tacit message was clear: they must give me what I want. And I got what I asked for--stale, lifeless, canned "analyses" that said absolutely nothing. Even the sharper, more daring students stayed well within the lines of what they thought I wanted. The less ambitious resorted to plot summaries.

What is the problem? In a phrase, the problem might be "critical orientation." Abrams and others have traditionally categorized literary criticism into the four schools mentioned earlier in this chapter: mimetic, affective, expressive, and objective. These classifications alone "construct" a particular kind of response that inhibits the kind of discovery we seek in literary analyses. Many teachers--and I am included--slip in and out of the four classical modes of criticism, never

satisfied with any one in and of itself. If I wanted personal responses, I would rely upon the affective school of literature, knowing all along that students would fall prey to the "affective fallacy." Literature served more as a springboard to ideas by association, ideas that usually fell wide of the mark when students dipped into totally unrelated anecdotes about what the literature "reminded them of."

Expressive theory failed as well. Never really comfortable with this school of thought to begin with, I would nonetheless throw in what biographical tidbits I knew about a particular author. Invariably this backfired. Hemingway's drinking or Dickinson's sexual orientation or Hawthorne's politics would reign supreme in the students' eyes, blurring whatever else might be in the piece. Even Thoreau was labeled a "lazy bastard who would not know a value if it slapped him in the face."

New Criticism seemed to be the solution. Reasonably well-schooled in this theory, I thought that an objective, structural analysis would keep students on track. No longer chit-chatty (affective) or gossipy (expressive), the course had content--real substance. I lectured about literary technique and terminology and insisted that the students dig out the meaning through the kind of close reading required

of structuralist thought. We symbol hunted, read between and over the lines, and found motifs in any phrase repeated twice. I reinvented the literary wheel with each new piece we encountered. I isolated plot, theme, character, setting, symbol, and the host of other terms with the turn of each page. I behaved, in short, as a new critic who emphasized the principles of Brooks and Warren:

> They paid attention to the text in itself, regardless of authorial motives or historical context; and they focused on the formal elements that they thought distinguished literature from non-literature.... It taught students to read carefully, to master the text, to pull from it the meaning they thought existed there objectively (Raymond 11).

New criticism and current-traditional rhetoric are similar in their diminshment of ethos in the text. Ethos fades, surrendering itself in part to the scientific influences of objectivity, a type of external reality that the new criticism espoused.

Deconstruction, however, places the reader/writer at the center of personal involvement. Jacques Derrida, the inventor of deconstruction, discusses "binary opposites" that are the cornerstone of deconstructive

thought. This concept of binary opposites is divided into two phases, the first of which "overturns," the second of which "reconstructs":

> [overturning] To do justice to this necessity is to recognize that in a classical philosophical opposition we are not dealing with the peaceful coexistence of a vis-a-vis, but rather with a violent hierarchy. One of the two terms governs the other. To deconstruct the opposition is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment.
>
> [reconstructing] To remain in the first phase is still to operate on the terrain of and from within the deconstructed system. By means of this double...we must also mark the interval between inversion, which brings low which was high, and the eruptive emergence of a new 'concept'(qtd.in Fink 65).

Derrida is hard to read, and, though I oversimplify his complex theories, I find his ideas about overturning and reconstructing understandable and practicable. This "fifth" school of literary theory essentially collapses the previous four and frees in the process the literary constraints that inhibit reader response.

His idea of "binary opposites," or "philosophical opposition," is the key to "overturning" previously held conceptions about the nature of

literature. To illustrate this point I will allude again to my example of teaching an Introduction to Literature class. With any of the established four critical schools of theory, I constrain student response (or my own for that matter) to the particular criteria of that critical school. In doing so the response is either mimetic, affective, expressive, or objective.

Derrida's deconstruction dismantles these constraints. For example, Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" has been variously taught, consciously or not, using all of the four schools of thought. Such questions might follow from such a framework: Is this story "real" or not? (mimetic). How do you view Brown's plight? (affective). How does Hawthorne's background contribute to his writing of the story? (expressive). And, what recurring images, colors, or symbols reflect the theme of the story? (objective). Derrida would not have us think this way. Again, he would have us overturn and reconstruct. In other words, as I understand it, he is suggesting that we focus on the opposites in any given reading. "Young Goodman Brown" is replete with opposites: good/evil; dark/light; real/unreal; innocence/corruption; and male/female, to name a few. Of course, none of these pairs exists without opposition, without "violence" as Derrida would say. The point of deconstruction,

then, is two-fold: identify the binary opposites, and reconstruct the new concept that emerges.

This breaking down and rebuilding empowers the reader to render a fresh and personal interpretation without the baggage of either self-delusion or standard critical rehash. This freedom, however, does not simplify the reading process, nor should it be misconstrued as a reckless form of interpretation that abandons the intellectual integrity that should exist between reader and writer. Poststructural analysis demands that the reader break down a piece--deconstruct it--to its central binary opposites, an activity that requires analysis, and then, equally important, the synthesis demands that the reader reconstruct the piece, creating new meaning in the process. In other words, the reader no longer breaks down a piece and searches for meaning in the fragments, as structuralism stresses; instead, the reader "overturns" a piece in identifying binary opposites, and then reconstructs it with this important distinction: which opposite prevails?

Within these opposites lies Derrida's notion of "violence." Deconstruction insists that the reader sense the struggle of philosophic assumptions within a text. This struggle evolves into conflict that, in

deconstructionist theory, produces a full-fledged battle where one side "overturns" the other. In a deconstructionist framework, then, "Young Goodman Brown" becomes, for instance, a struggle between good and evil. Though, of course, traditional theories could render the same conclusion, deconstruction, through emphasis on polar opposites, forces readers to delineate the opposing terms and then determine which side prevails. Seen as a teeter-totter, these opposing terms, in this case good and evil, are not equally balanced. Depending upon active reader response, one side tilts the other. For sake of simplicity, I will assume that the majority of readers would agree that in "Young Goodman Brown" evil tilts the balance. The fulcrum of analysis now requires that the reader rivet attention on the philosophic violence that pervades the piece. In doing so the reader not only draws upon traditional methods of support, but, in a sense, "rewrites" the piece with the resolution of conflict in mind. To extract from the piece that "evil is the nature of mankind" yields, perhaps, a superficial understanding, a passive knowledge. But to reconstruct the piece as seen as a struggle where one side prevails is to render it a personal and permanent experience drawn from the reader's active involvement.

Though I have focused on Hawthorne as my illustration, any piece of literature, poetry and essays included, subjects itself to a deconstructive reading. Readers of Kate Chopin, for instance, can discern the binary opposites of liberation/suppression or of morality/immorality. Joyce yields dark/light; Hemingway life/death; Frost engagement/disengagement; Dickinson reality/fantasy. The interpretations are as numerous as the readers.

Jane Tompkins' "A Short Course in Poststructuralism" sheds light on the obscurity that clouds what Christopher Norris calls deconstruction: "[not] a method, a system or settled body of ideas" (1). Defining by negation, other critics go to great lengths in saying what deconstruction is not. Foucault himself defines it in Spellmeyer's words as "an activity rather than a body of knowledge" (715). Barthe says that "language is neither an instrument nor a vehicle," and asks the question "who writes?" (142). Others have called it "destabilizing, obscure, hazy, and unduly dyadic" (Schilb 423).

Poststructuralism, Tompkins says, is "a challenge to the accepted model of reading and of criticism" (733). Reviewing the traditional model of literary criticism, Tompkins says it "puts in the number one spot the

reader, in the number two spot the method, in the number three spot the text, and in the number four spot the reading" (733). Like Abrams' classifications, such categories tend to dissect, rather than synthesize, the interpretation of the text. Tompkins notes that the "significance of the poststructural model is that it collapses all four of these entities into a simultaneity, into a single, continuous act of interpretation [so that] all are part of a single, evolving field of discourse" (733).

The significance of Tompkins' interpretation of poststructuralist theory lies in its relevance to composition. Though poststructural theory, with its primary emphasis on the collapsing of traditional methods of literary analysis, has an avant-garde appeal to literary theorists, rhetoricians have scrambled to make sense of its significance in the writing classroom. The challenge of what I would call poststructural rhetoric, however, involves the murkiness of interpreting what exactly poststructuralism is. Clearly enough, I think, poststructuralism is a reaction against the structuralist movement that took hold early in the twentieth century. Rhetoric, seeking to identify itself as a solid

and clear-cut discipline, sought to imitate the exactitude of science that emerged at the beginning of this century. As Jon Harned notes,

> Recent studies have shown that the freshman English course as it was taught in American universities from the late nineteenth century until the mid 1960's took its governing assumptions from the empiricist epistemology of the Newtonian tradition in science (10).

With this scientific metaphysics firmly ensconced in educational circles, structuralism in literary criticism seemed to be a logical response to those empiricists who found English too vague, too nebulous, and too "unscientific" to be worthy of academic pursuit. The structuralists developed their crisply delineated schools of literary theory in hopes that such division would create the kind of objectivity that would put literature on a level field with science. As Tompkins points out, literature was neatly categorized into the four entities of reader, method, text, and interpretation, with the objectivity of text holding the key position (733). With machine-like precision, a reader entered a piece, absorbed its content, and came out the other end having understood (or by a fault of his own not having understood) what the author meant.

This emphasis, of course, deflates the signficance of both the reader and the writer. Communication is restricted to knowable, objective realities where language is relegated to the subservient position of a mere medium of exchange. Ideas, accordingly, must have precise, corresponding words that equate meaning and understanding. To the extent that this correspondence is not achieved, the writer fails--or the reader fails in his comprehension of what the writer intended to say. This structuralist mode of univocal meaning between writer and reader--the essence of current-traditional rhetoric--serves as the major point of departure between structural and poststructural theory.

Derrida and fellow deconstructionists raise a point that confounds contemporary rhetoricians. Deconstructionists generally call into question the relationship of nature, thought, and language--into what Ferdinand de Saussure called the "signified" and the "signifier."

But before I proceed with what I understand are the basic principles of deconstruction--principles that began with de Saussure and that were expanded by Derrida, Foucault, and numerous American rhetoricians--I need first to step back and attempt to clarify as well as I can the clouds of confusion that have resulted from deconstructionist thinking. In

doing so I will sort out the strands of deconstruction that have woven their way through the myriad interpretations of what has come to be called the New Rhetoric. In this sorting out, I hope not only to illuminate some of the darkness that distinguishes deconstruction, but also to relocate the role of ethos as it stands today.

Deconstruction, an off-shoot of poststructuralism, seeks among other matters to merge composition and literary theories. Writing and reading, as reasoning would have it, are opposite sides of the same coin. Expanding this logic, it would follow that we read as we write and write as we read. When we write, we "construct" texts. When we read, we "deconstruct" texts. In a rhetorical sense, we "compose" and "decompose." The essence of deconstruction involves this interaction of writer and reader. Simply stated, the basic question might be this one: "Whose text is it, the writer's or the reader's?"

Deconstruction addresses this question, and, in doing so, adds a dimension that transcends the simplicity of the writer-reader interaction. This dimension of difference is the source, however, of multiple interpretations--and of multiple doubts, several of which surface in Schilb's "Composition and Poststructuralism." Schilb, wondering first

whether we should "strenuously reject this perspective [deconstruction], mildly tolerate it, guardedly encourage it, or utterly embrace it," cites others on this issue:

> Jim Corder...[sees it] as a destabilizing force within language itself. Ross Winterowd has scorned J. Hillis Miller's effort to relate deconstruction to the teaching of writing. Ann Berthoff has faulted poststructuralism for what she takes to be its unduly dyadic conception of the sign. C. Jan Swearingen has charged it with a radical skepticism that deters the promotion of literacy. [And] Maxine Hairston has suggested that younger composition scholars espousing post-structuralism just want to please their mentors in literature (423).

Indeed, the overriding question coming from the 1966 Conference on College Composition and Communication was, "how can deconstruction possibly help us" (Schilb 424).

Though I certainly do not have the definitive and final answer to this question, I do believe that deconstruction reestablishes the long tradition of rhetoric and the role that ethos plays in that tradition. Ironically, despite various proclamations that the writer dies in deconstruction, I maintain that the writer reasserts himself as a living,

breathing entity, even though, as Foucault would have it, he must transform himself from author to writer to do so: "the author has disappeared; God and man died a common death; we should reexamine the empty space left by the author's disappearance" (182).

In strange twists, the author's disappearance may be more of a restoration of the proper balance among text, writer, reality, and reader. Far more attention has been given to the 1963 Conference on College Composition and Communication that featured the innovations of Corbett, Christensen, and Booth--innovations that largely advocated personal writing as the antidote to the lifeless themes of the 1950's and to the authoritarian educational and social system that stifled individuality. However, the lesser known conference at Johns Hopkins University may have done more to overthrow the structuralist constraints that have dominated rhetoric since 1875. Arguably, despite all the positive dialogue that emerged from the 1963 convention from the likes of Corbett, Booth, Christensen, Elbow, Macrorie, and a host of others, the basic paradigm of western metaphysics remained unchanged: language, according to Harned, "still sought to convey a reality that existed outside language itself" (10).

Before I delve deeper into the nebula of deconstruction and its relevance to composition, I must first summarize the larger significance of what has occurred regarding the role of ethos in rhetoric. As I have maintained throughout this work, rhetoric has its primary roots in Aristotle and Plato, roots that were refined by Cicero and Quintilian. For simplicity's sake, I categorized Aristotle and Cicero as advocating an ethos that stressed the appearance of good character. In this respect, rhetoric had pragmatic as well as aesthetic purposes. I further categorized Plato and Quintilian as advocating an ethos that equated character with ethos. Non-virtuous people could not be good writers; ethos, and the virtues it elicits, could not be feigned in the manner described by Aristotle and Cicero.

These basic classical strands have woven their way through the history of rhetoric, with only the emphases of ethos shifting one way or the other. Germane to my discussion, however, is the point that the writer and his perception of reality remained at the forefront of rhetoric. Readers remained outside the work in that they were either persuaded by the ethos of Aristotle's rhetoric or they were inspired by the ethos of Plato's rhetoric.

These strands have remained for some two thousand years. But with the advent of composition at Harvard in 1875, which "standardized" the teaching of writing, coupled with the Industrial Revolution, which brought forth massive social, cultural, and political changes, these basic strands were severed. For the sake of convenience, I have marked the diminishment of ethos as occurring between the years 1875 and 1963. The individual was lost in the haze of mechanized writing that has been variously characterized throughout this work and has been labelled as current-traditional rhetoric.

It is ironic, though, that current-traditionalists generally identify themselves as neo-Aristotelians. To a point, of course, they are correct in that Aristotle emphasized, in Berlin's words, "a reality that is rational, regular, and certain," and a knowledge that " is readily accessible because of the consonance between the world and the faculties of the mind" (Berlin, "Current-Traditional" 1), but they neglect or at least distort Aristotle's extensive views on the role of ethos in projecting this version of reality (and they totally ignore his insistence on invention).

A similar distortion exists with neo-Platonists who define reality as an ethereal entity that is unattainable excepting the meagerness of copies of copies. If discovery of the true self is the aim of neo-Platonists, a truth on which language is loosely hung, then ethos becomes exclusively the self revealed--a self in search of truth without any reality beyond the perceptions of the individual writer. The distortion here is that neo-Platonists, though emphasizing the self in writing, do not ignore reality or language. Composition under the guise of neo-Platonism is not written in a vacuum void of subject, purpose, or audience.

My digression here--a summation of the basic tenets of classical rhetoric and the role of ethos played in each--serves as a foundation for discussing the shifting paradigms that emerged in the 1960's. I assert, that for all the good that arose from the 1963 convention and its attempt to reestablish itself in writing, little was accomplished beyond a tampering with the basic western metaphysical communications triangle of writer, audience, and reality. Reality, in other words, was still something "out there."

The primary difference exists in how far or near the writer stood in relation to the presented external reality. The assertion of self, though liberating on the one hand, is, on the other hand, still inhibiting in that the self is constrained by an objective reality and by the language used to convey it.

I do not intend to denigrate the ideas of Elbow, Booth, Christensen and others who convened in 1963 to give new direction to our discipline. I remain convinced, indeed, that without their influence composition would still be steeped in a voiceless mode that has distinguished writing since 1875. What I am suggesting, however, is that nothing much new came from what has been hailed as a revolution; it was more of a restoration--a restoration of ethos in the wider scheme of rhetoric.

If there was a battlefield during this period, as has been generally said, it was not between the conservative neo-Aristotelians and their brand of current-traditional rhetoric, which, as I have indicated is a misnomer, and the liberal neo-Platonists and their brand of expressionism, which is equally a misnomer. The battle, as it were, was more of a pedagogical one than a philosophical one. How composition should be taught was the prevailing question that emerged from this era.

And the answers, from Booth's rhetorical stance to Christensen's generative rhetoric to Mellon's sentence combining to Burke's pentad, have all positively affected the teaching of composition. In short, ethos was revived and techniques were invented. But the metaphysics--the underlying philosophic assumptions about the relationships of language, thought, and reality--remained largely the same. However, deconstruction, based on Derrida's distinction of "metaphysics of presence," radically shifted the fundamental ways in which we view the role of language in reading and writing.

Reality, conventionally, has been thought of as an entity that exists "out there," separate from the writer. Historically, rhetoric, in its broadest terms, has sought to establish the connection between the writer, the reader, and this external reality. Despite differences between Aristotle and Plato, their perceptions of the physical world had more similarities than differences. Both metaphysics had as their premise the writer's aim to "capture" meaning. Meaning, in this respect, was determinate in that written expression should have a conclusive, univocal interpretation that united the writer and reader. Misunderstanding was the result of misinterpretation. Some readers simply do not "get it." As Sharon

Crowley states, traditional metaphysics presents a kind of "self-sealing argument" regarding the relationship of the mind, reality, and language:

> minds correctly perceive and experience the world because they have a natural representative relation to it. Further, minds create language, which must perforce represent nature...since language is a mental production, and thus a product of nature...[minds] literally 're-present' [nature]--make it present to us, give it to us again, perfect and undistorted. Minds 'picture' nature (Crowley 3).

And language is the vehicle for this "picturing" of reality, or, as Crowley adds, "reality is enshrined in the structure of language" (3).

Derrida, though, flips this around. As Crowley suggests, Derrida might argue that traditional metaphysical thought about the tidy alignment of language, thought, and reality has it "precisely backwards, or upside down, or inside out" (4). Consciousness, in other words, does not produce language, but, rather, language produces consciousness. As Crowley further states, "language speaks us" (4). The essence, then, of Derrida's metaphysics of presence is the philosophic assumption that

language, again in Crowley's words, is "transparent rather than opaque, [which] must assume that language has no originary or creative powers of its own....It is only instrumental, forever dependent on some other generative force for its motivation" (5). In other words, nothing exists independent of itself; in language, symbols are meaningless without context--they require, or are dependent on, this other "generative force" that Derrida calls "differance," a play on words that captures the essence of deconstruction. A French pun, this word merges "different" and "deferred" in suggesting that all writing is not a matter of sameness and that all writing must, by its very nature, be distanced from the context of one human being communicating simultaneously with another. In other words, contrary to the conventional western metaphysical theories of communication--that language has a referent--Derrida's metaphysics of presence refutes the idea that language can transcend itself in conveying ideas between writer and reader. Writing, in this sense, is different and deferred as my simple example here might illustrate.

I am presently sitting alone in my office at Northern Oklahoma College on Sunday morning, December eleventh, 1994, and the time now is exactly 8:26 a.m. This past sentence, an utterance in Derrida's

vernacular, is now in the past tense, as time continues to tick away. The "presence" of this communication is already "distanced," and this distance will increase over the span of time. Theoretically, and again borrowing from deconstructive language, I, the writer of this piece, am currently actively writing language that dies the moment I write it. If this text is read after my metaphorical or physical death, then I have authored a piece that renders life to the reader--but my presence is gone.

Additionally, these utterances called language cannot have, according to Derrida, any reference outside the markings that the reader sees presently in this text. The reader sees these markings at the time he sees them, not at the current time of 8:43 a.m. Furthermore, during this seventeen-minute span in the writing of this paragraph, the reader has been totally absent both in time and in the ability to respond to what I am saying. My communication, written to unknown audiences in unknown places in unknown times, refutes the very meaning that language is a medium of understanding between the writer and the reader. I, the writer, have no idea that these markings will ever be read, much less understood. In other words, I am now able to assert in the

presence of absence. "Reality," or language's ability to create it, is non-existent. My task is no longer to capture an external reality through the medium of language--an "out there" referent; nor is it to project an "in here" version of my own world in mere want of a reader who wishes to engage me.

Absurd, perhaps, but deconstruction--at least Derrida's brand of it--can be so variously construed that it either totally liberates or completely suppresses the role of ethos in writing. But Derrida is not a rhetorical outlaw writing on the fringes of absurdity. He is rather, in many respects, a disciple of Plato, whose pronouncements on rhetoric were just as radical in his day as Derrida's are today. If we are to take Plato seriously, as well we should, then I would argue that we should take Derrida seriously. But to accept either is to reject an aspect of our discipline--that writing is a form of communication through language that seeks truth (or the appearance of it) to an audience within a referential framework. As Jasper Neel points out, "Plato undeniably condemns writing" (1). And, as was more fully pointed out in chapter two, Plato, as quoted by Neel, goes on to say that "any serious student of serious

realities will shrink from making truth the helpless object of men's ill-will by committing it to writing" (1).

Neel contends, however, that Plato is "wrong about writing, and his error is compounded because he uses writing to make his case" (5). Plato needed writing to condemn it. As Neel further states, "Plato could stand under the plane tree beside the Ilissus and shout as loudly as he liked; the only way we 'hear' him today is in writing" (3).

Though I have contended elsewhere in this paper that the lines separating current-traditionalists, with their roots in Aristotle, from expressionists, with their roots in Plato, are really blurry distinctions of pedagogy, Derrida and his deconstructive theory bring forth the central shift in thinking about composition. My point here is that the shift is philosophic, not pedagogical. Plato, like Derrida, is less a rhetorician than he is a philosopher. Seekers of knowledge, beauty, and truth, philosophers quarrel over the meaning of life and our purpose in it. With these ideals, Derrida (who studied and taught philosophy) was indeed influenced by Plato, Nietzsche, and Saussure, among others. Though my intention here is not to diminish philosophic contributions to rhetoric, I think that we must bear in mind a primary difference between

the two: philosophy is largely conceptual, while rhetoric is largely pragmatic.

Deconstruction, I think, forces us to look at the paradigms that have formed our discipline, and, in doing so, we can effectively "reconstruct" from the ground up what we do and how we do it. As Theresa Enos notes, we must approach poststructuralist theory with the following objectives in mind:

> 1) to broaden thinking about literature not only to include the discursive nature of language but also to accept its persuasive nature.
>
> 2) to attempt distinctions between author and writer.
>
> 3) to acknowledge the presence of the writer in the text itself.
>
> 4) to embrace the concept of the world as language (339).

Though Enos' points pertain more to literature than they do to composition, the correlation between literature and composition, long held as separate entities in departments of English (as well as in the minds of students), narrows in deconstructive theory. In fact, general

poststructural theory blurs the conventional distinctions between literature and composition, and, paradoxically, from this blur emerges the clarity of the writer's role in poststructural/deconstructive theory. Ethos, in summary, emerges as an essential force in the new rhetoric. Enos' last two points about the presence of the writer and the concept of language are especially essential to the role of ethos in deconstructive theory.

Enos, of course, like others who interpret the nebula of deconstruction with varying shades of differences, simplifies to a degree what I think Derrida and Foucault meant by presence and language. To them, despite their disagreements about deconstruction, writers and language both serve as rather inadequate means of communication.

Derrida's refutation of the metaphysics of presence refutes this direct correlation. My words, chosen and presented here, do not transcend the here and now, nor do they defer the reader to anything outside the presence of now. In this deconstructive sense, I disappear with each word written, leaving mere traces for unknown readers to discover long after this moment of thought--thought inadequately represented by black marks on a page and thought restricted to what I

can say through duplication of signifiers. In other words, at this moment I am thinking far more than I am writing. My ethos is constrained, is "deconstructed" by the nihilistic nature of poststructural theory.

This reduction of the speaker/writer to insignificance accords with Foucault's notion that it matters not who's speaking, and liberates the writer to create whatever realities he can, knowing, as he goes, that he metaphorically dies in the process. Writers are, in Foucault's words, "freed from the necessity of 'expression,' it [writing] only refers to itself" (180). Foucault further expounds upon the significance of the insignificance of the writer:

> Writing unfolds like a game that inevitably moves beyond its own rules and finally leaves them behind. Thus, the essence of this writing is not the exalted emotions related to the act of composition or the insertion of a subject into language. Rather, it is primarily concerned with creating an opening where the writing subject endlessly disappears (180).

I seek closure that Derrida says does not exist. I have preceded this text and stand outside of it. Yet I am here if the reader finds me. I must conclude that I am alive through the language I "recreate" (I have no original language that serves to signify a greater truth--to this extent

deconstruction is perfectly understandable). And the language I recreate came long before me and the words I use are in the dictionary available to anyone.

In conclusion (which in itself is a refutation of deconstructive theory), I must admit that all I have written thus far is non-deconstructive. Contrary to whatever efforts I have expended in writing deconstructively, I have nonetheless abided by the conventions of structural rhetoric. To what extent I have "succeeded" remains a decision to be made by the reader, but I have attempted to write with a purpose, a subject, and an audience, and have attempted to do so with clarity, correctness, and organization. I have also tried to insert a sense of self throughout this paper, especially in light of my thesis of surveying the evolution of ethos in rhetoric.

Philosophically, poststructuralism forces rhetoricians to look anew at the relationships among reality, thought, and language. It further enhances and defines the classical roots from which writing sprung, clarifying in the process much of what Aristotle, Plato, and their followers expounded upon. Additionally, poststructuralism makes an earnest attempt to dismantle the metaphysics of western thinking--a

task that is nearly impossible, as this chapter has no doubt indicated. And finally, poststructuralism, despite its efforts to the contrary, gives voice to the writer. To coin my version of Descarte, I write; therefore I am.

Pedagogically, poststructuralism crackles on thin ice. Though I have no philosophic qualms about poststructural theory, and though I find it stimulating to look at the world upside down, I nonetheless cling to the familiar in finding safe ground between the reality of Aristotle and of Plato. For better or worse, writers, at least writers in our contemporary culture, must master the conventions of communication as they have evolved from classical times.

Chapter V

Pedagogical Applications: Practice in Projecting Ethos As a Role in Discourse

A writer's self-consciousness, for which he is much scorned, is really a mode of interestedness that inevitably turns outward.
John Updike

The theory of ethos in composition involves an intriguing history of the ebb and flow of the voice in writing. The sounds of self seem to surface, even shout, then submerge into depths of silence. Currently, as I have suggested in the theoretical chapters of this study, we are seeking to rediscover the proper role--the right pitch--for ethos in composition. But classroom practice can dampen the enthusiasm of the brightest of scholars who espouse the multiple philosophies that address the nebula surrounding the self in composition. Ethereal, murky, and slippery are but a few of the adjectives that come to my mind in describing ethos in written discourse.

During my year's writing of this study, I have spent 720 hours in classrooms teaching writing to 356 students, a sizable portion of whom left

my course in about the same shape they entered it. Though I would like to report otherwise, the best of theories can flop come Monday morning when the bell rings and the door shuts. Yet, from my experience, I have noticed a glimmer of light that pushes me onward in my efforts to lay claim as a top gun in my business, albeit self-proclaimed and with but a sliver of recognition, the shards of which scatter with the winds of time.

My building, Central Hall, is over a hundred years old, and late in the night I wander the empty halls squinting at the ghosts of teachers past who taught in their own clouds of chalkdust in the very rooms that I do--all of whom probably thought that they were in the midst of a maelstrom of theory that was the panacea for the ills of poor writing. They and their students have long since departed to the world of obscurity.

These journeys down the dark, quiet halls of Central, punctuated by the echoes of my footsteps, remind me of my own insignificance--of a distance that lends perspective. Rumor even has it that one professor, lathered in the frenzy of the evolution of ethos in discourse, went berserk and leaped head-first from the steeple that adorns our building. Worse yet, legend has it, nobody cared.

Ruminations aside, my optimism lies with my observation that a growing number of students do write better when they themselves are at the center of their composition. Granted, not all will profit by such a pedagogy, but these captive charges trudging through the perceived irrelevance of required composition would slip between the cracks of any approach.

But through my years of study and experience, I have come to this conclusion: Composition I should stress correctness; Composition II should stress effectiveness. Though this line of demarcation is etched in sand because some writers are ready to take risks in Comp I, I have found that the vast majority of students have not mastered the basics necessary for effective writing, which include grammar, punctuation, and structure.

With these distinctions in mind--correctness and effectiveness--I begin both my Composition I and Composition II course with this essay from Jasper Neel's Plato, Derrida, and Writing:

> Three Reasons for Stopping X
>
> X is one of the most important problems in today's modern society. There are three reasons why X should be stopped. This essay will explain those reasons.

> First, a lot of people do X because it is the popular thing to do. They do not realize how harmful it can be in their later lives. All young people should realize that the best thing to do is to have fun later when it will last. Doing the popular thing now because it is fun is a big mistake, because this sort of thing doesn't last.
>
> Second, a lot of people don't realize that taking the easy way now is a bad idea. The way to have a bright future that will last is to work hard now and wait until later to X. For example, Horatio Alger did not X a lot when he was young. Instead, he worked hard for a bright future, and he ended up with a wonderful family, a good job, a lot of money, and a beautiful home.
>
> Third, the Bible says young people should not X. The Bible has been around a lot longer than those who X. If young people will be patient like Job was and if they work hard like he did, they will end up with children and all the good things life has to offer.
>
> In conclusion, I feel that people should not X. We should elect leaders and hire teachers who do not X. Because X is popular, and the easy way, and against the Bible, you can see X should be stopped.

Neel's "translation" is also worth noting in its entirety:

> I am not writing. I hold no position. I have nothing at all to do with discovery, communication, or persuasion. I care nothing about the truth. What I am is an essay. I announce my beginning, my parts, my ending, and the links between them. I announce myself as sentences correctly punctuated and words correctly spelled.

Clearly this example exemplifies the kind of dull, voiceless prose that conveys correctness at the cost of effectiveness. And though Neel's point is that this essay says nothing, which is true, it nonetheless does illustrate proper grammar, punctuation, and structure. These emphases are no small tasks: students should know, even memorize, the rules that govern language. Effectiveness is predicated on correctness. But this essay marks the end of Composition I and the beginning of Composition II.

Students can, I think, learn the basics of composition: grammar, punctuation, and standard essay organization, though, truth to tell, and despite my better efforts, students have left my Composition I course unable or unwilling to string together a complete thought that ends with a period. For reasons I know not, some students lack the linguistic fluency that is required in written expression. But such thoughts as these go beyond the scope of this study.

I will assume, for purposes of this discussion, that the majority of students have sufficient writing ability at the conclusion of a Composition I course. With this assumption, I begin Composition II once again with Neel's "Three Reasons for Stopping X" essay. This time, however, I use it

as a point of departure. Like a Betty Crocker recipe, I say, you can tape this essay to your refrigerator and churn out indeterminate numbers of essays, substituting whatever you wish in place of X. What was correct in Composition I becomes ineffective in Composition II. As Neel points out, discovery, communication, and persuasion are absent in his idea of "antiwriting." And ethos, I assert, is the catalyst for these emphases.

The challenge of having students assert themselves in writing, however, is a nettlesome task. And though I offer no final solution for engaging students in their writing, I have found that some methods have worked for me in the past several years, methods that I continue to develop and refine.

First, I establish from the outset that the first ten minutes of every class period we write without stopping (I sit in the back of the class and maintain my own journal). I further tell them that I expect a page of ink, or about 150 or so words. This task they do--surprisingly well. I have even reached the pleasant point where if I should forget the free-writing, they, to a class, remind me. This method, I think, serves two important functions: one, it sets the right tone for a writing class; and, two, it frees their pens and minds in the much needed physical act of putting words on paper. I

would further add that I do not read what they write, but that I do monitor their writing through simple observation.

As for topics, I keep them open-ended, though I encourage ideas that relate the writers with discovering, exploring, and evaluating themselves with the world about them. Even though the topics are of their choosing, I provide them a heuristic at the beginning of the course of broad areas including spirituality, places/things, work, strengths/weaknesses, groups, and people. From these headings, I encourage students to narrow and refine. From this mode of invention students begin to understand the power of their own ethos. Additionally, such writing provides the students with a reservoir of ideas which they can draw upon for their formal essays.

In terms of the curriculum for Composition II, I divide the course into roughly three segments: personal writing, persuasive writing, and research writing. However, I keep ethos at the forefront in any classification of writing. In establishing and maintaining this focus I attempt to create at the outset an ambience, an attitude, that suggests my seriousness about the craft of writing. And although I hesitate to proselytize about teacher demeanor, or in any way suggest that I emanate an aura that inspires the

kind of committed writing that I think is effective, I do believe that a teacher's attitude is essential to a writing class. I must emphasize, however, that to whatever extent I lack the demeanor critical to a writing class, I nonetheless find this rather ethereal entity perhaps the most important distinguishing characteristic in separating good classes from great classes. Theories, methodologies, textbooks, lesson plans, or technology can supplement, but cannot supplant, the interaction that must occur between writers and teachers. Writers must trust and respect their writing teachers; and writing teachers must trust and respect their writers. Without this mutual bond, writers will hold back and revert to their old ways of generating sterile prose. They will not serve themselves up, as good ethos requires, to a teacher for whom they lack trust and respect.

And this rapport is the hard part. I cannot explain it--perhaps it is age, gender, physical appearance (attire, height, weight, posture), vocabulary, accent, or mannerisms--but it exists, and it makes all the difference. In a word, though, it is the ethos of the teacher that ignites the ethos of the writer.

From experience (I don't know if a teacher's ethos can be taught in the school of education), I have had some success and much failure at

striking the right ethos in my classes. My years of evaluations run the gamut of student responses ranging from "you are the worst teacher I've ever had," to "you are the greatest teacher I've ever had." Though I prefer the latter, I know that both extremes are off the mark; and I know too that for the many students who take composition for the requirement that it is, no teacher can make the connection necessary for writers to shine through with sterling prose. But to reiterate, students write differently to different writing teachers, and say what we will about audiences, for student writers, the teacher is the audience. And if ethos is our aim, then we must understand and project our own if we expect the same in return.

Beyond the free writing, the general curriculum, and the projection of my own ethos, I spend considerable time setting the table, as it were, with philosophic discussions that tap into their perception of themselves and the world about them. Although I challenge their thinking throughout the semester, I devote several class periods at the outset of the course addressing specific philosophic questions that address the connection between "knowers" and "writers," a distinction that I first encountered at an English conference in 1991. Joanne Kurfiss of Santa Clara University gave a presentation entitled "Knowers as Writers/Writers as Knowers," the gist of

which draws the parallels between thinking and writing. Without going into the depth of detail she discussed, I nonetheless find it important to present the crux of her information that I paraphrase as follows:

Perspective I: As knowers--

1) Have uncomplicated view of reality; polarized thinking; believe things are clearly true or false; do not question personal beliefs.

2) Believe that knowledge is factual information; consequently, learn by reading and listening for facts rather than meaning. Expect to be tested on facts rather than concepts, interpretations, or ideas.

3) Trust the "voice of authority" (parents, professors, printed word)--not peers. Learn by absorbing "truth" from "authorities."

4) Are intolerant of ambiguity; want others to "say what they mean." Perceive qualified language as confusing or sign of wishy-washiness.

5) Learning is quantitative: how many pages of reading are required? How long should the paper be? Have no standards to judge what is important.

Perspective I: As writers--

1) May offer facts and details with little interpretation; simplistic, single-factor solutions to complex problems.

2) May use dogmatic, moralistic rhetoric; may blame or scold those with whom they disagree.

3) Present facts to "prove" their view is correct with little regard for alternative interpretations.

4) Try to write by formula (outline, five-paragraph essay). Organize writing by putting all related facts together with no clear purpose or point.

5) Want clear statement of what is expected. Believe effort, quantity, and accuracy should determine grade.

This perspective, I think, establishes the clear connection between the way the majority of our students think, and, by extension, the way they write. With this correlation, ethos is muffled. A second perspective, however, provides a framework that can drive students towards a more open-minded approach that requires that ethos come to the forefront of their writing.

Perspective II: As knowers--

1) Believe knowledge is indeterminate, value-laden, and is constructed by fallible human beings.

2) Perceive knowledge as an ongoing, social, constructive process, a search for understanding rather than a possession of facts.

3) Are willing to make responsible choices and commitments based on analysis, judgment, and acknowledged values.

4) Are able to go outside given frames of reference to pose questions, identify problems, and examine basic assumptions.

5) Can integrate "inner and outer" voices into an authentic personal voice.

Perspective II: As writers--

1) Can recognize cultural and historical context from which they can position themselves from other possibilities.

2) Can identify and evaluate assumptions of competing perspectives and interpretations.

3) Can identify values and ethical perspectives underlying a dispute, and can present an issue in complex terms, propose distinctions, invent new categories, and synthesize ideas.

4) Can reason dialectically, taking into account all relevant reasons and evidence in support of views that differ from their own.

5) Can understand that writing is a complex process that generates as well as displays understanding.

This perspective, contrary to the first, clearly promotes the kind of engaged, committed, persuasive writing that emphasizes ethos as the cornerstone of composition. And although I must admit that the presentation of these two perspectives does not pry open ironclad minds, it does nonetheless provide students with a sort of self-analysis from which they can better see themselves as thinkers and writers. Equally important, these perspectives provide me with an insight into how my students think. As a generality, those thinkers steeped either in a scientific mindset or in no particular mindset at all fit the first perspective; and those thinkers, rare though they be, that are open to the possibilities of the second perspective tend to be more receptive to ethos-based composition.

The challenge thus becomes nudging students from perspective I to perspective II, or from an external to an internal view of reality as discussed

in the theoretical chapters of this study. Distance and objectivity render a degree of comfort; closeness and subjectivity shatter, I think, the wall that writers build between themselves and their audience.

In addition to the methods I have discussed, the ethos I create, and the philosophy I espouse, I still must provide a pedagogy that promotes the emergence of self in writing. As I have noted throughout this chapter, students are hesitant to "expose" themselves. Examples help in alleviating their resistance. I have found that the essays written in Newsweek's "My Turn" column are especially effective in demonstrating the power of self in composition. These essays, one page in length, provide accessibility, relevance, and a reading level commensurate with their comprehension, rather than the classical essays that too frequently confuse, intimidate, or bore them. I do, however, depending upon the class, have success with E.B. White's "Once More to the Lake" and George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant," though these essays are far more challenging than the "My Turn" essays.

These essays, as the title suggests, are personally engaged essays that address an array of issues from non-professional writers. With ease I can duplicate and distribute these essays whenever I deem them

appropriate for class analysis and discussion. If students find the essays appealing, I save them in a file; if they do not, which is frequently the case, I discard them.

I have found over the past two years that three essays in particular invariably elicit a favorable response--essays that I will briefly discuss here. Before I proceed, though, I should note that the class has been introduced to the rhetorical principles that I have discussed thus far: they have an awareness of their philosophic orientation, understand the rhetorical stance, (Booth's concept of subject, purpose, and audience), and know the significance of ethos in effectively engaged prose. From this point I have found that students can successfully analyze an essay with ethos as the primary criterion. Although, of course, we discuss other rhetorical principles, we focus on the writer--at least at the outset.

With this primary emphasis, I seek pieces that are more personal than they are argumentative. For example, John Monahan wrote a piece in the "My Turn" column entitled "When the Cold Wind Blows," a poignant piece about the pain, loneliness, depression, and reaffirmation of the writer following a divorce. Essential to this topic, however, is the writer's projection of his ethos. He is not, for example, confessional or maudlin or

caustic. In fact, divorce is not mentioned in the piece. Nor does he blame or scold. Nor, for that matter, does he make any grand moral pronouncements about the faltering family, the sky-rocketing divorce rate, or any other message that is in the least bit didactic. These characteristics are important considerations in personal writing, for, as we have all experienced, unconstrained ethos can become confessional, maudlin, or caustic. Monahan, instead, establishes an equable ethos that shows more than it tells.

I have the students first read through the piece. Then, with pens in hand, they underline every "I," "me", or "myself" in the essay. From this exercise they can see the dominance of the self in writing. In "Cold Wind" the following phrases catch the eye:

"I knew deep snow would come to the lake."

"I turned inside to spoon the dogs their Science Diet."

"I can see my breath in the master bedroom."

"The dogs and I live downstairs in the parlor with the fireplace."

"I'm cold."

"I wish we could share a brandy and a five-dollar smoke."

"I might simply lie down to sleep in the heaven of geese."

"I am called back to the present."

In addition to underlining personal pronouns, students circle the first word of each sentence. Although the examples above would suggest an overuse of "I" beginning sentences, I cite these examples out of context to illustrate not only the appropriateness of "I" (many students still think it is illegal to use "I" in an essay), but to show the smoothness of the style. In Monahan's first twenty sentences, he begins only four sentences with "I." I want students to see this. I also want them to see that in this essay, however, that he begins his last five sentences with "I" for rhetorical effect: he is reasserting himself.

Last, I ask them to discuss the writer in as much detail as possible. If the piece is well-written and has abundant ethos, I assert, then the readers should have a strong sense of the writer's self. The writer of "Cold Wind" has variously been described as "tough," "sensitive," "alone," an "outdoorsman," "depressed," and "contemplative." In arriving at these traits, the students specify how the writer projects these attributes. Equally important, students can see first-hand the degree of exposure the writer renders in revealing himself, the distance as it were that builds or not the barrier the writer wants. Effective personal writing should reveal, as this essay in point illustrates, the created ethos that the writer intends. Both

personality and character surface in this piece: he is, at least by group concensus, both personable and virtuous--and I would certainly agree. I thought that students responded well to this piece and that the writer projected the engaged ethos that elicited a favorable response.

In contrast, another "My Turn" piece--Chang-Lin Tien's "America's Scapegoats"--though personally engaged, was not as well received. Although I would rather speculate otherwise, I suspect that in large part the generally negative reaction to this piece dealt more with the writer's name than his ethos. But, nonetheless, we approached this piece in the same manner we approached "Cold Wind," gleaning these elements of ethos:

"My life has been far more satisfying than I dreamed possible when I arrived in the United States."

"My former Ph.D. students are professors at major colleges."

"I have watched the campaign to discourage immigration with growing concern."

"I don't object to controlling the volume of immigration."

"I am no stranger to the sharp sting of anti-immigrant hostility."

"I am privileged to head a world-class institution."

As with all pieces, the students circled personal pronouns, paying special note to sentence openers. In contrast with "Cold Wind," Tien began far fewer sentences with "I," although, of note, he began six sentences with "my." Possession permeated his ethos--appropriately enough (I thought)--given his thesis of the tacit discrimination against natural-born Americans of Asian descent. When asked for their impressions of the writer--as I do with all pieces--students described him as a "foreigner," "arrogant," "whiney," "geeky," "negative," and a "racist." When I asked them to substantiate their responses with specific attention to ethos, some could see the gap between his ethos and his message. Although my point in this chapter pertains more to writer- than reader-based composition, I thought that the students failed to see the differences in ideology between them and the writer--that his ethos, when isolated, projected attributes opposite to those that the students claimed they found.

Although I would classify these two essays as primarily personal because the subject as self was the strongest mode of appeal, I approach argumentative essays in much the same way. What characteristics beyond grammar, style, and organization make an essay effective? Ethos, I maintain, is indeed the most powerful means available in persuading an

audience. To illustrate this point, I again refer to the "My Turn" column, specifically to an essay entitled "Brother, Don't Spare a Dime." Unlike the previous two essays, "Brother" directly engages the reader with this provocative thesis: the homeless themselves are at fault for their poverty. As usual, I ask students to seek out the personal pronouns. These references are pronounced:

"How can I say this?"

"I have led a weekly chapel service."

"Let me qualify what I just said."

"One person I worked with is a good example."

"I will not pretend to give ultimate answers."

"Please don't take my word for it."

Students like this essay. Conservative in its content, this piece portrays an ethos of care and compassion, yet an ethos of experience that essentially supports students' predispositions to the topic of welfare. After completing the preliminary analyses, students view the writer as "concerned," "religious," "hard working," "honest," and "bold." They respond, I think, less to the argument at hand and more to the ethos of the writer, a response that supports the power of the self in composition.

I insisted that the students reread this piece.

Upon closer scrutiny, this writer, though well-engaged, personable, and seemingly virtuous, appeared to have a hidden agenda. The students and I sensed a veiled voice that attacked not only the homeless, but the welfare system in general. This attack, we thought, though fair game, was deceptive in that the writer's ethos was insincere. In summary, we were not persuaded by this piece--the ethos rang no bells of truth.

Of course, I realize that my own ethos and character probably impeded student response. And I also realize that some, if not all, of my students agreed with my analysis on only a surface level. Some still thought, I sensed, that the writer was a well-meaning person, who, though compassionate, who, though serving soup in the food lines in Austin, and who, though conducting chapel services, could not bring himself to accept that some people are poor for reasons beyond their control.

Perhaps these students were right. But my point is that ethos is an abstract quality--visible through grammatical references--yet evasive otherwise. Some essays can crackle with personality--a less judgmental aspect of ethos; and some essays can capture character--a less definable trait. Ideally, ethos should disclose both personality and character in the conveyance of effective composition.

Thus far in this chapter I have discussed my general approach to the teaching of composition. Part philosophic, part practical, my teaching, for better or for worse, focuses on the writer--the ethos of the personality and/or character that should surface in a paper.

In conclusion to this chapter, I will briefly discuss some students' samples that I have collected during the semester. Although these essays are not necessarily the best or the worst that have come across my desk, they do illustrate the range of ethos that I see emerge. And although I would like to categorize with finality levels or types of ethos, I find it a nearly impossible task. Some papers talk and others do not. I will, however, label my examples as "strong ethos," "fair ethos," and "no ethos."
My criteria for such determination is similar to the criteria that we as a class apply to the theory and to the examples that we study.

"Words Downrange" expresses both personality and character. The writer, discussing his composing rituals, compares writing with shooting: "Like a sharpshooter settling down on the 500-yard line, I go to the desk and sit. I look downrange at my target--clean white paper...no damage yet." Additionally, the writer sustains his engagement: "I carefully and methodically fire off my thoughts;" "I often sit in my

antique barber chair at home, prop my boots up on the swiveling foot-rest, lean the seat back...and get nothing;" "It is important that a man have a voice, or he is not a man;" "I enjoy writing."

This piece reads well. The ethos is strong, revealing both personality and character. His images suggest a rural person--the boots and guns. And the implicit character that emerges is one of strength and discipline.

Another essay, "The American Dream Blown Away," though not as stylistically sharp as "Downrange," is nonetheless strongly engaged. This writer, talking about gun control, tells the following anecdote:

> Friday night was all calm. My mother was in the kitchen frying chicken. My father was up to his usual routine. After work he would flop his dust-filled shirt across the porch swing and head straight for the shower. Then his ritual consisted of preparing his hunting apparel....Curious, I reached for the rifle.... My mother started toward me and was condemning children having guns when my father said, "don't worry, it is not loaded. She backed up with a disgusted look about her. I lifted the gun, pointed it at her, and muttered 'bang, bang.' The third bang was real....I looked and saw my father crouched over my mother.

This personal anecdote, I thought, was compelling. Convincingly, through the power of his ethos, the writer wrote a solid paper about the need for gun control. Although with this passage I find it difficult to

determine personality or character (unlike with the first piece), I would commend the writer's ethos as it is established from his perspective as a child. The balance of the paper, I might add, "flattens out" in that his ethos disappears with such typical statements as "self protection is what motivates most people to purchase a gun," or "the crime rate is higher than ever and violence has become a normal way of life in today's society." Clearly, however, his introductory anecdote is an example of strong ethos.

Another student, advocating unrestricted pornography, entitled her piece "More Than Tits," which I found engaging and eye-catching. Beginning her essay with this sentence--"As a married college student, I have encountered a dilemma involving Oklahoma's regulation of pornography"-- the writer proceeds to establish her own perspective and authority on the issue. Concluding her introduction with this sentence--"While our neighboring states drink six-point beer and watch arousing porn flicks, we [in Oklahoma] listen to the bellowing of hypocritical fat old women who never smile"--the writer makes a fairly good case about existing laws. This writer's ethos--at least her personality--bristles throughout the piece. Ethos as character, as I have said, is a tougher entity to capture. Al-

though I personally commend her audacity, others may find such ethos offensive. Like the previous two essays, I would classify this essay as projecting a strong ethos.

Other essays, essays that I would classify as having a fairly involved ethos, contain generally the semblance of ethos--the use of personal pronouns--but little engagement. For example, an essay entitled "Stressed Out" discusses "the nervous society in which we live." Beginning her essay by saying, "I fell for it, too--the theory that stress is ruining our lives," the writer proceeds to efface her ethos as the essay proceeds. Although she makes such statements as "I honestly believe that we make too much of our problems," little else is revealed about the writer or her ability to cope with stress. Little is disclosed about the writer and her involvement with her thesis. No where, for instance, does the writer talk about her bouts with anxiety attacks, or about a physical or emotional breakdown that may have caused her to reexamine her life. I am not suggesting that writers must disclose personal aspects of their lives, but I am suggesting that given their topics of choice they should include a strong dose of themselves.

My last classification--no ethos--is familiar, I think, to most readers. These papers, I suppose, may have a voice hovering above the piece, but I would say they are totally void of personality or character. On the grammatical surface, these papers have no personal pronouns, nor, from my perspective, do they in any other way convey the engagement that ethos requires. A typical example is an essay entitled "The HIV Infected Surgeon." I find the title alone distanced and uninviting, and I shuffle such papers to the bottom of the stack. The writer, beginning his paper with this line--"Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is one of the most controversial issues in today's modern society"--proceeds to vaguely drone on about "healthcare workers who are especially worried because they are exposed more than the rest of the population." True, I suppose, but what is the writer's engagement in this piece? He has none, and because of this complete lack of ethos the paper is ineffective. Other similar papers abound. I am pleased, however, that I receive fewer and fewer of these types of papers. For whatever other flaws I have in the classroom--and they are many--getting writers to engage themselves is becoming less of one.

Ethos in my classroom prevails. This emphasis, of course, does not diminish the importance of good grammar, mechanics, style, and structure. I have found, to the contrary, that good ethos promotes the principles of current-traditional rhetoric. When students have a voice that conveys something of essence to an audience, I find that their writing improves in all areas.

Chapter VI

Conclusion: Future Directions

Ah say...Ah say. Ah hate writin'! Ah always seems to mess somethin' up.

Foghorn the Rooster

This dissertation has surveyed the evolution of ethos from its classical roots through poststructuralism. Regardless of the gaps, contradictions, or errors of thought it may entail, I have found that writing about writing to an audience primarily of writers has been an unusually self-conscious act, made even more so by the discussion of the self in the larger field of rhetoric.

Ethos is problematic. On the one hand, it is an ethereal entity that bobs and weaves its way through a piece of discourse--a voice whispering to escape the confines of linguistic symbols. On the other hand, it is a concrete presence identified through the grammar of "I" that asserts the writer's presence. But composition, as discussed in this work, has not been defined as a private act of committing one's thoughts to paper for the purpose of self revelation or for the discovery of ideas. Clearly though, as I have implied throughout, ethos aligns itself with the

task of invention, and this discovery of self enhances composition--composition that must turn outward in communicating to another person. Writing must begin with the self. Jim Corder sums up the centeredness of the writer with this apt metaphor:

> Each of us is the center of some small geography, if only because we see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears. If north is up and south is down and east is over and west is out, then the center of the landscape is someone's bellybutton (305).

I, the writer, can only speak from my own perspective, as limited and distorted as my view may be. Though I have borrowed voraciously from others, this piece is mine, and I have asserted myself in ways of my own choosing, ways that include invention, arrangement, and style. This awareness compels me to conclude that we need to liberate writers from the constraints of any brand of rhetoric that ignores the writer by emphasizing content, grammar, and mechanics.

In this regard, I believe that ethos, largely ignored in the past century, will revive itself in our efforts to render--and not only explain--experiences both of ourselves and the world around us. The next millennium will require, I think, forceful, creative thinkers and writers who can no longer afford the timidity of expression that the exclusion of ethos

in rhetoric causes. Effectiveness, more than correctness, will better tackle the challenges that confront us.

Composition, like its literary counterpart, mirrors the social, cultural, and political milieu in which it is written. The rise of the current-traditional paradigm, with its emphasis on correctness, parallels the exactitude of the scientific and corporate thinking that has prevailed one hundred years. People, in general, became secondary to the ideas they expressed. Einstein, for instance, could communicate with complete objectivity his theory of relativity, but avoided any personal commentary on the human ramifications of his discoveries.

Likewise, thinkers in other fields utilized the preciseness of objectivity, the crispness of a barren style, and the tightness of a rigid structure to distinguish their writing--all attributes of the current-traditional model of writing that still dominates composition classrooms today. These features--correctness, precision, and organization--are, of course, admirable goals of effective writing, and enhance the thesis of this paper: the emergence of the self in writing.

Writing has prevailed over the writer, and correctness has prevailed over effectiveness. The current-traditional model of writing, predicated

on the assumption that knowledge is "out there" to be captured on paper, will ultimately run its course in its ability to generate new ideas for the problems that plague society. Only so much, I would argue, can be captured. The rest, I assert, must be discovered. And this discovery hinges on the liberation of ethos in rhetoric.

This liberation of ethos, I realize, is nothing new in the history of rhetoric. Our discipline, as I have noted throughout, has classical roots that we tend to rediscover as the occasion warrants, or, in more scientific terms, as the paradigm shifts. Maxine Hairston summarizes this shift as follows:

> I think that the people who do most to promote a static and unexamined approach to teaching writing are those who define writing courses as service and skills courses....Such a view, which denies that writing requires intellectual activity and ignores the importance of writing as a basic method of learning, takes away any incentive for the writing teacher to grow professionally (79).

Here lies our challenge. We as writing teachers must first change our methods before we can expect our students to change. Steeped as we are in the paradigm of current-traditional rhetoric, we cannot help but

see ourselves as trainers whose task it is to polish skills for students who view writing as a practical means of communicating knowledge in their respective fields. We should not train; we should educate. Students mirror our emphases. We must take charge of our own discipline, and, in doing so, begin asking ourselves why our students are writing the kind of "pretzel prose" that Elbow bemoans, or why our students cannot establish their rhetorical stance that Booth promotes, or why our students have no knowledge of the classical tradition that Corbett espouses. Or why, as the deconstructionist movement has informed us, we make such needless distinctions between reading and writing, asserting that they are opposite sides of the same coin and ignoring the poststructural truth that to construct (write) is to deconstruct (read).

We must continue to insist that writing have a point, that it be structured, and that it be correct. Dull, static, lifeless prose may not excite the imagination, may not project the essence of a living, breathing writer, and may not crackle with the stylistic nuances of a sophisticated sentence, but it serves a purpose and remains an admirable objective. Not all students, not all people, want or need the ready pen anxious to

discover, to reveal, or to communicate original ideas that will alter the reader's version of reality. To suggest otherwise is arrogant and elitist.

For the majority of our students who trudge across the required landscape called composition, writing is a chore. Though we would like to think otherwise, they see us as assigners of tasks to be done, who, once they have performed the motion of busywork, probably done in one fell swoop the night before, submit to us words to be graded. They expect the red marks and the grade at the bottom and consider the job done at that point. Subsequent essays are written in the same way, each being a separate and terminal task of composing the easiest and safest piece possible. This security means clinging to the basic, standard organization of introduction, main body, and conclusion.

This fear of exposure, this apprehension of the inner-consciousness turned outward, is, I suspect, one of the major impediments that novice--and even accomplished--writers encounter. Our students fear exposure of selves: ethos.

As Berlin, Elbow, Murray, and a host of others, myself included, have urged, we must stress ethos in writing for those who strive for

effective prose. Students must express personality and character in the projection of themselves as a central means of appeal to an audience.

We are not teaching experienced essayists who wish to refine their craft. We are instead teaching inexperienced students who find difficulty in moving their pens across an empty sheet of paper, much less in exposing themselves to strangers called teachers. For those of us not at the vanguard of innovative thought who want instead to write in straight lines with a steady hand, current-traditional rhetoric and its emphases on arrangement and style can well serve the writing needs of most students. Correct writing is preferable to incorrect writing.

This current-traditional emphasis essentially concludes a college Freshman Composition I course. Composition II courses and beyond must stress thinking that expands the limits of correctness, and such venturing requires the discovery of self and the values that underlie the individual writer. Ethos, from its classical origins to its modern interpretations, must emerge as the dominating force in effective writing.

Our future direction is clouded by an array of competing versions as to how writing should be learned and taught. I believe first that composition teachers must be rhetoricians. This nomenclature entails

the assumption that the best practice is good theory, and that good theory is rooted in the classical rhetoricians. This distinction further entails the academic rigor of tracing our roots from the classical foundation to the "rhetorical renaissance" of 1963. It further entails our ability to form consensus--rather than to provoke differences--about what constitutes good writing, about, as Aristotle said, "of discovering all the available means of persuasion."

These challenges, however, come from within. We can, in large part, seize and maintain control of our own discipline, knowing as we do the wide scope of differences that should unite rather than divide us. From these inside challenges I see much promise. Within our diversity I believe that we can forge ahead, demanding from our students that they reexamine themselves and the world around them. My optimism, in this respect, exceeds that of Stephen North, who, in his The Making of Knowledge in Composition, predicts that either "composition as we know it will essentially disappear...or that it might survive, but probably only by breaking its institutional ties with literary studies and, hence, English departments" (373). I see neither the disappearance of our discipline or the severance of our ties with our literary counterparts.

Literary and rhetoric scholars draw from the same well of knowledge, and each enhances the other; we are, by history, separate in consciousness yet of the same mind. Literary studies promote better writing, and better writing promotes better literature. Rather than seeing as North does a separation of composition and literature studies, I foresee, as current evidence already suggests, a merging and mutual respect of the two disciplines. Poststructural theory abounds with critical similarities, as was discussed in Chapter Four.

Ethos should remain at the forefront of our future. Just as literature is defined by where it focuses the writer's reality, so too does rhetoric make the same claim. And this nexus of reality remains with the writer--writing has been and will remain a manifestation of the self in which language, for all its flaws, is the medium of communication between the self and others. Writing must begin with the self and then turn outward.

Writing, ideally, should begin at our own geographic centers and travel outward in our efforts to better define ourselves and the world we inhabit. Ethos lies at the core of effective writing.

Works Cited

Adams, Hazard. Critical Theory Since Plato. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc, 1971.

Aristotle. The Rhetoric of Aristotle. Trans. Lane Cooper. New York D. Appleton and Company, 1932.

Awalt, Christopher. "Brother, Don't Spare a Dime." Newsweek 30 Sept. 1991: 13.

Barthes, Roland. "Author's and Writers," in Critical Essays. Northwestern University Press, Evanston, 1972: 143-150.

Berlin, James. "Current-Traditional Rhetoric: Paradigm and Practice." Freshman English News. 8 (1980): 1-14.

---. "Poststructuralism, Cultural Studies, and the Composition Classroom: Postmodern Theory in Practice," in Professing the New Rhetorics, ed., Theresa Enos and Stuart C. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994): 461-480.

---. "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class." College English. 50. (1988): 477-493.

---. Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1987.

---. Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1984

Booth, Wayne C. "The Rhetorical Stance." College Composition and Communication. 14 (1963): 139-145.

Burke, Virginia. "The Composition-Rhetoric Pyramid." College Composition and Communication. 16 (1965): 3-7.

Cicero. Cicero on Oratory and Orators. Landmarks in Rhetoric and Public Address. Trans. and ed. J.S. Watson. Intro. by Ralph A. Micken. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1970.

Connors, Robert J., Lisa S. Ede, and Andrea A. Lunsford. "The Revival of Rhetoric in America," in Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse, ed. Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede, and Andrea A. Lunsford (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1986): 1-15.

Corbett, Edward P.J. Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford, 1971.

Corder, Jim W. "Hunting for Ethos Where They Say It Can't Be Found." Rhetoric Review. 7 (1989): 299-315.

---. "Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love," in Professing the New Rhetorics, ed., Theresa Enos and Stuart C. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1994): 412-429.

Crowley, Sharon. A Teacher's Guide to Deconstruction. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English, 1989.

Derrida, Jacques. Of Grammatology. Trans. Gayatri Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

Elbow, Peter. "Reflections on Academic Discourse: How It Relates to Freshmen and Colleagues." College English. 53 (1987): 135-141.

---. Writing with Power. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Enos, Theresa. "Reports of the 'Author' Death May Be Greatly Exaggerated But the 'Writer' Lives On in the Text." Rhetoric Society Quarterly. 20 (1985): 64-72.

Fink, Thomas A. "Reading Deconstructively in the Two-Year College Literature Class." Teaching English in the Two-Year College. 12 (1985): 64-72.

Flower, Linda. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing." College English. 41 (1979): 19-37.

Foucault, Michel. "What is an Author?" in Professing the New Rhetoric, ed., Theresa Enos and Stuart C. Brown (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1994): 178-193.

Hairston, Maxine. "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing." College Composition and Communication. 33 (1982): 76-88.

Harned, Jon. "Post-Structuralism and the Teaching of Composition." Freshman English News. 15 (1986): 10-15.

Johnson, Nan. "Ethos and the Aims of Rhetoric," in Essays on Classical Rhetoric, ed. Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede, and Andrea A. Lunsford (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1986): 98-114.

Larson, Richard L. "Classifying Discourse: Limitations and Alternatives," in Essays on Classical Rhetoric, ed. Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede, and Andrea A. Lunsford (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1986): 203-214.

Liu, Hong. The Semantics of Old and New Rhetorical Terminology: A Close Examination of Ethos. Master's thesis: Oklahoma State University, 1985.

Miller, Carolyn. "Technology As a Form of Consciousness: A Study of Contemporary Rhetoric." Central States Speech Journal. 29 (1978): 228-236.

Monahan, John. "When the Cold Wind Blows." Newsweek 12 Feb. 1992: 10.

Neel, Jasper. Plato, Derrida, and Writing. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1988.

Norris, Christopher. Deconstruction: Theory and Practice. New York: 1982.

North, Stephen. The Making of Knowledge in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging Field. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boyton/Cook, 1987.

Pixton, William H. "The Triangle and the Stance: Toward a Rhetoric for Novice Writers." Rhetoric Society Quarterly. 17 (1987): 263-279.

Quintilianus, Marcus Fabius. Institutes of Oratory. Trans. Rev. John Selby Watson. 2 vols. London: George Bell and Sons, 1899.

Raymond, James C. "What Good Is All This Heady, Esoteric Theory?" Teaching English in the Two-Year College. 17 (1990): 11-16.

Schilb, John. "Composition and Poststructuralism: A Tale of Two Conferences." College Composition and Communication. 40 (1989): 423-438.

Shaughnessy, Mina P. Errors and Expectations: A Guide for the Teacher of Basic Writing. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Spellmeyer, Kurt. "Foucault and the Freshman Writer: Considering the Self in Discourse." College English. 51 (1989): 715-727.

Tien, Chang-Lin. "America's Scapegoats." Newsweek 31 Oct. 1994: 19.

Tompkins, Jane. "A Short Course in Post-Structuralism." College English. 50 (1988): 733-745.

White, Edward. "Post-Structural Literary Criticism and the Response to Student Writing." College Composition and Communication. 35 (1984): 186-195.

Yoos, George E. "A Revision of the Concept of Ethical Appeal." Philosophy and Rhetoric. 12 (1979): 41-58.

Young, Richard. "Working on the Margin: Rhetorical Studies and the New Self-Consciousness." Rhetoric Society Quarterly. 20 (1990): 325-332.

VITA

Michael A. Cronin

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: ETHOS: A SURVEY FROM CLASSICAL RHETORIC THROUGH DECONSTRUCTION

Major Field: English

Biographical:

Education: Graduated from Hazelwood High School, St.Louis, Missouri, in June 1966; received Bachelor of Science degree in Education and a Master of Arts in English from Northeast Missouri State University in August 1978 and May 1979, respectively. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in English at Oklahoma State University in July 1995.

Experience: Was Assistant Director of Composition at Oklahoma State University: employed as an English teacher at Red Rock High School; was high school principal at Red Rock High School. Have currently taught English at Northern Oklahoma College 1990-present.

Professional Memberships: Two-Year College Association.