POST-FACTUM STUDIES IN TRANS-CORPOREAL RHETORIC:
TRIANGULARITIES OF GENRE, ETHICS, AND AESTHETICS
IN
KENNETH BURKE AND MICHEL FOUCAULT

By

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DEDICATION

To my mother, Shirley Ann

(June 17, 1942 – March 3, 2021)

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.

Ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Ev'rywhere I go,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.

Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Jesus gave it to me,
I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.

—"This Little Light of Mine," (Rosetta Tharpe version)

ABSTRACT

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This dissertation gives an account of and expands upon Stacy Alaimo's term, "trans-corporeality," in order to reconsider the rhetorical situation, through conceptualizations of how rhetorical bodies become embodied and traverse one another in various humanities. From "trans-corporeality," what arises is a "trans-corporeal rhetoric," which becomes an interdisciplinary rhetoric that speaks to the futures of rhetoric within the boundaries of various humanities, involving notions of embodiment, materiality, corporeality, and what Alaimo calls "bodily natures." These futures of rhetoric not only wrestle with what embodiment is and can be for rhetorical bodies in various humanities, and what sort of ethics and aesthetics present themselves in rhetorical situations of "bodily natures," but they also consider genres where trans-corporeal subjects reside. The triangularities of genre, ethics, and aesthetics are grounded on what is materially significant to various humanities, with this dissertation concerning itself with two: journalism and Christianity. As they respectively appear in Kenneth Burke's *The War of Words* (2018) and Michel Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* (2021), Burke and Foucault provide for two post-factum studies of trans-corporeal rhetoric respectively in terms of the genres of journalism and Christianity, the ethics of news and the flesh, and the aesthetics of the body.

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INTRODUCTION

STACY ALAIMO, TRANS-CORPOREALITY, AND RHETORIC

> Trans-corporeality, as a theoretical site, is where corporeal theories, environmental theories, and science studies meet and mingle in productive ways.
> —Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures* (2010)
>
> Trans-corporeality, as it reckons with material agencies that traverse substances, objects, bodies, and environments, entails reckoning with scientific captures, even as the data are always already mangled by social and economic forces.
> —Stacy Alaimo, *Exposed* (2016)

0.1: Task and Scope

The rhetorical situation, as a term initiated in Lloyd Bitzer's "The Rhetorical Situation" (1968),

contextualizes the operations of human relations, insofar as the rhetorical situation itself is

"governed by exigencies, that is, social, political, economic, and ethical urgencies that invited

discursive responses" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 213). In beginning with Bitzer, I want

to be clear about what a rhetorical situation is, and to what extent the rhetorical situation informs

and is informed by various "exigencies" and provides opportunities for "discursive responses," if

the implications of Bitzer set the stage for how rhetorical bodies contribute to a given rhetorical

situation and to what extent various form of embodiment become rhetorical.

Because "Bitzer's analysis of the rhetorical situation derived from his philosophical and

epistemological commitments to realism" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 214), Richard E.

Vatz's "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation" (1979) not only challenges the frameworks by

which Bitzer constructs the meaning of the rhetorical situation, but also reconstitutes the

meaningfulness of the rhetorical situation by critiquing the meaning and meaningfulness of underlying exigences. For Vatz, "exigences are not the product of objective events, but rather are a matter of perception and interpretation" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 214). If this "matter of perception and interpretation" fundamentally arises from the hermeneutical significance of exigences, what remains at stake for any rhetorical situation is, as Vatz suggests, "the complexities of the relationship between 'rhetoric' and 'situation'" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 214). In other words, what "rhetoric" means to a "situation" and what a "situation" means to "rhetoric" becomes the hermeneutic significance of exigences. This underlying relationship, as that which ultimately attunes us more authentically to a rhetorical situation, requires, as Barbara A. Biesecker's "Rethinking the Rhetorical Situation from within the Thematic *Différance* (1989) argues, rethinking the rhetorical situation thematically as "a reexamination of symbolic action (the text) and the subject (audience) that […] enables us to rethink the rhetorical situation as articulation" (233).

Setting aside Biesecker's particular concentration on "Jacques Derrida's *différance*," while expanding upon her notion of the thematic, I will consider what it means to rethink the rhetorical situation thematically by meaningfully providing varied accounts of situational rhetoric as a triangular articulation of genre, ethics, and aesthetics. In doing so, I will examine the boundaries and futures of situational rhetoric in the domains of journalism and Christianity by respectively rethinking the rhetoricizing provided by Kenneth Burke's *The War of Words* (2018) and Michel Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* (2021), within the triangular articulations of genre, ethics, and aesthetics—in each case, we are speaking to the boundaries of rhetorical situation, while prescribing a series of futures of what rhetorical situations can be.

The fact that "the notion of the rhetorical situation has thus become more fluid in contemporary rhetorical theory than it was in earlier periods" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 215) suggests that the meaning and meaningfulness of the rhetorical situation must be reconsidered beyond the boundaries and futures of rhetoric itself. If there is an "increased fluidity" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 215) to the meaning of the rhetorical situation, the meaningfulness of it requires a reconsideration of the extent that "human pursuits […] prove to be transient and contextual" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 215) and, in the end, the extent to which "all human discourse [is] ultimately rhetorical" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 215). What, then, are the applications, concerns and implications of "the stage [being] thus set for continuing the reconsideration of the character of rhetoric as situated in discourse" (Lucaites, Condit, and Caudill 1999, 215), if this is a starting point? This point of inquiry will guide the form and content of the dissertation, with respect to the form of what is "situated in discourse" and the extent that any content is oriented towards "the character of rhetoric."

Insofar as, to Biesecker's point, "the stage is thus set for continuing the reconsideration of the character of rhetoric as situated in discourse," we must more concretely define the criteria by which we construct "the character of rhetoric," in order to more concretely determine how it is "situated in discourse." To do this, the boundaries of "the character of rhetoric" and the boundaries of what is "situated in discourse" can be re-considered and broadened to include other distinctively situational rhetorics, which make use of rhetorical devices—such as logos, ethos, and pathos—through the rhetorical triangularity of the logos of genre, the ethos within ethics, and the pathos calibrating aesthetics. Like logos, ethos, and pathos, I will consider genre, ethics, and aesthetics as rhetorical devices, which allow for articulations of the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric, the rhetorical situation, and the discourse that occurs between

rhetorical bodies, all of which can be laid bare when expanding into the futures of what rhetoric is, what the rhetorical situation is, and what rhetorical bodies are.

Though Bitzer, Vatz, and Biesecker provide helpful boundaries, in order to understand what the futures of rhetoric are—futures that broaden the very character of rhetoric—it behooves us to give accounts of more contemporary conceptualizations of rhetoric, which fundamentally contemporize the field of rhetoric, such as in Thomas Rickert's *Ambient Rhetoric* (2013), Casey Boyle's *Rhetoric as a Posthuman Practice* (2018), Amy D. Propen's *Visualizing Posthuman Conservation in the Age of the Anthropocene* (2018), and Justin Hodgson's *Post-Digital Rhetoric and the New Aesthetic* (2019). For instance, Rickert surmises that rhetoric "can and indeed must be grounded in the material relations from which it springs, not simply as the situation giving it its shape and exigence, but as part of what we mean by rhetoric" (x), where rhetoric should "include the materiality of our ambient environs" (x). Boyle, Propen, and Hodgson all make similar arguments. For instance, while Boyle's sense of "ambient environs" is understood as rhetorical ecologies, wherein "rhetoric is a practice that exercises serial encounters within ecologies to inform bodies" (27), Propen considers rhetorical ecology as that which is "configured as environmental accounts, that emerge through intra-actions of world-making" (1), and, Hodgson, in turn, asserts that rhetorical ecology "includes its artifacts, representative practices, […] as well as the particular ways in which these entities have been taken up, positioned, challenged, and co-opted" (36).

Admittedly, as much as Boyle, Propen, and Hodgson all engage in different approaches with respect to the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric, all three envision, it seems to me, similar futures relegated by rhetorical conceptualizations of ethics and aesthetics, which regulate the materiality of rhetorical bodies, in any given genre. Hodgson's focus is "on the intersections

and interpenetrations of humans and technologies and the object is the New Aesthetic" (11), whereby this "new aesthetic," Hodgson writes, "reflects a set of practices and aesthetic values of a contemporary moment" (16). This set of practices, when framed in a given genre, provides an ethics to what Hogdson prescribes, which is especially made explicit by Boyle's notion of the "posthuman practice," insofar as, for Boyle's sense of ethics, "all bodies […] become bodies by establishing sets of tendencies" (5), which, ultimately, "create new capacities of interacting with and mediating other bodies" (5). Here, too, like Hodgson, it is within a given genre, to Boyle's point, that "a body cannot be neatly defined except as a relational process, one that emerges with and through practices" (5). What this means is, though genres provide for a certain ethics for certain sets of practices and tendencies, and though genres, to be sure, provide for a certain aesthetics which, Propen ascertains, "speaks to the ways that we may participate in the becoming of the world through the practices of embodied knowledge-making" (1), genres also dictate how rhetorical bodies are embodied, and how that embodiment subscribes to a rhetorical situation, and how, for Boyle, Propen, and Hodgson, the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric works.

By ascertaining the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric, the rhetorical situation, the embodiment of rhetorical bodies to other humanities, such as journalism and Christianity, what arises, through Boyle, Propen, Hodgson, and even Rickert, is an understanding of an interdisciplinary rhetoric that speaks more broadly and more inclusively to the futures of rhetoric itself. These futures not only wrestle with what embodiment is and can be for rhetorical bodies, and what sort of ethics and aesthetics are brought to bear on and made possible by a rhetorical situation, but also consider that the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric is dependent on its interdisciplinarity.

Though we can consider journalism and Christianity as disciplines, insofar as we can say that a discipline "refers to a particular branch of learning or body of knowledge" (2), we can see each as a genre, with each containing its own ethics and aesthetics. Each genre as, to Propen's point, "world-making," provides for a particular kind of rhetorical body, whose embodiment subscribes to a particular ethics and a particular aesthetics, within a given rhetorical ecology. Thinking through the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric to each, where rhetoric becomes more interdisciplinary in nature, this suggests, as Joe Moran deftly defines in *Interdisciplinarity* (2002), "forging connections across the different disciplines […] establishing a kind of undisciplined space in the interstices between disciplines, or even attempting to transcend disciplinary boundaries altogether" (15). In this way, the interdisciplinarity of journalism and Christianity "interlocks with the concerns of epistemology" (15), predicated on what rhetoric means to each and what each means to rhetoric, to the degree that an interdisciplinary rhetoric becomes essential to making sense out of the boundaries of rhetoric and prescribing its futures. Because interdisciplinarity, to Moran's point, "tends to be [centered] around problems and issues that cannot be addressed or solved within the existing disciplines, rather than the quest for an all-inclusive synthesis" (15), doing rhetoric within the respective boundaries of journalism and Christianity and, in turn, articulating what matters to each respectively within the boundaries of rhetoric prescribes futures for all disciplines centered around problems and issues that are outside of the purview of what can be addressed or solved within each of the disciplines as they conventionally are.

This means, then, for the sake of rhetoric, and for the sake of each of the disciplines upon which I will ground rhetoric's interdisciplinarity, just as Moran argues, there will be a "form of dialogue or interaction" (16), taking place, which, to recast Moran's words slightly, will be

"transformative in some way, producing new forms of knowledge in [rhetoric's] engagement with [the] discrete disciplines" (16) of journalism and Christianity, as discrete futures. These futures, while expanding the boundaries of rhetoric itself, into its interdisciplinarity, can be considered by rethinking and recasting the theoretical implications of Stacy Alaimo's trans-corporeality into a rhetorical framework, concerned with rhetorical corporeality between the ethical positionalities and aesthetic interactions of bodies in a rhetorical space. Propen, in particular, makes this case, not only drawing on Alaimo, but also drawing on Rosi Braidotti, and Donna Haraway and, essentially, proposing, "the paradoxical enactments and intra-actments of ethical responsibility […] where responsibility is not just ours alone, but where the agential intra-actments and entanglements of bodies, environments, and matter also do not preclude consideration of our own relationships and responsibilities to productive, sustainable, compassionate world-making" (3).

For Alaimo, bodies, and the corporeality they hold, are made situational with one another through their inherent permeability or porousness, insofar as these bodies are always-already rhetorical—these bodies speak to one another, from within a rhetorical situation and across a rhetorical space, and in doing so, when we say that bodies are always-already trans-corporeal, we are always-already speaking about trans-corporeality as that which is always-already informed by a rhetoric. It is not strictly that what we mean when we say "trans-corporeality" requires a rhetoric to ground its meaning and extend its meaningfulness, with a certain lexicon of words that do rhetorical work at the level of theory—rather, when we think about "trans-corporeality," we are always-already thinking rhetoric beyond the theory of it, such that what we mean by trans-corporeality is always-already pointing to a trans-corporeal rhetoric about what bodies do when they act rhetorically, by the very fact that, as Alaimo contends, "the ethical space of trans-

corporeality is never an elsewhere but is always already here, in whatever compromised, ever-catalyzing form" (18). It seems to me, then, that trans-corporeal rhetoric is operating within "the ethical space of trans-corporeality," and is attending to a new aesthetic that "locates its value for rhetoric," if repurposing what Propen tells us, "situates it as its own rhetorical ecology and uses its rhetorical dimensions to help call to attention its operative contours" (8)—to this end, trans-corporeal rhetoric is also never an elsewhere, since it, too, is always-already here.

0.2: Trans-corporeality

Let us consider what Alaimo's trans-corporeality is, more concretely, before considering what makes it rhetoric, through the rhetorical undertones and the relatively short, but pointed intellectual history of the term, since Alaimo's first use of the term in *Bodily Natures* (2010). It behooves us to acknowledge that the term, as Alaimo first uses it, is "trans-coporeality," with a hyphenated emphasis. While some more recent scholarship, such as Jeffrey Cohen's *Stone* (2015), and even Alaimo herself in two instances in "Wanting All the Species to Be" (2019), references the term without the hyphen, adopting "transcorporeality," I want to maintain Alaimo's original, hyphenated use of the term in this dissertation. The hyphen is more than just a rhetorical flourish, meant to distinguish the term from corporeality, in much the same way that marks postcolonialism off from colonialism, or posthumanism off from humanism. As with the distinction between trans-gender and gender, at its most fundamental, trans-corporeality emphasizes movement in the prefix of "trans-." What is distinctive to trans-corporeality, though, is an understanding of the movement of bodies through the discursiveness of corporeality.

When considering Alaimo's first reference to this term in the introduction to *Bodily Natures*, she contends, "imagining human corporality as trans-corporeality in which the human is

always intermeshed with the more-than-human world, underlines the extent to which the substance of the human is ultimately inseparable from 'the environment'" (2). The relationship between corporeality—if we are delimiting ourselves from human corporeality itself—and trans-corporeality depends on an inseparability and an intermeshedness of corporeal structures, which, it seems to me, is another way of understanding what Alaimo means by the term, "bodily natures." By "bodily natures," we are speaking only of the body in the loosest sense, in terms of a corporeal codification or even a corporeal system, whereby what is meant by "body" is not corporeal autonomy when bodies being closed-off from one another, but, rather, corporeal discursiveness when bodies are, to Aliamo's point, inseparable and intermeshed. For that matter, bodily natures are "trans-corporeal subjects," which, Alaimo proclaims, "must also relinquish mastery as they find themselves inextricably part of the flux and flow of the world that others would presume to master" (17). Insofar as these trans-corporeal subjects are discursive, "a recognition of trans-corporeality," Alaimo writes, "entails a rather disconcerting sense of being immersed within incalculable, interconnected material agencies that erode even our most sophisticated modes of understanding" (17). This immersion, this incalculability, and this interconnectedness of material agencies—that which has bodily natures—are all grounded on underlying rhetorical agencies, so that the very meaning of material is always-already textual, and the very discursiveness of trans-corporeal subjects is always-already a rhetorical interaction between textual subjects that "relinquish mastery" through discourse, when discourse, in particular, is the means by which bodies, to Alaimo's point, "find themselves inextricably part of the flux and flow of the world that others would presume to master."

What makes trans-corporeality what it is, then, as a beginning point of inquiry, is with respect to an understanding of what human corporeality, in itself, is. The human, as a bodily

nature, is constructed in terms of its corporeality, which Alaimo frames in relation to the structure of the more-than-human-world—in this case, for Alaimo, human corporeality, as a bodily nature, cannot be cordoned off from the environment's own corporeality. Even so, human corporeality is not the only corporeality with which we can concern ourselves, since the very term, "bodily natures" can be expanded to include all corporeal structures and, in turn, allows us to envision a more expansive understanding of what trans-corporeality is. Alaimo acknowledges this, advising, "although the notion of trans-corporeality may seem anthropocentric, ultimately the ostensible center is extended through multiple, often global networks" (16). The manner in which the ostensible center exists, at all, if trans-corporeality is even ostensibly anthropocentric, becomes merely a theoretical framework—or a "theoretical site" (3), as Alaimo views it— devised to illustrate how trans-corporeality works. In fact, just as Alaimo prescribes, insofar as "trans-corporeality denies the human subject the sovereign central position" (16), the discourse necessary to articulate the meaning and meaningfulness of trans-corporeality is always-already moving beyond any implied limitations of anthropocentrism.

For the meaning and meaningfulness of trans-corporeality, as calibrated as it is by an ostensible center, to extend "through multiple, often global networks," as Alaimo prescribes, what must be recognized is that we are always-already doing trans-corporeally, since we are always-already actively engaged in a trans-corporeal discourse, as Alaimo's *Bodily Natures* takes care to indicate. In this sense, because Alaimo does not see trans-corporeality as "some sort of rarefied, new theoretical invention" (3), this means that the trans-corporeal discourse necessary to articulate what trans-corporeality is, indeed, is always-already there, due to what I will refer to as trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Indeed, we are always-already doing trans-corporeal rhetoric, particularly if trans-corporeality, Alaimo tells us, is "emerging in social theories, science, science studies, literature, film, activist websites, green consumerism, popular epidemiology, and popular culture" (4). We need not think of Alaimo as providing all the possible areas affected by and affecting trans-corporeality. To be sure, what she has provided is far from an exhaustive list of areas from which the meaning of trans-corporeality emerges and its meaningfulness "counters and critiques the obdurate" (4). *Bodily Natures* merely gives accounts of "how various models of trans-corporeality," Alaimo writes, "emerg[e] not only in a broad expanse of scholarship and theory, but in popular culture, literary texts, and social practices" (3). Similarly, this dissertation will examine various models of trans-corporeal rhetoric—just as Alaimo envisions trans-corporeality as a "theoretical site," so, too, do I envision trans-corporeal rhetoric as a rhetorical site, which, like "trans-corporeality impacts our ethics, politics, and practices" (147), so, too, does trans-corporeal rhetoric impact what I have prescribed as genre, ethics, and aesthetics.

The emphasis Alaimo places on "trans" in what trans-corporeality is "indicates movement across different sites" (2), insofar as what trans-corporeality does, Alaimo underscores, "opens up a mobile space" (2). Before parsing what Alaimo means here with the notion of "space," it behooves us to visit how she handles the same premise in what serves as an earlier draft for *Bodily Natures*. In Alaimo's "Trans-Corporeal Feminisms and the Ethical Space of Nature," as part of the collection, *Material Feminisms* (2008), she makes a similar assertion about the meaning of "trans" to trans-corporeality, but, here, she suggests that the meaningfulness of it "opens up an epistemological 'space'" (238). The difference between "epistemological" in the earlier work and "mobile" in the latter work is significant, just as the scare quotes Alaimo places around "space" in the earlier work do not appear in the latter work—

though this difference may not make a theoretical difference, there is, in fact, a rhetorical difference, with respect to what kind of space is opened up by trans-corporeality. It is not so much a paradoxical difference, where "epistemological" and "mobile" are describing very different spaces in which trans-corporeality occurs, if we maintain that there is little to no theoretical difference between the two in Alaimo's theorizing of the trans-corporeality from the 2008 article to the 2010 book. It seems to me that the trading of one descriptor for another is simply how Alaimo reifies what kind of theoretical space is opened up by trans-corporeality. However, for the sake of what kind of rhetorical space is opened up by trans-corporeal rhetoric, I contend that this space is both epistemological and mobile—in other words, the extent to which the rhetorical space that trans-corporeal rhetoric opens up is just as much epistemological as it is mobile addresses the degree to which what can be meant by "space" is relative to genre and whatever the center is, however ostensible it may be, is dictated by the boundaries of ethics and aesthetics.

The relationship between trans-corporeality and trans-corporeal is one where the former always-already opens up the latter. Put simply, for example, the very reifying of the notion of space, from epistemological to mobile, acknowledges, however implicitly, how essential rhetoric is to the articulation of trans-corporeality. Even so, the fact that trans-corporeal rhetoric, as it seems to me, is both epistemological and mobile, points to the expansive ways we can know what bodies are, epistemologically speaking, just as Alaimo articulates in "Thinking as the Stuff of the World" (2014), "entangled with multiple material agencies" (17). Not only is trans-corporeal rhetoric, then, concerned with the entanglement of "multiple material agencies," but it also points to the varied ways that bodies traverse one another, speaking in terms of mobility and

the "flows and processes that connect human bodies, animal bodies, ecosystems, technologies, and the wider world" (17).

Alaimo comes close to contextualizing the meaningfulness of trans-corporeality in *Exposed* (2016)—as a follow-up of sorts to *Bodily Natures*, especially, at certain turns, as an theoretical expansion on trans-corporeality, Alaimo writes, "the embeddedness of trans-corporeality involves grappling with data, information, scientific captures, and political modes of mapping interactions and relations across different scales" (183). In this regard, if trans-corporeality is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric, the very embeddedness of trans-corporeal rhetoric also involves the grappling with data and information. It is within a space that is just as much epistemological as it is mobile that trans-corporeal rhetoric grapples with scientific captures and, as Alaimo notes, "political modes of mapping interactions and relations across different scales"—to this end, what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric can be expressed across different scales, scaled within the boundaries of genre, ethics, and aesthetics, which remains invested in mapping interactions and relations.

Insofar as trans-corporeality, Alaimo writes, "entails reckoning with scientific captures, even as the data are always already mangled by social and economic forces" (183), so, too, does trans-corporeal rhetoric reckon with scientific captures. These scientific captures occur in an epistemological and mobile space, as that which is scientifically construed epistemologically and captured within its mobility. These scientific captures, as those which are laid bare in a rhetorical space, to Alaimo's point, are comported by "data [that] are always already mangled by social and economic forces," trans-corporeal rhetoric attends to making sense out of and to sorting through data, with the intent on de-mangling what has been mangled by social and economic forces, if what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric, at all, is focused on the rhetorical issues of

entanglement. Given that, as Alaimo argues in "Feminist Science Studies and Ecocriticism: Aesthetics and Entanglement in the Deep Sea" (2014), for the sake of what it means for understanding the significance of trans-corporeality, "the movement across human corporeality and nonhuman nature necessitates rich, complex modes of analysis" (190), these modes of analysis are always-already rhetorical.

For what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric means articulating what movement occurs between corporeality and nonhuman natures, all of which are corporeal and have bodily natures, and how this movement works rhetorically. In the same way that the implications of trans-corporeality upon corporeality allows bodies, Alaimo theorizes, to "travel through the entangled territories of material and discursive, natural and cultural, biological and textual" (190), the same holds true for the implications of trans-corporeal rhetoric on rhetorical bodies— the way that rhetorical bodies move in a rhetorical space is through the "entangled territories," so that what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric, as that which solicits "rich, complex modes of analysis," is through negotiating genres. What Alaimo points out with "the material and discursive, natural and cultural, biological and textual" is, on one hand, the boundaries within which trans-corporeality works, while, on the other hand, the futures dictating the genres made possible by trans-corporeality—in this way, what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric is to consider it as genres in an epistemological space, each with its own ethics and each with its own aesthetics of the body, which respectively attend to an ethical space for what bodies do and the meaningfulness of bodies in an aesthetic space.

Like trans-corporeality, Alaimo notes in *Exposed*, "reckons with material agencies that traverse substances, objects, bodies, and environments" (183), so, too, does trans-corporeal rhetoric reckon with material agencies, articulating how material agencies "traverse substances,

objects, bodies, and environments." If trans-corporeality, Alaimo writes in *Exposed*, "as an ethical call, emerges from a sense of fleshy permeability" (78), trans-corporeal rhetoric also acts as an ethical call, attending to the aesthetics inherent in what emerges rhetorically and how this emergence takes place, once rhetorical bodies traverse one another's embodiment.

Insofar as Alaimo envisions trans-corporeality as predicated on "movement across bodies" (2), this movement is one of the traversing embodiment and across natures of corporeality—this is precisely what Alaimo means by "bodily natures," which, it seems to me, is not only concerned with what corporealities do when traversing their bodily natures, if, by that, we are focused on purely aesthetic value of what bodies do, but it is also interested in how this traversing takes place because of or with the assistance of the kinds of situations in which these bodily natures find themselves, if, by that, we are focused on certain epistemologically-oriented genres that allow bodies to speak specific types of communication and the specific ways these discourses occur within ethical spaces. This sense of traversing, then, when we use the term "trans-corporeality," is invested in, Alaimo describes in *Bodily Natures*, "the interchanges and interconnections between various bodily natures" (2), insofar as bodily natures are rhetorical, and the interchanges and interconnections occur within subscribed rhetorical spaces due to prescribed rhetorical situations.

This variety of bodily natures, for trans-corporeal rhetoric, arises within the boundaries of specific genres, codified by specific ethics, and framed by specific aesthetics, though what remains integral to what trans-corporeal rhetoric is, as that which is always-already attuned to trans-corporeality, is the aesthetics of the body, or what could be just as easily referred to as corporeal aesthetics. Just as the body, and the extents of corporeality, are at the core of what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric, so, too, is the body the centerpiece of trans-corporeality,

insofar as, Alaimo tells us in *Bodily Natures*, "trans-corporeality not only traces how various substances travel across and within the human body but how they do things—often unwelcome or unexpected things" (146). Yet, when we speak about body, or even the human body, more narrowly, Alaimo is concerned with notions of the body more liberally. Because trans-corporeality is not limited to human corporeality, so, too, is trans-corporeal rhetoric delimited in the same manner, such that both attend to issues of embodiment. Given that, Alaimo asserts, "we can imagine all creatures existing as part of their own corporeal crossroads of body and place, provoking an ethics of concern for a multitude of creatures and their habitats" (111), this opens the theoretical possibility that corporeality is more about embodiment or, more deftly, embodied beings—it seems to me, then, that bodily natures is synonymous with embodied beings, when acknowledging the connotations of body towards human body and the broader possibilities of embodiment towards corporeality.

Indeed, trans-corporeal rhetoric attends to corporeality from the standpoint of embodiment and embodied beings, rather than strictly in terms of the body. It is through this rubric that trans-corporeal rhetoric's conceptualization of embodiment serves as a foundation for articulations about rhetorical bodies, especially if what makes a given rhetorical body rhetorical is, if following Alaimo, how it exists "as part of [it's] own corporeal crosswords of body and place." Rhetorical bodies are rhetorical because of an embodiment, when viewed through trans-corporeality, occurring at the interface between body and place—this embodiment, then, for what it means to do trans-corporeal rhetoric, if following Alaimo again, "provok[es] an ethics of concern for a multitude of creatures and their habitats." These ethics of concern are just as much about how the embodiment of an embodied being is traversed as it is about how an embodied being is traversed in a given space, based on what an embodied being's embodiment is. In other

words, while the very ethics of trans-corporeality surmises what an ethical space does for embodiment, there is also an aesthetics to trans-corporeality surmising what an aesthetic space does to embodiment, and vice versa. What corporeality what it is, as that which is embodied in a modality, is construed through an ethics, but it is also construed through an aesthetics—an embodied being is traversed through an undergirding ethic, but it is also traversed through an overarching aesthetic, both of which speak to corporeality as embodiment.

On this point, more recently, Alaimo expands corporeality into embodiment in the concise article on trans-corporeality, appearing in *Posthuman Glossary* (2018), in which Alaimo argues, "trans-corporeality means that all creatures, as embodied beings, are intermeshed with the dynamic, material world, which crosses through them, transforms them, and is transformed by them" (435). Though ethics remain in the background of what Alaimo means by "intermeshed," what she means by "the dynamic, material world" is more than just about ethics, but is, rather, about aesthetics, particularly when making sense of what makes "the dynamic, material world" both dynamic and material, in the first place. Insofar as the relationship between embodied beings and the dynamic, material world is one where both are intermeshed, embodiment is laid bare in an ethical space, and any given ethical space is constructed in terms of a spatiality indebted to aesthetics.

Thinking along these lines, what is also important in Alaimo's more recent articulation of trans-corporeality is its attention, however implicit, to what aesthetics means to trans-corporeality itself, such that, Alaimo writes, "trans-corporeality grapples with precisely how the transformation of the world alters – or should alter – ontologies, epistemologies, politics and ethics" (437). Though the manner by which the transformation of the world alters embodied being arises from, shall we say, a trans-corporeal ethic, what this transformation looks like for

both the transformed world and the transformed embodied being arises from a trans-corporeal aesthetic. In this way, the very meaning of a trans-corporeal subject, one that has a bodily nature, is situated in an ethical space by way of its embodiment, as that which is intermeshed, interconnected, and traversed by the dynamic, material world, which, in turn, makes embodied beings embodied in an aesthetic space. What a trans-corporeal subject is, to be clear, is always-already a rhetorical subject, always-already grounded in a rhetorical situation with the dynamic, material world, always-already situated in an ethical space of discursiveness, and always-already embodied in modalities that transform and are transformed by the dynamic, material world.

The extent that, Alaimo argues in *Exposed*, "trans-corporeality is indebted to Judith Butler's conception of the subject as immersed within a matrix of discursive systems, but it transforms that model, insisting that the subject cannot be separated from networks of intra-active material agencies […] and thus cannot ignore the disturbing epistemological quandaries of risk society," it behooves me to locate trans-corporeal rhetoric within these boundaries. Just as "networks of intra-active material agencies" draws from Karen Barad, the networks dictating the ways in which "material agencies" are "intra-active" is through the intersection of a modality, an ethic, and aesthetics. Similarly, with "the disturbing epistemological quandaries of risk society," which Alaimo draws from Ulrich Beck, this, too, is conceptualized through modalities, through ethics, and through aesthetics. The same can be applied to "Judith Butler's conception of the subject as immersed within a matrix of discursive systems," when this immersion of the subject is relegated to and regulated by specific modalities, specific ethics, and a specific aesthetics.

The various and varying intersections of specific modalities, specific ethics, and specific aesthetics, for the trans-corporeal subject, which is always-already a rhetorical subject, is, to recast Alaimo's words, "generated through and entangled with biological, technological,

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economic, social, political and other systems, processes and events, at vastly different scales" (436). Each of these entanglements, even as, Barad explains in *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007) for instance, "entanglements of matters of being, knowing, and doing, of ontology, epistemology, and ethics, of fact and value" (3), occur in modalities, or what I will henceforth call "genres," in which a particular ethic is at play, oriented to and oriented by a particular aesthetic. These entanglements, then, arise from, to Alaimo's point, "disturbing epistemological quandaries" occurring within every genre, whereby genre-specific ethics and genre-specific aesthetic dictate each as their own risk society, if, by that, Beck suggests in *World at Risk* (2009), "the consequences and successes of modernization become an issue with the speed and radicality of processes of modernization" (6).

Just as these intersections of genre, ethics, and aesthetics form the boundaries for the different scales of entanglements that trans-corporeal subjects find themselves rhetorically, Alaimo finds, "mapping those interchanges across all species and at all scales is the prelude to trans-corporeal ethics and politics" (435). In this same regard, I find, the interchanges between trans-corporeal subjects as rhetorical subjects, when cast "across all species and at all scales," become the prelude to trans-corporeal rhetoric.

0.3: Trans-corporeal Aesthetics and the Body

Though subtle, Alaimo's theorizing of trans-corporeality is implicitly concerned with aesthetics, if it is, simultaneously, more explicitly concerned with the body or, more aptly, with corporeality or embodiment, which, to Hodgson's point, "reflects a set of practices and aesthetic values of a contemporary moment" (16).

This is due, it seems to me, to a broader understanding of aesthetics, when what we mean by "aesthetics," at all, as Terry Eagleton observes in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), "is born as a discourse of the body" (13). The inextricability between what is meant by aesthetics and what is meant by the body, corporeality, or embodiment, thanks to Eagleton, is constituted by discourse—that is to say, language, discursiveness, and rhetoric, not only constitute what aesthetics mean to the body, corporeality, or embodiment, but also what bodies, corporealities, and embodied beings mean among themselves, from the standpoint of their subjectivities as trans-corporeal subjects. This directly speaks to Alaimo's conception of the trans-corporeal subject, in *Exposed*, as "immersed within a matrix of discursive systems" (112), but it also, rather indirectly, speaks to subjectivities that are made visible because of their discursiveness— here, it seems to me, what a trans-corporeal subject is, at its most discursive, is a visible identity, which, Linda M. Alcoff argues in *Visible Identities* (2005), is "constituted by social contextual conditions of interactions" (9).

Rhetorically speaking, trans-corporeal subjects are always-already visible identities through discursiveness. If this visibility and discursiveness are linked to subjectivity, this stands to reason, then, why, according to Andrew Bowie, in *Aesthetics and Subjectivity* (2003), "aesthetics is connected to the emergence of subjectivity" (2). The connections that Bowie makes, then, are corroborated by Emily S. Lee, when Lee writes, in the introduction to the collection, *Living Alterities* (2014), how subjectivity is constructed by "the particularities of embodiment" (6). The particularities that Lee mentions are aesthetic, with respect to "the social construction of subjects" (7), even without explicitly using the word "aesthetic." Though Lee contextualizes "the particularities of embodiment" in terms of "all its varied, racialized differences" (6), she traces the aesthetic alongside subjectivity, by, Lee makes clear, "evok[ing]

Franz Fanon's difference between externally and internally overdetermined subjectivity" (7). Setting aside Lee's use of Fanon as a way "to get a better sense of the relevance of race" (7) to subjects in their socially-constructed subjectivity, through the dual significance of external embodiment and internal phenomenology, I will also set aside Lee's conception of the internal for her discussion of the external, as "the visibility of the different features of one's body [where] others gauge the appropriate responses to one's embodiment—formatively constructing the experiences one encounters" (7). To this end, Lee argues, "the subject digests, filters, and makes sense of these experiences of the world" (7).

From this, how Lee construes the relationship between subjectivity and embodiment, as that which is tempered by aesthetics, is predicated on "illuminating how the meanings circumscribing embodiment constructs the experiences the subject encounters and consequently how the subject develops certain emotions, knowledge, ethical/moral postures, and sense of being-in-the-world" (7). Insofar as these "specificities of embodiment," Lee concludes, "are primary to subjectivity" (7), these embodied specificities are also primary to the aesthetics of trans-corporeal subjects as embodied, discursive, rhetorical subjects of trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Though working outside of Alaimo's purview for trans-corporeality, and yet relevant, when giving a fuller account of the aesthetics of trans-corporeal subjects as embodied, discursive, rhetorical subjects, Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology becomes particularly poignant on matters of embodiment. Indeed, in "Insurgent Vulnerability and the Carbon Footprint of Gender" (2009), Alaimo warns that "despite its emphasis on embodiment, trans-corporeality is not a phenomenological or individualistic stance" (23). However, one place to begin, though not to belabor Merleau-Ponty over and against Alaimo, but, rather, to expand Alaimo with phenomenology, is with Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), in

which Merleau-Ponty thinks of the body "only as an idea, to the universe as idea, to the idea of space and the idea of time" (71). For Merleau-Ponty and, it seems to me, Alaimo as well, the body, as that which is an embodied being, becomes "an attitude directed towards a certain existing or possible task" (100), if, by that, this attitude is a rhetorical attitude and what can be meant by "a certain existing or possible task" is one of discursiveness. This certainly holds true, given that Merleau-Ponty contends that "the body is a power of natural expression" (181).

If we take Merleau-Ponty a bit further beyond the field of phenomenology, while maintaining our proximity to Alaimo's trans-corporeality about the discursiveness of embodied beings, we are returning to what aesthetics mean for embodiment. This is so, by acknowledging that trans-corporeal subjects are, in one sense, rhetorical bodies, and, in another sense, communicative bodies—while, to the former, we can note that Jack Selzer writes, in the introduction to the collection, *Rhetorical Bodies* (1999), "the body has naturally become a more focal point of rhetorical inquiry" (9), we can also note that John O'Neill writes, in the introduction to The *Communicative Body* (1989), "we have the bodies we have because they have been inscribed by our mythologies, religions, philosophies, sciences, and ideologies" (3). In both cases, Selzer and O'Neill prescribe understandings of aesthetics, which, in turn, prescribe understandings of embodiment, such that both agree on the discursiveness of embodied beings as rhetorical subjects. What naturally makes, to Selzer's point, the body "become a more focal point of rhetorical inquiry" is precisely what causes bodies, to O'Neill's point, to be "inscribed by our mythologies, religions, philosophies, sciences, and ideologies"—it is the sense that bodies are trans-corporeal subjects discursively engaged with one another in a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

0.4: Trans-corporeal Ethics

Let us consider what Alaimo's trans-corporeality is, more concretely, before considering what makes it rhetoric, through the rhetorical undertones and the relatively short, but pointed intellectual history of the term, since Alaimo's first use of the term in *Bodily Natures* (2010). It behooves us to acknowledge that the term, as Alaimo first uses it, is "trans-coporeality," with a hyphenated emphasis. While some more recent scholarship, such as Jeffrey Cohen's *Stone* (2015), references the term without the hyphen, adopting "transcorporeality," we will want to maintain Alaimo's original, hyphenated use of the term. This is more than just a rhetorical flourish, meant to distinguish the term from corporeality, in much the same way that marks postcolonialism off from colonialism, or posthumanism off from humanism. As with the distinction between trans-gender and gender, at its most fundamental, trans-corporeality emphasizes movement in the prefix of "trans-." What is distinctive to trans-corporeality, though, is an understanding of the movement of bodies through the discursiveness of corporeality.

While aesthetics is concerned with embodiment, and what embodied being are in any given aesthetic space once situated in a rhetorical situation, when I say "ethics," I am more concerned with how embodied being become discursive within an ethical space or, said another way, within the ethics of space. Here, it is about the manner that embodied beings situated themselves in a rhetorical situation, which lead to discursiveness. The concern, here, is, to Lee's point, the ethical/moral postures of embodied beings, in terms of how they are rhetorically conditioned as trans-corporeal subjects—it is the degree that embodiment requires certain aesthetic values, comported ethically, which orient these rhetorical subjects. Alaimo frequently speaks about ethics, particularly in *Bodily Natures*, where she advances the notion of an ethical space, but also, as a means of developing what she refers to as "trans-corporeal ethics," she

suggests that, through the scope of trans-corporeality, "a nearly unrecognizable sort of ethics emerges—one that demands that we inquire about all of the substances that surround us, those for which we may be somewhat responsible, those that may harm us, those that may harm others, and those that we suspect we do not know enough about" (18).

The sort of ethics that emerges is, as Alaimo recently suggests in "Wanting All the Species to Be" (2019), "an ethics that desires biodiversity, in which humans as differently embodied beings want a multitude of other, irreducibly different species to be" (399). From this standpoint, this "desire for biodiversity" (399) is rooted in terms of bioethics "as a pulsing ethical force" (399), and the manner in which trans-corporeal ethics has as its underpinnings, to Alaimo's point in "States of Suspension" (2012), "a new materialist and posthumanist sense of the human as substantially and perpetually interconnected with the flows of substances and the agencies of environments" (476). Even if it is a "posthumanist mode of new materialism and material feminism" (Alaimo 2018, 435), trans-corporeality and its ethics conceives of, Alaimo details in "Material Engagements" (2010), the "profound sense of entanglement, intra-activity, and perpetual emergence [that] fosters an ethical stance that insists that the activities and knowledge practices of the human are always part of, and accountable to, the wider world"

These trans-corporeal ethics, for Alaimo, are concerned just as much with the nature of embodied beings as they are with the nature of space, which is respectively about aesthetic value. This aesthetic value is based on the ethical significance of how embodied beings are interdependent, interwoven, and vulnerable, as explained in "The Naked Word" (2010), as "trans-corporeal ethics." Because these ethics, Alaimo explains in *Bodily Natures*, "turn from the disembodied values and ideals of bounded individuals toward an attention to situated, evolving practices" (22), these trans-corporeal ethics, as Alaimo calls them, speak to, it seems to me, both

how embodied beings, "bound toward an attention" are rhetorical subjects and how, through "situated, evolving practices," these rhetorical subjects become discursive within rhetorical situations. Though Alaimo is not in Boyle's purview, these "situated, evolving practices," if looping Boyle into this, "orients rhetoric as a kind of onto-ethic by examining rhetoric's prior engagements with practice […] and recasting those practices in contemporary media ecologies" (15)—to this end, Boyle further explains, if "rhetoric [is] to be an ethic exercising bodies within ecologies of practice" (20), what trans-corporeal ethics is, then, depends on trans-corporeal aesthetics, as that which constitutes value to the discursiveness between rhetorical subjects.

Insofar as what we mean by ethics—whether pointing to an ethical space or an ethics of space—is constituted by aesthetic value, what we mean by value, then, is, itself, constituted by various kinds of value, which make embodiment possible, in the first place. Given what Lee prescribes, what we mean by ethical space or ethics of space informs and is informed by morality—by the very fact that Lee conceives of ethical postures and moral postures, if taking them as separate conceptions, as related or synonymous, the two are pointing to the same idea. In this case, if ethical postures are always-already moral postures, and vice versa, both are ultimately concerned with matters of value. Whether we call this morality, or moral value, we are denoting the degree that the ethics undergirding what aesthetics, embodiment, and embodied beings are as rhetorical subjects is grounded by a relationship between aesthetics and ethics, from the standpoint of what "moral" means. As Paul Guyer argues in the introduction to *Values of Beauty* (2005), there are "links between aesthetics and morality" (x).

If we set aside Guyer's conception of aesthetics in terms of beauty, and consider aesthetics more broadly, Guyer makes a salient argument, given that the very uttering of "aesthetic value," as I have done, denotes, however implicit, a working relationship between the

concerns of aesthetics and those of value, if we see "value" as acknowledging ethic/moral dimensions. In this sense, when we speak about aesthetics, at all, we are always-already speaking about ethics, as well as its derivative of morality—for that matter, by the very fact that we consider what aesthetics and embodiment mean for what embodied beings are, it requires us to consider, too, the role that ethics plays when we ascertain what embodied beings, in particular, should do communicatively, if, to Boyle point. "rhetoric [is] to be an embodied study in the potentials and problems of mediation" (11).

Because there are, Guyer tells us, "inescapable connections between aesthetic and moral values, for that we make our aesthetic recommendations responsibly is itself a moral responsibility" (xviii), when concerning ourselves with trans-corporeal subjects as rhetorical subjects, we are prescribing to these bodily natures a sense of morality and a moral responsibility for one another in an ethical space or within the ethics of space. To this end, for Alaimo, "a trans-corporeal ethics calls us to somehow find ways of navigating through the simultaneously material, economic, and cultural systems" (x). Not only does Alaimo consider these ethics as "an ethical call" (78), but she also proposes that these ethics emerge "from a sense of fleshy permeability" (78), which, I find, both attend to the aesthetic value of embodied beings as rhetorical subjects. This "ethical call" and the way in which that embodiment is "fleshy permeability" becomes the means by which embodied beings are discursive with one another as trans-corporeal subjects, insofar as they are, as Jeffery J. Cohen characterizes trans-corporeality in *Stone* (2015), "a phenomenon of bodily crossings and ontological hybridities" (12).

Taking into account what Cohen's sense of Alaimo's trans-corporeality is, in Cohen's *Prismatic Ecologies* (2013), as "show[ing] how bodies interpenetrate and modify one another" (70), Cohen suggests that this interpenetration and modification among trans-corporeal subjects

is "an affectively fraught web of relation that unfolds within an extensive spatial and temporal range, demanding an ethics of relation and scale" (41). Within these ethics of relation and scale, Cohen tells us, "bodily crossings and ontological hybridities" take place, given that what occurs, and how it occurs, arises in a rhetorical situation of some kind. For that matter, in a rhetorical situation of any kind, there is, to Cohen's point, an ethics of relation and scale, but there is also, if expanding Cohen just a bit further, an aesthetics of relation and scale. Both the former and the latter, within the scope of their respective concerns with relation and scale, allow embodied beings to become "phenomenon of bodily crossings and ontological hybridities," but also, the ethics of space that brings trans-corporeal subjects together aesthetically, and the aesthetics of space that brings trans-corporeal subjects together rhetorically, to Alaimo's point, provides a means of "mapping those interchanges across all species and at all scales"—where bodily crossings take place, and where hybridities are cast ontologically, and where corporeal interchanges are mapped trans-corporeally is in a rhetorical situation, "rooted in," Propen argues, "an ethics of ecological relationality" (3), which I will refer to as a trans-corporeal genre.

0.5: Trans-corporeal Genre(s)

The rhetorical situation that is attuned to and is attuned by trans-corporeal aesthetics and trans-corporeal ethics is a trans-corporeal genre, based on a trans-corporeal space "in which the human body can never be disentangled from the material world" (Alaimo 2009, 12). Rather than using the term "modality," which, it seems to me, has certain connotations attached to it that tend towards technical specializations, my use of the word "genre," now, seems to be more optimal, since it points to the specific concerns of the humanities.

In this sense, when I use the term "genre," and situate its meaning and meaningfulness in a certain way that is synonymous with the term "category," insofar as "genre," as I will use it, forms of a rhetorical triangularity with the respective matters of ethics towards the ethics of space, and aesthetics towards the aesthetics of space, it behooves me to conceptualize the term more concretely, before devising what I mean by trans-corporeal genre(s).

For example, in the appropriately titled book, *Genre* (2005), John Frow asserts, "the category of genre is a privileged object of study because it supposes that questions of meaning and truth are always questions of form and of the situation of utterance" (12). Through Frow's working definition of "genre," the relationship between the ethics of space and the aesthetics of space, it seems to me, is predicated on "questions of meaning and truth." This is especially so for matters of trans-corporeality, insofar as the interchanges between embodied beings occur when one embodied being is confronted by the meaning and truth of another embodied being—these interchanges, interconnections, entanglements, and enmeshments allow embodied beings to traverse one another as trans-corporeal subjects, by working out and working through meaningfulness and truthfulness, which, to Frow's point, "are always questions of form and of the situation of utterance."

While "questions of form" point to the manner in which embodied beings are embodied, it is through "questions of the situation of utterance" that rhetorical situations take place, such that trans-corporeal subjects, as rhetorical subjects are engaged in a "situation of utterance." Within a situation of utterance is where genre is noted, which, if following Frow's working definition of genre, "has to do at once with systems and with historical change" (12). By this, what is meant by genres, and, more precisely, what I mean by trans-corporeal genres, are notions of "systems," but also the extent that these systems are contained "with historical change." In

order words, these systems are made possible, as distinctly rhetorical systems, due to, it seems to me, a two-fold significance of historical change: change that occurs rhetorically within the system of any given genre, as well as change that is imposed rhetorically upon the genre itself—the internal and external aspects of historical change is what makes trans-corporeal genre possible, as trans-corporeal sites where trans-corporeal subjects become discursive as rhetorical subjects. If, as Frow explains, genre "ranges over every level of the symbolic order, of our social world and of every other " (12), trans-corporeal genre also "ranges" the same way, if we are to say, then, that these ranges are dictated by a diversity of embodiment "over every level of the symbolic order," meaning to represent pluralities "of our social world."

Yet, when we think of any given trans-corporeal genre, as that which captures a particular embodiment, there arises what Jacques Derrida describes as a law of genre. In the aptly titled, "The Law of Genre," included in the collection, *Glyph 7* (1980), Derrida proposes that the law of genre "has a controlling influence and is binding on that which draws the genre into engendering, generations, genealogy, and degenerescence" (221). In this case, Derrida prescribes a notion of genre that is autonomous, self-sustaining, and independent of any "engendering" or the like, such that, to Derrida's point, "this law, as law of genre, is not exclusively binding on the genre *qua* category of art or literature" (221). If genre, then, is not binding to conceptualizations of it arising from art of literature, the notion of genre, when considering Derrida's argument, has a more diverse meaning, which is made meaningful in terms of the relationship of genre to a law of genre.

Though what Derrida means by "law of genre" certainly speaks to an ethics to what genre is, if, by that, we can say that there is a relationship between ethics and genre, there is also an aesthetic to genre, insofar as what allows a notion of genre to resist being defined by art or

literature speaks a relationship genre has with aesthetics as part and parcel of a "controlling influence." What is also integral to genre's "controlling influence" is how the very meaning of genre, while still remaining unbound by art and literature, is predicated on, as John M. Swales argues in *Genre Analysis* (1990), representing "a class of communicative events" (45)—in this way, when articulating the meaning of trans-corporeal genre, in terms of the controlling influences of, as well as its controlling influences upon, trans-corporeal aesthetics and trans-corporeal ethics, and the meaningfulness of this triangularity to trans-corporeal rhetoric itself, the rhetorical situation in which trans-corporeal subjects become rhetorical subjects is determined by communicative events between embodied beings.

0.6: Trans-corporeal Methodology

If bringing a trans-corporeal ethics and a trans-corporeal aesthetics to bear upon trans-corporeal genre(s), even within the boundaries of the rhetorical triangularity between the three upon the trans-corporeal subject as the rhetorical subject, such that, Frow tells us, "genre is not just a matter of codes and conventions, but that it also calls into play systems of use, durable social institutions, and the organization of physical space" (12), a methodology is required.

Not only does a decidedly trans-corporeal methodology, as that which attends to the concerns of trans-corporeal subjects engaged in trans-corporeal rhetoric as embodied beings, provide boundaries around which an "organization of physical space" is possible, but a methodology also provides a means of constituting the embodiment of embodied beings within a series of "durable social institutions." What makes these "social institutions" durable, for the purposes of trans-corporeal rhetoric, is that they provide a means of tracing embodied beings,

assessing how these rhetorical subjects become discursive, and articulating what sort of trans-corporeal rhetoric is laid bare within "systems of use."

Methodologically, when situated in terms of trans-corporeal aesthetics and trans-corporeal ethics, what trans-corporeal genres do, to Frow's point, cannot be reduced simply to "just a matter of codes and conventions." That is to say, even with the "controlling influences" of trans-corporeal aesthetics and trans-corporeal ethics, whatever codes and conventions are imposed on a given trans-corporeal genre, the trans-corporeal genre, in itself, serves certain controlling influences the meaningfulness of trans-corporeal aesthetics and trans-corporeal ethics. As Frow warns us, instead of viewing genre—and, here, we mean trans-corporeal genre, more precisely—as "just a matter of codes and conventions," the real rhetorical work of a genre occurs in "mediat[ing] between a social situation and the text" (14), Frow makes clear, "which reali[z]es certain features of this situation, or which responds strategically to its demands" (14). On this point, I endeavor to prescribe trans-corporeal genres that mediate between a given social situation and the discursiveness of embodied beings, which offer different kinds of trans-corporeal rhetoric: Burke's *The War of Words* and Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*.

Chapter 1 will consider Burke's place in the field of rhetoric, in order to give an account of what Burke means to rhetoric, to the exclusion of *The War of Words*, which will lead to suggesting how *The War of Words* allows for a new understanding of Burke's place in contemporary rhetoric, approaching contemporary problems in the dissemination of information. Given Burke's use of the term "scientific" in *The War of Words*, towards what Burke refers to as "scientific rhetoric," this chapter will consider the implications of Burke's use of "scientific." I will show how this contributes to what Burke means to the rhetoric of science, as a means of conceptualizing the relationship between rhetoric, science, and how information, in itself, is a

relation between facts and interpretations. For Burke, facts and interpretations operate within a rhetorical situation, which I will describe as trans-corporeal subjects.

Chapter 2 will consider what Burke's scientific rhetoric, as presented in *The War of Words*, means to the science of rhetoric, as an extension of the previous chapter's discussion of the same with respect to the rhetoric of science. From this, I will follow the way that the rhetoric of science, in terms of what it means to the science of rhetoric, is charted through notions of materiality, which I will interface with Burke's scientific rhetoric. Tempered by the rhetorical triangularity of genre, ethics, and aesthetics, in respective terms of the genre of journalism, the ethics of news, and the aesthetics of the body, I will argue that Burke's scientific rhetoric, as that which is cast through a materiality of rhetoric, addresses the particular rhetorical status of embodied beings of facts and interpretations, such that, for Burke, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, what arises is a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Chapter 3 will consider, broadly, Foucault's place in the field of rhetoric, in order to ascertain what Foucault means to rhetoric, to the exclusion of *Confessions of the Flesh*, which will lead to Foucault's concerns with language and discourse. These concerns, from the standpoint of Foucault's approach to discursiveness, are integral to Foucault's examination of Christianity, not simply as a structure, or even as that which will requires post-structuralist thinking to make sense of it, but, for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, as something that imposes technologies on the flesh and for the self. To make this clear, this chapter will present Foucault's rhetoric of confession as scientific discursiveness between self-examination and self-renunciation, as a means of conceptualizing the relationship between rhetoric, the confession, and "technologies of the self." For Foucault, self-examination and self-renunciation operate within a rhetorical situation, which I will describe as trans-corporeal subjects.

Chapter 4 will first consider what Foucault's science of confession is, which will act as an extension of or implications to the previous chapter's discussion of the rhetoric of confession. From this, I will conceptualize the science of confession, modeled on the science of rhetoric from Chapter 2. Tempered by the rhetorical triangularity of genre, ethics, and aesthetics, in respective terms of the genre of Christianity, the ethics of the self, and the aesthetics of the body, Foucault's confessional rhetoric, cast through a materiality of rhetoric, just as Burke's scientific rhetoric is cast the same way, will address the particular rhetorical status of embodied beings. In Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, with the flesh and the body, and *exomologēsis* (by self-examination) and *exagoreusis* (by self-renunciation), what arises is a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

CHAPTER 1

KENNETH BURKE, RHETORIC, AND THE SCIENTIFIC

> Insofar as possible, we confine the realm of the "factual" to a low,
> but necessary and unquestioned order of observations.
> —Kenneth Burke, "Face, Inference, and Proof in the Analysis of
> Literary Symbolism" (1954)

> We are not by any means embarrassed by the fact that the
> situation, when considered in terms so universal, is not clear-cut.
> —Kenneth Burke, "[Notes toward] The Rhetorical Situation," *The
> War of Words* (2018)

1.1: Prologue

When Kenneth Burke (1897-1993) died, he left an unpublished text, which has been

posthumously titled, *The War of Words*. The text was written primarily in the 1950s, as a

thematic contribution to the volumes, *A Grammar or Motives* (1945) and *A Rhetoric of Motives*

(1950), along with the other material planned as "A Symbolic of Motives." With the publication

of *The War of Words*, only recently in 2018, as much as the text contributes to a new way of

understanding Burke's concerns in the 1950s under the rubric of his "motivorium" trilogy, it

prescribes another concern for Burke about the relationship between rhetoric and information,

and, in turn, between the natures of facts and interpretations in the rhetorical dissemination of

information.

As Anthony Burke, Kyle Jensen, and Jack Selzer, the editors of *The War of Words*, point

out, "when Kenneth Burke was preparing *A Rhetoric of Motives* for publication early in 1949"

(1), Burke planned for *The War of Words* to be a second volume to *A Rhetoric of Motives*.

Insofar as editors write, "[Burke] inserted a footnote to signal the existence of a prospective

second volume of [*A Rhetoric of Motives*]" (1), the second volume never appeared, and in turn,

the editors maintain, "surprisingly, no one has so far paid much notice" (1) to Burke's footnote. Yet, despite the "modest footnote" (2), the editors make it clear that *The War of Words* "had been conceived of from the start as a central part of [*A Rhetoric of Motives*]" (2). This is especially important, given that *The War of Words*, they conclude, "remains timely today for its trenchant commentary on the belligerent aspects of contemporary American culture that operate in both conscious and unconscious realms" (2).

Even with its timeliness and, more aptly, its timelessness, *The War of Words*, just as the editors find, "is a significant independent addition to the Burke canon that discloses numerous contemporary rhetorical tropes" (2). To this end, while *The War of Words* speaks just as much to Burke's concerns in the 1950s as it does to how those concerns have become perennial, as the editors write, the text "also expos[es] how conventional and uncritical journalistic and bureaucratic communications condition Americans to accept the possibility of ruinous wars" (2), particularly with respect to how the phenomenon of misinformation and disinformation, it seems to me, aid in the acceptance of "the possibility of ruinous wars" on the noumenon of information, truth, facts, and reality.

As much as *The War of Words*, the editors tell us, "offers perspective" (2) on *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and that Burke "conceived of them together, as part of one sustained argument" (9), looming questions remain about why Burke never followed through with his promise to have *The War of Words* become a follow-up to *A Rhetoric of Motives* and, at the least, why Burke never published *The War of Words* at all. The editors admit that "definitive answers to these questions are difficult to provide" (31), to the extent that Burke's correspondence and other archival material "produced after 1949 offer some clues" (31). The fact that "after April 1949 Burke turned to *A Symbolic of Motives* instead of to the unfinished *War of Words*" (31) does not imply

that Burke had abandoned the manuscript—rather, just as the editors chart the compositional history of *The War of Words*, Burke continues working on the manuscript well into the 1970s, thinking in favor of and, then, thinking against its publication, as either a whole or in parts, deciding in a 1974 letter to a University of California Press editor that *The War of Words* should be published posthumously (36).

This chapter will consider Burke's place in the field of rhetoric, in order to give an account of what Burke means to rhetoric, to the exclusion of *The War of Words*. To do this, I will discuss the ways in which Burke has contributed to rhetorical studies and rhetorical theory, in order to suggest what *The War of Words* means to Burke's oeuvre and, in turn, suggest how *The War of Words* allows for a new understanding of Burke's place in contemporary rhetoric, where *The War of Words* approaches contemporary problems in the dissemination of information. Given Burke's use of the term "scientific" in *The War of Words*, towards what Burke refers to as "scientific rhetoric," this chapter will consider the implications of Burke's use of "scientific." I will do this, not just by making sense out of what the term adjectivally means to the kind of rhetoric *The War of Words* espouses, but also how the term, as Burke conceives it, contributes to, I will show, what Burke means to the rhetoric of science, as a means of conceptualizing the relationship between rhetoric, science, and explore how information, in itself, is a relation between facts and interpretations.

1.2 Burke and Rhetoric

What Burke means to the field of rhetoric remains just as inarguable as what the field of rhetoric means to Burke, particularly when taking into account Burke's undeniable and influential place in modern and contemporary rhetoric, even to this day. This is certainly not too hyperbolic to

say, given that vast amount of scholarship articulating Burke's influence on what it means to do rhetoric now, evidenced with, for example, Lawrence Coupe's *Kenneth Burke on Myth* (2005), Debra Hawhee's *Moving Bodies: Kenneth Burke at the Edges of Language* (2009), Stephen Bygrave's *Kenneth Burke: Rhetoric and Ideology* (2012), and Bryan Crable's *Ralph Ellison and Kenneth Burke: At the Roots of the Racial Divide* (2012), just to name a few monograph studies. Indeed, there has been plenty written about Burke's significance, which need not be enumerated here, insofar as Burke has become the embodiment, especially now, of the meaning and meaningfulness of rhetoric to other humanities, such as, most recently, in the collection, *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman* (2017), which uses Burke to construct and map a specific conceptualization of posthuman rhetorics, operating from the premise that, as the introduction to the volume explains, "rhetoric concerns itself with human affairs; *post*humanism seems concerned with leaving the human behind" (Mays, Rivers, Sharp-Hoskins 1).

Note the emphasis placed on "post." This emphasis precisely outlines what Burke means to posthumanism and what posthumanism could mean to Burke. From the standpoint of Burke's humanism, another undergirding premise of the *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman* collection is that "posthumanism opens up the human, particularly those humanist definitions that privilege the human as some hermetically sealed, ontologically discrete entity in the world" (Mays, Rivers, Sharp-Hoskins 1)—Burke provides one of these humanist definitions. If "the posthuman turn in rhetoric, then, spins from the propensity of posthumanist terminologies to unpack and reexamine the *human*" (Mays, Rivers, Sharp-Hoskins 1), and Burke provides certain boundaries to what the human means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to the human, even under the futures of posthumanism, Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins are correct to suggest that "this work strikes us as rhetorical" (1). Given the "post" aspect to posthumanism, and how they consider "posthuman

rhetorics," in concluding that "so much of rhetoric is predicated upon both epistemological and ontological understandings of the human" (2), Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins predominantly draw upon Burke's essay, "Definition of Man," the first of five summarizing essays appearing in Burke's collection, *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966). From it, in particular, they conclude, "Burke's definition of humans as symbol-using and symbol-misusing is at the heart of his rhetorical project" (Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins 2).

As Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins note, Burke's definition of the human is essential to what Burke means to rhetoric and vice versa, insofar as it "inheres across rhetorical studies writ large" (2), but it is also essential to what Burke means to posthumanism, insofar as "Burke is the figure with whom [*Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman*] engages the posthuman, which is, again, a renewed thinking of the human" (2). If this "renewed thinking of the human" means anything to rhetoric, through Burke, is that it offers the very "new rhetoric," or "new rhetorics," that Joseph Schwartz discusses in "Kenneth Burke, Aristotle, and the Future of Rhetoric" (1966), such that "if such a thing exists or is in the process of being born […] then one should be able to discover something of its character by a close study of [Burke]" (210). Thanks to Schwartz, to which Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins refer, it is clear that, to whatever extent "there has been much talk of late of a new rhetoric" (Schwartz 210), it emerges contemporarily to the emergence of Burke's *Language as a Symbolic Act*—and, for that matter, the very "Definition of Man," to which Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins refer, is certainly in Schwartz's purview, even if the text itself goes unmentioned by Schwartz altogether.

As much as Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins think of Schwartz as an anchor that situates the genealogy of what their understanding of posthuman rhetorics mean to "new rhetoric" and vice versa, as those that turn on what Burke contributes to both, as late as 2017 or as early as

1966, they write, "[Burke's] body of work still anchors many of our field's most basic precepts: extended or challenged, dismissed or developed, coopted or simply copied [whereby] Burke is a figure with whom we feel we must commune" (3). Still, whether speaking, more narrowly, of posthuman rhetorics or, more generally, of new rhetoric, Burke himself is anchored by Friedrich Nietzsche, which becomes a significant strand of influence interwoven into Burke's thought as early as the 1930s—though this is made abundantly clear, for example, in *Kenneth Burke in the 1930s* (2007), co-authored by Ann George and Jack Selzer, Nietzsche's influences on Burke remain unfortunately, perhaps unintentionally, out of the purview of both Schwartz and the *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman* collection.

For Burke to mean anything to what "new rhetoric" is and what posthuman rhetoric(s) is, respectively espoused by Schwartz and the *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman* collection, under the rubric of Burke being "a figure with whom we feel we must commune," the same must be said of Nietzsche. Traces of Nietzsche appear in *Counter-Statement* (1931), *Permanence and Change* (1935), and *Attitudes Towards History* (1937), with the latter two, as noted by George and Selzer, playing important roles in the making of Burke's rhetorical theory. While George and Selzer characterize *Permanence and Change* as "theoriz[ing] the merger of rhetoric, poetics, and everyday life" (110), they tell us that *Attitudes Towards History* "is nothing if not a primer on specific rhetorical methods for locating, analyzing, and modifying symbolic attachments […] present[ing] a discussion of attitudes towards audiences—in effect, a rhetorical theory" (143). Insofar as how Burke synthesizes rhetoric, poetics, and everyday life in *Permanence and Change* by drawing on Nietzsche among others (George and Selzer 88), as a means of "offer[ing] a vocabulary for talking about these powerful attachments to prevailing cultural values" (George

and Selzer 166), *Attitudes Towards History* "provided a practical method for locating and analyzing these symbolic attachments" (George and Selzer 166).

To this end, given how essential Burke's "Definition of Man" is to establishing how the *Kenneth Burke + The Posthuman* collection "attests to the shifts in rhetorical attention made possible at the intersections of Burke studies and posthumanisms, collectively and self-consciously pushing our rhetorical imagination with respect to how we conceptualize, rethink, and potentially intervene in emerging boundaries and futures" (Mays, Rivers, and Sharp-Hoskins 13), Nietzsche is essential to what Burke studies means to posthumanism, and vice versa. For posthumanism, Nietzsche plays a role in the shaping of the field, as envisioned from the likes of Cary Wolfe (2013), Neil Badington (2000, 27), David Roden (2014, 182), Stefan Herbrechter (2013, 31), and Rosi Braidotti (2013). For Burke studies, and what his "Definition of Man" means to Burke's rhetorical theory, Burke's indebtedness to Nietzsche, as Michael A. Overington points out in "Kenneth Burke and the Method of Dramatism" (1977), is evident in "Burke trac[ing] to Nietzsche the sense of perspectives as interpretations from a particular position" (139). Indeed, what Burke's sense of perspectives as interpretations means when cast from a particular position depends on a "valuative thought," which, Samuel B. Southwell explains, works within "the tradition of Nietzsche, but [Burke's] values are not Nietzsche's" (6). In his *Kenneth Burke and Martin Heidegger* (1987), though predicated on larger triangulation between Nietzsche, Burke, and Martin Heidegger, Southwell, nonetheless, makes very keen observations about what Nietzsche means to Burke, where, from Nietzsche, "[Burke's] values […] are order, balance, coherence, dignity […] his lifelong preoccupation is to preserve the power of human affirmation against the inroads of nihilism" (6).

Burke's rhetorical theory, then, as a means "to preserve the power of human affirmation," is constructed upon a philosophy of becoming that Burke characterizes, in *Permanence and Change*, "when approach[ing] problems historically" (163). For Burke, this philosophy of becoming, as that which confronts "the inroads of nihilism," is focused on "get[ting] at the irreducible minimum of human certainly, to re-emphasize the humanistic as the sound basis above any scheme of values [that] must be constructed" (172). But also, in terms of what becoming means to Burke's rhetorical theory as a broader project of valuation, Burke's rhetorical use of Nietzsche lays bare the degree that "valuing creativity is valuing a specific type of activity, that of confronting and overcoming resistance" (Reginster 247). If we see this as indicative of *Permanence and Change* as the starting point for Burke's rhetorical theory, it is in, Burke ascertains, "laying stress upon the notion that man must patch up the discordances between himself and his environment by reshaping the environment" (172). Indeed, if, as Burke writes, "[man] must not *surrender* to the environment that oppresses him; he must *change* it" (172), this sets the stage for Burke's rhetorical theory, as not just patching up discordances, or even just "reshaping the environment," but also, more fundamentally, as a metabiological rhetorical criticism (Crable 1998) predicated on a Nietzschean perspectivism (Wess 68), most notably in *Permanence and Change* (Burke 88), while, according to Ross Wolin (2001), operating at the intersection of communication, criticism, and aesthetics.

Burke's familiarity with Nietzsche, evident as early as *Counter-Statement* (1931), hinges on, as Timothy W. Crusius notes in *Kenneth Burke and the Conversation after Philosophy* (1999), the notion that "Nietzsche exposed Philosophy as rhetoric and the pursuit of Truth, Goodness, and Rationality as not just one instance of the will to power but the supreme example of it" (9). Because of this, what Nietzsche means to Burke's rhetorical theory is situated in the

close proximity between philosophy and rhetoric, for the sake of pursuing truth, goodness, and rationality. All three form the boundaries around which Burke's rhetorical theory works, not just as a means of attending to discordances, to Burke's point, but also, and more precisely, as a means of locating and finding remedies for misunderstanding, if we think of Burke's notion of patching up discordances as that which similarly undergirds I. A. Richards' *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936). Yet, for Burke, the idea of surrendering to the environment, just to patch up discordances, does not go far enough as far as rhetorical theory goes, when viewing Burke's Nietzschean proclivities towards "reshaping the environment" as reshaping, to Wolin's point, the very rhetorical intersection of communication, criticism, and aesthetics, as evidenced in *Counter-Statement* and *Permanence and Change*.

Given how Burke draws on Nietzsche to aid the development of Burke's rhetorical theory, in "Burke and Nietzsche" (1999), Debra Hawhee writes, "[Burke] developed his early works using Nietzsche as a model" (130). Burke's early works, dated to the 1920s, consist of fiction, poetry, essays, and music criticism published in *The Dial* magazine. With Nietzsche's influence on Burke, the works of this early period demonstrate that "Burke not only read Nietzsche with care and sympathy," Crusius writes, "[Burke] also encountered Nietzsche through other authors influential in this early period, writers Burke wrote about and, in some cases, even translated." (24). Crusius goes on to proclaim that "Burke was more nearly a Nietzschean than anything else in the twenties" (24). Though Hawhee does not go as far as Crusius, Hawhee does recognize that "many of Burke's writings have a distinctive Nietzschean inflection" (129). Even so, Hawhee suggests that "Burke's connections to Nietzsche are largely ignored among scholars in rhetoric, or at best they are cited in a fleeting manner" (129)—thusly positioned contemporaneously to Hawhee, it is certainly possible to extend this argument to

Crusius. Standing as an important antecedent to Crusius and Hawhee, according to Gregory

Desilet's "Nietzsche Contra Burke: The Melodrama in Dramatism" (1989): "Nietzsche's role in

the formation of Burke's orientation towards language is reason in itself for communication

scholars to probe Burke's reading and rhetoricization of Nietzsche and other contemporary

assessments of Nietzsche" (65).

If following Desilet towards what would eventually become Burke's "dramatism" by the

1940s in *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), the path Burke takes in "[his] orientation towards

language" is charted through the 1930s with the major works, *Counter-Statement*, *Permanence*

and Change, and *Attitudes Toward History* (1937). Nevertheless, though, as Crusius writes,

"when dramatism emerges in the forties, Marx and Freud are more important to Burke than

Nietzsche is" (13). Burke's movement away from Nietzsche is not an all-together shift, since

Nietzsche serves another influence respectively upon both Marx and Freud, so that Nietzsche's

influences upon Burke become transformed through Marx's and Freud's respective influences on

Burke. Suffice it to say, Burke would not have been drawn to Marx and Freud in the 1940s had it

not been for Nietzsche's influences on Burke in the prior decade, such that, Hawhee points out,

"Burke's writings in the 1930s [became] replete with Nietzsche, both stylistically and

philosophically" (130).

The first of these, *Counter-Statement*, contains several references to Nietzsche, though

the focal point of Burke's use of Nietzsche can be found in *Permanence and Change*. This latter

text, as cited by Desilet, contains the "most extensive references to Nietzsche" (65). As extensive

as the Nietzsche references are, there is some sense that *Permanence and Change*, as the second

major work of the 1930s, arises out of a tumultuous and intense period for Burke—it is this text,

more so than *Counter-Statement* or what follows with *Attitudes Towards History*, which displays

Burke's Nietzschean influences, as that which allows Burke to transition towards the work of the 1940s. As William H. Rueckert describes in *Kenneth Burke and the Drama of Human Relations* (1963), *Permanence and Change* contains "obvious signs of transition, new vision, and solidification" (34-35). To this end, in disagreement with Rueckert, Hawhee believes "*Permanence and Change* is more than chaotic, expulsive writing" (133). For Hawhee, *Permanence and Change* becomes a representation of "Burke's attempt to ground complex philosophical concepts in rhetoric and apply them to cultural and social forces" (133).

Yet, the means by which Burke orients himself to "cultural and social forces" arises from, in Rueckert's view, "the historical situation in which [Burke] found himself" (35) in relation to the Great Depression, just as Burke discloses in the preface to the book (xiii). It is with this in mind that Rueckert reads *Permanence and Change* as "a desperate attempt to locate analytically what is wrong with the changing historical situation by setting it against the permanent universal situation of man as it is revealed in the documents of the present and the past" (35). This attempt, as "desperate" as Rueckert surmises it to be, becomes oriented towards the concerns of *Attitudes Towards History*, not just a sequel to *Permanence and Change*, but also, according to George and Selzer, as "a book [that] grew out of and attempted to amend [Burke's] relationships within the committed leftist political community" (142). In this way, the relationship between *Permanence and Change* and *Attitudes Towards History* is grounded on how Burke approaches the meaning of history, which, as he prefaces in *Attitudes Towards History*, seeks to emphasize "attitudes" over "history," such that "attitudes," as a term, is "about the ways and means of studying cultural phenomena located in history" (George and Selzer 143).

In defining "history" as, in Burke's words, "primarily man's life in political communities" (i), Burke moves from critiquing the historical situation to critiquing the political

situation—nevertheless, Burke couches both situation in a continued emphasis on "attitude" with respect to the meaning of rhetorical acts. To George and Selzer, "Burke resolved to focus […] on the audience analysis and historical analysis that should precede rhetorical acts" (143). If tying together *Permanence and Change* and *Attitudes Towards History* thematically and suggesting that both align to a shared focus for Burke, as Rueckert acknowledges, the two texts are the embodiment of Burke "converting a theory of poetry into a philosophy of living" (51). In this vein, Hawhee cites Rueckert's assertion, but, instead, suggests that the thematic connection between *Permanence and Change* and *Attitudes Towards History* "might be turned around to say that during this time Burke converted *philosophy* into a theory of *poetry*" (140).

Whether considering Rueckert or Hawhee, there remains an undeniable emphasis on how "philosophy" and a "theory of poetry" function as interlocutors for Burke. It seems to me, then, that Burke defines these interlocutors in terms of what philosophizing means for poetizing and what poetizing means for philosophizing. Along these lines, the following from Burke all the more stands out from the final section of *Permanence and Change*: "the conclusion we should draw from our thesis is a belief that the ultimate metaphor for discussing the universe and man's relations to it must be the poetic or dramatic metaphor" (263). If viewing this as not just a summing up of *Permanence and Change*, but also as a prologue directed to *Attitudes Towards History*, both exhibit the ability the discuss "the universe and man's relations to it" requires a philosophizing through a poetizing by way of "the poetic or dramatic metaphor." To this end, philosophizing is about "the universe" viewed through "the changing historical situation," and poetizing is about, in Burke's words, "man's relations" to the historical situation. From here, George and Selzer appropriately believe that this occurs "since human relations (as well as

interpretations of those relations) are inevitably rhetorical, [*Attitudes Towards History*] also presents a discussion of attitudes toward audiences—in effect, a rhetorical theory" (143).

Burke's rhetorical theory, as it is situated in the 1930s, is grounded upon Nietzsche through what Hawhee defines as "perform[ing] a twofold function for Burke" (140). For Hawhee, in one sense, "Nietzsche's ideas on language, metaphor, aesthetics, and ethics permeated Burke's thought," and in another sense, Nietzsche is "an embodiment of the ideal poet whose poetry embodies the very acts Burke called poetry" (140). Due to these twofold influences on Burke, Nietzsche informs what George and Selzer call "Burke's aesthetic proposal" through "an art of living"—in this way, "if poetry has as much validity as science as a basis for practical life," they write, "then art should assume a central role in transforming American society" (108). As much as this points to, as they note, a relationship between poetry and the rhetorical nature of art, "Burke did not envision rescue in the form of any particular body of poems" (108). Even if Burke's concern is not so much with a "particular body of poems," he is, nonetheless, through his use of Nietzsche, more concerned with how an ideal form of poetry can be philosophized and poetized into a rhetorical theory.

Yet, when assessing Burke's rhetorical theory in the thematic relationship between *Permanence and Change* and *Attitudes Towards History* predicated on Nietzsche's influences on Burke, George and Selzer arrive at the following conclusion:

> Burke's sense of art's role in culture had shifted (or grown) as well, for while [*Permanence and Change*] argues primarily for a poetic orientation, for an understanding of the function of perspectives or ideologies, and for an understanding that art, indeed all language and interpretation, is rhetorical, [*Attitudes Towards History*] focuses more on art as reflection of or a way to get at society's psychic state (166).

Here, while Nietzsche influences Burke's "poetic orientation," influences from Marx and Freud dictate Burke's movement away from Nietzsche as Burke settles on an analysis of "society's

psychic state." If Nietzsche allows Burke to come to Marx and Freud as much as the concerns in

Permanence and Change position Burke to the concerns in *Attitudes Towards History*, Burke

remains concerned with the "sense of art's role in culture." Though it may have "shifted" across

the 1930s, Nietzsche is undoubtedly at the center of Burke's understanding of art,

conceptualization of the artist, and the meaning of art, such that, as it brings George and Selzer to

note:

> If [*Permanence and Change*] proposes art as social cure, [*Attitudes Towards History*] offers diagnostic tools for understanding art and other forms of symbolic action—so that radical rhetors might be able to subvert the 'allegiance to the symbols of authority' that were compelling people in 1937 (166).

What is important here, if minding what George and Selzer mean by "diagnostic tools," is the

significance of what they have quoted from Burke's *Attitudes Toward History*. For Burke, his

approach to "symbols of authority" arises from the need "to integrate technical criticism with

social criticism" (331). With what George and Selzer call "diagnostic tools" seemingly in mind

in relation to what Burke means by "integration," M. Elizabeth Weiser, in *Burke, War, Words:*

Rhetoricizing Dramatism (2008), notably observes: "what [Burke] needed was the methodology

for this integration, and this he needed to develop in conversation with the other methodologies

being promulgated by this new generation of literary and cultural critics" (27). What Burke

develops "put[s] forth poetic language as a flexible tool for understanding and affecting the

ambiguous social realm" (27). In Weiser's view, "[Burke] was moving toward drama as the key

poetic metaphor for language as an interactive, action-oriented process" (27). This movement

towards drama, with Nietzsche unquestionably remaining in Burke's purview, becomes what

Weiser considers a "rhetoricizing dramatism" (27).

If "rhetoricizing dramatism" in the period after *Attitudes Towards History* and the

appearance of *A Grammar of Motives* can be ascertained, in the words of George and Selzer, as

what "[was] compelling people in 1937," Burke's desire to challenge the "allegiance to the symbols of authority" holds a special significance in understanding Burke's essay entitled "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle," first published in Summer 1939, and included in the collection, *Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941). In "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle," not only does Burke employ a means of "integrat[ing] technical criticism with social criticism" as he initially describes in *Attitudes Towards History*," but he also, as Weiser puts it, "trie[s] to show aesthetic scholars the rhetorical place of their literature, to show Marxists the psychological importance of the words they chose, and to show social scientists and semanticists that the ambiguities of everyday discourse could be analyzed in active, non-positivistic ways" (60-61).

Reviewing the English translation of Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*—appearing first as an abridged version in 1933, then in an unabridged form in 1939—Burke's assessment of how Hitler rhetoricized dramatism in "The Rhetoric of Hitler's Battle," according to Weiser, "saw that there were things to learn from close reading of not just Hitler's content but his style, the attitudinal language he chose in order to influence a people's view of their situation" (61). In a certain sense, Hitler becomes a "symbol of authority," to which the German people situationally hold allegiance. This situation, even as Burke sees it, is erroneously "Nietzschean cast" (210). Given Hitler's rhetoricization of Nietzsche, as that which Germans could see as another "symbol of authority," it is not just that Burke explicitly finds that "there is no 'philosophy of the superman'" (210). in Nietzsche, as Hitler's propagandized notion, which Hitler conceptually credits to Nietzsche. For Burke, there is also a broader understanding of what National Socialism's appropriation of Nietzsche accomplishes rhetorically, when Nietzsche is one of the philosophical faces of Nazi ideology. This rhetoricization of Nietzsche directly contributes to what Burke cites in *A Grammar of Motives* as "the Hitlerite motive of booty" as compensatory

(398) and "the Hitlerite cult of Anti-Semitism" as racialized scapegoating (407)—these two pieces of commentary speak contemporaneously to the rhetorical situation of World War II, to which Burke envisions *A Grammar of Motives*, in a 1942 letter, as "built about the *quandaries* of motivation [...] at the moment Hitler has provided the world with motives" (Weiser 93).

Though Weiser takes care to note that "Burke started on his *A Grammar of Motives* several years before World War II began" (59), she, nonetheless, concedes to the fact that "it would be the war that both shaped the book's final form and provided Burke with a compelling reason to promote its principles of ambiguity, dialogue, and active response" (59). Insofar as *A Grammar of Motives* is a "wartime monograph" (Weiser 105), predicated on how "the war showed Burke that his long-term project for a study of human relations was more valid than ever," *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), extending this study, arises from certain wartime contingencies, having been composed during a period between 1945 and 1950, during the beginnings of the Cold War tensions. While, as Barbara A. Biesecker argues in *Addressing Postmodernity: Kenneth Burke, Rhetoric, and a Theory of Social Change* (1997), the former, "present[s] a methodological tool by means of which critics can uncover the motivational loci of symbolic forms" (24), the latter "reopens the inquiry into motive by seeking to explain not the condition of the possibility for human action per se but, rather, the condition of possibility for collective action" (40).

Though neither Biesecker nor Weiser, for the purposes of their respective arguments, consider each component of Burke's "long-term project" as the often-described Motivorum trilogy, which includes *A Grammar of Motives*, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and the never-published work on poetics, *A Symbolic of Motives*, Rueckert's introduction to a collection of texts embodying the earliest version of *A Symbolic of Motives* asserts, "Burke's grand plan for his

dramatistic project was to follow Aristotle and write a modern grammar, rhetoric, poetics, and ethics" (xv). Here, Rueckert is suggesting four parts to Burke's dramatistic project, based on a "five-year schedule," with *A Symbolic of Motives* due in 1955, and "presumedly, [Burke's] *Ethics of Motives* by 1960, at the end of a twenty-year period of prodigious work and thought" (xv). Still, not only does *A Symbolic of Motives* "never [get] assembled and published as a book" (xv), though the *Language as Symbolic Action* collection becomes a means of working it out, but Rueckert also confirms that "no 'Ethics of Motives' exists as such" (72), though it, too, seems to have been largely worked out in *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961). Even with Reuckert's care, there is another essential text contributing to Burke's long-term project, which remains out of Rueckert's purview, as well as Weiser's and Biesecker's—this essential text, *The War of Words*, directly speaks to a specific component of Rueckert's conception of Burke's project, articulates Biesecker's understanding of how Burke address postmodernity, and broadens Weiser's argument about Burke's dramatism serving to "purify the failure of verbal debate that led to [World War II]" (3).

As extensive as the history of scholarship on Kenneth Burke is, *The War of Words* has largely remained out of the scope of Burkean studies—perhaps, with the exception of one 2021 piece by Jim A. Kuypers, appearing in *The Journal of the Kenneth Burke Society*. Given the circumstances surrounding the composition and now publication of *The War of Words*, it would be in our best interest to ask: what does *The War of Words* offer now? This is an important question that seeks both the meaning and meaningfulness of *The War of Words*, if it has become clear that *A Rhetoric of Motives* unquestionably harnesses both meaning and meaningfulness. Just as the editors of *The War of Words* note, it is true that Burke "was delivering elaborately and famously on the promise he had made" in the introduction to *A Rhetoric of Motives*. This is

certainly so, at the least, when Burke promises "to develop our subject beyond the traditional bounds of rhetoric" (xiii).

Still, even though *The War of Words* "had been conceived of from the start as a central part of [*A Rhetoric of Motives*]" (2), this only addresses the general meaning of *The War of Words*. Speaking in terms of its meaningfulness, the editors are correct to consider that it "remains timely today for its trenchant commentary on the belligerent aspects of contemporary American culture that operate in both conscious and unconscious realms" (2). This timeliness immediately confronts our contemporary rhetorical needs more so, I argue, than what is ultimately accomplished with *A Rhetoric of Motives*, or even what can be derived from the texts of *Language as Symbolic Action* as a representation of the never-published *A Symbolic of Motives*. Insofar as "*The War of Words* takes its exigence the developing Cold War," the editors write, "it also seeks to explain past discourses as well as current ones, private discourses as well as public" (3).

To understand the significance of *The War of Words* for us now, rather than for Burke's time, we will need to consider the text outside of the context of *A Rhetoric of Motives*, if our intent is to situate the meaningfulness of *The War of Words* within certain rhetorical futures—that is, our present—wholly beyond Burke. This begins by first acknowledging, as the editors of *The War of Words* appropriately do, it "is a significant independent addition to the Burke canon that discloses numerous contemporary rhetorical tropes" (3). As significant and as independent as *The War of Words* is to the Burkean collection of canonized texts, what must be secondarily acknowledged is that there remains, in the three short years since the publication of *The War of Words*, no scholarship on the work nor any mention of the space that it, only until now, occupies in the field of contemporary rhetoric. This provides an opportunity to make *The War of Words*

more relevant to our time and allow Burke to do more than simply speak posthumously to us. Indeed, since what is disclosed in *The War of Words* lays bare numerous rhetorical tropes that are as contemporary to Burke's time as they are to ours, making sense out of the text means doing so by not strictly relying on Burke's exigence, but, instead, allowing the text to speak to today's exigence.

Even though, for Burke, *The War of Words*, as the editors find, "expos[es] how conventional and uncritical journalistic and bureaucratic communications condition Americans to accept the possibility of ruinous wars" (4) with respect to Cold War-era militarism, for us, the book exposes what journalism and communications means to postmodern wars and contemporary militarism. As the "separate volume [that] has never appeared until this one" (2), *The War on Words* makes a timely assessment of how Americans are currently and continuously conditioned, in particular, by an inundation conventional and uncritical journalism—this is certainly so, if we view the war on facts and truth as "ruinous wars" on information and reality and the militarism of disinformation and misinformation, with a careful consideration of Burke's conception of scientific rhetoric.

1.3: What is "Scientific" to Scientific Rhetoric?

As one of two substantively finished chapters of *The War of Words*, Burke's "Scientific Rhetoric," as the editors describe, provides "a catalogue of 'the typical rhetorical resources available to journalism and other mediums that deal in the distribution of information'" (2). These typical resources, as Burke catalogues them, provide for a scientific approach to rhetoric—here, the extent that rhetoric is "scientific" speaks more to the manner in which a certain kind of rhetoric can be schematically duplicatable and can be empirically rendered as a

"science." The editors make this clear about Burke's use of the term "scientific rhetoric," affirming that it "has little to do with science but everything to do with media" (3). Not only is this important for the uniqueness of Burke's use of the term in relation to the Burkean terminological canon as a whole, but it also presents a significant turn in Burkean rhetoric away from where *A Rhetoric of Motives* concludes and where Burke planned for "A Symbolic of Motives" to resume his Motivorum, as promised in the introduction to *A Grammar of Motives*.

The pathmark that Burke takes towards *The War of Words* and what is particularly being worked out in "scientific rhetoric" is, as Burke outlines in *A Grammar of Motives*, the domain of "editorial bias, sales methods and incidents of social sparring" (xviii). It is out of what Burke works out in "scientific rhetoric"—which is on the way towards what Burke plans to offer in "A Symbolic of Motives"—that Burke wishes to, as he writes in the introduction to *A Rhetoric of Motives*, "contribute much to counteract the torrents of ill will into which so many of our contemporaries have so avidly and sanctimoniously plunged" (xv). These torrents of Burke's contemporaries, as Burke viewed them to be, remain torrential for us and ultimately transcend Burke's contemporary view until we see ourselves anew in Burke posthumously, such that *The War of Words* and the scientific rhetoric therein speak to, as Burke notes at the end of the introduction to *A Rhetoric of Motives*, "the more strident our journalists, politicians, and alas! even many of our churchmen become" (xv), insofar as that stridence has, now, become just as subversive for our present situation as it is for Burke's time. Even when acknowledging that Burke's explication of what he refers to as "scientific rhetoric" consists of "seven sections amount[ing] to a sustained rhetorical analysis of postwar journalism that demonstrates the 'interested' (i.e., anything but objective) nature of print news" (3), there remains an unmistakable

and unavoidable timeliness to Burke on the matters of print news, which directly speaks to the current issues with information, disinformation, and misinformation.

Setting aside Burke's focus on postwar journalism of the Cold War-era, and even his dedication to print news, if considering what *The War of Words* offers to today's dissemination of information as that which is "anything but objective," it will require a clear establishment of the boundaries with which the text now operates and an envisioning of futures to which the text is speaking—in doing so, we will need to place *The War of Words* outside of the boundaries Burke had in mind for the text to operate and beyond whatever futures Burke intended for the text to speak. One way to accomplish this is with a careful consideration of the meaning and meaningfulness of Burke's conception of "scientific rhetoric," which, as the smaller of two completed chapters in *The War of Words*—the other section being "The Devices"—will, first, outline the meaning of "scientific rhetoric" for Burke's view of the workings of news media and reporting practices and, secondly, project the meaningfulness of "scientific rhetoric" for the workings of contemporary news media and current reporting practices.

Burke begins the chapter on "scientific rhetoric" by understandably conceding, "from the Aristotelian point of view, 'scientific rhetoric' would be a contradiction in terms" (169). On these grounds, Burke recognizes that "scientific" and "rhetoric," when separately considered, align to different bodies of knowledge in the Aristotelian corpus, with "scientific" arising from Aristotle's work on natural philosophy (i.e., *On the Soul*, *History of Animals*, and *Physics*) and "rhetoric" arising from Aristotle's work on practical philosophy (i.e., *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Politics*, and *Rhetoric*). This categorization, notwithstanding Aristotle's work on speculative philosophy (i.e., *Organon* and *Metaphysics*), is only further complicated by Aristotle's reference to "scientific" in its derivative form, "science," suggesting, on Lines 1025b20-30 of *Metaphysics*,

that all science occurs in either practical, artistic, or theoretical forms. If thinking about what "scientific" means to Aristotle, in the scope of Aristotle's speculative philosophy, particularly what Aristotle offers in *Organon* about matters of logic, it stands to reason that Burke would recognize not so much the contradictory relationship between the meanings of "scientific" and "rhetoric" for Aristotle, but the extent that the two terms are inextricable, in the following way: "for in Aristotle's usage, a statement becomes scientific in proportion as it departs from the rhetorical" (169).

For Burke, then, what "scientific" means to what is "rhetorical," and vice versa, is predicated on the meaningfulness of a statement. Here, Burke is noting a particular kind of statement endowed with a meaningfulness that is just as much "scientific" as it is "rhetorical"—it is a statement, once articulated, fundamentally functioning between that which is "scientific" and that which is "rhetorical," so that, once articulated, both the realms of the scientific and the rhetorical are necessary to explain what makes such a statement as it is. The sort of statement that Burke is concerned with is one that makes use of information in a particular way, in a particular manner, and towards a particular purpose —this is a statement that is, on one hand, informational and, on the other hand, informative, such that, as Burke outlines in *A Grammar of Motives*, what makes such a statement work scientifically and rhetorically depends on an act, a scene, an agent, agency, and a purpose (Burke xv). It is with these five key terms of dramatism in mind that Burke considers how a given statement contextualizes and is contextualized by news, if newsworthiness informs just as much as it is informed by the way, the manner, and purpose of a given statement—for Burke, news exemplifies how dramatism works, with respect to how information is given and received and, ultimately, what can be deemed as news itself becomes grounded on how it is situated between the concerns of the scientific and those of the rhetorical.

On this point, Burke concludes, "we would call news 'scientific' in the sense that it deals with information, or knowledge, and at its best this information is accurate" (169). Yet, recognizing how news is situated between that which is scientific and that which is rhetorical, Burke continues, "news is 'rhetorical' insofar as it forms attitudes or induces to action" (169).

The extent that news is not only always-already informational, but it is also always-already informative depends upon the meaning and meaningfulness of facts. Facts make information construed scientifically as informational, but facts can also be construed rhetorically as informative. That which makes anything informational, such as it is, is the degree to which what is expressed is "accurate." For that matter, that which makes anything rhetorical, such as it is, is the degree to which what is expressed elicits "attitudes" and promotes "action." Facts are to both extents, not just by way of what facts are, but also by way of what facts do. The meaning and meaningfulness of facts become tied to the meaning and meaningfulness of scientific rhetoric—what it means to do scientific rhetoric is predicated on Burke's proposition: "'facts' are *interpretations*" (169).

Note that Burke not only places facts in quotation marks, but he also places emphasis on interpretations. The specificity that Burke applies to facts and interpretations, within the framework of his conception of scientific rhetoric, suggests a reconsideration of the subject-object relationship between facts (that which should be construed objectively) and interpretations (that which should be construed subjectively), so that facts are "facts" because they function more subjectively than objectively, and interpretations are *interpretations* because they function more objectively than subjectively.

If facts become subjective and interpretations become objective, this stands to reason, as Burke is correct to note, a call for paradigm shift away what Burke calls "the Aristotelian point

of view." It also stands to reason why Burke explicitly references both Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* (397-426 CE) and Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* (1266-1273), both of which are influenced by Aristotle and, respectively speaking, to be brief, harness their Aristotelian influences into a paradigm shift for what it means to theologize from the standpoint of utilizing a Christian rhetoric. Though Burke is certainly aware of what I have described as "Christian rhetoric," given Burke's eventual development of logology in *The Rhetoric of Religion*, assessing "verbal action" in Augustine's *Confessions* (43-171), Burke's concern with what Augustine means to scientific rhetoric is in terms of Burke's of Augustine's notion that "information may be so persuasive that no further eloquence is needed for moving an audience" (169). Burke bases this on a rendering of Augustine's Latin, however paraphrased, without providing precisely where Burke's quotation from Augustine originates in *De Doctrina Christiana*—even with Burke's paraphrasing of Augustine and his supplying of Latin as it appears in *De Doctrina Christina*, we should consider other translations that more succinctly render Augustine's words, particularly in a way that provides more nuance to what Burke undoubtedly sees in Augustine for the purposes of Burke's conception of scientific rhetoric. Two such translations of the same sentence that Burke utilizes are, for example, can be found in D. W. Robertson Jr.'s 1958 translation and R. P. H. Green's 1995 translation. On one hand, Robertson renders Augustine's Latin into: "and perhaps when the necessary things are learned, they may be so moved by a knowledge of them that it is not necessary to move them further by greater powers of eloquence" (Augustine 1958, 137), while, on the other hand, Green renders Augustine's same sentence into: "and perhaps when they know the relevant facts they will be moved to such a degree that greater powers of eloquence are not needed to move them" (Augustine 1995, 231). Not only do these renderings reveal how Burke views information as "the necessary things [that] are learned" and

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"the relevant facts," but they also reveal Burke's understanding about how information, in and of itself, when considering Augustine, "may be so persuasive" that it becomes pervasive enough that it harnesses a more potent eloquence, in and of itself, capable of effectively and proficiently moving a given audience to action, on the basis of information alone.

What Burke is drawing upon, as it is similarly drawn upon by Geoffrey D. Dunn in "Rhetoric in the Patristic Sermons of Late Antiquity" (2018), is the manner that Augustine recognizes that "moving people to act was sometimes necessary because even people who know what to do, do not always do it" (112). Here, what Dunn is characterizing is Christian rhetoric, as Augustine intends it to be, but, more specifically, Dunn is working from a standpoint that is concerned with the kind of rhetoric necessary in homiletics, if, when considering it rhetorically, we can say that the art of homiletics, or that which makes homiletics effective, is predicated on moving people to act and doing so, to Dunn's point, even when people know what to do and do not always do it. To be clear, Burke is certainly unconcerned with homiletics—and does not become more fully concerned until *The Rhetoric of Religion*—so Burke's use of Augustine, and even Aquinas, is more deliberately calibrated towards conceptualizing the relationship between information, motives and action. While Augustine's notion of the pervasiveness of information over what moves people to act is, Burke sees this similarly argued by Aquinas in *Summa*, if Aquinas, like Augustine, is concerned with the effectiveness of homiletics, as that which is predicated on moving people to act, even when they know what to do and do not always do it. Burke takes care to cite and translate the following from Aquinas's Latin: "the appetible does not move the appetite except as it is apprehended." In this, Burke seems to recognize the tension between "the appetible," or what is desirable, and what "is apprehended," or interpreted, with respect to how the appetite is moved, or how people are moved to act.

Whether considering Augustine or Aquinas, there remains, for Burke, a pervasiveness to what information does, when people are moved to act. Though Burke is not yet arguing what he will argue in *The Rhetoric of Religion*, if what he will eventually focus on with logology is not strictly a Christian rhetoric, but, more precisely, what Wayne C. Booth describes, in a characterization of Burke, as "religious rhetoric" (2000, 25-46) and later as "rhetorology" (2009, 153-170). What makes information so pervasive, then—and, ultimately, so pervasively persuasive, or persuasively pervasive—is how information is always-already interpreted and, to another extent, information lends itself to what is always-already desirable.

For Burke, information moves people to act, not strictly or exclusively because of a motive that is wholly detached from or operating as an extension of what information means to those that are moved to act, but precisely because of the inseparably and inextricably of information, motive, and act. When information is pervasive enough, motives and acts are always-already prescribed in the pervasiveness itself, insofar as what information means, what information asks us to do, and what precepts information outlines for us. In this way, to Dunn's point, if people know what to do but do not always do it, and if information is pervasive enough to move people passively knowing to actively doing, what moves people is the transposing of facts and interpretations, as epistemological bodies, and the transposing of what should be objective and what should be subjective, which corporealize facts and interpretations.

If, as Burke finds, "'facts' are *interpretations*," the converse is true: interpretations become facts. What this demonstrates, for Burke's scientific rhetoric, is, rather than facts and interpretations being embodied as separate epistemological bodies anchored to that which makes them separately corporeal, facts and interpretations are, instead, trans-corporeal. To this extent, this trans-corporeality traverses a frame between that which is subjective and that which is

objective, and between the respective embodiments of subjective and objective realities—here, we can think of "frame" in the same manner as Jim A Kuypers' notion of a frame, in "Framing Analysis" (2009), which "induces us to filter our perceptions of the world in particular ways, essentially making some aspects of our multidimensional reality more noticeable than other aspects" (181). Indeed, a frame separates and provides boundaries to our multidimensional reality, particularly between subjective and objective realities, insofar as a frame "induces us to filter our perceptions of the world" in terms of what facts are and what interpretations are. This frame "induces us," then, to perceive facts objectively and perceive interpretations subjectively, by, Kuypers asserts, "making some information more *salient* than other information" (181)—this is certainly so, if we can say that facts construed in objective reality are embodied as a kind of information that is more salient than the kind of information received from interpretations embodied by subjective reality.

When Burke concludes, rather prominently, that "'facts' are *interpretations*," with facts in scare quotes and interpretations italicized, he not only recognizes that facts and interpretations are not separately fixed to their respective objective and subjective realities, but he also surmises that the fluidity of facts and interpretations, which causes the former and the latter to become transposed, is due to permeability of the frame that separates and provides boundaries for objectivity and subjectivity. It is this permeability that allows interpretations to act as stand-ins for facts in an objective reality, while facts replace interpretations in subjective reality—as corporeal as facts and interpretations are, this corporeality, when transposed through a permeable frame, becomes trans-corporeality. Because "facts" are not simply and only facts but function interpretatively, and *interpretations* are not simply and only interpretations, but function factually, what becomes apparent about Burke's description of scientific rhetoric is that it is, I

argue, a form of trans-corporeal rhetoric, where "facts" and *interpretations*, as Burke sees them, are trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities.

Nevertheless, it behooves me to acknowledge that Burke is not alone in using the term "scientific rhetoric." Notwithstanding Burke's "scientific rhetoric," as that which predominantly and exclusively comes to bear in *The War of Words*, there is some consensus, it seems to me, that the term can be traced to the work of seventeenth-century thinker, Francis Bacon (1561-1626), not so much as a coining of the term, but more as a practitioner of it, most notably in Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605). Whether considering him as "the father of modern scientific prose" (Zappen 1975, 244) or considering how "[his] many writings on induction include a great deal of rhetorical and scientific commentary in concert" (Harris 282), Bacon is certainly the starting point for what scientific rhetoric is in its modern framing. This Baconian framing of scientific rhetoric, then, from a time contemporary to Burke's, for J. H. Hexter's "The Rhetoric of History" (1967), "presuppose[s] that the reader already possesses a body of precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes to which they refer" (9). In this way, it seems to me, scientific rhetoric is not engaged in the act of persuading, but, rather, it is focused on appealing to a persuasion that has already happened—for Hexter, scientific rhetoric engages with what the reader, or the audience, "already possesses" epistemologically, so that the transposing of facts and interpretations, for Burke, not only respectively points to "particular universes to which they refer," but also points to the same, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

In a rather unassuming article, "The Birth of Molecular Biology: An Essay in the Rhetorical Criticism of Scientific Discourse" (1984), S. Michael Halloran provides something of a comprehensive characterization of scientific rhetoric as a field of study, grounded on the way

that "while a number of scholars have been arguing theoretically that science is rhetorical, very little attention has been paid to particular cases of scientific rhetoric" (70). Even so, with the early work of James Watson and Francis Crick in 1953 in mind, before the two turned to the famed, *The Double Helix* (1980), and with Thomas S. Kuhn's early work in 1962 also in mind, before he turned to the equally famed, *The Scientific Revolution* (1962), Halloran admits that his essay "comes at the rhetoric of science from a critical perspective" (70), such that his intent is in "explicat[ing] a particular case [of scientific rhetoric] that is surely worth the effort" (70). Interestingly, Halloran provides a footnoted snapshot of "some of the more interesting studies of scientific rhetoric" (81), with these concentrated mostly in the 1970s, attending to the variety of approaches to scientific rhetoric at the intersections of the rhetoric of science and a rhetorical analysis of science.

The extent that scientific rhetoric works at the intersections of the rhetoric of science and a rhetorical analysis of science requires further contextualization, which decenters Burke use of the term in *The War of Words* to a contemporary understanding of it. From a contemporary standpoint, I will consider "scientific rhetoric" through a consideration of the rhetoric of science, which, it seems to me, will allow for Burke's sentiment of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts to be considered as a particular kind of rhetoric of science, situated in a particular rhetorical analysis of science. In doing so, I will consider, on one hand, what Burke means to the rhetoric of science, as that which is predominantly contingent on references to texts in Burke's *oeuvre* precluding *The War of Words*, and propose, on the other hand, what the rhetoric of science means to Burke's *The War of Words*.

1.4: Burke's Place in the Rhetoric of Science

A good place to begin determining what the rhetoric of science is with Alan G. Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science* (1990). In it, Gross provides a thoroughgoing and foundational account of rhetoric of science, rhetorical analysis of science, and what this means to the development of scientific rhetoric itself. Though, to the best of my knowledge, Gross never evokes the term "scientific rhetoric" anywhere *The Rhetoric of Science*, he, nonetheless, offers a systematic, disciplinary way of understanding the meaning and meaningfulness of scientific rhetoric, as a means of codifying what Halloran endeavors to accomplish earlier in 1984, albeit on a smaller and more limited scale than Gross's monograph. Insofar as Gross adheres to the conceptualization of a rhetoric of science as a stand-in for a conceptualization of scientific rhetoric, this is drawn, it seems to me, by certain influences upon Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science* by Lawrence J. Prelli's *A Rhetoric of Science: Inventing Scientific Discourse* (1989), notwithstanding any implied influences that John Hannay's small collection, *The Literary Uses of the Rhetoric of Science* (1989) holds over Gross.

Indeed, insomuch as Hannay's collection, as a special issue of *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, is out of Gross's purview, with respect to "analyz[ing] how literary works transform the concepts and terms, and more generally the rhetoric, of science into poetic metaphor" (Hannay 1), precisely in the works of John Donne, John Milton, William Blake, Thomas Pynchon, and others, Prelli is all the more foundational to Gross's particular approach to the rhetoric of science. To the extent that Prelli wishes to "invent" scientific discourse through scientific rhetoric, Gross thematically expands Prelli, focusing on the significance of the scientific text, rather than strictly exploring "what is added to a scientific idea when it forms a part of a literary work" (Hannay 1)—while Prelli is primarily, and more narrowly, interested in

ascertaining how scientific claims are validated and legitimated rhetorically, Gross provides a broader survey of how rhetoric, in its classical and contemporary understandings, assists in the validation and legitimization of scientific texts.

Yet, given Prelli's influence on Gross, it is important to note that Prelli relies on Burke, just as much as Gross. Though, understandably, Burke's evocation of scientific rhetoric in *The War of Words* is out of Prelli's and Gross's respective purview, both Prelli and Gross make use of Burke's *A Rhetoric of Motives*. In addition to this, while Prelli includes references to Burke's *Permanence and Change* and "Terministic Screens," Gross refers to Burke's *A Grammar of Motives*. As contributive as Burke is to varying degrees in Prelli and Gross, it is noticeable in both that Burke has a very limited and measured say in how both construct the rhetoric of science. Nonetheless, with the foundational nature of Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science*, over that of Prelli, Gross gives Burke only a modest voice to what the rhetoric of science is—Gross's handling of Burke is all the more noticeable in *Starring the Text: The Place of Rhetoric in Science Studies* (2006), in which Burke is diminished to the point that Burke has not place in Gross's conception of the place of rhetoric in science studies.

For that matter, what is also noticeable, for the sake of positioning Gross as foundational to the trajectory of the rhetoric of science, is that Philip C. Wander's "The Rhetoric of Science" (1976) is absent from Gross's purview. What is significant about this, as it occurs to me, is that Wander's sentiment that the "rhetorical critic," a label applied to Wander, Gross, and Burke alike, is "burdened by the historical split between science and the humanities and [is] caught up in the mystique of modern science with its guarantee of knowledge and power and promise for the future" (226). The extent to which, Wander writes, "the rhetorical critic has been slow to treat this topic" (226), Wander speaks both to scholarship arising mainly in the 1970s and to

Burke's absence from Wander's purview, but also Wander provides an impetus for the emergence of Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science*.

The foundational nature of Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science* is certainly explicitly earmarked in texts, just to name a handful, such as Marcello Pera's *Scienza e retorica* (1991), translated as *The Discourses of Science* (1994), Carolyn R. Miller's "Kairos in the Rhetoric of Science" (1992), Dilip P. Gaonkar's "The Idea of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric of Science" (1993), Charles A. Taylor's *Defining Science: A Rhetoric of Demarcation* (1996), John T. Battalio's *The Rhetoric of Science in the Evolution of American Ornithological Discourse* (1998), Jeanne Fahnestock's *Rhetorical Figures in Science* (1999), and Leah Ceccarelli's *Shaping Science with Rhetoric* (2001). Notwithstanding Randy A. Harris's "Rhetoric of Science" (1991), with references to Gross's work pre-dating Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science*, Pera, Miller, Gaonkar, Taylor, Battalio, Fahnestock, and Ceccarelli all acknowledge varied degrees of indebtedness to Gross, while only Gaonkar and Fahnestock acknowledge Burke as contributive to two things. In one sense, Burke facilitates "the collapse of neo-Aristotelianism" and "the globalization of rhetoric" (Gaonkar 31), while Burke "operate[s] outside of the traditional academic partitioning of types of discourse and the valorizing of the literary" (Fahnestock 34)—to both ends, Burke, for Gaonkar and Fahnestock alike, actively contributes to what Gross's rhetoric of science is.

Still, in successive articles, which further expand Gross's conceptualization of the rhetoric of science, Burke is immaterial to Gross. In "Rhetoric of Science is Epistemic Rhetoric" (1990), Gross surmises "if rhetoric was epistemc, then the rhetorical analysis of science should yield an appropriate epistemological and ontological harvest" (304). What inspires Gross to connect "epistemic" to rhetoric and, in turn, connect them to what rhetoric of science is, which is expressed forthrightly as "a continuation of a movement" (304), is Barry Brummett's "A Eulogy

for Epistemic Rhetoric" (1990). Essentially, for Brummett, the movement, to which Gross aligns himself, has "burned itself out" (69)—to the end, Brummett proclaims, I might add, as he writes contemporaneously with Gross, "the idea of epistemic rhetoric has faded as a scholarly inspiration because its defenders failed to link theoretical principles to actual criticism or analysis of 'real life' (however that may be defined) communication" (69). Gross disagrees with this characterization. Robert L. Scott, who Brummett credits with "introduce[ing] the concept of 'epistemic rhetoric to the field of communication" (69), also disagrees with Brummett's view. Given Scott's own "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic" (1967), Scott proposes, in "Epistemic Rhetoric and Criticism: Where Barry Brummett Goes Wrong" (1990), that Brummett "fail[s] to grasp the relationship between the claim that rhetoric is epistemic and the practice of criticism" (300). In criticizing Brummett, Scott evokes Burke and, it seems to me, injects Burke into what epistemic rhetoric is, insofar as, Scott writes, "those who have written about the epistemic function of rhetoric have not had the sort of impulse that drive makers of dramatistic schemes of analysis" (300). If we are to view, to Scott's credit, that Burke "discusse[s] the stances from which one begins to think about rhetoric" (300), and that epistemic rhetoric is always engaged in these endeavors, it certainly stands to reason that Scott would draw upon Burke as an example of one who "grasps the relationship between the claim that rhetoric is epistemic and the practice of criticism." In this regard, Scott's view echoes in "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," with the following conclusion: "in human affairs, then, rhetoric, perceived in the frame herein discussed, is a way of knowing: it is epistemic" (17).

All of this suggests: if rhetoric is epistemic, to Scott's credit, as "a way of knowing," and there is an undeniable through-line from the concerns of epistemic rhetoric and those of rhetoric of science, to Gross's point, there remains a tenuous relationship between facts and

interpretations. This tenuousness is grounded, it seems to me, on the tenuous relationship between what "rhetoric" means and what "science" means to what the rhetoric of science is, as that which is pointed out by Gaonkar (1993; 1997) and is echoed in Steve Fuller's "'Rhetoric of Science': A Doubly Vexed Expression" (1993), expanded into Fuller's 1997 version "'Rhetoric of Science': Double the Trouble?" Not only does Gaonkar believe that, as it has been previously pointed out, "the globalization of rhetoric [is] greatly facilitated by the works of [Burke]" (31), but he also makes clear, to his understanding of what the rhetoric of science is, that "Gross is committed to globalizing rhetoric" (60). For Gaonkar, this globalizing of rhetoric hinders what the rhetoric of science is, stunting it, he argues, from becoming what it can more meaningfully be—the likes of Burke and Gross, Gaonkar seems to suggest, do more to constrict what rhetoric of science is and, in turn, do little to provide "programmatic statements" attesting to what rhetoric of science does (39).

However, setting aside his take on Gross, Gaonkar's handling of Burke is, in itself, constrictive, rather than constructive. Given that Goankar's "idea of rhetoric," in relation to Burke, is constricted to Burke's *Rhetoric of Motives*, I contend that Burke's *The War of Words* would be more constructive. There, Burke's assertion about facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts—more specifically, the notion of "facts *as* interpretations" and "interpretations *as* facts"—is, indeed, a programmatic statement, which, in my estimation, has something contributive to say to what rhetoric of science does. In my view, if facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts speaks to a kind of rhetoric of science—when ascribing to Prelli's view on this, over that of Gross—it speaks to an ambiguity, not just in what rhetoric means to science in the rhetoric of science construction, but also substantively to what facts and interpretations mean to one another.

As Fuller is right to point out, Gaonkar's critique of the rhetoric of science "focuses primarily on the ambiguous, if not downright amorphous status of *rhetoric* in the rhetoric of science" (279). Though Fuller does not make any acknowledgment of Burke, when considering the significance of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, the very ambiguity in the transposing of the two, which outside of Gaonkar's purview, subsequently establishes the "amorphous status of rhetoric" for Burke's *The War of Words*, as that which is made explicit with Burke's conceptualization of "scientific rhetoric."

As disinterested as Fuller is in Gaonkar's "historical purism" of rhetoric (279), Fuller considers the same "about the science end, which fares no better than the rhetoric end of rhetoric of science" (279). In doing so, Burke is out of Fuller's purview, with a certain emphasis, like Gaonkar, on Gross's culpability in "the failure of the rhetoric of science" (294). With Gross firmly in mind, though Fuller "believe[s] that most exercises in the rhetoric of science […] are better regarded as prescriptions for how texts ought to be read than descriptions of how they have actually been read" (295), I disagree, particularly when positioning Burke's *The War of Words* as engaging in an exercise in the rhetoric of science. To me, Burke's sense of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, as an exercise in the rhetoric of science, is more descriptive than it is prescriptive. For Burke's *The War of Words*, and through his scientific rhetoric, Burke's concern is not exclusively with "how texts ought to be read," since what guides Burke's understanding of the relationship between facts and interpretations is with "how [texts] have actually been read."

I do not wish to presume that Fuller, and Gaonkar for that matter, misunderstand Burke or, in some way, misconceive the rhetoric of science. For Fuller and Gaonkar, their respective critiques of the rhetoric of science is largely a critique of the kind of rhetoric of science in which

Gross engages and articulates. Though Gaonkar's chief interest is in making sense out of the

"idea of rhetoric" in the rhetoric of science, and Fuller's primary approach is in making sense out

of the idea of science in the rhetoric of science, both are undoubtedly interested in codifying

what the rhetoric of science is—they do so in conversation with Gross's "rhetoric of science."

In this sense, I want to give a further account of Gross's "rhetoric of science," and place

in conversation with Burke's account of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations

becoming facts. Firstly, in "Does Rhetoric of Science Matter?" (1991), Gross contends that the

scientific report "is a genre like the novel or the epic, one whose organization is as rhetorical as

the arrangement of the classical oration" (933), what is organized, or even arranged, occurs when

facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts. Secondly, in "Rhetoric of Science

without Constraints" (1991), when Gross advocates a "radical rhetoric of science," he does so by

arguing against any limit to rhetorical analysis, since "any demarcation between rhetoric and

science […] relies on the ultimate failure of radical rhetorical analysis" (298)—if rhetoric of

science lacks constraints, Gross observes, "because conceptions of rationality are part of the

social world of science" (298), this is due to the manner in which facts become interpretations

and interpretations become facts, in a way that eludes demarcation. Thirdly, in "The Roles of

Rhetoric in the Public Understanding of Science" (1994), when Gross asks if "a rhetorical

perspective on the public understanding of science confirm existing insights, and yield new

ones" (4), he is essentially operating, it seems to me, under the same rubric about facts becoming

interpretations and interpretations become facts. Fourthly, and lastly, in the Gross introduction

to the collection, *Rhetorical Hermeneutics* (1997), co-authored with William M. Keith, when

critiquing Gaonkar's "The Idea of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric of Science," as that which is included

in the same collection, Gross and Keith suggest, "Gaonker does not attempt to question whether

the rhetoric of science has understood *science* properly, but whether it has sufficiently comprehended *rhetoric*" (1)—here, the emphasis they provide to "science" and "rhetoric," in my view, underscores that the two are facts as much as they are interpretations. To Gross's and Keith's point, for Gaonkar to "not attempt to question" what the rhetoric of science understands in relation to what it comprehends, this, too, seems to operate under the premise that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

Consider Gross's *Starring the Text: The Place of Rhetoric in Science Studies* (2006). As something of a follow-up to, or even a companion text for, the earlier, *The Rhetoric of Science*, in the preface to *Starring the Text*, Gross asserts, "rhetoric 'stars' the texts […] that is, it makes their hermeneutic unraveling central" (ix). Such an assertion, for Gross, proceeds from a baseline that ultimately echoes Scott's "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic." Similarly, *The Rhetoric of Science* functions as a baseline for *Starring the Text*, insofar as, Gross admits, the latter text "is a major refiguring of the earlier one" (ix). To this end, what Gross means by "refiguring" of *The Rhetoric of Science* into *Starring the Text*, it seems to me, is that the latter text is an interpretation of the earlier one, rather than the two texts embodying a fact that is separate and distinct from one another. In the same way, statements that Gross makes in the earlier text become interpretations in the latter text, rather than the two statements respectively embodying a fact that is separate and distinct from one another. At this intra-text level, for example, in *The Rhetoric of Science*, Gross tells us that "facts are by nature linguistic—no language, no facts" (203), while the same assertion, as it appears in *Starring the Text*, becomes "facts are not in the world, but in our heads; they are by nature linguistic—no language, no facts" (43). Upon further inspection, though the earlier version is a fact that has been interpreted into the latter version, the latter version, in itself, becomes its own fact.

This demonstrates, at the intra-text level, facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, as Burke prescribes in *The War of Words*. But, more importantly, but not to belabor this point, if considering a wider, inter-text level, when comparing the earlier text to the latter text, we can also view the earlier text being interpreted into the latter text, with this interpretation becoming, in its own right, a fact. Indeed, at this inter-text level, *The Rhetoric of Science*, as a fact, becomes the interpretation of *Starring the Text* and, in turn, *Starring the Text*, as an interpretation, becomes a fact in its own right.

Though the relationship between Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science* and *Starring the Text* can be explained, it seems to me, as one fact lending itself to one interpretation and that interpretation lending itself to becoming one fact, I do not wish to insinuate that there is only, always, a one-for-one. Burke's understanding of facts and interpretations in *The War of Words* operates in a plurality, rather than in singularity—in other words, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this occurs not because one particular meaning corresponds with another particular meaning, but because of the proliferation of multiple meanings, from the standpoint of facts and interpretations respectively.

It is important to note that Leah Ceccarelli, in *Shaping Science with Rhetoric* (2001), speaks to, it seems to me, what is at stake when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts: the proliferation of multiple meanings. Ceccarelli is significant not just because her *Shaping Science with Rhetoric* has Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science* in its purview, but also because *Shaping Science with Rhetoric* is in the purview of Gross's *Starring the Text*. With other key figures in the field of the rhetoric of science with its scope, such as Gaonkar (1996), Halloran (1984), Harris (1991), Miller (1992), even Prelli (1989), Ceccarelli details what Shaping Science with Rhetoric contributes as a "new method of criticism" (175). For Ceccarelli,

the benefit of this new method is in "its openness to the possibility of multiple meanings" (175).

By "recogniz[ing] that different interpretations exist, and they are not only valid, but may be

necessary to the social action of a text" (175), Ceccarelli prescribes, in my view, the very

significance of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, as it is outlined

in Burke's *The War of Words*.

If we consider that the rhetoric of science, as that which arguably culminates with

Ceccarelli, while following a trajectory inaugurated with Gross, views "the social action of a

text" as serving certain influences over the nature of meaning, what facts are in relation to what

interpretations are play critical roles in meaning-making. The very fact that facts become

interpretations and interpretations become facts is rooted in "the social action of a text," and how

this social action opens the possibility of multiple meanings from a text. As much as Ceccarelli

sees the benefit in "social action" opening up the meaning of the text, rather than foreclosing it,

she still finds limitations to her new method of criticism. Ceccarelli describes this limitation in

the following way: "though the close textual-intertextual reading does a good job of exploring

the connection between the form of a text and tis reception by a culturally situated audience, one

limitation of this method is its failure to more fully explore broad cultural influences *of* a text"

(176). This admission comes very late in *Shaping Science with Rhetoric*, with Ceccarelli

emphasizing what culturally happens to a text itself, which, to her broader point, is a scientific

text, deploying scientific discourse, as Prelli calls it, and presenting scientific rhetoric. As

Ceccarelli reiterates, "studying both text and reception allows us to say something about the

specific influences *of* a text, but says little about the broader cultural influences *on* a text" (176).

Given the limitations Ceccarelli points out, when ascertaining, as Burke does, that facts

become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this is addressing both the first part of

Ceccarelli claim, while giving an account of the second part. In the event of "studying both text and reception," it becomes apparent that we are studying how facts become interpretations, since, to the first part of Ceccarelli's point, this "allows us to say something about the specific influences *of* a text." But, when providing for the very suggestion that interpretations become facts, it seems to me that we are, to the second part of Ceccarelli's point, speaking to "the broader cultural influences *on* a text."

Though Ceccarelli's self-owns the limitations of *Shaping Science with Rhetoric*, Gross's *Starring the Text*—having appeared after Ceccarelli—treads similar territory, concluding that there is a "serendipitous" relationship between sociology and rhetorical analysis (178), which is prescribed without constraints. On this point, Gross certainly echoes Ceccarelli's notion of the "social action of a text," through the "more general kinship of two allied disciplines between which […] sociology still deals with the structural determinants of social conditions, rhetoric with their symbolic interaction in the sphere of social action" (178-179). Not only does Gross arrive in a space similar to that of Ceccarelli on the matter of what is at stake for rhetoric of science, with respect to how sociology and rhetoric interface with one another, but he also outlines the broader cultural influences on a text in the commensurability between the rhetoric of science and "other disciplines such as history, philosophy and cognitive psychology" (178). In the interdisciplinarity Gross seeks for the rhetoric of science, which is directly challenged by Harris (1997), he is intent on situating "the role of rhetorical theory in solving the problem of scientific priority" (180), which Prelli (1997) finds is rhetorically constructed (88).

If we view this as what facts mean to scientific priority and what interpretations mean to rhetorical theory, what is ultimately prescribed when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, as Burke sees it, is the degree that both—to what they mean to

Burke's scientific rhetoric as derivative of Gross's rhetoric of science—are starring the text, in some way, and shaping science with rhetoric, in some way. To this end, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, as Burke argues, this suggests that any "scientific *ethos* is not given; it is constructed rhetorically" (Prelli 1997, 88)—not only is a "scientific ethos" constructed for the sake of what facts mean in themselves, and what interpretations mean in themselves, but it is also "constructed rhetorically" for facts to become interpretations and for interpretations to become facts.

1.5: Epilogue

Given the centrality of Burke's work to what it means to do contemporary rhetoric, this chapter has endeavored to show that Burke is largely absent from the field of the rhetoric of science, which is all the more significant when considering that rhetoric of science is generally drawn from discussions originating in contemporary rhetoric. This is certainly so, when placing Gross at the forefront of the development of what it means to do rhetoric of science. Though, as I have shown, key progenitors such as Gaonkar (1993) and Fahnestock (1999), influenced by Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science*, make use of Burke in their respective approaches to what rhetoric of science is and does, the majority of thinkers contributing to literature exploring the rhetoric of science ignore Burke.

However limited Burke's voice in and contribution to Prelli's and Gross's respective texts on "the rhetoric of science" in 1989 and 1990 are, Burke's absence from most of the literature ascribing to the rhetoric of science is noteworthy. To this end, Gross's *Starring the Text*, as a refiguring of his earlier *The Rhetoric of Science*, similarly refigures Burke out of its scope, in a way that completely marginalizes what Burke means to rhetoric of science, which, in

itself, is also noteworthy. Even so, if we are reminded of Goankar's use of Burke in 1993, and recall Prelli's own use of Burke in 1989, it is also noteworthy that Prelli critiques and challenges Goankar on what Burke means to rhetoric of science, as Goankar envisions it in texts that pre-date 1993. In Prelli's "Rhetorical Perspective and the Limits of Critique" (1993), he highlights what Prelli believes are instances when Gaonkar misuses or misconstrues Burke (321), particularly in two of Gaonkar's articles dated to 1990—as Prelli sees it, these instances of misuse and misconstrue shape how "Gaonkar's view of rhetoric as either global or restrained too narrowly restricts opens for contemporary rhetorical theorizing" (321).

The significance of Prelli's critique of Gaonkar over what Burke means to rhetoric of science demonstrates, it seems to me, the extent that Burke has some say in what rhetoric of science is and does, from the standpoint of a Burkean topical perspective. This topical perspective, Prelli explains, "incorporates global precepts and field invariant within a system of terms that directs analytical attention to the constraining rhetorical features of discourse as situated, addressed, and reasonable" (322). For Prelli, this topical perspective aligns to a topical logic, which "brings together Kenneth Burke's fundamental assumptions about rhetoric and classically based precepts of topical invention" (321), with which, Prelli points out, Gaonkar disagrees. Through Prelli's use of Burke's topical method, Prelli advises, it seems to me, that any foreclosure of Burke's usefulness to what rhetoric of science is and does, as Gross seems to prescribe, becomes a missed opportunity. For Prelli, the very conception of "the rhetoric of science" is precisely what Prelli also wishes to critique, drawing a difference between the title of his 1989 book and that of Gross's 1990 book. If, Prelli maintains, "as the title of my book indicates, the topical perspective is offered as *a* rhetoric of science, not *the* rhetoric of science"

(322), the suggestion is that Burke should mean something to rhetoric of science, with *The War of Words* prescribing to a kind of rhetoric of science.

Insofar as Prelli and Gaonkar differ on what Burke means to rhetoric of science, and Gross forms boundaries around which "the rhetoric of science" is to, generally speaking, the exclusion of Burke, we should be reminded that this treatment of Burke always excludes Burke's *The War of Words*. In other words, *The War of Words*, as presented in this chapter, is essential in establishing what Burke means to rhetoric of science, but also in establishing what rhetoric of science means to Burke, with respect to Burke's scientific rhetoric, asserting that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts ventures further than the bounds of rhetoric of science. If, as Harris details in the introduction to *Landmark Essays on Rhetoric of Science* (1997), "rhetoric of science is not truly interdisciplinary project, since little serious collaboration is underway, but it is a thoroughly multidisciplinary enterprise" (xxv), this characterizes the degree to which there is also "little serious collaboration" between facts and interpretations in *The War of Words*, when the very notion of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts is less about collaboration and more about transposition.

The extent that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts through "a thoroughly multidisciplinary enterprise," when one transposes the other, opens a broader discussion about what it means to do a rhetoric of science, at all, in *The War of Words*, means always-already doing a science of rhetoric as a "colligation" (Harris 2013, 1). From that point, the implications of *The War of Words* ventures towards issues of materiality for facts and interpretations, an underlying materiality of rhetoric, and a transposition arising from trans-corporeality, all of which will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2

KENNETH BURKE'S SCIENTIFIC RHETORIC AND TRANS-CORPOREALITY

> Once we choose a generalized term for what people do, it is certainly as literal to say that "people act" as it is to say that they "but move like mere things."
> —Kenneth Burke, "The Nature of Human Action" (1968)

> I suddenly awoke to the realization that, if I left things pretty much as they were in my original MS the sheer course of history has brought it about that readers can of themselves readily profit by the "pathos of distance" in both seeing the original circumstances and seeing around the corner of those circumstances.
> —Kenneth Burke, "Forward (to end on)," *The War of Words* (2018)

2.1: Prologue

In Chapter 1, after giving an account of the relationship between Kenneth Burke and contemporary rhetoric, I considered the ways in which the term "scientific" figures into Burke's conceptualization of scientific rhetoric in *The War of Words*, if viewing Burke's scientific rhetoric as a way to do rhetoric now. Thereafter, I focused on aspects of Burke's *oeuvre*, excluding *The War of Words*, and what it means to the rhetoric of science, as a field, and, in turn, what Burke's *The War of Words* means to the rhetoric of science. To accomplish this, I provided a survey of key voices in the rhetoric of science, centering with Alan G. Gross's *The Rhetoric of Science*, which provides a grounding point for the tasks of, methods to, and debates in the rhetoric of science that influence and are influenced by Gross.

One of the contemporary problems in rhetoric particularly exposed by *The War of Words* is a lack of demarcation between facts and interpretations, and what arises informationally when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts—it is the epistemological

commerce that occurs between facts and interpretations, such that the relationship between the two transposes facts with interpretations and interpretations with facts, to the shaping of realties and the establishment of truth. In this sense, the interactions between facts and interpretations in *The War of Words* not only contributes to the debates of the rhetoric of science, as set forth in Chapter 1, but they also contribute to an associated, juxtaposed notion of the science of rhetoric and the related debates therein, which this chapter will discuss.

Though there remains more questions than answers about why Burke ultimately decided against publication of *The War of Words* and, he believed that, as the editors quote from Burke's 1974 letter, "troubledness lies behind it" (36), what is clear, it seems to me, is that *The War of Words* speaks to contemporary problems in rhetoric, particularly as these problems are laid bare in Burke's "scientific rhetoric" section, focusing on the relationship between facts and interpretations.

Though Burke's evocation of "scientific rhetoric" in *The War of Words*, to a certain extent, speaks to the concerns of the rhetoric of science set forth by Wander, Prelli, and, most vociferously and sustainingly, Gross, *The War of Words* also has something to contribute to the reverse "colligation," science of rhetoric (Harris 2013, 1-2). Like the interactions between facts and interpretations, there is no clear demarcation between the concerns of the rhetoric of science and those of the science of rhetoric. This is certainly so, thanks to Burke, if facts do not only belong to the rhetoric of science any more than interpretations only belong to the science of rhetoric—this suggestion, here, is that interpretations are as important to the rhetoric of science as facts are to the science of rhetoric. What it means to do rhetoric of science and, in turn, to do science of rhetoric has, it seems to me, a concurrence, both in terms of voices contributing to the two notions, and in terms of how the two conceptualize the relationship between facts and

interpretations. The very extent that Burke views facts and interpretations transpose one another to the shaping of different kinds of realities and to the establishment of different kind of truth tells us, I argue, that *The War of Words* occupies a unique space between the rhetoric of science and the science of rhetoric. This is not only essential to understanding how to place Burke's scientific rhetoric between the concerns of the rhetoric of science and those of the science of rhetoric, but it also serves as an opportunity to situate the significance of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts.

This chapter will consider what Burke's scientific rhetoric means to the science of rhetoric, as an extension of the previous chapter's discussion of the same with respect to the rhetoric of science. From this, I will follow the manner in which the rhetoric of science, in terms of what it means to the science of rhetoric, is charted through notions of materiality. In doing so, this chapter will discuss an approach to the science of rhetoric outlined in Christian O. Lundberg's *Lacan in Public* (2012), wherein Lundberg proposes a materiality of rhetoric—I will interface this with Burke's scientific rhetoric. Tempered by the rhetorical triangularity of genre, ethics, and aesthetics, in respective terms of the genre of journalism, the ethics of news, and the aesthetics of the body, I will argue that Burke's scientific rhetoric, as that which is cast through a materiality of rhetoric, addresses the particular rhetorical status of embodied beings of facts and interpretations, such that, for Burke, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, what arises is a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

2.2: Burke's Place in the Science of Rhetoric

Though Gross, as discussed in Chapter 1, is a key voice in the development of what the rhetoric of science is, it is important to note that Gross also contributes, however modestly, to what is

meant by "the science of rhetoric." For Gross, through the conceptualization of "the rhetoric of science" depicted in his "Rhetoric of Science without Constraints" (1991), he is concerned with the degree to which "science becomes a literary activity, its operations producing a variety of 'texts' […] each must be interpreted" (284). To this end, Gross opines about how the interpretations of a variety of "texts" produced by science requires "a strong constructivism" (284), particularly "when interpretations differ [and] there is but one means of settlement: persuasion, the art of rhetoric" (284). From this, Gross suggests that, even when interpretations differ, and even when "a means of settlement" arises through the use of rhetoric, Gross acknowledges that "radical relativism applied to science" is counterintuitive (284)—hence, just as rhetoric should be without the "constraints" of radical relativism, Gross suggests the same for science, though Gross remains aware of how both rhetoric and science use "normative conceptions of rationality as analytical probes, as frameworks for [their] own judgments" (298).

What is clear, it seems to me, is that, when Gross is speaking about the rhetoric of science, he is always-already speaking about the science of rhetoric. Indeed, if we are to say that the rhetoric of science becomes the science of rhetoric, we are also saying that the former is interested in how interpretations shape facts and the latter is concerned with how facts shape interpretations. In both cases, Gross alerts us to the role that "normative conceptions of rationality" plays when interpretations become facts and facts become interpretations respectively for the rhetoric of science and the science of rhetoric—just as rhetoric becomes a "framework" for science in what the rhetoric of science is, the same occurs when science, as a "framework," meets rhetoric in what the science of rhetoric is.

What Gross proposes in "Rhetoric of Science without Constraints" is further codified in Gross's "The Rhetoric of Science and the Science of Rhetoric" (1991-1992), originally delivered

as a paper to the Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric, and later appearing in *Proceedings of the Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric* (1993). Gross suggests that there is a relationship between the two, which, if thinking of this relationship through Burke's "scientific rhetoric," is grounded on the very extent that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts. The relationship that Gross establishes between the concerns of the rhetoric of science and those of the science of rhetoric, as that which is predicated on "normative conceptions of rationality," is also made in Herbert Simons's "The Rhetoric of Science and the Science of Rhetoric" (1978). There, notwithstanding its shared title with Gross's, Simons proposes that, with Gross and others in mind, in the "rhetorical analysis of scientific discourse, most of them [are] offered from a debunking perspective" (37). This debunking, as Simons characterizes it, is based on the sense that the very notion of the rhetoric of science requires debunking the objectivity of rhetoric as well as that of science, which, of course, is precisely what Burke implies with facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts—not only does Burke debunk the objectivity of facts when they become interpretations, but he also debunks the "objectivity" of interpretations when they become facts.

Insofar as Simons is "concerned with what [he] regard[s] as the dominant social-psychological approach to the study of persuasion" (38), he is more concerned with the science of rhetoric than the rhetoric of science. In focusing on the former over the latter, Simons is highlighting not just what the social-psychological means to what facts are in themselves and what interpretations in themselves, but, more poignantly, he is drawing attention to the degree to which the transposing of facts and interpretations, as Burke proposes, shape the social-psychological understanding of what the normative conceptions of rationality are. It is the sense that, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, the transposition of the

two undermines the normative conceptions of rationality to which both respectively subscribe, which, it seems to me, is concern for Burke's *The War of Words.*

Given that Simons is concerned with "the attempt to infuse high-level theorizing about so-called basic psychological processes with practical applications" (38-39), and he views this sentiment as taking the rhetoric of science only so far, it is here where Simons opens up the opportunity for the science of rhetoric. If Simons finds that the rhetoric of science has a "record [that] does not bear out its promise" (39), what he conversely finds in the science of rhetoric, as that which bears out its promise, is something that will more stridently consider not just the ways that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, but also what happens when such a transposition takes place. Indeed, it seems to me, Burke's interest in facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts is with the consequences of this transposition—even if we are to grant Burke's meaningfulness to the rhetoric of science, as I have done in Chapter 1, particularly when establishing the relationship between facts and interpretations, the implications of what the two transposing one another means for the dissemination of information, disinformation, and misinformation, it occurs to me, brings Burke's understanding of all of these phenomenon more firmly into the realm of the science of rhetoric, from the standpoint of his "scientific rhetoric."

Though Simons tracing of the first use of the term, "the science of rhetoric," to Nathan Maccoby's "The New 'Scientific' Rhetoric" (1963) is debatable, given a much earlier, explicit evocation of the term in David J. Hill's *The Science of Rhetoric: An Introduction to the Laws of Effective Discourse* (1877), this need not undercut an important point Simons makes about what the science of rhetoric is. This point is that the science of rhetoric, as that which Simons fuses with "scientific rhetoric," provides, Simons proposes, "a time of great promise for the persuasion

area" (39). Indeed, while this is in juxtaposition to Simons's conceptualization of the rhetoric of science and its limitations—contrary to Gross's opinion—Simons's conceptualization of the science of rhetoric, then, suggests that "not only was persuasion a cumulative science, but it was also an eminently practical one at that" (39). As much as Burke's scientific rhetoric, as akin to Simons's science of rhetoric, envisions facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts as the extent that persuasion emerges as "a cumulative science," it also envisions how this transposition is "an eminently practical one."

Admittedly, though Burke is out of Simons's purview, Burke becomes integral to Randy A. Harris's "The Rhetoric of Science Meets the Science of Rhetoric" (2013), with Simons's former text influencing Harris's latter text. There, Harris—if remembering how foundational Harris is to the rhetoric of science in Chapter 1—acknowledges that "the various and scattered moves to propagate" (1) what the science of rhetoric is has "been somewhat less successful than for the reverse colligation, *rhetoric of science*" (1-2). In an effort to propagate what the science of rhetoric is and advance something more successful, Harris proposes "to warrant the subfield, cognitive rhetoric […] connect this subfield to rhetoric of science, while simultaneously […] reconfiguring Kenneth Burke" (2). To a certain extent, this subfield, "cognitive rhetoric," intends to ground the science of rhetoric more declaratively to the cognitive sciences, but it is also operates under the rubric that "what makes this cognitive grounding especially crucial for the rhetoric of science is exactly what makes the rhetoric of science the crucial occupation it is in the first place" (Harris 2013, 7). What makes this cognitive grounding all the more crucial, it seems to me, is with respect to the normative conceptions of rationality that establishes facts as facts and interpretations as interpretations, as well as what is cognitively laid bare once facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

Harris provides further rationale for what cognitive groundings means to the rhetoric of science, from the standpoint of bolstering a science of rhetoric in the following way:

> The point of researching the cognitive underpinnings from a rhetorical perspective, especially one so deeply rooted in Kenneth Burke, is not to predict and manipulate, but to understand, to align that understanding with the ethical awareness […] and to use that alignment in ways that improve society, prominently including science (10).

In this way, it is through the cognitive underpinnings that allow us "to understand, to align that understanding with the ethical awareness" is what happens when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, insofar as it is possible to differentiate facts from interpretations in terms of their respective adherence to normative conceptions of rationality. To Harris's point, if we are "to use that alignment in ways that improve society," this is only accomplished in the acknowledgment of facts as facts and interpretations as interpretations—yet, as Burke points out, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this transposition directly affects what information is, and whether or not the effects of disinformation and misinformation, resulting from facts transposing with interpretations, actually serves "in ways that improve society."

The extent that Harris conceives of "researching the cognitive underpinnings from a rhetorical perspective," with Burke as integral in this, suggests that what Harris views as "cognitive" and what he views as "rhetoric," or even language itself, is interfaced at Burke. This is especially significant, when considering Harris's review of Jeanne Fahnestock's *Rhetorical Figures* (1999). Published in 2001, Harris's review takes Fahnestock's concept of "rhetorical figures," insofar as they are "the formal embodiments of certain ideational or persuasive functions" (Fahnestock 1999, 23), to contend that "figures are the very stuff of language" (Harris 2001, 92). When considering both, "formal embodiments" and "stuff," as they seem to me, speak to the two understanding the very meaning of materiality, whereby Fahnestock and Harris, I find,

consider figures as contributive to the materiality of rhetoric. This insight is important, not only if viewing facts and interpretations as "formal embodiments" or "the very stuff of language" in terms of the materiality in both, but also if viewing what their respective materiality means when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

If seeing Fahnestock's "rhetorical figures," and Harris's understanding of them, as indicative to both ascribing to a materiality of rhetoric, there remains, to Harris's point, "cognitive underpinnings" to this, in terms of what these figures mean to language more generally. Though, Harris argues, Fahnestock does not go far enough in what figures mean to language, and vice versa, even though she acknowledges a pervading "cognitive significance" (viii), Harris expounds, "figures are the stuff of language [and] language is profoundly cognitive" (92). In other words, if there are cognitive underpinnings to language, and language is represented by the stuff of rhetorical figures, the very materialities of facts and interpretations can be conceived of conversely, due to "a range of cognitive affinities that underlie the aesthetic and suasive characteristics of semiosis" (Harris 2013, 7). When facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, just as Burke tells us, this results in new materialities, predicated on "a range of cognitive affinities" through normative conceptions of rationality—facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts, as new rhetorical materialities with particular "aesthetic and suasive characteristics of semiosis," are laid bare by a materiality of rhetoric.

To Harris's point, when the rhetoric of science meets the science of rhetoric, what arises is a materiality of rhetoric. Harris certainly makes this clear, it seems to me. Though neither Fahnestock nor Harris, to the best of my knowledge, ever use the term "materiality," even if their respective articulations of "formal embodiment" and "stuff" certainly gesture towards notions of materiality, Burke's understandings of facts and interpretations can be considered as material

understandings. Indeed, Burke's material understandings of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts seems to reach towards a particular handling of these new materialities, from the standpoint of what he calls "scientific rhetoric"—in other words, what can be derived from Burke is, on one hand, a material understanding of facts as facts and a new materiality arising in facts becoming interpretations, while, on the other hand, it is a material understanding of interpretations as interpretations and a new materiality arising in interpretations becoming facts.

The extent that Burke introduces a new materiality to what facts are and what interpretations are respectively solicits a particular kind of materiality of rhetoric. Burke's is predicated on facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, which speaks to, to Fahnestock's point, "formal embodiments" of rhetorical significance, particularly in the mamking of misinformation and disinformation. Materially speaking, for Burke, facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts are, to Harris's point, "the very stuff of language," but also, it seems to me, the very stuff of information—it is through, also to Harris's point, the cognitive underpinning of what this transposition means that grounds   Burke's scientific rhetoric, insofar as it traverses from a rhetoric of science, as discussed in Chapter 1, to a science of rhetoric, as discussed in this chapter, settling with a materiality of rhetoric.

2.3: Burke's Science of Rhetoric and Its Materiality

Given Harris's proposal of "cognitive rhetoric," as that which takes rhetoric of science towards a science of rhetoric, with a refiguration of Burke essential to this conceptualization, Harris expounds, however briefly, on what contributes to his understanding of the term, "cognitive." Certainly, Harris is drawing from an understanding of "the cognitive sciences" (2) that attends to,

as Harris footnotes, "[Burke's] direct contact with psychology [that] engaged either psychoanalysis or behaviorism" (2). While he details that Burke, to the former, "never tired of attacking" behaviorism (2), and, with respect to the latter, "Burke found amenable with certain currents of motivation, but did not link them to his 'grammar'" (2), Harris does not go any further than this. Instead, though Harris acknowledges that Burke's *A Grammar of Motives*, makes a direct reference to "the psychological" (2), Harris does not sufficiently tell us what this means to his specific notion of cognitive rhetoric, more generally, what role Burke's notion of "the psychological" means to Burke's place in the science of rhetoric, as Harris envisions it, and what this science of rhetoric means to materiality, to that which Harris gestures.

Writing contemporarily to Harris, Christian O. Lundberg's *Lacan in Public: Psychoanalysis and the Science of Rhetoric* (2012) not only attends to a conceptualization of the science of rhetoric, through the same network of concerns about psychology as Harris's, but also is more explicitly concerned with psychoanalysis and situates that concern on Jacques Lacan. For Lundberg, all of this is laid bare in terms of materiality, whereby *Lacan in Public* expands, it seems to me, upon Lundberg's earlier, "On Missed Encounters: Lacan and the Materiality of Rhetoric," included in the collection, *Rhetoric, Materiality, and Politics* (2009). Taken together, Lundberg's earlier and later text contribute to a science of rhetoric, which speaks to Harris's contribution, but, for Lundberg, with Lacan and Burke explicitly interacting as interlocutors, for the sake of prescribing a materiality of rhetoric.

Even though Lundberg sees in the connection between Lacan and Burke a way to establish as approach to the relationship between materiality and rhetoric, Lundberg is not alone in seeing the Lacan-Burke connection, Indeed, the connection between Lacan and Burke has been argued, for example, by Kevin A. Johnson's "Burke's Lacanian Upgrade: Reading the

Burkean Unconscious Through a Lacanian Lens" (2009), Dina Stevenson's "Lacan, Burke, and

Human Motive," as it is included in the *Kenneth Burke and the 21st Century* (1999), and Douglas

Thomas's "Burke, Nietzsche, Lacan" (1993). I will consider each one briefly. First, Johnson

believes Lacanian scholarship can benefit from an engagement with Burke, insofar as Lacan's

psychoanalysis can interface with Burke's dramatism, which Johnson earlier considers

stylistically in his dissertation as the BurkeLacanian subject (2007, 102). Secondly, Stevenson

contends, "Lacan's well-developed theory of the language-using subject is, in both function and

formation, congruent with the language-motivated, language-created human being of Burkean

theory" (193). Thirdly, Thomas proposes a relationship between Burke and Lacan through

Nietzsche on matters of rhetoric and order. Though Thomas, Stevenson, and Johnson all bring

Lacan and Burke in conversation, these interactions are, to a certain extent, largely working

within the boundaries of Lacanian and Burkean theories—however, because Lundberg does not

simply subscribe to what the two mean to one another, he prescribes to what the two mean to a

science of rhetoric and, in turn, notion of materiality in his *Lacan in Public*.

Before venturing into his broader, *Lacan in Public*, I will, first, consider Lundberg's more

narrow argument in "On Missed Encounters." As the article's subtitle suggests, though

Lundberg's approach to a materiality of rhetoric is charted through Lacan, it has implications, it

seems to me, on the relationship between the materiality of rhetoric and Burke. Notwithstanding

what he surmises is Lacan's relationship with or use of materiality, it would be helpful to

contextualize Lundberg, in order to provide some precedence to the term and concept, what

Lacan means in this precedence, and place Burke's *The War of Words* in a congruent discussion.

One such precedence is *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the

Theory of the Subject* (1977), co-authored by Rosalind Coward and John Ellis—even though

semiology and rhetoric consider the meaning derived from language differently, there remains a through-line in the role that materiality plays in the meaning-making process for both, hinging on a materialist theory of the subject. Not only do Coward and Ellis argue that Lacan provides a materialist theory of the subject, but they also situate Lacan's understanding of the unconscious as contributive to social processes, through which "a subject [is] constructed as always already included by those social processes, but never simply reducible to being a support" (93). To this point, Burke's *The War of Words* assumes an understanding of the unconscious as contributive to social processes, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts—Burke's materialist theory of the subject, then, for the purposes of *The War of Words*, is also "constructed as always already included by those social processes."

If, for Coward and Ellis, "Lacan's subject is therefore […] a subject in process" (93), this materialist theory of the subject functions at the rhetorical juncture between language and discourse. Coward and Ellis describe this juncture as a nodal point, from which "everything that flowers in the unconscious diffuses itself" (121). Since "this nodal point is the subject" (121), and the subject is "in process" by way of discourse and social processes, this becomes integral to how Lundberg articulates materialist rhetoric. With this in mind, Burke's *The War of Words*, then, reflects a materialist rhetoric, insofar as Burke conceives, too, of a "nodal point" around which facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, such that subject, as Burke's nodal point, is in process at the juncture between language and discourse.

Exercising a materialist theory of the subject, as found in *Language and Materialism*, Lundberg's "On Missed Encounters" also considers what materiality means to a more thoroughgoing rhetorics and what a more robust explication of Lacanianism contributes to this endeavor. To do this, Lundberg asks a fundamental question that is certainly not too far afield

from the central issue in *Language and Materialism*, which will, by extension, become essential to Burke's place in this discussion—Lundberg's question is: "can an account of either the formal properties of discourse as a system or a description of communicative exchanges embedded in social contexts define rhetoric without remainder" (161)? This question recognizes, as Lundberg points out, the need to reconcile between "general accounts of rhetoric" (161) and "the irreducible plurality and specificity of rhetorical events, texts, and practices" (161).

For Lundberg, it is more than just the relationship between language and materialism—rather, through the conceptualization of the materiality of rhetoric, what is at issue "orbits around defining rhetoric's function and, by implication, around the nagging question of rhetorical theory's relationship to the specific phenomenon it addresses." (161). This is precisely Burke's concerns in *The War of Words*, wherein facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts grapple with "defining rhetoric's function," but also grapple with "rhetorical theory's relationship" to the dissemination of information.

The materiality of rhetoric, Lundberg defines, is grounded on two fundamental, albeit incongruent lines of inquiry, speaking to two different trajectories: first, "the formal qualities of discourse as a durable productive system" (161) and secondly, a reliance "on processes of communicative exchange" (161). Given these tenets, which Lundberg calls "logics" (161), he suggests that neither "excludes the other, and each may be present in admixture in any given framing of rhetoric's materiality, but the presence of one or both of these presuppositions is a hallmark of a materialist rhetoric" (161). To frame rhetoric's materiality, and to do so by being mindful of the separate boundaries created around these two presuppositions, Lundberg's goal in "On Missed Encounters," when we are reminded of the fundamental question with which Lundberg opens the article, "is to offer a Lacanian rereading of these presuppositions that avoids

reducing rhetoric either to a system of discursive operations or to a contextually nested set of communicative habits without remainder" (161). From Lundberg's Lacanian rereading, a Burkean rereading becomes possible, with *The War of Words* not only avoids "reducing rhetoric to a system of discursive operations" and, for that matter, avoids thinking of rhetoric as "a contextually nested set of communicative habits," but to show, it seems to me, that a remainder exists once facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

Even though, Lundberg tells us, a materiality of rhetoric is "focus[ing] on rhetoric as inextricably tied to Lacan's conceptions of trope and enjoyment as material embodiments of a durable principle of non-mediation" (161), Lundberg connects these conceptions, particularly trope, to a science of rhetoric in *Lacan in Public*. This inextricability, Lundberg argues, occurs along three "sites" of rhetoric's materiality: the split "where the signified is constantly being slid under the signifier" (169), what results as "the materiality of the subject" (169), and the unconscious that "solves the problem of reference by changing its locus" (171, 161-184).

In *Lacan in Public*, Lundberg further expands upon what he briefly outlines in "On Missed Encounters." Setting aside Lundberg's admission that "[*Lacan in Public*] is as much an argument for a conception of rhetoric as it is a reading of Jacques Lacan's interpretation of it" (xi), Lundberg's offers insight, I find, into Burke's place in the science of rhetoric and its materiality. Though Lundberg draws on sentiment that "rhetoric, or the art of oration, was a science and not just an art" (Lacan 1993, 238), and "extends Lacan's call for a science of rhetoric by defining an economy of trope as the central object of a science of oratory" (xii), both ground Burke's science of rhetoric, as that which considers facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, to the transposing of facts and interpretations as "an economy of trope." In other words, if, as Lundberg proposes, the science of rhetoric "would contest the total

reduction of rhetoric to its imaginary functions by situating the imaginary functions of rhetoric in the ground of trope" (44), Burke's transposition of facts and interpretations, in the development of misinformation and disinformation carry an "imaginary function." In this way, Lundberg adds, "a science of rhetoric would understand the imaginary functions of rhetoric as derived from the formal and affective properties of discourse" (44), which suggests, it seems to me, the degree to which facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, even as imaginary functions, retain, to Fahnestock's point, certain "formal embodiments" that become, to Harris's point, "the very stuff of language," through a materiality based on "the formal and affective properties of discourse."

Insofar as, Lundberg concludes, there is "a science of rhetoric rooted in the enjoyment of signs" (192), this is laid bare by "the formal and affective properties of discourse," but it also lays bare a materiality of rhetoric. To this end, though Lundberg "suggest[s] Lacan's conception of enjoyment as a specific affective modality that lends durability to processes of signification" (xiii), this reference to Lacan allows for a way of viewing Burke's sentiment about facts becoming interpretation and interpretations becoming facts as eliciting "a specific affective modality," predicated on a materiality about facts when they become interpretations, and about interpretations when they become facts. The degree to which, to Lundberg's broader point, he "engages debates surrounding the 'materiality of rhetoric' thesis to argue for enjoyment as a material practice in the context of immediation between the orders of discourse and that which is external to it" (xiii) subsequently provides for an understanding of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts as a "material practice." Not only can such a transposition be placed "in the context of immediation between the orders of discourse," whereby facts should be only facts and interpretations should be only interpretations, but this transposition also

fundamentally and necessarily creates a normative conception of rationality as "that which is external to it."

Given what Lundberg's *Lacan in Public* means to its account of the science of rhetoric and its materiality, notwithstanding Lacan's centrality to that interfacing, Burke's assertion of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, as pivotal to his scientific rhetoric, opens the possibility to place Burke within the science of rhetoric. This not only allows us to say that this placement means something to the materiality of rhetoric, but it also allows for a means of placing Burke within recent, congruent discussions into rhetorical new materialism, or "RNM," particularly in the recent forum in the *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*. In this forum, "contributors not only *reflect on* entanglements of time, space, sounds, environs, objects, affects, and intra-actions so central to new material," Laurie Gries writes, "but they also *reflect* the longstanding entanglement between the rhetorical and new material" (139). In this sense, Burke becomes, too, a posthumous contributor, where Burke's sense of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts "reflects on" entanglements, to Gries's point, especially in terms of the transposition is an entanglement of time and space, environs and affects, and even "intra-actions." To this end, Burke's *The War of Words* "reflects," just as Gries points out, "the longstanding entanglements between the rhetorical and new material," insofar as Burke is as aware of what Gries is articulating as Gries is of what Burke argues, even if both are outside of the other's purview. For Burke, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this transposition occurs in time and space, but they also, to further Gries's point, develop as affects, to the extent that their "intra-actions" shape environs into communities.

As Gries makes clear, the extent that "[scholars] must come to acknowledge that rhetoric's role in all these communities is not just a negotiation of different perspectives but an

ontological and ethical conditioning of worlds that are radically unique even as they may be intimately connected" (143), Burke's *The War of Words* certainly contributes to Gries's rubric. In this way, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this is "not just a negotiation of different perspectives," if we are to say that facts, by themselves, and interpretations, by themselves, are different perspectives. Rather, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, this transposition establishes "an ontological and ethical conditioning of worlds." Though the respective worlds of facts and interpretations are "radically unique," they remain "intimately connected," for Burke's scientific rhetoric, as entanglements that emerge as rhetorical new materialisms.

These entanglements, as Gries points out, can be explained in terms of trans-corporeality, if, by that, what is entangled is one corporeality with another, to the extent that these entangled corporealities traverse one another. To this end, when considering facts and interpretations, in Burke's *The War of Words*, they are "intermingling entities" (Gries 2022, 143), from the standpoint of their "bodily natures" (Alaimo 2010, 3-4).

2.4: Burke's Scientific Rhetoric

If we see scientific rhetoric as fundamentally venturing beyond the strictest definitions of science itself, with respect to the rhetoric of science, discussed in Chapter 1, and even the science of rhetoric, discussed in this chapter, it stands to reason that what it means to do scientific rhetoric, at all, is to do so by engaging in "the rhetorical work that goes on in the usage of [certain] disciplinary labels" (Pinch 300). With Burke's scientific rhetoric expressed through an understanding of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts as "intermingling entities," the sense that this transposition is the basis for a trans-corporeality

becomes a certain disciplinary label—because there are a variety of "studies of scientific rhetoric" pointed out by Halloran, as discussed in Chapter 1, it is essential to consider what place Burke's scientific rhetoric has in contemporary understandings of what scientific rhetoric is.

Given that Taylor Pinch considers what scientific rhetoric is, as that which engages in specific "rhetorical work" and does so under the rubric of certain "disciplinary labels," Pinch contributes another characterization of scientific rhetoric, as part of a collection of essays, *Science, Reason, and Rhetoric* (1995), co-edited by Henry Krips, J. E. McGuire, and Trevor Melia. Here, in Pinch's "Rhetoric and the Cold Fusion Controversy," as ascertained by the co-editors' introduction to the volume, "Pinch's essay not only provides compelling instances of the use of rhetoric in public argument among scientists, but also points to significant ways which the notion of scientific rhetoric must be broadened to accommodate various 'lower' forms of persuasion" (xvi). Notwithstanding what scientific rhetoric means to scientists in particular and the manner in which the scientist engages in "public argument," more broadly and generally considered, public argument is especially relevant to Burke's sense of scientific rhetoric, if, by that, scientific rhetoric is "broadened to accommodate" the ways and means by which, for Burke, facts and interpretations play pivotal roles in the dissemination of information.

It is precisely at the "lower forms of persuasion" where facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, because it is in these "lower frequencies," to borrow from Ralph Ellison's final line in *Invisible Man* (1952) but recast Ellison's words, that scientific rhetoric speaks for us. What speaks for us, then, is what trans-corporeally occurs once facts and interpretations transpose one another, not so much in persuading us of what facts as interpretations are or doing the same about what interpretations as facts are, but, instead, as trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities, of which we do not need to be persuaded. When facts are

interpretations and interpretations are facts, they speak for us, at lower rhetorical frequencies, which, being reminded of Hexter, presuppose that we already possess "a body of precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes," to which these lower frequencies refer, through modes of misinformation or disinformation, with the dubiousness of "news," Burke describes in *The War of Words*, is part scientific and part rhetorical. It is at these lower frequencies that scientific rhetoric, Philip Kitcher argues in "The Cognitive Functions of Scientific Rhetoric" (1995), "serves a cognitive function" (62), insofar as scientific rhetoric establishes a creative (Kitcher 62) process for the parameters of any given rhetorical situation, the boundaries around which facts and interpretations transpose one another, and the futures, to which facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts direct us, bring about encounters with information that is, to Kitcher point, "creative scientific rhetoric." For Kitcher, not only does scientific rhetoric cognitively frame how we already possess "a body of precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes," but it also cognitively frames how we encounter facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts—in effect, for the sake of what Kitcher suggests is a "cognitive function" of scientific rhetoric, the resulting trans-corporeal rhetoric, then, is not only cognitively constructed around the "particular universes" of facts and interpretations, but it is also cognitively constructed around the lower rhetorical frequencies of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts.

Similarly, in "Persuasion," included in the collection, *Persuading Science: The Art of Scientific Rhetoric* (1991), Kitcher explains how "a sense of the cognitive backgrounds of our targets and a concomitant anticipation of the responses that they are likely to make," for the sake of what "effective persuasion requires" (18). These cognitive backgrounds speak to the particular universes in which facts and interpretations exist, but also it speaks to what exists, in terms of

persuasion, once facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts—the very trans-corporeality of facts and interpretations, by way of their respective bodily natures, are able to transpose one another in discernably persuadable ways due to "a concomitant anticipation of the responses that [we] are likely to make" at lower rhetorical frequencies. Setting aside, for the moment, what he means by what "effective persuasion requires," Kitcher does, it occurs to me, acknowledge the degree that lower rhetorical frequencies, as I have called them, attune us to what facts and interpretations do trans-corporeally, with respect to what he conceives of as "limited cognitive systems" (23). To this end, as Kitcher makes clear, "for limited cognitive systems, such as ourselves, activating the right inferential propensities and thus reaching the correct conclusions always depend on the mode of presentation of the scientific material" (23-24). To Kitcher's point, not only do the transposing of facts and interpretation activate "the right inferential propensities," but they also transpose one another in ways that "always depend on the mode of presentation." In this sense, insofar as we are involved in "reaching the correct conclusions," scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, always-already works through and works out much of what the correct conclusions are at the lower rhetorical frequencies, so that, for Burke, we are persuaded before surmising that effective persuasion has actually occurred.

Essentially, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, they do so by deciding for us, to Kitcher's point, what "a body of precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes" are. They prescribe, rather than subscribe, whereby they work through and work out, I maintain, what reality is, in a way that requires effective persuasion, but not necessarily asking anything of us at lower rhetorical frequencies. To say that scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric requires effective persuasion, it seems to me, is misleading, since this suggests that we are making interpretations of facts and isolating facts from interpretations—the

very nature of facts and interpretations transposing one another, then, circumvents any participation we may have in the persuasive arguments inherent in facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts, which is precisely Burke's point with the meaning and meaningfulness of scientific rhetoric in *The War of Words*. Even if, scientific rhetoric, Marcello Pera writes in "The Role and Value of Rhetoric in Science," also included in the collection, *Persuading Science: The Art of Scientific Rhetoric* (1991), "[can] be considered as the art of making use of persuasive arguments in order to change or reinforce opinions in a scientific community abut questions that have cognitive value" (35), which corroborates Kitcher's point about scientific rhetoric's cognitive function, it becomes necessary to qualify what Pera means by "the art of making use of persuasive arguments." For Pera, if "a persuasive or rhetorical argument is an argument that is neither formally stringent nor empirically compelling," for the sake of what this means to how Pera defines scientific rhetoric, it is certainly possible to conceive of scientific rhetoric, as that which is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric, as not necessarily grounded on persuasive arguments, but grounded on tapping into our cognitive backgrounds, just as Kitcher suggests, at the lower rhetorical frequencies of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts. Tapping into our cognitive backgrounds is a persuasive technique. To this point, as Pera tells us, insomuch as "scientific rhetoric is the set of those persuasive, argumentative techniques scientists use in order to reach their conclusions, not the modes of expression, or the ornament, or the style that may accompany those arguments" (35), so much is always-already worked through and worked out through the transposing of facts and interpretations, once facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts.

In "Rhetoric in the Content of Scientific Rationality," also included in the *Science, Reason, and Rhetoric* (1995) collection, John Lyne makes two important arguments, which, it

seems to me, speaks not just to the meaning of scientific rhetoric, but also the meaningfulness of it to trans-corporeal rhetoric, through how we make meaning of and meaningfulness from the transposing of facts and interpretations. First, though Lyne believes, "a scientific rhetoric, like any other, must be persuasive to succeed" (255), it behooves us to consider what he means by "persuasive" and how this aligns to or misaligns with what Pinch argues. If we are reminded of how Pinch conceives of scientific rhetoric as "accommodat[ing] various 'lower' forms of persuasion," and the degree to which, I maintain, trans-corporeal rhetoric operates at the lower rhetorical frequencies, it is certainly appropriate to ask: what role, if any, does persuasion play in what it means to do scientific rhetoric, as that which is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric? Another aspect to this question works off of what Lyne means by "succeed," insofar as what he believes scientific rhetoric must do.

When considering Lyne's point carefully, if isolating the "persuasive" element from the "succeed" element, and if scientific rhetoric points to a trans-corporeal rhetoric, predicated on, through Burke, the transposing of facts and interpretations, whatever can be meant by "persuasive" is, I argue, mutually-exclusive from whatever can be meant by "succeed"—this seems so, I feel, if scientific rhetoric operates at the lower rhetorical frequencies of persuasion and, because of this, always-already succeeds in what it exerts upon us, when we encounter, in any given rhetorical situation, facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts. To this end, because scientific rhetoric always-already succeeds in what it does trans-corporeally, it always-already persuasive, in this sense that persuasion is cognitively baked, if following Kitcher, into the transposing of facts and interpretations and, for that matter, persuasion at the lower rhetorical frequencies, to Hexter's point, always-already encompasses "a body of precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes"—if we must qualify Lyne's assertion, we must do so by

ascertaining that scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is more about what succeeds than what persuades.

Let us consider Lyne's other point, which is: "it can be bad for rhetoric as well as for science if scientific rhetoric grows into something independent and isolable from scientific practices" (264). Here, Lyne makes a salient observation, which is certainly fundamental to what brings Burke to scientific rhetoric in *The War of Words*. For Burke and Lyne alike, though writing some forty years apart, there is a potential for scientific rhetoric to be detrimental to what we mean by rhetoric and what we mean by science, even if, Lyne is careful to argue, the true danger in scientific rhetoric is that it outstrips "scientific practices." Lyne's warning about scientific rhetoric being inextricably linked to scientific practices, such that the latter informs the former, speaks to the rhetorical situation inherent in these scientific practices. What it means to do scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, does not grow into "something independent and isolable from scientific practices" that lays bare the trans-corporeal rhetorical entities of facts and interpretations—the connection that Lyne makes between scientific rhetoric and scientific practices is, to a certain extent, corroborated in Deirdre N. McCloskey's *The Rhetoric of Economics* (1998), whereby economists make use of scientific rhetoric by engaging with economics through scientific practices (xxi). For Burke, it occurs to me, scientific rhetoric is inextricably linked to the scientific practices of how we engage with the particular universes in which facts and interpretations reside, but also how we engage with certain realities defined by facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts.

If following the implications of the futures of scientific rhetoric, as prescribed by both Lyne and McCloskey, along the boundaries of both rhetoric and science, there are, Victoria Clarke outlines in "'Stereotype, Attack, and Stigmatize those Who Disagree'" (2000), certain

"(political) costs and benefits of using science and scientific rhetoric" (152). Though Clarke applies the parenthetical to "political," the political, as that which attunes scientific rhetoric, is presented in terms of "political motivation" (153), political interventions (153), "political apparatus that govern us" (156), the role of political activists (156), political debates (156), and political commitments (157)—all point to a broader political context shaping what it means to do scientific rhetoric, which, for Burke, is precisely, I maintain, what transposes facts and interpretations out of their "particular universes" and how we are cognitively affected by facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts. Admittedly, notwithstanding Clarke's specific task in detailing what scientific rhetoric politically means to the debates about lesbian and gay parenting, Clarke finds, "in using scientific rhetoric we reinforce the power of science to define reality" (156)—indeed, there is a reality being defined for us, when facts and interpretations transpose one another.

In *Composition and the Rhetoric of Science: Engaging the Dominant Discourse* (2007), Michael J. Zerbe concludes, "scientific rhetoric is among the most powerful of discourses [where] it *is* the way the world is represented" (2). Yet, Zerbe tells us, "in a broader sense, beyond the examination of the relationships between scientific discourse and rhetoric and composition studies, [his] book argues for the reconnection of composition studies and rhetoric" (13). This is not to say that Zerbe acknowledges a tenuousness between the two, or some sort of rupture, requiring a reconstitution of the two, for the sake of scientific rhetoric itself. Rather, Zerbe's approach to scientific rhetoric is by way of "rhetoric in terms of the study of public or civic discourse, of which scientific rhetoric is a neglected part" (13).

In "The Productivity of Scientific Rhetoric" (2013), David J. Depew and John Lyne suggests that "we should resist the tendency to think of scientific rhetoric as something that is

monological, or something merely to be mapped, or something apprehended as text" (12). Burke's sense of scientific rhetoric is certainly not "monological," but, it seems to me, dialogical, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts. For that matter, how Burke understands the relation between facts and interpretations in *The War of Words* resists the notion that facts, in themselves, and interpretations, in themselves, can be mapped. When facts and interpretations transpose one another, Burke's scientific rhetoric also challenges how anything can be apprehended as text—that is to say, what is apprehended is what has been transposed.

In the introduction to the most recently published, *The Routledge Handbook of Scientific Communication* (2021), Zerbe, Gabriel Cutrufello, Cristina Hanganu-Bresch and Stefania M. Maci argue, "it is fair to say that today no rhetoric defines our lives more than scientific rhetoric" (1). This becomes precisely poignant, given the way that the scientific rhetoric espoused in Burke's *The War of Words*, though written in the 1950s, remains contemporarily relevant—in this way, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, for the purposes of shaping our rhetorical situation to facts and interpretations respectively, scientific rhetoric, as understood by Burke, undoubtedly "defines our lives." More than that, Zerbe, Cutrufello, Hanganu-Bresch and Maci also argue, "as a form of rhetoric most commonly perceived as a source of knowledge, reality, and truth, scientific rhetoric occupies a dominant, privileged position among the types of rhetorics that shape human experience" (1). Not only do facts and interpretations, when transposed, affect the "source of knowledge, reality, and truth," and facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts "shape human experience," but scientific rhetoric, acting trans-corporeally, especially as Burke sees it, "occupies a dominant, privileged position among types of rhetorics." Because scientific rhetoric is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric, Zerbe, Cutrufello, Hanganu-Bresch and Maci are correct to view it as having "enormous

epistemological and ontological potential" (1), particularly when the transposing of facts and interpretations "shape human experience" towards how we define our lives in relation to information—if, they argue, "scientific rhetoric deserves careful, continual analysis from scholars of rhetoric and communication" (1), this speaks to the reason, it occurs to me, why Burke's espousal of scientific rhetoric in *The War of Words* not only captures the roles that facts and interpretations ontologically have as bodily natures that are corporeally significant, but it also captures the roles that facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts epistemologically have as trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities.

2.5: Burke's Scientific Rhetoric as Trans-corporeal Rhetoric

As much as Burke's understanding of "scientific," as a term, has its Aristotelian roots, by Burke's own admission in *The War of Words*, it is worth noting that the term has a notable history in Burke's work prior to *The War of the Words*. Indeed, there are frequent references to the "scientific," particularly in *Counter-Statement* and *Permanence and Change*, both of which hold a certain significance to Burke's later use of the term, as that which adjectivally conditions what Burke means by "scientific rhetoric." Admittedly, given that "scientific" appears in too many instances across his three major works of the 1930s, I will only give an account of a few, which are particularly relevant, it seems to me, to what Burke intends to do with scientific rhetoric and what it means to what he sees as an interactive, transpositional relationship between facts and interpretations as trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities.

In *Counter-Statement*, when drawing a distinction between "the psychology of information" and "the psychology of form," Burke finds that the difference between the two are defined by "aesthetic truth" (42). These psychologies, then, are laid bare by how we "combat the

deflection which the strength of science has caused to our tastes" (Burke 42), insofar as information and form are, respectively speaking, aesthetic constructions, but are, I might add, cast within ethical contexts, for the sake of a given rhetorical situation. It is there, from the rhetorical situation to its ethical context to an aesthetic construction, that we, to Burke's point, "must examine the essential breach between scientific and artistic truth" (42). Here, it seems to me, that Burke aligns the psychology of information towards scientific truth, while aligning the psychology of form towards artistic truth. If this is so, when differentiating between the two, he sees the former as an "encroachment" over and against the latter, such that the former distorts the latter (42)—to this end, as Burke's footnotes this, scientific truth distorts for the sake of calling itself truth, "whereby one aspect of an object is suppressed the better to emphasize some other aspect" (42), such that Burke sees this "scientific truth" as a doctrine (42).

For Burke, the extent that there arises an "encroachment of scientific truth into art" (42) suggests, it seems to me, a means of partially understanding the trans-corporeal nature of the "scientific" in relation to the artistic in Burke's thought. Through this encroachment, scientific truth, Burke argues, "attempts to *indicate* by art some fact of knowledge, to make some implicit aspect of an object as explicit as one can by means of the comparatively dumb method of art" (42), which, in itself, indicates that the implicit and the explicit transpose one another, for the sake of a comparatively intelligent method of science. Just as Burke maintains, because "the procedure of science involves the elimination of taste, employing as a substitute the corrective norm of the pragmatic test, the empirical experiment, which is entirely intellectual" (42), scientific rhetoric resoundingly eliminates taste by transposing it with what I would call a corrective pragmatism—here, taste as interpretation is being transposed with the corrective pragmatism of facts.

In *Permanence and Change*, Burke casts a similar conceptualization of "scientific," insofar as, Burke details, "the psychotic pressure in favor of science pure and simple is still stimulated by a definite social need for the completion of the scientific rationalization" (63). In this, not only does Burke confirm, it seems to me, how facts and interpretations transpose one another through "a definite social need," and the extent that facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts, through scientific rhetoric, arise from scientific rationalizations, but he also notes that there is a "psychotic pressure in favor of science," which, I argue, is directly involved in the elimination of taste, as Burke makes clear in *Counter-Statement*.

Whether viewing how facts are deemed as interpretations, or how interpretations are characterized as facts, the relationship between facts and interpretations, such that they transpose one another, is due to, to Burke's point, as it unfolds very early in *Permanence and Change*, issues of orientation, abstraction, and criticism (4-6). By this, we can take Burke to mean three important pieces of insight. First, how we are oriented to both facts and interpretations and how this orientation, it seems to me, allows for facts and interpretations to transpose one another. Secondly, this orientation occurs regardless of "what conquest over the environment we have attained through our powers of abstraction" (6). Thirdly, this orientation alerts us to how that a lack of criticism arises due to the manner in which "these abstractions [are] mistaken for realities" (6). All of this has a cumulative effect for, in one sense, the ability for facts and interpretations to transpose one another, and in another sense, the degree that facts become interpretations as much as interpretations become facts, due to, if incorporating Burke's sentiments, "no slight critical ability is required" (6). For Burke, "when criticism can do so much for us, it may have got us just to the point where we greatly require still better criticism" (6), insofar as criticism is necessary to not only understand facts and interpretations are separate

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rhetorical embodiments, but also to understand how these rhetorical embodiments transpose one another into abstractions of one another, which, in turn, situate how both rhetorical embodiments are oriented to another and how we, too, are oriented to them. To this end, consider what Burke opines in the following:

> Though all organisms are critics in the sense that they interpret the signs about them, the experimental, speculative technique made available by speech would seem to single out the human species as the only one possessing an equipment for going beyond the criticism of experience to a criticism of criticism (6).

Here, while it is certainly possible to construe the very nature of scientific rhetoric as "the experimental, speculative technique made available by speech," it is equally possible to draw trans-corporeal rhetoric from the idea of "going beyond the criticism of experience to a criticism of criticism." When scientific rhetoric, as it can be drawn from Burke's rhetorical theory, functions as trans-corporeal rhetoric, it does so by way of how each of us "possess[es] an equipment" capable of grasping facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts.

The transposition of facts and interpretations, then, as a means of "going beyond the criticism of experience to a criticism of criticism" also comes to bear, it seems to me, on how "we not only interpret the character of events […] we may also interpret our interpretations" (Burke 6). If the transposition of facts and interpretations, where facts become interpretations, and interpretations become facts, Burke is correct to point out that there arises, in what I have deemed as transposition, "the question of right and wrong orientation" (7). From here, and in elaborating on this point, though Burke introduces the term "trained incapacity […] that state of affairs whereby one's very abilities can function as blindnesses" (7), this has a certain significance to how we orient ourselves respectively to facts made into interpretations and interpretations made into facts, if we do so through a blindness. Even if, "we need to interpret our interpretations to avoid the solipsism of 'trained incapacity'" (Blakesley 82), the very nature

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of scientific rhetoric, for the sake of its trans-corporeal rhetoric, exploits solipsistic person. This exploitation changes how we make sense of facts and interpretations towards a conflation of the two, which is grounded on "language as an instrument that causes and solves our problems," Hugh D. Duncan writes in the 1965 introduction to *Permanence and Change*, "through recalcitrant and mystifying symbols" (xvii). To the extent that these symbols, Duncan furthers, "are both blessing and curse—a blessing if we turn our study of their use into a *method* of social control, a curse if we let their power overwhelm us until we accept symbolic mystification as reality" (xvii), scientific rhetoric, as it is constituted trans-corporeally, allows facts and interpretations to transpose one another as trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities construing "symbolic mystification as reality." Furthering the notion of "mystification," Burke adds:

> Among the consequences of mystification is our own 'trained incapacity' that blinds us to the discovery and examination of the rhetorical patterns of those whose 'actions' are nonstrategic, or take place in the contexts or moments when the need for persuasion is absent (110).

Insofar as scientific rhetoric occurs "when the need for persuasion is absent," towards the very nature of trans-corporeal rhetoric, in the transposing of facts and interpretations capitalizes on the "mystification" of facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts, is grounded on "trained incapacity," the point upon which Foss and White end their article, with respect to Burke's understanding of hierarchy, deserves further consideration, for the sake of making sense out of Burke's *The War of Words* and how it is outside of the purview of Foss and White.

Given that, as Foss and White point out, when considering Burke's sentiments about "the crumbling of hierarchies" in *Rhetoric of Motives*, they conclude that "the notion of being unites the realms of motion and action, disrupts the polarity of the two, and transcends their implicit dualism" (110). Notwithstanding the broader context of Burke's words, within the narrower confines of what Foss and White construct, there are, it seems to me, undertones referencing

trans-corporeality, beginning with "the notion of being" as an acknowledgment of embodiment, an embodied being, or, for that matter, a bodily nature. What are being united, being disruptive, and being transcendent are that which are being transposed trans-corporeally, within Burke's scientific rhetoric. To this end, when taking into account the way that "even as being represents a means for demystifying [Burke's] most fundamental distinction—hierarchy—we believe Burke anticipated and would applaud its crumbling" (Foss and White 110), if "being" can be synonymous with embodiment, suggests a through-line from *A Rhetoric of Motives* to *The War of Words*, if tracing what the "scientific," and its derivative "science," for Burke, means to a scientific rhetoric that is always-already a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

However, if beginning with *A Grammar of Motives*, which contains too many references to "scientific," whether in adjectival or nounal forms, to list, I will point out two instances that are especially relevant to the meaning and meaningfulness of Burke's scientific rhetoric as trans-corporeal rhetoric. To the extent that "the potentiality-actuality pattern is at the bottom of all 'scientific' attempts at 'prediction' and 'control'" (Burke 256), not only is there a duplicity to the potentiality-actuality that manifests when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, but also, it seems to me, facts certainly correspond to "actuality" just as much as interpretations align with "potentiality"—in this case, facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts embody a "potentiality-actuality" pattern, as embodied beings transposing one another. But, also, just as this is "at the bottom of all 'scientific' attempts at 'prediction' and 'control,'" so, too, does this characterize the very grounding of scientific rhetoric trans-corporeally attuned to prediction and control. To this end, when facts become interpretations, facts make predictions about interpretations, and, in turn, when interpretations become facts, interpretations make

predictions of facts—more broadly, when facts become interpretations, the former controls the latter, just as, when interpretations become facts, the former controls the latter.

Another point that Burke makes in *A Grammar of Motives*, which is relevant to the meaning and meaningfulness of scientific rhetoric as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is the notion that "in a scientific world ethics become unnecessary" (38). Indeed, if such an assertion is to mean anything to scientific rhetoric, if Burke's words are to be effectively recontextualized, it would hold that, for scientific rhetoric, too, "ethics become unnecessary." This is certainly true, but only, I argue, when considering the bodily natures of facts and interpretations respectively, since, as bodily natures, facts and interpretations are porous, and, through this permeability, we can certainly, narrowly speaking, say that "ethics become unnecessary," when facts and interpretations, as embodied beings, transpose one another through a scientific rhetoric that is trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Yet, more generally, in proclaiming that "ethics become unnecessary" to the meaning and meaningfulness of the ethics of journalism and the dissemination of information, by way of the relationship between facts and interpretations, something entirely different is being asserted. Insofar as "ethics become unnecessary" for the transposing of facts and interpretations, such that facts become interpretation and interpretations become facts, ethics do, indeed, become unnecessary when scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, lay bare misinformation and disinformation—conversely though, it seems to me, ethics become necessary when facts and interpretations transpose one another, such that there is an underlying ethic to what scientific rhetoric means to do as that which becomes trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Let us turn to *A Rhetoric of Motives*, when considering the notion of the scientific, through the derivative, "science." There, in a way that is relevant to what it means to do

scientific rhetoric as trans-corporeal rhetoric, Burke sets up a relationship between science and magic, which is construed through a "scientist view" (41). To this end, Burke tells us, "scientific knowledge is thus presented as a terminology that gives an accurate and critically tested description of reality" (41), which, it seems to me, comes to bear upon what facts do by themselves and what interpretations do by themselves, before they are transposed, and if we simply consider the two respectively as impermeable towards "accurate and critically tested description[s] of reality." Still, when the two transpose one another, they do not allow for accurate and critically tested descriptions of reality—rather, they become what Burke deems as "magic." Even if Burke suggests that "magic is presented as antithetical" to science (41) and, in turn, to the scientific, he maintains that magic operates as another form of science, which is a sentiment, Burke later echoes in "The Language of Poetry 'Dramatisically' Considered" (1958), serving as contributive to Burke's planned but never-published "A Symbolic of Motives," suggesting "[science's] nature as a social 'magic'" (48).

In this case, if carefully following Burke, "magic is treated as an early uncritical attempt to do what science does, but under conditions where judgment and perception were impaired by the naively anthropomorphic belief that the impersonal forces of nature were motivated by personal designs" (41), this holds a certain significance to the manner in which facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts embody misinformation and disinformation, especially when judgment and perception are impaired. But also, insofar as scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is intent construing facts into interpretations and interpretations into facts, that which is transposed, it seems to me, due to "the impersonal forces of nature" about what facts are in relation to what interpretations are, and the way that the bodily natures of both are permeable enough to become a kind of journalism that is "motivated by personal designs."

Given these personal designs, which orient scientific rhetoric all the more stridently to a trans-corporeal rhetoric, and give accounts of the bodily natures of facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts, it is necessary to make sense out of what these trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities mean, if they do not, to reconsider Burke's point, give "an accurate and critically tested description of reality." It is this reality that is grounded on the scientific, but also one that is grounded on a kind of magic that is "uncritical" enough to allow facts and interpretations to be permeable enough to transpose one another in a given rhetorical situation. On this point, Burke's equating science to magic by the conclusion of "The Language of Poetry 'Dramatisically' Considered," included in *Essays Toward a Symbolic of Motives* (2007), further contextualizes the scientific, for example, "as a discipline infused, or made radiant by motives extrinsic to its specialties as such, but intrinsic to it as a mode of action evolved by the symbol-using species of organism" (48), which also speaks to what is at stake for scientific rhetoric.

Though Burke's use of the term "scientific" varies across the terrain from what can be derived from the collection of texts proposed to conceptualize Burke's "A Symbolic of Motives" to what Burke makes explicit in *A Rhetoric of Motives* and *A Grammar of Motives*, and what can certainly demonstrated across Burke's varied uses of the term is concentrated understanding of what the terms means and what is meaningful about it for the sake of rhetoric. Still, there remains a uniqueness to Burke's articulation of "scientific" towards "scientific rhetoric," as it appears only in *The War of Words*.

Indeed, given the trajectory I have outlined for the meaning and meaningfulness of scientific rhetoric, if "throughout the twentieth century, historians of science and scientific rhetoric have turned regularly to Francis Bacon and the seventeenth century in search of models or precedents for our own time" (Zappen 1989, 74), Bacon serves as a precedence for Burke, too,

and it is precisely Bacon that is in Burke's purview, particularly in *A Rhetoric of Motives*. At a certain point in *A Rhetoric of Motives*—not just as a companion work to *The War of Words*, but the first part of a two-part larger work to which *The War of Words* is included—Burke references Bacon, providing a rather long citation from *The Advancement of Learning*, and concluding, "[Bacon] is considering the good uses of a power which will deserve distrust, once you stress rather the negative possibilities that imagination may reenforce prejudiced opinion, false apprehensions, and lapses from religion" (81).

Though, notwithstanding his reference to Bacon, such a sentiment certainly seems to map Burke's preoccupations, speaking antecedently to *A Grammar of Motives* and all the way up to and including *The Rhetoric of Religion*, I want to place emphasis on Burke's conceptions of "prejudiced opinion," "false apprehensions," and "lapses," to the omission of any connotations surrounding the term "religion." Each of these concerns holds a certain relevance for Burke's scientific rhetoric as a trans-corporeal rhetoric, predicated on facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, to the degree that, Burke explains, "too often we assume that we can get an adequate extra-philosophic report of 'reality' by confining ourselves simply to 'the facts'" (170). To this end, the transposing of facts and interpretations challenge and shape, to Burke's point, "an adequate extra-philosophic report of reality," so that facts are not simply closed bodily natures, but are, rather, permeable with respect to the bodily natures of interpretations—the trans-corporeal relationship between the two are rhetorical entities cognitively frame, if reminded of Kitcher, what reality is, if reminded of Hexter, as "a precise and exact knowledge of the particular universes."

Even though, Burke tells us, "these facts are thought to exist wholly outside the realm of interpretation" (170), and he ponders "maybe they do" (170), this only takes into account the

corporeality of facts and interpretations, rather than their respective bodily natures. Burke recognizes this, particularly if, under the very rubric of scientific rhetoric, when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, they accomplish this trans-corporeality precisely because do they not "exist wholly outside the realm of" the other. As Burke conceives of scientific rhetoric, as that which is imbued into news, journalism, and the act of reporting information, "for not only are many facts *interpretations* of the reporter; they are *selections* along his interpretations" (170). Note, here, the emphasis Burke places on "interpretations" and "selections." This emphasis, it seems to me, not only speaks to the way that facts trans-corporeally become interpretations, when emphasizing the permeability of facts as "interpretations," but it also speaks to the way that interpretations trans-corporeally become facts, when emphasizing the permeability of interpretations as "facts" or "selections."

The transposing of facts with interpretations and interpretations with facts, then, Burke makes clear, hinges on how "one could not interpret without selecting, quite as one could not select without criteria of selection" (170), insofar as, to expound on Burke's point, facts need interpretations, just as much as interpretations need facts. If, by saying they respectively "need" one another, the implication is that they trans-corporeally need one another, it is possible to draw from Burke an understanding that facts are just as permeable as interpretations and, because of this, there is always-already a trans-corporeal relationship between facts and interpretations, whereby facts always-already become interpretations, just as surely as interpretations always-already become facts—it is in this sense, then, that scientific rhetoric, as Burke views it, as that which is grounded on what facts mean to interpretations and vice versa, as permeable bodily natures, is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Consider how Burke situates the relationship between facts and interpretations within the context of news, reporters, and the act of reporting information. For Burke, "'the same facts,'" which Burke places in scare quotes, as I have endeavored to preserve, "are reported differently in Moscow and Washington not because the reporters are crooks, but because they have different philosophies, theories of motives, interpretations" (170). In spite of Burke's using Moscow and Washington as examples, when reminded that Burke is writing in the 1950s at the very beginnings of the Cold War, there are other ways that the role of place encounters "the same facts" and construes them through "different philosophies, theories of motives, interpretations"—contemporarily speaking, differences in socio-economic status, religious beliefs, cultural background, generational divide, educational experiences, access to information, and so forth all shape how we make meaning out of "the same facts," whereby the meaningfulness made by each case allows for "the same facts" to be, to Burke's point, "reported differently." How facts trans-corporeally become interpretations, and, in turn, how interpretations trans-corporeally become facts, is contingent on how "the same facts," it seems to me, are trans-corporeally "reported differently," depending on a wide range of contexts and, even, pretexts.

In this regard, "the same facts," or Burke puts simply, as "'the facts,'" Burke tells us, maintaining the qualifying scare quotes, "gain added rhetorical power from the belief that if 'the facts' are but honestly given, they 'speak for themselves'" (170). But, of course, to one part of Burke's point, facts do not "speak for themselves," since facts always require interpretations of them, paradoxically, to the other part of Burke's point, our interpretations of the facts, when "honestly given," suggest that facts have an objective quality to them—in this, what is at stake, I maintain, is what facts trans-corporeally mean to interpretations and interpretations trans-corporeally mean to facts, not only from the standpoint of what is "honestly given" and what

"speak[s] for themselves," but also to what ways and what means facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts "gain rhetorical power."

The power that is thusly gained rhetorically, through scientific rhetoric that is always-already trans-corporeal rhetoric, comes to bear, when further considering Burke, "when discussing events of the world at large, we must ourselves implicitly and explicitly supply the interpretative framework in terms of which the given action or event is to be judged" (170). In this sense, though "events of the world at large" are embodied by the bodily natures of facts, the judgments applied to them are embodied by the bodily natures of interpretations—it is in the supplying of an interpretative framework where the transposing of facts and interpretations become possible, and where the traversing of these bodily natures take place corporeally and then trans-corporeally, and where facts as interpretations and interpretations as facts become trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities.

Insofar as, Burke informs us, his conceptualization of an interpretative framework is previously discussed in *A Grammar of Motives*, as that which pertains to his section, "Scope and Reduction" (170). There, Burke explains, for example, "men seek for vocabularies that will be faithful *reflections* of reality" (59), but do so, nonetheless, by "develop[ing] vocabularies that are *selections* of reality" (59). Considering the important emphasis here, this relationship between that which informs reality either by reflections or selections, Burke writes, is ultimately informed by the extent that "any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a *deflection* of reality" (59)—because, as Burke sees it, a " necessary scope" (59) develops from the "needs of reflection" (59) and, in turn, this scope develops into a selectivity that becomes a "reduction," what undergirds the connection between scope and reduction is an interpretative framework,

which, for Burke in *The War of Words*, sets the stage for facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts.

Whether we implicit or explicitly supply an interpretative framework, Burke notes in *The War of Words*, this framework, when deployed in any given rhetorical situation where facts and interpretations operate as trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities, "resides in the focusing of attention upon the 'fact' to be judged rather than upon the critical framework in which it is judged" (170). Though this is certainly an expansion upon what he means by "scope" and "reduction" in *A Grammar of Motives*, and it anticipates what he will eventually argue in "Terministic Screens" (1965), as part of the collection, *Language as Symbolic Action*, what Burke means, more narrowly, by "interpretative framework" for *The War of Words* is integral to what he means, more narrowly, by scientific rhetoric, as "a major resource of [it]" (170).

Yet, given that Burke does not call what he is discussing as scientific rhetoric in *A Grammar of Motives* and, for that matter, does not apply such a label in "Terminstic Screens," even though, in the latter, he writes of reality as that which is a reflection, selection, and a deflection (45), it seems to me, Burke's understanding of scientific rhetoric remains in the backgrounds of both texts. For that matter, this understanding permeates from Burke's assertation, in *A Rhetoric of Motives*, for example, that "the ability of rhetoric to ingratiate is considered secondary, as a mere device for gaining good will, holding the attention, or deflecting the attention in preparation for more urgent purposes" (52). From this, if viewing scientific rhetoric as a primary mode, working as more than just "a mere device for gaining good will" or as a means of either holding or deflecting attention, it—scientific rhetoric as trans-corporeal rhetoric—works, to Burke's point, "in preparation of more urgent purposes." Rather than simply being invested in ingratiation, then, as Burke writes in *The War of Words*, the primary mode of

scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is predicated on the degree that, "since the 'fact' is believed to be 'speaking for itself,' people fail to note that there *is* no 'fact' before them; there is nothing but a *report* of the 'fact'" (170).

Burke's scientific rhetoric, in terms of what it means to trans-corporeal rhetoric, is contingent on, I maintain, the relationship between news, journalism, and the act of reporting information, through the meaning and meaningfulness of Burke's conceptualization of the newspaper. For Burke, even though "a newspaper is thought to be a body of *facts* […] but a newspaper is a body of *words*" (170-171), the distinction Burke wishes to make, it seems to me, is between what facts are in themselves and what words are in themselves and, for the matter, how both are what they are due to how we, to Burke's point, "must ourselves implicitly or explicitly supply the interpretative framework" necessary to make sense out of what facts means to words and what words mean to facts. In this way, given that, Burke concludes, "[a newspaper's] statements are not merely the *grounds* of an interpretation; they are themselves interpretations" (171), with emphasis on the word "grounds," what Burke is articulating is not only the extent that facts and interpretations transpose one another corporeally through an interpretative framework, but also the extent that facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts constitute one another trans-corporeally through a newspaper.

Consider Burke's more thoroughgoing definition of the newspaper, as, to a certain extent, it becomes a screen, or a frame, through which facts and interpretations transpose one another trans-corporeally. In a more thoroughgoing, and more robust sort of way, Burke asserts the following: "the newspaper, being not a set of 'facts' (which are things and situations), but a set of interpretations (*reports* of things and situations), is not *antithetical to philosophy*, but is itself the *uncritical and unsystematic*, or *implicit*, philosophy" (172). Here, Burke provides what it

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means to do scientific rhetoric, as that which is, in itself, not "antithetical to philosophy," but, instead, is an "uncritical and unsystematic, or implicit philosophy," if we see this distinction, in favor of the latter over the former, is about qualifying what he means by "scientific," for the sake of quantifying what he means by "rhetoric"—that which is qualified and that which is quantified is, for Burke, constituted in the very notion of the newspaper.

Though we can broaden Burke's understanding of the newspaper beyond that of the 1950s to, contemporarily speaking, notions of news, journalism, and the act of reporting information, Burke's use of the term "news" remains important to what he means by scientific rhetoric and, for that matter, what scientific rhetoric means to trans-corporeal rhetoric. Insofar as "news" is reported by a "newspaper" and a "newspaper," in turn, reports "news," to do scientific rhetoric, as Burke certainly suggests, means doing so through the act of reporting. Reporting, as Burke sees it, if pushing Burke a bit further, is always-already accomplished through a trans-corporeal rhetoric, whereby facts reported in a newspaper are really interpretations, just as much as interpretations reported as news are presented as really facts. To this end, facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts are trans-corporeal, rhetorical entities that respectively affect what we mean by a "newspaper," at all, and what we mean by "news," at all, which, it seems to me, are both problems for Burke, with respect to what he means by "journalism" during the Cold War of the 1950s and what we mean by "journalism" now.

The transposing of facts and interpretations under the rubric of scientific rhetoric, for the purposes of its being trans-corporeal rhetoric, adversely affects what a newspaper should be and is, just as much as this transposing adversely affects what news should be and is, which Burke surmises and summarizes in the following manner:

> Hence, a falsely persuasive effect of news can result through deflecting the attention from the real center of the problem, which is always a *philosophic* one. And while we are

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invited to keep our attention upon the 'facts' before us, we fail correspondingly to watch the point at which the magician is really performing his trick, as he implicitly builds up the frame of reference which should itself be in question. That is, since the report must be given through the medium of *terms*, it automatically fixes the terms by which the reported event is to be defined (171).

Here, for Burke, the "falsely persuasive effect of news" is what occurs when facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, particularly when the transposing of facts and interpretations, to his point, deflect "attention from the real center of the problem." If, as Burke views it, this problem is "always a *philosophic* one," given that he is emphasizing "philosophic," what remains at stake, then, is the manner to which the transposing of facts and interpretations, as he suggests, builds up the frame of reference philosophically, so that the means bv which "a reported event" is presented remains more subjective than objective, more partisan than nonpartisan, fixes and defines what the facts are and what the interpretations are more than it allows for facts and interpretations to speak for themselves, to the extent that, Burke tells us, news "indirectly contribut[es] to the enforcement of the particular terminology which perpetuates this bias" (171).

2.6: Epilogue

Rather than simply considering *The War of Words* as an extension to or merely working within the "motivorium" framework of his *A Grammar of Motives*, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and even what would have been a "Symbolic of Motives," the text, it seems to me, more directly contributes to Burke's conceptualization of rhetoric in a way that ventures beyond whatever rhetoricization is laid bare in the two volumes Burke published and what can be gleaned from the material that would have contributed to "A Symbolic of Motives." In serving as a codification of and a culmination to Burke's preoccupations with information and what it means to news and

journalism, within the bounds of certain "screens," if I may use Burke's term, imposed on the dissemination of news, *The War of Words* advances a particular approach to rhetoric that, for Burke, is situated in what facts and interpretations do rhetorically to the information. What results, then, is a scientific rhetoric, just as Burke prescribes it, that is not only concerned with the separate issues of what institutional journalism is, but it is also with what journalistic screens are, how these screens exercise an ethics upon information, and how these ethics of the information inform a corporeal aesthetics of embodied beings of facts and interpretations—all of these concerns are interconnected into a rhetorical triangularity hinging on how scientific rhetoric fundamentally points towards a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

In a post-factum way, Burke's scientific rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is concerned with the ways and means that the news is constructed within a specific genre, with a particular ethics, and with a certain corporeal aesthetics. For Burke, the very notion of "scientific" initiates a trans-corporeal process, which conflates facts and interpretations, so that facts become interpretations and interpretations become facts, though the two are different corporeal, aesthetic concerns, so that the two can transpose one another. To this end, Burke views "facts as interpretations" and "interpretations as facts" as being conditioned by and in terms of the ethics of news, in order to reify facts and interpretations into embodied beings, for the sake of presenting a trans-corporeal rhetoric about the use, misuse, and abuse of information.

CHAPTER 3

MICHEL FOUCAULT, RHETORIC, AND THE CONFESSION

> I wondered what the technology of the self before Christianity was, or where the Christian technology of the self came from, and what kind of sexual ethics was characteristic of the ancient culture.
> —Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics," (1983)

> One cannot care for self without knowledge. The care for self is of course knowledge of self […] but it is also the knowledge of a certain number of rules of conduct or of principles which are at the same time truths and regulations. To care for self is to fit one's self out with these truths. That is where ethics is linked to the game of truth.
> —Michel Foucault, "The Ethic of Care for the self as a Practice of Freedom: An Interview," (January 20, 1984)

3.1: Prologue

Before Michel Foucault (1924-1984) died, he was preoccupied with a multi-volume study of sexuality in the Western world, more broadly called *L'Historie de la sexualité*, or "The History of Sexuality." Though the project was constituted by the first volume, entitled, *La volonté de savoir* (1976), translated as *The Will to Knowledge* in 1978, the next two volumes did not appear until May and June of 1984: first, *L'usage des plaisirs*, translated as *The Use of Pleasure* in 1985, and, then, *Le souci de soi*, translated as *The Care of the Self* in 1986. Though Foucault initially planned and announced as many as five additional volumes after *La volonté de savoir* (Eribon 1991, 273-274), and given that none of these volumes ever appeared in Foucault's lifetime, and "none of these works will see the light of day" (Gros 2021, vii), only the publication of *Les aveux de la chair* recently in 2018, translated as *Confessions of the Flesh* (2021) has emerged. As much as the text certainly contributes to Foucault's "The History of

Sexuality" project, *Confessions of the Flesh* also contributes to a new way of understanding Foucault's concerns, as Stuart Elden's *Foucault's Last Decade* (2016) makes clear, in the last decade of his life—even if *Confessions of the Flesh* directly operates under the rubric of "The History of Sexuality" project, it prescribes another concern for Foucault about the relationship between rhetoric, confession, and the self, in terms of what these mean to Christianity, and, in turn, as this chapter will show, between the natures of self-examination and self-renunciation, in the rhetorical constructions of what Foucault calls "technologies of the self."

If, Federic Gros, the editor of *Confessions of the Flesh,* tells us, "the year 1980 constitutes a decisive moment in the development of studies leading to the manuscript of the [*Confessions of the Flesh*]" (ix), Elden certainly agrees with this, suggesting that, though Foucault's concern is with the relationship between governmentality and selfhood, "[his] key concern here though is the transition between different understandings of the relation between the body, desire, and pleasure" (149). This seems so, for Foucault, due to how governmentality fashions selfhood into what Foucault describes, in the final session of his "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture on April 1, 1981, as the "government of the self by self and government of individuals by each other" (281). What arises from this, Foucault proposes, is a connection between "the basis for a history of governmentalities" and "the basis of a history of technologies of the self" (288), such that, he concludes, "a certain type of relationship of self to self was formed that has itself undergone certain transformations, since we have seen it developed, organized, and distributed in an apparatus (*dispositif*) that was first that of the flesh before becoming, much later, that of sexuality" (288-289). Though Foucault brings the "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture to an end on this supposition, he will cover a comparable matrix of concerns in both "The Hermeneutics of the Subject" (January 6 to March 24, 1982), and "Technologies of

the Self" seminar (October 1982)—Gros pinpoints, "the definitive drafting" of *Confessions of the Flesh* to this period (x).

From this, it is clear that Foucault remained preoccupied with working out and working through a conceptualization of the self, which is certainly evident the lectures and seminars Foucault delivered relatively contemporaneously to the composition of *Confessions of the Flesh*. In this respect, Foucault's conceptualization of the self is connected to a conceptualization of confession, insofar as the notion of confession rhetorically conditions how the self is, in itself, conditioned by or through, Foucault finds, "Christian technologies," given that these "technologies of the self" are predicated on a rhetoric of confession.

This chapter will consider, broadly, Foucault's place in the field of rhetoric, in order to ascertain what Foucault means to rhetoric, to the exclusion of *Confessions of the Flesh*. To do this, I will discuss some ways in which Foucault has been understood in terms of or in opposition to structuralism and, in turn, the degree to which this connection affords an opening for discussing what rhetoric means to Foucault, particularly with respect to Foucault's concerns with language and discourse. These concerns, from the standpoint of Foucault's approach to discursiveness, are integral to Foucault's examination of Christianity, not simply as a structure, or even as that which will requires post-structuralist thinking to make sense of it, but, for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, as something that imposes technologies on the flesh and for the self. To make this clear, this chapter will present Foucault's rhetoric of confession as scientific discursiveness between self-examination and self-renunciation, as a means of conceptualizing the relationship between rhetoric, the confession, and "technologies of the self."

3.2: Foucault and Rhetoric

As a starting point, unlike with the relationship between Burke and rhetoric advanced in Chapter 1, what Foucault means to the field of rhetoric is more complicated, to say the least. While the meaningfulness of Burke to rhetoric is undeniable and Burke's place is influential in what it means to do rhetoric now, when similarly considering what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault, there are challenges in conceptualizing Foucault in a way analogous to what has been presented about Burke. These challenges, they seems to me, are rooted in three concerns: first, what "Foucault" and what "rhetoric" are being interfaced, secondly, how are the two being interfaced in terms of how the two are being conceptualized, and thirdly, why this is interface occurring, if what results is to place Foucault within rhetorical studies, or locate in Foucault's work a formalized understanding of rhetoric.

More specifically, what is complicated about the relations between Foucault and rhetoric is the extent that Foucault occupies a place, if any, in the field of rhetoric and the extent that rhetoric, as a field of study, occupies a place, if any, in Foucauldian studies. Given the extent that what we mean by "rhetoric' elicits a systematic understanding of it, and given that Foucault's *oeuvre* is voluminous and varied, what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault greatly depends on how Foucault is read and interpreted. Here, for the sake of being clear about to what "Foucault" I am referring, my intent is to situate Foucault's proximity to rhetoric in terms of Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*—there, it is possible to not only ascertain what Foucault means to rhetoric, from the standpoint of what *Confessions of the Flesh* contributes to what it means to do rhetoric now, but also articulate what rhetoric means to Foucault, from the standpoint of what kind of rhetoric Foucault espouses in *Confessions of the Flesh*. To this end, *Confessions of the Flesh*, it seems to me, gives an account of the place

Foucault occupies in the field of rhetoric, if any, in an effort to, ultimately, give an account of what rhetoric means to Foucault.

Suffice it to say, unlike Burke, to the best of my knowledge, Foucault is not generally considered as a rhetorician, and, currently, *Confessions of the Flesh* is not widely considered as a work of rhetorical studies. To contend, then, that *Confessions of the Flesh* advances a kind of rhetoric and that this kind of rhetoric, for Foucault, provides a way to think about what rhetoric means to Foucault, this means that Foucault has something meaningful to contribute to rhetoric, particularly in a way that, I feel, is more explicitly laid bare in *Confessions of the Flesh* than anywhere else in Foucault's *oeuvre*. To make that case, while working within the scope of what Foucault generally means to rhetoric and what rhetoric specifically means to Foucault in *Confessions of the Flesh*, I want to carefully consider *Confessions of the Flesh* as representative of a specific "Foucault" that is outside the purview of what is generally meant by "Foucault," to the extent that the kind of "Foucault" that predominantly and frequently emerges in rhetorical studies adopts other texts from Foucault's *oeuvre* and uses the rubric of post-structuralism.

Insofar as what is generally meant by "Foucault," if viewing his work as post-structuralist contributes to the field of rhetoric, this is understandably to the exclusion of *Confessions of the Flesh*. The issue, here, is to which "Foucault" we are referring, if, by this, we are concerned with either an early Foucault or a later Foucault, or some specific work of his. For that matter, if operating only within the landscape of post-structuralism, and interfacing this with what we mean by "rhetoric," only certain understandings of Foucault emerge—reconfiguring Foucault requires coming to terms with the prevailing account of what Foucault means to rhetoric, in order to more effectively explicate what rhetoric means to Foucault in *Confessions of the Flesh*.

Indeed, there is a modest amount of scholarship, however limited in scope, that gives an account of what Foucault means to rhetoric and vice versa. In my view, these relations can be traced, at least in the sense of having a good starting point, to Hayden White's "Michel Foucault," included in the collection, *Structuralism and Since* (1979). Keeping in mind White's contributions to historical theory more broadly, White's specific take on Foucault is noteworthy, given that White has a certain affinity for the same structuralism from which Foucault wishes to distance himself, and White is writing during Foucault's lifetime when Foucault's overall "History of Sexuality" project, as a culmination of his thought, remains incomplete. For that matter, Foucault's legacy, by 1979, had not yet fully materialized—the questions that Foucault hoped to answer, by 1979, were still open-ended. White indirectly acknowledges all of this from the opening of his chapter on Foucault, particularly in light of the extensiveness of Foucault's body of work at the time, but also, according to White, "because [Foucault's] thought comes clothed in a rhetoric apparently designed to frustrate summary, paraphrase, economical quotation for illustrative purposes, or translation into traditional critical terminology" (81).

Consider White's sentiment that Foucault's "thought comes clothed in a rhetoric." From this, it is clear that White views Foucault's "rhetoric" suspiciously, not only in terms of White's understanding of Foucault's thought, to White's own frustration, but he also in terms of White's understanding of what rhetoric is or should be, with respect to a "traditional critical terminology" that, for White, Foucault lacks. What we find, in White's account, is a hesitancy to connect Foucault and rhetoric, which is rooted in the way that, whatever rhetoric means to Foucault, it means something other than what White is accustomed—to compensate for this, White discusses Foucault's uses of discourse and language, as that which is, to White point, "clothed in rhetoric."

Though White finds a "idiosyncrasy [in] Foucault's rhetoric" (81), and that "there is no centre to Foucault's discourse" (82), White, nonetheless, approaches "the thicket of Foucault's work and […] a way out of it, by concentrating on its nature as discourse" (82). Even so, White's reading of Foucault is largely concerned with making sense of what Foucault means to structuralist thought and what structuralist thought means to Foucault, which White characterizes, in "Foucault Decoded" (1973), included in his essay collection, *Tropics of Discourse* (1978), as a designation that is "fair enough" (230). It is in this regard, then, that White's criticism of Foucault's work, for example, lacking a center speaks more disparagingly to what this lack means to structuralist thought, and how such an issue matters to a devoted structuralist such as White himself, than it does to what can be deemed as "idiosyncrasy" inherent in Foucault's use of rhetoric—to this end, we should take care to consider that White's sense of idiosyncrasy in the rhetoric that Foucault deploys is also more about what White's sense of rhetoric means to structuralist thought than it does about providing an objective account of what rhetoric is itself and what Foucault, as White reads him, contributes to the field of rhetoric.

Nevertheless, though White tells us, "my approach will be generally rhetorical and my aim will be to characterize the style of Foucault's discourse" (82), we should take heed to note that White is much more concerned with situating his approach to Foucault in terms of Foucault's work prior to the publication of the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* series, *The Will to Know*. To this end, how White considers "the style of Foucault's discourse" is with *The Will to Know* mostly in White's periphery—to be sure, though White does spend time addressing his reading of *The Will to Know*, he does so in a relatively cursory way, acknowledging that *The Will to Know* "indicates the matrix of the larger work" of the History of Sexuality series (108). This certainly seems so, particularly when this acknowledgment is placed along side of White's

proclamation that "[the] never-ending conflict between power and desire is the aim of [Foucault's] *History of Sexuality*" (108), which, it seems me, is markedly perfunctory, since Foucault's Collège de France lectures delivered contemporarily to White's writing indicate a broader aim for the *History of Sexuality* project than White is prepared to give an account for.

Still, notwithstanding the limitations to his purview, White remains insightful in his rhetorical approach to Foucault, which, ultimately, prescribes the meaningfulness of Foucault to the field of rhetoric as being "based upon a rather conventional conception of the relation between language and experience, a theory originating in the now discredited discipline of rhetoric" (114). Here, not only do we see White's dismissal of the "discipline of rhetoric" at odds with his approach to Foucault as "generally rhetorical," but we also see, in this contradiction, a handling of Foucault that explicitly gestures to the discipline of rhetoric, as that which White utilizes to validate his view that "Foucault uses rhetorical notions of language to project a conception of culture as magical, spectral, delusory" (114). The very fact that White goes on to say that "this idea of language remains unexamined by [Foucault]" (114) not only speaks to White's desire to see what Foucault can contribute to the discipline of rhetoric, but it also, though only coincidently, prescribes the very significance of *Confessions of the Flesh* to "the idea of language" and "a theory of discourse," situated in a particular kind of rhetoric.

As much as White believes that "[Foucault] has not elaborated such a theory [of language] systematically" (114) and warns us that "as long as [Foucault] fails to elaborate it, his thought remains captive to that very power which it has been his aim to dissipate" (114), White, in his own right, also fails to elaborate upon what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault, if it is through rhetoric that any understanding of Foucault's theory of language—or a theory of discourse, or an idea of language—is made possible. If, to White's

point, the discipline of rhetoric is "discredited," it stands to reason that it would be difficult for White to ascertain what Foucault's theory of language is—this is not just simply a criticism of what rhetoric is, or what Foucault's theory of language is, but it is also a criticism of White's view of Foucault as a deviant structuralist, such that Foucault's deviance for White, as I see it, is a deviant theory of language and, then, a deviance that ventures into that which White wishes to discredit: rhetoric.

The point where White's article ends does not go much further than White's modest reading of Foucault's *The Will to Know*, though, to be sure, White is much more concerned with Foucault's body of work before it. While this remains limiting to White's reading of Foucault, for the purposes of White's article in 1979 and what can now be ascertained from *Confessions of the Flesh*, White provides, nonetheless, an important starting point into the nature and scope of the relations between Foucault and rhetoric. This is certainly so, despite White's desire to discredit the meaningfulness of the discipline of rhetoric. The irony in this, or perhaps the contradiction in this, is that what White discredits about the discipline of rhetoric becomes the centerpiece of how he wishes to approach his understanding of Foucault's theory of language, however defunct he believes it to me.

White's duplicity towards rhetoric lays bare a line of inquiry, which is furthered by Nancy Fraser's "Foucault's Body-Language: A Post-Humanist Political Rhetoric" (1983). In it, not only does Fraser directly refer to White's 1979 article, but she also confirms that White reads a "centrality of rhetoric" (58) in Foucault's body of work up to 1979, Fraser writes, "as opposed to epistemology and ethics" (58). Though *Confessions of the Flesh* remains outside of Fraser's purview, it certainly exemplifies what Fraser means, if there is, indeed, a "centrality of rhetoric" permeating from the text "as opposed to epistemology and ethics." This is undoubtedly poignant,

too, when considering that Fraser's characterization runs relatively contemporarily to Foucault's writing of *Confessions of the Flesh*, with the text moving beyond the epistemology and ethics of the other three volumes of the "History of Sexuality" project, and towards what I believe is a more consequential rhetoric for Foucault.

For Fraser, through the centrality of rhetoric, Foucault "proclaims the need for a new *vocabulary* or *rhetoric* of social criticism" (58). Note, here, Fraser's emphasis on "vocabulary" and "rhetoric" attends to what Fraser sees as an emphasis for Foucault, insofar as Fraser views, as the title of her article proposes, Foucault advances a "post-humanist rhetoric." Fraser's use of the term "post-humanism" is notable, since it predates the emergence of the term as it "seems to have worked its way into contemporary critical discourse in the humanities and social sciences during the mid-1990s" (Wolfe 2010, xii). Though the roots of the word "go back, in one genealogy at least to the 1960s" (Wolfe 2010, xii), and the extent that "pronouncements of the sort" can be traced to Foucault's *The Order of Things* (Wolfe 2010, xii), Fraser's use of the term, in 1983, has an altogether different scope, it seems to me, from that of what the terms means presently, even if Fraser's task is construed similarly to the contemporary task that the term implies. As Fraser's use of the term "post-humanist" suggests, when applied to her reading of Foucault, she sees that what makes Foucault "post-humanist" arises from Foucault's "need for a new *critical paradigm*" (58), insofar as, Fraser describes, there arises a critique of and a resistance "to continue to use the modern humanist vocabulary and rhetoric" (58). Reading Foucault this way, "it is this project of a critique without traditional normative foundations," Fraser writes, "a critique rooted in a postmodern *rhetoric* rather than in a postmodern *theory*, that I wish to explore here" (58).

For Fraser, what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault is ultimately predicated on a postmodern rhetoric, which Fraser views as "post-humanist" in nature. By this, Fraser is pointing out that Foucault's "post-humanist" rhetoric is politically tinged, insofar as Foucault's use of rhetoric rejects and distances itself from humanism, modernism, and, more importantly, structuralism—it is through a post-humanist, post-modernist, and post-structuralist form of rhetoric that Foucault, to Fraser's point, attends to "a new critical paradigm." If all are rooted, more generally, on humanism and "modern humanist vocabulary," Fraser proposes that "Foucault's account of the mystificatory functioning of humanist rhetoric depends upon some assumptions about historical temporality which help define his *own* project of a posthumanist political rhetoric" (60).

As much as "posthumanist"—which, it seems to me, in Fraser's hands, becomes synonymous with the stylistic "post-humanist"—attempts to handle certain assumptions that arise due to certain boundaries placed by humanism, modernism, and structuralism itself, so that "historical temporality," too, can be handled in terms of certain assumptions. According to Fraser, "these assumptions come to light in the curious fact that he charges rights rhetoric with two seemingly mutually contradictory offenses" (60). In Fraser's view, Foucault rejects rights rhetoric—it seems to me, as that which is particularly laid bare by humanism, modernism, and structuralism—because it is "not the proper normative standard for the critical thematization of discipline because it is anachronistic" (60), and, Fraser points out, "on the grounds that it is precisely contemporary with the disciplinary regime" (60). Indeed, what Foucault rejects, then, in terms of "discipline" and that which codifies itself into a "disciplinary regime" is more than just structuralism, but also disciplinaries such as humanism and modernism—to this, we can also include, as a disciplinary regime, history itself, whether from the standpoint of Foucault's first

major work, *History of Madness*, to his last, incomplete project, *The History of Sexuality*. This rejection of the disciplinary regime, as Fraser sees it, is due to "Foucault want[ing] to rule out in principle any paradigm which is either anachronistic or contemporary with the regime it is to critique" (61). In this sense, when considering the problem of modern humanist vocabulary, Fraser concludes, for Foucault, "neither the vocabulary of the past nor that of the present is adequate" (61). The extent that "this leaves only the vocabulary of the future" (61) becomes the means by which Foucault, Fraser surmises, "seems to assume that an adequate critique of discipline must await the appearance of an entirely new political rhetoric" (61). Not only does this new political rhetoric become Fraser's conceptualization of a post-humanist political rhetoric, but, through Foucault's handlings of other disciplinary regimes, it also allows for a rhetoricization of post-structuralist and post-modernist regimes, such that "[Foucault's] scheme of things is tantamount to a new moral vision" (61).

While Fraser situates her understanding of what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault by mostly mining the first volume of *History of Sexuality*, and, in doing so, by necessity, aligns Foucault over and against humanism, for the sake of developing and advancing a new political rhetoric, the implications of this are addressed by Carole Blair and Martha Cooper in "The Humanist Turn in Foucault's Rhetoric of Inquiry" (1987). For Blair and Cooper, "Foucault hardly can be called the standard view of an 'anti-humanist'" (151), which is a direct challenge to an earlier characterization of Foucault by Walter R. Fisher's "The Narrative Paradigm: An Elaboration" (1985). According to Blair and Cooper, "Fisher describes Foucault as an anti-humanist so as to dismiss the utility of the French post-structuralist's writings to Fisher's own narrative paradigm" (151). The significance of Fisher's argument is not only in how it sees "prima facie evidence" of Foucault as an anti-humanist (Fisher 1985, 356), rather than a post-

humanist as Fraser does, but, in its "dismiss[ing] the utility" of Foucault to Fisher's "narrative paradigm, also dismisses the utility of Foucault to the field of communication more broadly. This concern is what Blair and Cooper focus their efforts, insofar as, thanks to Fisher, "scholars in communication studies have begun to assimilate Foucault's work into the discipline" (151), Blair and Cooper write, though "[Foucault's] unique contribution runs the risk of being reduced to an anti-humanist perspective and, therefore, dismissed as detrimental to the goals" of the field of communication studies (151).

With this in mind, Blair and Cooper argue, "our contention is that Fisher's discussion [of Foucault] constitutes a serious misinterpretation of Foucault's views that may have the result of discouraging those in our discipline from further probing Foucault's writings" (152). Blair and Cooper provide a corrective to Fisher, both within the boundaries of communication studies, to which they see "[Foucault's] humanist turn be followed by those interested in his potential contribution to communication studies" (167), and also within the boundaries of Foucault studies, from which they draw on the Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow co-authored, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (1982), citing a "rhetorical dimension" to Foucault's work (206). Given that Cooper's own 1984 dissertation, entitled "The Implications of Foucault's Archaeological Theory of Discourse for Contemporary Rhetorical Theory and Criticism" makes abundantly clear, which Blair and Cooper note, they see Foucault holding a dual significance to the fields of communication studies and rhetorical theory, "by offering a method that investigates the relationship between discourse and the prevailing social order" (168). In this regard, they add, "by offering a conception of discourse as presentative and pragmatic, rather than representative, [Foucault] opened a space for inquiry in which rhetorical theory and practice can drive the social order and practice" (168). More specifically, towards the

very end of their article, Blair and Cooper arrive at the following conclusion: "for Foucault, then, rhetoric is a constructive instrument that enhances humanism's goal of freedom by opening a space of inquiry into who the human is" (168)—in this way, rhetoric, for Blair and Cooper's reading of Foucault, conceptualizes social order and practice as predicated on discursiveness.

While Blair furthers, in "The Statement: Foundation of Foucault's Historical Criticism" (1987), what Foucault offers to rhetorical theory and criticism, through the meaningfulness of Foucault's notions of discourse and discursiveness, published contemporarily to Blair [in the same issue of *The Western Journal of Speech Communication*] is the Sonja K. Foss and Ann Gill co-authored, "Michel Foucault's Theory of Rhetoric as Epistemic" (1987). In it, contributing to an ongoing debate, beginning with Robert L. Scott's "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic" (1967), about the relationship between rhetoric and knowledge, working towards and working out the notion of "rhetoric-as-epistemic," Foss and Gill point out that Foucault "has influenced a number of speech communication scholars outside the rhetoric-as-epistemic debate" (386). Moreover, in situating Foucault more firmly in the rhetoric-as-epistemic debate, Foss and Gill write, "[Foucault's] elaboration of the notion of discursive formation specifies elements involved in the rhetorical creation of knowledge that can serve as units for a well-developed epistemic rhetorical theory" (386).

For Foss and Gill, Foucault's notion of discursive formation, particularly in his *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), "makes clear the central role Foucault sees for discourse in the structure of knowledge" (387). This speaks to "a framework for knowledge," Foss and Gill suggest, "[that] is constituted by a shared body of discourse or given discursive practices" (387), they view as cumulatively pointing to discursive formation, of which discursive practices and four other "primary units […] form the basis of a middle-level epistemic theory" (387). Setting

aside how Foss and Gill specifically explain the meaning of middle-level epistemic theory, and how they detail each of the primary units from which middle-level epistemic theory is constructed, the meaningfulness of it all to how they read Foucault is predicated on "the interactions among the theoretical units" (390), and how they read these interactions in several of Foucault's works. The discursiveness between the theoretical units highlights the fact that "discourse creates knowledge" (398). In light of this, Foss and Gill outline three contributions that Foucault makes, through the relations between discursiveness and knowledge, for the sake of what rhetoric as epistemic means: first, through Foucault's sense that "existence is discourse […] the study of rhetoric is the study of the constraints upon discourse and of knowledge, which is discursive" (398), secondly, Foucault "forces us to analyze the framework in which rhetoric is produced and the effects of it on the rhetorical practices that occur within it" (398), and lastly, Foucault "settl[es] questions […] about the domain and significance of rhetoric" (398).

From their reading of Foucault, Foss and Gill come to the conclusion that "rhetoric becomes clearly separated" (398) from other humanities and disciplines, insofar as rhetoric "constitutes the foundation, provides the boundaries, and generates the knowledge of these other disciplines" (399). But, more importantly, through Foucault, Foss and Gill surmise an "epistemic rhetorical theory," which, they write, "explains the processes by which these foundations are constituted and knowledge of them is generated" (399). Like Foss and Gill, Allan Megill's "Foucault, Ambiguity, and the Rhetoric of Historiography" (1990) also notes how rhetoric shapes historiography, in terms of how Foucault constitutes its foundation, provides its boundaries, and generates its knowledge. In highlighting the role that rhetoric plays in Foucault's task as a historian, Megill sets up a tension between Foucault's historiography and "more conventional historiography practi[c]ed by professional historians" (343). This tension, Megill

argues, is "between Foucaultian rhetoric and the kind of rhetoric fav[o]red by academic disciplines" (343), with respect to matters "of language and argument" (343). If the tension, then, "between Foucault and 'historians' is largely a matter of adherence to different rhetorical conventions" (343), this tension is not only about what Foucault means to the field of historiography, but it is also about what the field of rhetoric means to Foucault, as that which fundamentally conditions what historiography means to Foucault. The extent that Foucault's approach to historiography is always-already, to Megill's point, a "rhetoric of historiography" speaks to the decisive role that rhetoric plays in what historiography is for Foucault—how its foundation is constituted, how its boundaries are provided, and how its knowledge is generated—and the decisive role that rhetoric plays in "Foucault's mode of writing," Megill notes, and "the directedness [that] suggests that important insights are being conveyed, while the ambiguity allows the text to be received, and used, in a variety of ways" (343).

To be sure, Megill situates his articulation of Foucault's rhetoric of historiography chiefly in relation to Foucault's work prior to 1976, to the exclusion of three of the four volumes of the *History of Sexuality* series. I do not wish to presume the reasons for this, nor to suggest that the omission of the *History of Sexuality* volumes from Megill's purview undermines what he means for Foucault's rhetoric of historiography to be. In the same way that Foucault injects a rhetoricality to what he does with history and what he means to do as a historian, the *History of Sexuality* volumes, too, propose a rhetoric of historiography, which, just as Megill makes clear, constitutes a specific foundation, provides particular boundaries, and generates certain knowledge. Perhaps more so than the work that Megill includes, the *History of Sexuality* volumes become a broader, more robust, and more concentrated rhetoric of historiography. This is certainly so, when considering that the *History of Sexuality* volumes is not just a culmination

of Foucault's efforts at capturing the meaningfulness of history, but it is also a culmination of

what rhetoric means to Foucault and what Foucault means to rhetoric—this cumulative effect of

the *History of Sexuality* volumes, as a means of speaking to what rhetoric is for Foucault is

precisely how Barbara Biesecker's "Michel Foucault and the Question of Rhetoric" (1992) picks

up where, it seems to me, Megill, Foss and Grill, and Blair and Cooper, all leave things.

Biesecker approaches the question of what rhetoric is to Foucault and what Foucault is to

rhetoric by acknowledging the degree that Foucault's later writings, particularly the *History of*

Sexuality volumes, become fertile places to situate the relationship between rhetoric and

Foucault. Though Biesecker is "tempted to advance the proposition that Rhetoric has adopted

Foucault" (351), such a proposition is certainly warranted, given the fact that, Biesecker

correctly notes, "rhetorical theorists and critics are beginning to turn to [Foucault's] work" (351).

Still, for "Rhetoric," as Biesecker thinks of it, to adopt Foucault, what is required is an adoption

of a specific "Foucault," if we are to say that the early Foucault and the later Foucault

respectively comport what is meant by "Foucault" to what is meant by "rhetoric" differently—

for this reason, Biesecker predominantly refers to the first volume of the *History of Sexuality*

series, which suggests, it seems to me, how to contextualize the question of rhetoric for Foucault.

For Biesecker, this seems so, "because [Foucault's] work makes it possible for us to respond to a

generalized pressure in the humanities to update or 'postmodernize' our orthodoxies while

preserving, in however veiled a fashion, our disciplinary identity" (351).

The disciplinary identity to which Biesecker refers, and with which she is ultimately

concerned, is rhetorical studies, as that which speaks to the interests of rhetorical theorists and

those within communication studies alike. It is the broader disciplinary identity that must

respond to "a generalized pressure," Biesecker describes, that Foucault's place in rhetorical

studies updates and postmodernizes what it means to do rhetoric within the scope of what humanities means to do, insofar as, Biesecker proposes, "we have found in Foucault's theorizations and historical analyses a critical lexicon that, while establishing a crucial point of contact between us and others in the humanities, allows us nonetheless to continue to study the art of persuasion in roughly the same old way" (351). Even so, Biesecker asks, "what are the implications of Foucault's work for Rhetoric" (352), which serves as an explication of what Foucault means to rhetoric. To this, when Biesecker asks, as a follow-up question, "if our field were to affirm [Foucault's] statements, how would its tactics be transformed and the territory modified" (352), what is being explicated is what rhetoric means to Foucault, when "put[ting] the question in Foucaultian terms" (351).

Though Biesecker sees, when approaching what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault, that certain "orthodoxies" in the field of rhetoric "have continued to polarize the terms 'power' and 'resistance'" (352), which only further roots the field of rhetoric into a particular disciplinary identity. For Foucault to mean anything significant to what it means to do rhetoric, in ways that update and postmodernize it, the tactics and territory must respectively transform and modify themselves towards "the possibility of our understanding rhetoric's role in social change in a new way" (352), Biesecker maintains, rather than foreclosing it, "even as we have taken Foucault into our ranks" (352).

While true, the fact that Biesecker readily concedes that "it is not easy to discern the role Foucault attributes to rhetoric since, other than in his final lectures […] he rarely wrote or spoke about rhetoric per se" (352) suggests that there are problems inherent in what Foucault means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to Foucault. Biesecker enumerates these problems in footnoted information about just two of Foucault's final lectures, with Biesecker seemingly centering her

argument on Foucault's paradoxical relationship between what rhetoricians and what parrhesiasts respectively do, such that there is an "open contrary" between rhetoric and parrhesia (363). Yet, it is important to point out that Biesecker does not acknowledge all of Foucault's lectures in those final years beginning in 1980, in which Foucault repeatedly turns to the notion of "*parrhesia*" or "frank speech,"—a term which I will discuss later in Chapter 4—and, in its increasing frequency, what the implications of this notion, it seems to me, means to the relationship between Foucault and rhetoric more broadly.

For Biesecker, the degree to which Foucault "wrote or spoke about rhetoric per se" is fundamental to how Biesecker understands what rhetoric means to Foucault and what Foucault means to rhetoric. This is only true, if such a characterization attends to only instances when Foucault writes or speaks explicitly about rhetoric, and if the prevailing view, up to Biesecker's time, attends mainly to a particular period in Foucault's career that can be best described as an early to middle period up to the publication of the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* series. The fact that Biesecker anchors "the question of rhetoric" more to *History of Sexuality* than any of Foucault's other works speaks to, as Biesecker explains, "an aesthetics of existence" (351), but it also, by implication, speaks to the extent that the notion of "*parrhesia*"—which will be discussed in Chapter 4—predicated on an aesthetics of existence, offers something to the relationship Biesecker establishes between Foucault and the question of rhetoric. To this end, the primary means by which "parrhesia" figures into the extent that "the role Foucault attributes to rhetoric" is through Biesecker's drawing on Raymie McKerrow's "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis" (1989), insofar as McKerrow allows Biesecker to conceive of "the place, indeed the centrality, of critical rhetorics and rhetoricians in Foucault's theory of social change" (352).

The question of rhetoric, then, for Biesecker, can be viewed in terms of Foucault's theory of social change and, in turn, how the theory of change is laid bare by the meaningfulness of the aesthetics of existence. For the sake of the question of rhetoric, Biesecker concludes, "Foucault presents us with an alternative way to understand the condition of possibility and the function of critical rhetorics, one that would surely alter our tactics of analysis without crushing our conviction that the world can be otherwise" (362). For the sake of conceptualizing a critical rhetoric through Foucault's theory of social change, the question of rhetoric, as Biesecker prescribes it, is posited as "how would Rhetoric's territory be modified in the event that we affirm [Foucault's] statements" (362), so that what is modified and what is affirmed both subscribe to an aesthetics of existence—though the "History of Sexuality" series, as a whole, is undoubtedly rhetorically concerned with assessing an aesthetics of existence with respect to the meaning of sexuality, *Confessions of the Flesh*, it seems to me, provides for another way to look at the aesthetics of existence, upon which sexuality itself is constructed.

To Biesecker's point, "if rhetorical theorists and critics were to follow the current of Foucault's inquiry into 'the aesthetics of existence' [where] we would find ourselves in a position to reinvent our relationship to style" (362), this provides an opening in which *Confessions of the Flesh* holds relevance to what rhetoric means to Foucault, establishes the centrality of confession, and holds significance to Foucault's concerns with Christianity.

3.3: What is Christianity (for Foucault)?

Confessions of the Flesh contribute to a broader vision than what Foucault sets forth in the "History of Sexuality" series, particularly in how the notion of the confession relates to technologies of the self. Even though, through *Confessions of the Flesh*, Foucault's approach to

sexuality as a particular kind of history, as well as Foucault's approaches to other subjects, such as specific histories of madness, prisons, knowledge, and power, just to name a few, all have been characterized within the theoretical frameworks of structuralist thought, poststructuralist thought, and new historicism, *Confessions of the Flesh* certainly operates within the traditional boundaries of Foucauldian studies. Yet, *Confessions of the Flesh* also articulates not only what rhetoric is for Foucault from a structural standpoint, but also what Christianity is for Foucault from a structural standpoint—to the degree that there is a relationship between Christianity and confession, Foucault's proposition that Christianity is a confession has structural significance.

As discussed in Chapter 1 with respect to what the "scientific" means to Burke's notion of scientific rhetoric, here, for Foucault, I will consider what "Christianity" means to Foucault's notion of the confession, for the sake of Foucault's proposition, *Christianity is a confession.* In this sense, thinking respectively, Foucault envisions Christianity as something that is scientific and, in turn, Foucault conceives of confession as something that is a form of rhetoric—which, later in this chapter, will be discussed as the rhetoric of confession, and, by Chapter 4, will be articulated as Foucault's confessional rhetoric. Here, for the purposes of this chapter, I will approach what Christianity is for Foucault, as Jeremy R. Carrette calls it in *Foucault and Religion* (2000), as a "religious question" (2). When situating that "religious question" more directly to *Confessions of the Flesh*, I will frame Foucault's religious question in much the same manner as I framed Burke's "scientific" question in Chapter 1.

Contextually, though Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* has a place in the relations between Foucault and rhetoric, precisely from the standpoint of what the notion of confession is as discourse and does as discursive practice, *Confessions of the Flesh* grapples with a "religious question." That religious question, it seems to me, carries a scientific significance, through

working out of or working through Foucault's understanding of Christianity as, to use Foucault's terminology, technologies of the flesh. For Foucault's understanding of Christianity to exercise technologies on the flesh, in order to exercise technologies for the self, these technologies point to a kind of science inherent in what Christianity is—the religious question, then, for Foucault's purposes in *Confessions of the Flesh*, is a question about what kind of science Christianity engages in, what becomes scientific about the technologies that Christianity uses, and what role does the notion of confession play in the technologies of the self.

For Foucault, Christian technologies of the self, as he articulated it in his "Technologies of the Self" seminar (October 1982), arise because "Christianity imposed a set of conditions and rules of behavior for a certain transformation of the self" (40). In this way, the very imposition of "set of conditions" and the very deployment of "rules of behavior" speaks to, it seems to me, the structural demands of Christianity, both for the individual and for the institution—this is the "scientific" nature of what Christianity does through what the confession initiates. If, to Foucault's point, technologies of the self are "not only to believe certain things but to show that one believes, and to accept institutional authority" (40), this is precisely due to what the confession initiates. Through the confession, it is possible "to show that one believes," but it also allows for what is confessed to support that the confessor "believe[s] certain things." That which is confessed, for Foucault, operates within structures imbued into Christianity, for the sake of transforming the salvific self and sustaining the broader, institutional technologies at work.

As Foucault makes clear, insofar as "Christianity is not only a salvation religion, it's a confessional religion" (40), this means that, structurally speaking, Christianity is what it is by way of the role that confession plays in it. It is not just that confession, structurally speaking, becomes what needs to be evoked to initiate a "transformation of the self," but it also becomes

what needs to be evoked to substantiate "institutional authority." The centrality of confession to Christianity—this centrality is between the transformation of the self, as the one who confesses, and the institutional authority, as to whom is being confessed. For Foucault, confession, is rooted in a truth obligation, as Foucault acknowledges, which, it seems to me, is made, structurally speaking, for the sake of what the self means to authority and for the sake of what authority means to the self—for that matter, structurally speaking, as a truth obligation, what the confession is and does for the transformation of the self is simultaneously what the confession is and does for the institutional authority.

However, even with confession becoming central to the structure of Christianity, both for the individual that is being transformed and the institution that being sustained, Foucault describes, I find, a structurality to confession itself, suggesting that confession is grounded on "truth obligations of faith and the self [that] are linked" (40). For Foucault, the confession is a truth obligation of self that, on one hand, is contingent on "the duty to accept a set of obligations, to hold certain books as permanent truth, to accept authoritarian decisions in matters of truth" (40), while, on the other hand, the confession is a truth obligation of self, where "each person has the duty to know who he is, that is, to try to know what is happening inside him, to acknowledge faults, to recognize temptations, to locate desires" (40). On this point, as Foucault explains, "everyone is obliged to disclose these things either to God or to others in the community" (40), such that they carry through on truth obligations of self—yet, what is carried through structurally on truth obligations of self is, in turn, structurally reified by truth obligations of faith.

Foucault's sentiments about Christianity being structured in terms of truth obligations of faith and the self, to be sure, is expressed earlier in the "Christianity and Confession" lecture (November 24, 1980), collected in *About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self* (2016),

as well as in the Victoria University, Toronto lectures (June 1982), collected in *Speaking the Truth about Oneself* (2021). It is in these two earlier lectures where Foucault explicitly ties the structurality of Christianity to the structurality of confession—while, in the former, "Christianity is a confession" (Foucault 2016, 54) and, in the latter, "Christianity is not only a salvation religion: it is a confession" (Foucault 2021, 94), both propositions become foundational to *Confessions of the Flesh*.

Though, to the best of my knowledge, Foucault's assertion, "Christianity is a confession," is never evoked in *Confessions of the Flesh*, it remains to what the notion of confession means to the flesh, through technologies of the self. From this, for Foucault, technologies of the self are interpolated by Christianity from the top down and by the confession from the top up—while Christianity allows technologies to be imposed on the flesh to reify the self, the confession is just one of the many technologies designed to reify the flesh. These technologies are structurally significant, not just for what Christianity is for Foucault, but also for what the confession is for Foucault—these technologies are, for Christianity, "structures of existence," to borrow John B. Cobb Jr.'s argument in *The Structure of Christian Existence* (1967), insofar as "Christianity embodies a distinctive structure of existence" (16). To Cobb's point, what allows for "structures" in the "structures of existence" is, as Foucault is aware, are technologies, to the extent that, when reconsidering Cobb in light of Foucault, Christianity embodies distinctive technologies of existence, predicated on a technology of the self.

If, Cobb explains, "the distinctive essence of Christianity can be best seen in terms of the structure of Christian existence" (19), it is also possible to think of the "distinctive essence of Christianity," for Foucault, as the technology of Christian existence and, for that matter, to Biesecker's point about Foucault, as the aesthetics of Christian existence. In this way, it seems to

me, if the terms, "structure," "technology," and "aesthetics" are all analogous ways of speaking about what Christianity is for Foucault, these terms not only particularly contribute to *Confessions of the Flesh*, but also, more broadly, contribute to the extent that "Christianity assumes a more dominant role in Foucault's work, taking centre stage from 1977 to 1982 when he explored the history of Christianity confession in the first five centuries of the church" (Carrette 2000 , 20). Given that *Confessions of the Flesh* is, indeed, "the final words of [Foucault's] study of Christianity" (Carrette 2000, 24), if by "study" we can consider it as a scientific study, but it also grapples with, to Carrette's other point, Foucault's religious question. Not only is Foucault interested in viewing Christianity as a "structure," a "technology," and an "aesthetics," and in situating confession, it seems to me, in terms of that institutionalizing structure, technology, and aesthetics, but also in conceptualizing Christianity as, in the discussion on "Truth and Subjectivity," as part of the Darmouth lectures in 1980, as "a religion which imposes on its adherents very strict obligations of truth" (Foucault 2021, 94).

What Christianity is for Foucault, then, is carefully cast in relation to what religion is for Foucault. There is a distinction, even if Foucault sees them as inextricably linked notions. Carefully teasing out what Foucault means by "religion" and "Christianity," through their distinctiveness and relatedness, Carrette characterizes in the following way: "Foucault generally uses the term 'religion' as a kind of overall phenomenological term to refer to any institutionali[z]ed faith tradition, through this predominantly means institutionali[z]ed Christianity" (Carrette 2000, 6). Here, Carrette's point matters, both for how *Confessions of the Flesh* works through "institutionalized Christianity" as a "religious question" and to what extent *Confessions of the Flesh* works out "the range and depth of Foucault's 'problemati[z]ation' of

religion" (Carrette 1999, 9), its phenomenological significance, and, quite frankly, congruence to Burke's notion of the scientific, as discussed in Chapter 1.

I want to be careful with the evoking of the term, "phenomenological," in an effort to narrowly consider, for the purposes of Foucault, what it means to a particular study of Christianity as, Foucault makes clear, "a confessional religion." Insofar as "the realm of religion, phenomenology denotes an order of attested spiritual manifestations as well as a body of verifiable doctrines and persuasions" (Jurji 1963, 1), this is certainly true for what Foucault means by "confession" and by "flesh" in the thematic relationship between the two in *Confessions of the Flesh*. To this end, when keeping phenomenology in the realm of religion, if, as Edward J. Jurji notes in *The Phenomenology of Religion* (1963), "[phenomenology's] standards include an objective description of realities and a systematic evaluation in keeping with what primary sources reveal" (1), this confirms Foucault's proposition about Christianity being a confession in the imposing of technologies on the flesh and in the reification of technologies for the self. In one sense, Christianity, for Foucault, is a primary institutional source, predicated how the confession becomes an objective description of reality and, in turn, becomes "a systematic evaluation" of technologies on the flesh and for the self. However, in another sense, the confession itself, for Foucault, is a primary individual source, predicated on Christianity becoming an objective description of reality, imposing a "systematic evaluation" through technologies on the flesh and for the self.

Christianity, for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, becomes phenomenological, whereby his notion of the confession figures into a "scientific method which views religion as a phenomenon" (Jurji 1963, 1). Without going so far as to call the Foucault that appears in *Confessions of the Flesh* as a phenomenologist of religion—even if some have suggested, at

minimum, a connection between Foucault and phenomenology (Shiner 1982; Visker 1999; May 2005; Legrand 2008)—Foucault certainly subscribes to the supposition, it seems to me, "that without a transcendent reality, religion could not exist, and thus, the phenomenology of religion, with its empathetic approach towards adherents, is seen as an ally with" the theological underpinnings to Christianity (Cox 2006, 7). How this works, for Foucault, is through the sense that Christianity is a confession, not only in terms of how Christianity and the confession, in themselves, become objective descriptions of reality, but in terms of how both, in themselves, point towards a "transcendent reality." Subsequently, Christianity and the confession, for Foucault, become "adherents," and Foucault's approach to them in *Confessions of the Flesh* arises from a scientific method, viewing Christianity and the confession as phenomenon.

From the standpoint of Foucault's phenomenology of religion towards Christianity, as Carrette surmises, for Foucault, "Christianity modifies the earlier moral system by developing new techniques of self and new modes of ethical subjection" (24). As an adherent, Christianity, in *Confessions of the Flesh*, is a "moral system," which partakes in the development of "new techniques" as adherents. Because Christianity is a confession, the confession becomes a "mode of ethical subjection," based on how Christianity deploys a specific structure, a particular technology, and a certain aesthetics—to this end, Carrette acknowledges, "in Foucault's lectures and essays on Christianity we see how confession brought about a new ethics of self through the process of self-renunciation" (24).

Consider Foucault's Collège de France lectures, beginning in 1980, as pinpointed earlier in this chapter, with respect to what Foucault says about Christianity, and where confession figures into these discussions. For example, in the "On the Government of the Living" lecture, in a January 30, 1980 session, Foucault speaks about "great systems of relations of power [that] has

a regime of truth" (82), such that he will approach "this historical problem of the formation of a

relation between the government of men and truth acts, well, reflexive truth acts, by approaching

it from the angle of Christianity and early Christianity" (82). As a "great system of relations of

power," Christianity, for Foucault, becomes "a regime of truth" through the "reflexive truth acts"

of the confession. To the extent of Christianity as a "great system of relations of power,"

Foucault argues, in February 25, 1981 session of the "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture,

"Christianity has been led to replace the techniques of self, the technologies of subjectivity

developed by classical or late antiquity, with new technologies of subjectivation […] the matrix

of a new experience, what Christians call the flesh" (256). Not only does this "matrix of a new

experience" become "the formation of a new experience" in *Confessions of the Flesh*, but these

"new technologies of subjectivation" also become integral to what Foucault means by "the

formation of a new experience," through technologies on the flesh and for the self. This matrix of

a new experience, as a formation, is what Foucault describes in the February 17, 1982 session of

"The Hermeneutics of the Subject" lecture, as "a circular relation between self-knowledge,

knowledge of the truth, and care of the self" (255). Foucault details this "circularity" in the

following way:

> I think we can say that in this model knowledge of the self is linked in a complex way to knowledge of the truth as given in the original Text and by Revelation: knowledge of the truth is entailed and required by the fact that the heart must be purified in order to understand the World; it can only be purified by self-knowledge; and the Word must be received for one to be able to undertake purification of the heart and realize self-knowledge (255).

For Foucault, all of this is brought to bear on "one of the fundamental points of the relations

between care of the self and knowledge of the self." This self-knowledge, which is initiated

through a confession, points towards two other fundamental points: "an exegetical method for

self-knowledge" and "the objective of self-renunciation" (256). All of these points, for

Foucault's understanding of Christianity, are grounded to what a confession is and does. This functionality of the confession, then, becomes, as Foucault argues in the March 9, 1983 session of "The Government of self and Others" lecture, "an obligation to speak of oneself, to tell the truth about oneself, to tell everything about oneself, and to do so in order to be cured" (359). To be cured, then, through the confession, is, as Foucault finds in the March 28, 1984 session of "The Courage of Truth" lecture, "the aim of the other life (*la vie autre*) to which the ascetic must dedicate himself and which he has chosen" (319)—insomuch as, for Foucault, Christianity is a confession, Foucault suggest at a later point in the March 28, 1984 session, "you see the development of structures of authority in Christianity which, as it were, embed individual ascetism within institutional structures" (334). These structures "embed individual ascetism" through the imposition of technologies or aesthetics within the institutional "structures of authority in Christianity."

Indeed, across these Collège de France lectures from 1980 to 1984, Foucault is fairly consistent about what Christianity is to him, which never seems to venture too far afield of the proposition, Christianity is a confession, as, it seems to me, a scientific proposition. Though Foucault's notion of confession plays a pivotal role in what Christianity is to him, particularly at various points in Collège de France lectures, towards, to Carrette's point, "[bringing] about a new ethics of self through the process of self-renunciation," there remains another structurality to what confession is. Just as there is a structurality to Christianity—as an institution comprised of technologies, or aesthetics—and confession's structurality comprises of levels of self-knowledge, Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* prescribes another way to consider what the confession is as a truth obligation, from the standpoint of what is scientific about the confession.

As much as the *Confessions of the Flesh* speaks to Foucault's religious question about what Christianity is to him, and the text certainly contributes to Foucault's proposition, Christianity is a confession, especially when viewing the text congruently to the Collège de France lectures from 1980 to 1984, what ties Foucault's notion of the confession to what Christianity is for him is the connective tissue of rhetoric. If, as Carrette argues, "Foucault's [thoughts] on religion offer a series of critical interventions that question the conditions of religious knowledge" (9), Foucault's thoughts on rhetoric is a "critical intervention," which participates in Foucault's religious question, in terms of "question[ing] the conditions of religious knowledge." This can be viewed, it seems to me, as a primary question and a secondary question. While the primary question, as a religious question, is invested in the proposition of Christianity is a confession, the secondary question, in my view, is a question of rhetoric, invested in the scientific supposition of Christianity is a confession, in terms of the role that rhetoric plays between the two discursively.

In other words, for Foucault, what Christianity is to the confession is rooted in rhetoric, just as what a confession is to Christianity is rooted in the same. Like Burke's scientific rhetoric, as discussed in Chapter 1, what is scientific for Burke seems congruent to Foucault's proposition, Christianity is a confession. In this case, what Christianity is for Foucault, where the confession figures into it, and how far Foucault's religious question reaches are all situated, it seems to me, in Foucault's approach to "the scientific"—to examine what Christianity is to Foucault requires viewing Christianity as something that has scientific significance for Foucault, which can be derived from how he handles Christianity in his Collège de France lectures from 1980 to 1984 and how this is brought to bear on Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*.

Given that, Carrette explains by 1999, "the examination of Foucault's work on religion has been limited" (13), this remains so since, not just in quantity, but also, generally speaking, in quality. Though up to Carrette's time in 1999, a number of studies on Foucault's religious question "have failed to appreciate the full scope of Foucault's writings on religious and theological themes" (Carrette 1999, 13), I would not go as far to characterize, in as strict of a sense, the scope of what has appeared post-1999 in the same way. Notwithstanding Carrette's contributions in *Foucault and Religion*, "Foucault, Strategic Knowledge and the Study of Religion" (2001), "Beyond Theology and Sexuality" included in *Michel Foucault and Theology* (2004), "Rupture and Transformation" (2013), and "Foucault, Religion, and Pastoral Power" in *A Companion to Foucault* (2013), other approaches to Foucault's religious question appear in extended studies such as Henrique Pinto's *Foucault, Christianity and Interfaith Dialogue* (2003), David Galston's *Archives and the Event of God* (2010), Jonathan Tran's *Foucault and Theology* (2011), Steven G. Ogden's *The Church, Authority, and Foucault* (2017), and Petra C. Redell's *Foucault, Art, and Radical Theology* (2018), with shorter, concentrated studies such as Richard King's "Foucault and the Study of Religion in a Post-Colonial Age" (2001), Mervyn F. Bendle's "Foucault, Religion and Governmentality" (2002), James Bernauer's "Confessions of the Soul" (2005), John McSweeney's "Foucault and Theology" (2005), and Thomas Lynch's "Confessions of the Self" (2009). This is even the case for Patrice Ladwig's "Thinking with Foucault Beyond Christianity and the Secular" (2021), in which Ladwig admits her aim "has merely been to present some elementary ideas on how Foucault's ideas of religion and monasticism can be transferred to a non-Christian context" (6). Yet, given the totality of these approaches to Foucault's religious question, Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* remains outside of all of their purviews.

Only recently, in 2021, there has been a paradigm shift into what Christianity is for Foucault, particularly by placing *Confessions of the Flesh* at the center of Foucault's religious question. For example, concurrently published with Ladwig's piece, in "Foucault on Christianity: The Impasse of Subjectivation" (2021), Jean-Michel Landry finds that *Confessions of the Flesh* "discloses a paradox […] that his studies of Christian (and Ancient) ascetic practices contribute to foreclosing the very analytical terrain that the notion of 'subjectivation' opened up" (54). Landry's point, it occurs to me, speaks to Foucault's sense that Christianity's new technologies of subjectivation for the development of "a new experience" centers on the flesh, as Foucault suggests, as I have noted earlier, in the "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture—it is out of this "new experience" that self-renunciation occurs, by way of confession. For Landry, "this very idea of renunciation" brings about an impasse between what is being renounced, either "the subject's will" or "the monastic subject itself" (57). This impasse points back to another impasse, Landry locates, in the extent that "subjectivation is oriented either toward freedom or unfreedom, or more precisely toward 'self-mastery' or self-renunciation" (57). From this, Landry endeavors to show "how, in turning to Christianity, Foucault leads the promising concept of subjectivation into a philosophical impasse" (54).

The philosophical impasse, as Landry identifies it, sparks a series of questions, which Landry contextualizes in terms of "the fact that confession leads to self-renunciation is for [Foucault] a fundamental paradox in Christianity" (57). To this end, when reminded of Foucault's proposition of Christianity is a confession, it is possible to extend Landry a bit further into the broader sentiment: Christianity is a confession that leads to self-renunciation. Not only is there, to Landry's point on Foucault, "a fundamental paradox in Christianity," pertaining to the very meaning of self-renunciation, but this paradox also extends to the confession itself.

Landry's questions are important questions to ask, but only take Landry's inquiry so far, without adequately attending to what binds "Christianity" and "confession" together in Foucault's proposition of Christianity is a confession by what Foucault surmises as an apparatus, or a *dispositif*—that which binds Foucault's proposition, it seems to me, also binds together the structures, technologies, or aesthetics of Christianity and binds together, as Landry references, "the process of confession" (58).

Subsequent to Landry, a recent special issue of five articles in *Foucault Studies* focuses on what *Confessions of the Flesh* means to Foucault's broader "History of Sexuality" project, in an effort to, as the general editors of the special issue note, "investigate the main topics studied by Foucault" in the text (1). But, collectively speaking, the five articles also give accounts, to varying extents, of what Christianity is for Foucault, and Foucault's religious question therein, by way of these "main topics"—firstly, the translation issues with translating Foucault's "*aveu*" as either "confession" or "avowal" in Philippe Büttgen's "Foucault's Concept of Confession" (2021), secondly, the relationship between "*metanoia*," or change, and the practice virginity in Lynne Huffer's "Foucault's Queering Virgins" (2021), thirdly, Foucault's religious question in terms of Foucault's understanding of Catholic and Christian experiences in James Bernauer's "Fascinating Flesh" (2021), fourthly, the relationship between Foucault's sense of modern form of governmentality and neoliberal, rational governmentality in Bernard Harcourt's "Foucault's Keystone" (2021), and, lastly, Foucault's approach to concupiscence in Agustín Colombo's "What is a Desiring Man?" (2021).

As much as each of these articles on Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* attend to particular aspects of Foucault's religious question as it pertains to what Christianity is for Foucault, none of them adequately work through Landry's important questions about the

relationship between confession, subjectivation, and self-renunciation. This relationship, I find, operates from the standpoint of what role rhetoric has for Foucault, through confession's scientific discursiveness. If, for Foucault, Christianity is a confession, and this proposition is central to Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, and Foucault's religious question unfolds through technologies, structures, or aesthetics imposed on the one who confesses, what Christianity is for Foucault is technologies of the self, which I wish to delineate into technologies on the flesh and for the self, through the rhetoric of confession.

3.4: Foucault's Rhetoric of Confession

In light of what Christianity is for Foucault and how this is articulated by Foucault as "Christianity is a confession," Foucault's religious question leads to a rhetoric of confession—to this end, what I mean by "rhetoric of confession," for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, is what the confession is prior to executing and in the conditioning of technologies of the self into technologies on the flesh from technologies for the self.

Though, to the best of my knowledge, the explicit term "rhetoric of confession" has only been used in a handful of instances: in terms of Alfred Tennyson for W. David Shaw (1971), in a dissertation about Marcel Proust, William Golding, Thomas Mann, and Italo Svevo by Kay L. Stewart (1973), in the relationship between the works of Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Jean-Jacques Rousseau for Barbara F. Howard (1981), in a dissertation about the notion of the will in five confessional works by Dolora A. Wojciehowski (1984), in relation to Emily Bronte for Michael S. Macovski (1987), in terms of early twentieth-century Japanese fiction for Edward Fowler (1988), and, more recently, in terms of James Baldwin for Daniel Q. Miller (2019) and in terms of a thesis on Jodi Picoult for Nabin Rai (2020). None of these instances make use of Foucault's

conceptualization of confession and, for that matter, none of these instances are especially

significant to what Christianity is for Foucault in *Confessions of the Flesh*.

For the purposes of Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, a rhetoric of confession, then,

works through the relationship between confession, subjectivation, and self-renunciation, when

the one who confesses speaks—that which has been confessed occurs in language and through

discourse about what undergoes self-examination, pointing towards a discursiveness about what

will eventually be renounced in self-renunciation.

As Landry makes clear, "the fact that confession leads to self-renunciation is for

[Foucault] a fundamental paradox in Christianity" arises from what Foucault refers to as "new

technologies of subjectivation." What is paradoxical about these new technologies is the way that

a confession is always a "rhetorical activity," which is "evocative of judgment […] the judgment

is of the self by the self" (Jasinski 2001, 101). In this case, a rhetoric of confession, as I have

conceived it, considers that the paradoxical way a confession works, from the moment it is

uttered by the one who confesses, is inextricably linked to the relationship between facts and

interpretations. These "facts" and "interpretations," for Foucault, can be contextualized by

Burke's use of the terms towards what Burke means by "scientific," but, as the terms are now

applied to Foucault's rhetoric of confession, there is a conflation of facts with interpretations,

instead of a transposition presented in Burke's handling of them. This conflation, for Foucault's

rhetoric of confession, is of facts always-already being interpretations and interpretations always-

already being facts—the conflating of facts and interpretations not only becomes, to Landry's

point, "a fundamental paradox in Christianity," but it also becomes a fundamental paradox for

what a confession is,

When considering what facts are and what interpretations are, in a narrow sense, facts correspond to what self-examination is for Foucault, while interpretations correspond to what Foucault views as self-renunciation. Take the notion of self-examination, for instance. Notwithstanding how it is articulated in *Confessions of the Flesh*, Foucault is consistent about what self-examination is for him: it is "the examination of conscience" in each of his sequential Collège de France lectures, beginning in 1980 (Foucault 2014, 200; Foucault 2005, 285; Foucault 2010, 317; Foucault 2011, 3). This is also the case for more obscure lectures Foucault delivered during the period, such as in the November 17, 1980 session of the Darmouth College lectures (Foucault 2016, 30), the third lecture of April, 29, 1981 from the Catholic University of Louvain lectures (Foucault 2014, 95), in the second meeting of Victoria University lectures of June 1982 (Foucault 2021, 170), and the November 30, 1983 session from the University of California-Berkeley lectures (Foucault 2019, 195). From these instances, the examination of conscience is an examination of facts—in one sense, it is an examination of a totality of facts (Wittgenstein 1999, 29), but, in another sense, it is an examination of the facticities of existence more broadly (Woodson 2019a, 88).

Insofar as self-examination is an examination of conscience as, in turn, an examination of facts either in their totality or in their specificity, Foucault broadens what he means by self-examination in the "Technologies of the Self" (June 1982), suggesting that it is "the scrutiny of conscience" (46). To examine the conscience, then, means "to examine any thought which presents itself to consciousness to see the relation between act and thought, truth and reality […] which will move our spirit, provoke our desire, turn our spirit away from God" (Foucault 1988, 46). In seeing these as incorporating "three major types of self-examination" (46), Foucault

conceives of them as facts towards what I have referred to as a rhetoric of confession, which,

informs what Christianity is for Foucault.

Yet, the very nature of self-examination as an examination of facts is only part of what

the rhetoric of confession is for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, since self-examination leads

to self-renunciation—it is not only about confessing to something specific about oneself, but also

confessing about something. This is a "renunciation of oneself" (Foucault 2011, 262), "the

renunciation of certain things" (Foucault 2010, 343), "the renunciation of this or that part of

oneself (Foucault 2005, 320), and a "renunciation of self" (Foucault 2014, 289). This self-

renunciation, at its most intrinsic, is "a total renunciation of one's will" (Foucault 2014, 131).

But, as Foucault goes on to say, in the May 6, 1981 session of the Catholic University of

Louvain lectures, "it [is] a question then of annulling oneself as a willful being, of renouncing

oneself, of renouncing the will to be and being oneself, and renouncing being oneself in and

through one's will" (131). In other words, to renounce being oneself means giving an account of

oneself and renouncing it, given that giving "an account of oneself" is required first (Butler

2005, 3-40). In another way, to renounce oneself requires renouncing the "interpretation of data"

related to oneself (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 120-123). To renounce the

interpretations of the data of the self, which has been accounted for, means renouncing to the

extent of "the mortification of the self" (131)—the very nature of self-renunciation, as Landry

identifies it in *Confessions of the Flesh*, "aims to foster a life of perpetual renunciation" (57),

through, to Foucault's point, "the mortification of the self."

As Landry tells us, "the object of renunciation/mortification is the subject's will" (57) is

essential to what it means to renounce the intrinsic, immaterial, and metaphysical parts of

oneself. Self-renunciation does not end here, any more than self-examination ends with the

examination of the conscience. Just as the very title of *Confessions of the Flesh* makes explicit,

Foucault is concerned with self-examination of the extrinsic, material, and physical aspects of

the self: the flesh—the flesh is, like the conscience, also a totality of facts, from which the

facticities of existence are also derived. For Foucault, self-renunciation of the conscience is also

a self-renunciation of the flesh, as two sides to what it means to renounce oneself.

For Foucault, the rhetoric of confession, it seems to me, turns on the self-examination of

the conscience and the same of the flesh, towards a self-renunciation of the conscience and the

same of the flesh. It is not only that, when reminded of Burke from Chapters 1 and 2, a self-

examination of the conscience and the same of the flesh is primarily devoted to facts, or that self-

renunciation of the conscience and the same of the flesh is primarily accomplished by

interpretations. Instead, what it means to self-examine facts is always-already a self-renunciation

through the interpretation of those self-examined facts, just as what it means to self-renounce

through interpretation is always-already self-examined facts of those self-renounced

interpretations.

Indeed, rather than facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, as I

have discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 with respect to Burke's scientific rhetoric, for Foucault's

rhetoric of confession, facts are always-already interpretations and interpretations are always-

already facts. This is what binds together, to Landry's points, the process of confession and, for

Foucault, the very paradox of what confession is in Christianity. In other words, in the rhetoric of

confession, facts are not things in themselves any more than interpretations are things in

themselves, which, as I have argued in Chapters 1 and 2 for Burke, as separate normative

conceptions of reality before they transpose within Burke's sense of the scientific. Here, for the

purposes of Foucault's rhetoric of confession, as I have deemed it, facts are always-already

interpretations and interpretations are always-already facts in one normative conception of reality, based on the paradoxical relationship between self-examination and self-renunciation.

3.5: Epilogue

Though this chapter began with giving an account of the relations between Foucault and rhetoric, in terms of the ways and means that Foucault is discussed in the field of rhetoric without necessarily calling Foucault a "rhetorician," it argued that an important way to situate Foucault in rhetorical theory and rhetorical analysis is through what Christianity is for Foucault, particularly as it culminates in *Confessions of the Flesh*. When considering this, what is at stake for Foucault is what Christian technologies of the self are and what the notion of confession does rhetorically, for the sake of Christian technologies do. From there, this chapter presented what Christianity is for Foucault by way of the rhetoric of confession. If the underpinnings of Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* is the rhetoric of confession, and this is integral to what Foucault means by proposing "Christianity is a confession," the relationship between what Christianity is for Foucault and what how he views rhetoric works within the imposition of Christian technologies is, it seems to me, about self-fashioning—this self-fashioning begins with the process of confession, initiated by self-examination and self-renunciation.

I am using this term "self-fashioning" as a take on Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980), which, in my view, is relevant to what this chapter has endeavored to say about Foucault. Though Greenblatt's task in examining "self-fashioning" is rooted in sixteenth-century England, where, Greenblatt asserts, "there were both selves and a sense that they could be fashioned" (1), the same can be said of Foucault's examination of the Patristic era. What Christianity is for Foucault is as much about selves as it is about the sense that they could

be fashioned. This idea of fashioning is important to Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, such that what Christian technologies of the self are, as Foucault sees them, is a means of fashioning, through the making of the self and the policing of the flesh. Just as Greenblatt takes note of "there [being] considerable empirical evidence that there may well have been less autonomy in self-fashioning in the sixteenth century than before, that family, state, and religious institutions impose a more rigid and far-reaching discipline upon their middle-class and aristocratic subjects" (1), Foucault's own empirical evidence similarly unfolds in how he characterizes the Patristic era in *Confessions of the Flesh*.

For Foucault, there is a Christian kind of self-fashioning, which is just as much a state, a condition, or even a status that is assumed by the one who confesses, as it is a religious, institutional means of discipline, as Foucault finds, against the autonomy of the flesh. In this way, just as, Greenblatt suggests, "the power to impose a shape upon oneself is an aspect of the more general power to control identity—that of others at least as often as one's own" (1), Foucault's interest in *Confessions of the Flesh* is in the same. This is certainly so, with respect to how that which "impose[s] a shape upon oneself" is among many, as Foucault points out, Christian technologies of the self.

Where this chapter concludes with Foucault's understanding of the Christian technologies of the self in terms of technologies on the flesh and for the self, through the rhetoric of confession constructed upon self-examination and self-renunciation, the following chapter will work through the implications of the rhetoric of confession as the science of confession. At that juncture, the next chapter will discuss self-examination and self-renunciation as *exomologesis* and *exagoreusis* within a science of confession, and their implications towards and through one another. To this end, given what this chapter has presented about the relationship between

confession, subjectivation, and the self-renunciation and, in turn, about facts and interpretations, the next chapter will attend to how the science of confession, for Foucault, can be further constructed upon the Burkean scaffolding set forth in Chapters 1 and 2. Like Burke's science of rhetoric, Foucault's science of confession will work towards a materiality of rhetoric but, ultimately, what will be presented in the next chapter is Foucault's confessional rhetoric.

CHAPTER 4

MICHEL FOUCAULT'S CONFESSIONAL RHETORIC AND TRANS-CORPOREALITY

> The "flesh" should be understood as a mode of experience—that is, as a mode of knowledge and transformation of oneself by oneself, depending on a certain relationship between a nullification of evil and a manifestation of truth.
> —Michel Foucault, *Confessions of the Flesh*,

> Christianity is a confession. That means that Christianity belongs to a very special type of religion, the religions which impose on those who practice them obligations of truth.
> —Michel Foucault, "Christianity and Confession," (November 24, 1980)

4.1: Prologue

In Chapter 3, after giving an account of the relationship between Michel Foucault and contemporary rhetoric, charted primarily through the ways and means that Foucault has been incorporated in rhetorical analysis and rhetorical theory. This survey focused on critiques and assumptions about Foucault's place in rhetoric, to the exclusion of *Confessions of the Flesh*. In order to situate Foucault as an interlocutor in the contemporary concerns in the field of rhetoric, Chapter 3 developed an understanding of Foucault's place in rhetoric in relation to his place in structuralist and post-structuralist thought, which allowed for a discussion of Foucault's concerns with language and discourse as one of the chief concerns in structuralist and post-structuralist thinking. From the standpoint of what Foucault's use of language and discourse mean to his more concerted preoccupation with discursiveness, I considered the means by which Foucault approaches Christianity, the technologies it imposes, and the notion of the confession, through the discursiveness inherent in Foucault's proposition, "Christianity is a confession."

If Christianity, for Foucault, is tied to the confession, as I have shown in Chapter 3, I focused on aspects of lectures and seminars in Foucault's *oeuvre*. This directly relate to his concerns in *Confessions of the Flesh*, particularly its opening section, "The Formation of a New Experience," in terms of the role that confession plays in self-examination and self-renunciation. I considered how Foucault approaches Christianity as a structure, predicated on technologies imposed on the flesh and for the self, which Foucault refers to as "technologies of the self." From this, I presented Foucault's rhetoric of confession, stylized as a rhetoric of science from Chapter 1— based on what Foucault argues in related lectures from 1980 to 1984, Chapter 3 sought to engage in scientific discursiveness between self-examination and self-renunciation, as a means of conceptualizing the relationship between rhetoric, the confession, and "technologies of the self," which would situate Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* firmly in this discussions.

Following how Burke conceives of facts becoming interpretations and interpretations becoming facts, as argued in Chapters 1 and 2, I considered the same framework for Foucault in the relationship between self-examination and self-renunciation. Having argued in Chapter 3, through a consideration of Foucault's rhetoric of confession, that self-examination as facts is always-already self-renunciation as interpretations, and vice versa, facts are always-already interpretations and interpretations are always facts. In contextualizing this in terms of how I have described Burke in Chapters 1 and 2, Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* speaks to the concerns of the rhetoric of science set forth by Wander, Prelli, and, most vociferously and sustainingly, Gross through what Chapter 3 refers to as the rhetoric of confession—I have described this as Foucault's sense of the scientific through the proposition that Christianity is a confession.

This chapter will first consider what Foucault's science of confession is, which will act as an extension of or implications to the previous chapter's discussion of the rhetoric of confession.

From this, I will conceptualize the science of confession, modeled on the science of rhetoric from Chapter 2, by how the confession is scientized through the domains of jurisprudence, psychology, the "politics of confession," and the nature of admissibility. From these domains, I will discuss the phenomenon of the "false confession," both as a matter of jurisprudential and psychological significance. From there, I will consider what the false confession means when a confession is a "truth obligation," and how this affects what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others, if the science of confession is predicated on one normative conception of reality.

Once establishing what is at stake in the science of confession, and why this matters to Foucault, I will work out and work through how the confession is scientized in terms of the confession's materiality, with Foucault's discussions of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*. In doing so, I will reconsider a materiality of rhetoric in relation to Foucault's science of confession, in order to discuss the significance of "avowal" and "parrhesia" (frank speech) for Foucault, as well as the distinction Foucault makes between "*l'aveu*" and "confession," in the construction of Foucault's confessional rhetoric. Tempered by the rhetorical triangularity of genre, ethics, and aesthetics, in respective terms of the genre of Christianity, the ethics of the self, and the aesthetics of the body, Foucault's confessional rhetoric, cast through a materiality of rhetoric, just as Burke's scientific rhetoric is cast through a materiality of rhetoric, will address the particular rhetorical status of embodied beings. In Foucault's case, these are the flesh and the body, and *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, such that, for Foucault, when *exomologēsis* (by self-examination) is always-already *exagoreusis* (by self-renunciation) and *exagoreusis* is always-already *exomologēsis*, a trans-corporeal rhetoric arises through what the flesh and the body rhetorically mean to one another.

4.2: Foucault's Science of Confession

Similar to the way that Burke's place in the science of rhetoric has been described in Chapter 2, I will entertain Foucault's science of rhetoric in a similar way, but as Foucault's science of confession. Yet, admittedly, the way to Foucault's science of confession, as I have conceived of it, is paved through a conceptualization of Foucault's science of rhetoric. To the best of my knowledge, Richard L. Lanigan's "Foucault's Science of Rhetoric" (1996) is the only text that makes such an explicit argument. Insofar as he is concerned with the roles that "practical discourse" and "discursive practice" have for Foucault's approach to science, Lanigan explains that "[his] analysis of Foucault's rhetoric of science and science of rhetoric" (199).

However, in constructing what he views as Foucault's science of rhetoric, Lanigan does not address the role that the confession plays for Foucault, when acknowledging that a confession is a "rhetorical activity" (Jaskinski 2001, 101). In fact, neither the term "confession" nor Christianity are ever mentioned anywhere in Lanigan's article, even though he does make some use of certain aspects of the *History of Sexuality* volumes. Even so, Lanigan prescribes a relationship between the rhetoric of science and the science of rhetoric, contributing to what was discussed in Chapter 2. But, at the same time, for the purposes of Foucault, Lanigan aligns his understandings of the rhetoric of science to semiotics (195-196) and the same of the science of rhetoric to phenomenology (196-200). Though there are material implications to Lanigan's argument that go unarticulated, I will pick up this thread later in this chapter. Nevertheless, for now, in a general sense, I will use Lanigan to support the relationship between the rhetoric of science and the science of rhetoric for what Foucault's science of confession is.

In the same way that the rhetoric of science was explained in Chapter 1 as a means of framing what matters to the science of rhetoric, Lanigan certainly agrees with this, as it pertains

to Foucault. Given what the rhetoric of science means to the science of rhetoric, the same will hold true for what Chapter 3 has discussed about the rhetoric of confession as a means of framing what matters to the science of confession in this chapter. Because of this, Foucault's science of confession will be explained in ways that purposely cross-pollinate with what has been presented in Chapter 2 for Burke, but the boundaries already constructed around what the science of rhetoric will only set the stage for the unique matters of the science of confession, as it relates specifically to Foucault.

To the best of my knowledge, the phrase "science of confession" has a long history in jurisprudence in discussing the connection between "science" and "confession," such as in Thomas F. Green's "Can Science Legally Get the Confession" (1935) and Walter G Summers's "Science Can Get the Confession" (1939). Though admittedly dated, both support, it seems to me, what can be ascertained as Foucault's science of confession, even though both predate Foucault. This is certainly so, if we adhere to the degree that, for Foucault, techniques or technologies are scientific in nature and, when imposed on persons, they underwrite a science to what they do, for the sake of technologies of the self. To this end, Green and Summers provide significant perspectives on how certain techniques or technologies can be imposed physiologically on persons to respectively detect or induce a confession. For Green and Summers alike, what is at stake is the legally admissibility of a confession in court, if it has been obtained through the techniques or technologies imposed by polygraphs—in this sense, while the legality of and the admissibility to the confession is construed scientifically, as that which fundamentally matters for prosecutorial purposes, these concepts directly inform what Foucault's science of confession is.

For Foucault, the science of confession, which is connected to the rhetoric of confession, under the rubric of the proposition "Christianity is a confession," as discussed in Chapter 3, is predicated on admissibility. By that, it is not simply for the purposes of Christianity as a "legal" structure of sorts, or even in terms of the certain Christian technologies to which a confession is given, but, more operatively, for one level of admissibility that occurs after self-examination and, in turn, a second level of admissibility that occurs after self-renunciation. This self-admissibility—or what is admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self—is interwoven into self-examination and self-renunciation, insofar as the former as facts are always-already the latter as interpretations, as pointed out in Chapter 3. Here, self-admissibility, it seems to me, allows for "the self to be a relation that relates itself to itself" (Kierkegaard 1980, 13), with "the Self itself apprehend[ing] itself" (Sartre 1956, 211), so that what is made jurisprudentially admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self directly arises from the facts of self-examination as what are already-always the interpretations for self-renunciation. These interpretations, in turn, as argued in Chapter 3, are always-already self-examined facts that are made jurisprudentially admissible to, by, and for Christianity's institutionalization.

In addition to, but as a subset for, the role that jurisprudential admissibility plays in Foucault's science of confession, there is also a psychology of confession, rooted in police interrogations, in the risk of eliciting false confessions and how this type of evidentiary confession adversely impacts a given jury (Kassin 1997; Kassin 2008). The rather long but fairly consistent history of the phenomenon of the false confession, what its psychological significance is, how it could be acquired in police interrogations, misused prosecutorially, and used in jury decision-making (Horowitz 1956; Sterling 1965; Berggren 1975; Gudjonsson 1992; Conti 1999; Meissner and Russano 2003; Kassin and Gudjonsson 2004; Kassin 2004; Kassin 2005) works

through what has been made admissible by the "false confession." In this case, what is imposed

psychologically, like a technology, on that which has been self-examined, are either facts that

have been misinterpreted or falsities that have been interpreted as facts. Whichever it is, a

psychologically drawn "false confession" undermines what a confession should be, particularly

as Foucault sees it, for the one who confesses and the confession's chain of custody from the

police interrogation to the prosecution to the jury, all of which have a responsibility to handle

what has been confessed. Not only does a "false confession" drawn from the confessor require a

certain psychology to allow either facts to be misinterpreted or falsities to be interpreted as facts,

but there is also a certain psychology to what moves jury decision-making about what has been

falsely self-renounced. For Foucault, with respect to what is at stake for the science of

confession, the psychology of confession is always conditioned as a truth obligation, insofar as

the obligation to the truth is also an obligation to "unconceal" oneself in both a Heideggerian

way (Heidegger 1992, 17-20) and, similarly, in a Lacanian way (Woodson 2020).

The extent that a "false confession" is not part of what Foucault understands a confession

as and is certainly incongruent with the positivistic proposition that "Christianity is a confession"

speaks to the sense that a "false confession" is not a truth obligation, since it is involved in

concealment. This is not so much for the sake of what is self-admissible to the self, by the self,

and for the self, but what is made admissible for others, such that the "false confession"

presupposes "[one's] existence, the existence of the *Other*, [one's] existence *for* the Other, and

the existence of the Other *for* [the self]" (Sartre 1956, 88). To this end, if we see the false

confession as "holding that the liar must make the project of the lie in entire clarity and that [the

liar] must possess a complete comprehension of the lie and of the truth which [the liar] is

altering" (Sartre 1956, 88), the complete comprehension of what has been self-examined and

self-renounced. It is the way that what has been initially made self-admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self "has been altered" into a false admissibility for others.

All of this informs what Christianity is for Foucault, when Foucault proclaims, "Christianity is a confession." While there is undoubtedly a rhetoric of confession operating behind Foucault's proposition, as discussed in Chapter 3, the implications of this proposition lays bare a science of confession, which is partly informed by what is part-jurisprudential and part-psychological to it. If we to say, then, that, for Christianity, there is something scientific about the way confessions are made, what kind of confessions are given, to whom confessions are directed, how confessions are received, and why confessions are made, what also holds true is the manner in which the truth obligation is at the very heart of what a confession is. Because a truth obligation is what it is only by self-admissibility, for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, "confession is a form of truth-telling that actively constitutes the self" (Besley and Peters 2007, xvi), if, conversely, a false confession does not actively constitute the self.

From the standpoint of a science of confession, "the centrality of truth in relation to the self is developed through using 'others' as an audience—intimate or public—in a form of performance that allows for the politics of confession and (auto)biography" (Besley and Peters 2007, 125). In this way, with a confession being predicated on self-examined facts always-already being a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretation is always-already self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations, as discussed in Chapter 3, what it means to confess is scientifically determined "through using others as an audience." What it means to confess, as detailed in Chapter 3, is only partly about a rhetoric of confession, with the implications of a

rhetoric of confession as a science of confession, detailed in this chapter, is conditioned "in a form of performance."

It stands to reason that, because the jurisprudential and psychological aspects to a confession arises from and with respect to "the politics of confession," each of these domains molds what is scientific about a confession. Not only does Foucault speak to this matrix of concerns in *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1* (1978) in terms of a "confessing society" (59), but also with respect to "*scientia sexualis*," or the science of sex, with the confession becoming "procedures for telling the truth of sex which are geared to a form of knowledge-power" (Foucault 1978, 58). To Foucault's point, "*scientia sexualis*" is tied to the science of confession, even though, to be sure, different sciences inform what a confession is and the confession itself takes varied forms within different contexts. Foucault's proposition, "Christianity is a confession," is concerned with a specific kind of science, a particular form of confession, and a certain scientific context in which the confession occurs, all of which are brought to bear in *Confessions of the Flesh*.

As Andreas Fejes and Magnus Dahlstedt conclude in *The Confessing Society: Foucault, Confession and Practices of Lifelong Learning* (2013), specifically in reference to Foucault's "Technologies of the Self" seminar, "in contemporary times, we can see how confession has become linked to science and thus has become scienti[z]ed" (16). Insofar as Fejes and Dahlstedt are drawing upon the arguments presented in *Subjectivity and Truth: Foucault, Education, and the Culture of Self* (2007) by Tina Besley and Michael A. Peters, who suggest that confession is "scientized through new techniques of normalization and individualization that include clinical codifications, personal examinations, case-study techniques, the general documentation and collection of personal data, the proliferation of interpretive schemas" (38), Besley and Peters

situate their conceptualization of Foucault's notion of confession in terms of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977). Even though Besley and Peters think of the scientized nature of the confession in relation to "the secular form of confession" (38), they are aware, nevertheless, just as Fejes and Magnus are, that the secular form of confession is made possible by Christian technologies and, to Foucault's point, "Christianity is a confession."

The very premise behind Foucault's proposition that "Christianity is a confession" is that the confession is scientized in, by, and for Christianity, particularly through a matrix of concerns couched in the jurisprudential, the psychological, and even the political. The science of confession—or, the notion of confession as it is being scientized—ascertains the implications of a rhetoric of confession, from Chapter 3, when self-examinations are always-already self-renunciations and self-renunciations are always-already self-examinations, and, respectively speaking, when facts are always-already interpretations and interpretations are always-already facts in one normative conception of reality. What holds true for the science of confession, then, is that what scientizes the confession is admissibility—not only what is admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others, predicated on one normative conception of reality.

As for Foucault, the science of confession yields a materiality that culminates in *Confessions of the Flesh*, through the scientization of the confession. This scientization has both a primary and reflexive significance, which I will draw from Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society* (1992). In one sense, the science of confession, as it has been discussed thus far, carries a "primary scientization," where the notion of confession is a "science [that] is applied to a 'given' world of nature, people and society" (Beck 1992, 155) This is certainly so, from the standpoint of Christianity as a "given world of nature, people, and society," to which the confession is applied

as a science. In another sense, though, the science of confession, as it pertains to what Foucault accomplishes in *Confessions of the Flesh*, attends to a materiality that is "reflexive" in nature, to the extent that the science of confession is "confronted with [its] own products, defects, and secondary problems, that is to say, they encounter a second creation in civilization" (Beck 1992, 155). This "second creation," for the science of confession and its materiality, becomes meaningful for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, particularly, as I will show moving forward, in terms of the extent that "the places and participants of knowledge production change" (Beck 1992, 172), and the extent that this "change" is in what the confession means to and for the flesh.

4.3: Foucault's Science of Confession and Its Materiality

As the science of confession pertains to Foucault, in extending the Burkean science of rhetoric that has already been prescribed in Chapter 2, confession is a "rhetorical activity" (Jaskinski 2001, 101). As a rhetorical activity, confession is scientized into what Foucault refers to as "avowal," which is the central theme of the Catholic University of Louvain lectures of 1981. In these six lectures collected in *Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling* (2014), Foucault contends in the fourth lecture delivered on May 6, 1981, "this avowal found in the rituals of penance of the first centuries of Christianity […] was fundamentally different from what we call, strictly speaking, confession" (125). This difference, it seems to me, arises from the science of confession, such that "avowal" is what materially occurs when the confession is scientized.

If "confession," then, is a "verbal avowal of sins that would be institutionalized and become part of the sacrament of penance, but much later, not before the eleventh or twelfth centuries" (125), what Foucault is describing is what I have called the rhetoric of confession—if, in the case of what Foucault means by "avowal that was tied to rituals of penance in the first

centuries of Christianity" (125), this is the confession scientized. From this standpoint, when Foucault concludes that avowal is "a kind of manifestation, a manifestation of the self, an expressive and symbolic manifestation of the self" (125-126), this can be read as the science of confession and its materiality.

Notwithstanding the historiography Foucault performs, which situates "avowal" as an antecedent to confession, Foucault prescribes to the science of confession, it seems to me, the significance of materiality. This is certainly so, if, by materiality, we can align this to what Foucault means by "manifestation." Though Foucault qualifies "manifestation" in three ways in relation to "avowal," these three characterizations are not fundamentally different from one another, insomuch as they are fundamentally congruent to one another. If, for Foucault, self-examination leads to self-renunciation, and, as argued in Chapter 3, self-renunciation leads to self-examination again, what results from self-renunciation is "a manifestation of the self."

More precisely, drawing on how Chapter 3 aligned facts to self-examination and interpretations to self-renunciation, when self-examined facts as always-already self-renounced interpretations, these self-renounced interpretations are always-already self-examined facts, due "a manifestation of the self." For that matter, "an expressive and symbolic manifestation of the self," to Foucault's point about "avowal," is laid bare by self-examined facts—these facticities of existence (Woodson 2019, 88) become a manifestation of the self.

Aside from the *Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling* lectures, which contextualizes "avowal" within jurisprudence, Foucault's reference to "avowal" is subsequently sparce after 1981, even if it always evoked as inextricably linked to the confession. Whatever the reason for this, Foucault's presentation of "avowal" holds a certain significance to how he understands "confession," in light of the way that the former allows for the manifestation of the self to, by,

and for the confession. Consider the following ways that Foucault casts "avowal" and "confession": as the "moment of avowal, of confession" in the March 3, 1982 session of "The Hermeneutics of the Subject" lectures (Foucault 2005, 333), as both "play[ing] a very important role in penal and religious institutions" in the first lecture of "The Discourse of Self-Disclosure" lecture at Victoria University, Toronto in June 1982 (Foucault 2021, 2), as "the avowal or the confession of sins" in the November 14, 1983 session of "Discourse and Truth" lecture, as a conflation of "avowal, confession, or examination of conscience" in the opening February 1, 1984 session of "The Courage of Truth" lectures (Foucault 2011, 3). The point here is that, in each of these instances, though Foucault provides different articulations about what "avowal" means to "confession," there remains a through-line between the two, insofar as it makes it possible to not only consider Foucault's science of confession as linked to "avowal," but also consider that how confession is scientized for the purposes of how "avowal" attends to the manifestation of the self.

Indeed, as Foucault discusses in the November 17, 1980 session of his Darmouth lectures, through "the techniques of confession/avowal (*aveu*)," (Foucault 2016, 33), the manifestation of the self happens, once the confession has been scientized. In other words, Foucault's concept of "avowal," it seems to me, gives an account of the science of confession and its materiality. In fact, through the science of confession, there are manifestations of the self—in the plural sense—where there is one manifestation of the self that is predicated on self-admissibility to the self, by the self, and for the self and, in turn, another manifestation of the self that is predicated on what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others. In both cases, the manifestation of self is a materiality, grounded on the science of confession.

Reconsider what Foucault argues in the March 3, 1982 session in "The Hermeneutics of the Subject," for example: "the moment of avowal, of confession." To give a fuller context, when Foucault describes this moment in relation to Christian technologies, particularly what he calls "Christian ascesis," or Christianity's practice of severe discipline (333), he is also describing, it seems to me, the science of confession and its materiality. If, as Foucault tells us, "on the route to self-renunciation, Christian ascesis will give rise to a particularly important moment […] which is the moment of avowal, of confession, that is to say when the subject objectifies himself in a true discourse" (333), this "moment" is as much about what is made self-admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self as it is about what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others. It is at "the moment of avowal, of confession" where materiality occurs through a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self, as well as a manifestation to others, by others, and for others. This "moment," for Foucault, is a moment of manifest materiality "on the route to self-renunciation," to Foucault's point, but also on the way to renouncing oneself to others by giving an account of oneself (Butler 2005, 12).

Not only is it possible to view Foucault's proposition that "Christianity is a confession" as rooted, in one way, in what is made self-admissible to the self, by the self and for the self through a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self, but it is also rooted, in another way, in what is made admissible to others, by others, and to others, through a manifestation to others, by others, and for others. At "the moment of avowal, of confession," Foucault's proposition, then, is more than just a truth obligation. Rather, it becomes a proposition of material significance, insofar as "the obligation to manifest the truth about oneself forms part of the penitential ritual" (Foucault 2019, 3). In this sense, Foucault's evocation of "Christianity is a confession" is construed through the way that confession is scientized by materiality—one of

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the ways that this materiality lays bare the science of confession is in "the penitential ritual,"

which, Foucault makes clear, "constitutes the sacrament of penance" (3). Foucault's chief

concern, however, particularly as it matters to the science of confession and its materiality, is not

limited to the material significance of "the sacrament of penance." As far as the first section of

Confessions of the Flesh is concerned, Foucault also entertains the material significance of other

sacraments, such as baptism, and, to a lesser degree, confirmation, the eucharist, and healing, all

of which contribute to Foucault's science of confession and its materiality—all are constituted by

"the obligation to manifest the truth about oneself."

When Foucault comes to the conclusion, in the "Parrhesia" lecture, that "the obligation to

manifest the truth about oneself," as that which "forms part of the penitential ritual," the science

of confession and its materiality unfolds, in one way, through *exomologēsis*, which is:

> A kind of dramatization of oneself as a sinner, which is realized through clothing, fasting,
> ordeals, exclusion from the community, standing as a supplicant at the door of the
> church, and so on […] a dramatic expression of oneself as a sinner, by which one
> acknowledges one is a sinner, or fundamentally doing this—through language: this is
> exomologēsis (3).

The notion that "one acknowledges one is a sinner" means doing so, Foucault explains, by, in

another way, "tell[ing] someone, his director, in principle everything that is taking place in him,

all the movements of his thought, every impulse of his desire or concupiscence […] the agitation

of the mind" (3-4). Foucault goes on to say:

> It is this agitation of the mind that must be rendered into a discourse that is in principle
> continuous and that one has to deliver continuously to the person who is one's director.
> This is what is called in Greek exagoreusis (4).

Foucault expounds on both of these terms, *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, just five months later

in the "Technologies of the Self" seminar, as "two main forms of disclosing self, of showing the

truth about oneself" (48). This manner of "disclosing" and "showing" is, undoubtedly, the

manifestation of the self, and, for that matter, the materiality of the self, which is only made possible when confession is scientized by materiality. In this way, for Foucault, the science of confession and its materiality is embodied in, disclosed by, manifested in terms of, or shown through *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, in the following "two main forms":

> The first is exomologēsis, or a dramatic expression of the situation of the penitent as sinner which makes manifest his status as sinner. The second is what was called in the spiritual literature exagoreusis. This is an analytical and continual verbalization of thoughts carried on in the relation of complete obedience to someone else (48).

Not only does Foucault acknowledge a "relation" between the two, such that "you cannot disclose without renouncing" (48), but he also sees this relation being "modeled on the renunciation of one's own will and of one's own self" (48). This suggests that *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* are part of a larger process of confession, to Landry's point in Chapter 3, within the science of confession, pointing to the rhetoric of confession, as discussed in Chapter 3, that is initiated by self-examination and self-renunciation.

Insofar as, Foucault notes at an earlier point in the "Technologies of the Self" seminar, *exomologēsis* is the "recognition of fact" (41), this turns on how self-examine facts are always-already a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts, just as how self-renouncing through interpretation is always-already self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations. In other words, *exomologēsis*, as the "recognition of fact," and its materiality, is as much about self-examination and it is about self-renunciation, but, if we are reminded of Chapters 1 and 2, it is also as much about facts as it is about interpretations. Because *exomologēsis* "meant to recognize publicly the truth of [a Christian's] faith or to recognize publicly that they were Christians," it provides a materiality to the science of confession, through self-examined facts and self-renounced interpretations.

In light of *exomologēsis*, if, for Foucault, "you cannot disclose without renouncing," this suggests that *exomologēsis* is always-already *exagoreusis*, but it also says something about *exagoreusis* that is materially congruent with *exomologēsis*. To this end, it seems to me, *exagoreusis* carries a materiality to it, not strictly in terms of what is, to Foucault's point, "deliver[ed] continuously to the person who is [the confessor's] director," but how this delivery takes place in spatially. The continuous delivery of discourse through *exagoreusis* requires self-renounced interpretations and self-examined facts.

While the "Technologies of the Self" seminar ultimately becomes Foucault's final public discussions on *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, notwithstanding what he posthumously offers in *Confessions of the Flesh*, it is important to make clear that *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* have a very short, but concentrated history. For example, Foucault gives an account of only *exomologēsis* in the March 5, 1980 session of "On the Government of the Living" lecture, as "the manifestation of one's agreement, the acknowledgment, the fact of admitting something, namely one's sin and the fact of being a sinner (Foucault 2014, 202). Yet, Foucault's discussion of both *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* are relationally integral to the "Christianity and Confession" lecture on November 24, 1980. But, *exomologēsis* appears separately as "a spectacular manifestation of the fact that one had sinned, of one's awareness of being a sinner, of remorse for being so, and of the will to be a sinner no longer and be reintegrated" (Foucault 2014, 109) in the third lecture on April 29, 1981, before the relationship between *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* is described as "two practices— *exomologēsis* of penance and spiritual *exagoreusis*" (Foucault 2014, 172) in the fifth lecture on May 13, 1981 in the "Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling" lecture.

The materiality of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* rests in how Foucault views them as manifestations, with the former being a material manifestation of oneself for the sake of the self, and the latter being a material manifestation of oneself for the sake of "the person who is one's director." These manifestations derive from appearances, respectively either in what "is realized through clothing, fasting, ordeals, exclusion from the community, standing as a supplicant at the door of the church, and so on," just as Foucault tells us, or in what proximity is necessary to continuously deliver discourse "to the person who is one's director." In both cases, materiality plays a central role, on one hand, in terms of the physicality necessary for the "dramatization of oneself as a sinner" and, on other hand, in terms of the physicality necessary for "the discourse that is in principle continuous."

The materiality that is being discussed here in connection with the science of confession, for the sake of Foucault, allows for another connection to be made to the relationship between Burke, the science of rhetoric and the materiality of rhetoric, all of which were discussed in Chapter 2. While it is certainly advantageous to model Foucault's science of confession in terms of Burke's science of rhetoric, when maintaining that the confession is fundamentally a "rhetorical activity," what becomes especially optimal for the material significance of Foucault's handlings of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* and the material discursiveness that occurs between the two—a way to understand what is at stake for Foucault's science of confession and its materiality can be drawn from Lanigan's "Foucault's Science of Rhetoric" (1996), discussed earlier in this chapter, with Lundberg's *Lacan in Public*, as discussed in Chapter 2.

In placing Lanigan and Lundberg as interlocutors on materiality, it is important to note that Lacan is outside of Lanigan's purview, just as Foucault is largely outside of Lundberg's purview, save for a couple of references in Lundberg's endnotes (Lundberg 193; 204). For

Lanigan, the science of rhetoric as that which "entails a phenomenology of discourse" as "discourse practice" (196), with the term "phenomenology" holding a two-fold significance: first, as the study of phenomenon, such as discourse, and secondly, as the study of the consciousness, such as what it means to discursiveness. For Lundberg, however, the science of rhetoric "drives psychoanalysis toward a systematic account of the possible modes of connection that animate actually existing discourses, and toward an observation of the concrete functions of trope in the social life of the subject" (68). Though, generally speaking, both define the science of rhetoric differently, they still think of discursiveness, it seems to me, through the underpinnings of materiality that, for Lanigan, occurs in "discourse practice" and, for Lundberg, are "animate" and "concrete functions." As Lundberg prescribes, if the materiality of rhetoric is "a material practice in the context of immediation between the orders of discourse and that which is external to it" (xiii) which "require an account of publics as privileged sites" (xiii), this certainly speaks to the materiality of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* for Foucault. Not only do both require "account[s] of publics as privileged sites," but they also are "material practices," concerned with "the orders of discourse and that which is external to it." To engage in *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* means fundamentally to engage in animate, concrete functions, through a science of confession and its materiality.

Though Lundberg is more explicit about materiality than Lanigan, what Lanigan means by "discourse practice" falls in line with Lundberg's "material practices." For that matter, *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* are both discourse practices, but they are also "a semiotic explication of intra- and interdiscursive dependencies" (Lanigan 196). From this, Lanigan finds, "these dependencies motivate the relation of message and code together" (196). These dependencies are also inherent in *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, since the former "motivate[s]

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the relation of the message and code together" through the dramatization of oneself as a sinner, and the latter motivates the same through the delivery of "a discourse that is in principle continuous […] to the person who is one's director." Though Lanigan conceives of what "motivate[s] the relation of message and code together" as occurring "with the interrelation of contact and context in communication as the constitution of Subject, Object, Power, and Desire where the consciousness of experience (institution) is recorded in *both* discourse *and* practice, i.e. in rhetoric" (196), this sentiment encapsulates how Foucault conceives of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* by way of what they mean to the science of confession and its materiality.

For Lanigan, "Foucault's model of discourse moves beyond a discussion of intra- and interdiscursive dependencies" (196). This speaks to, as Lanigan reads Foucault phenomenologically, a characterization of Foucault's science of rhetoric that, I submit, culminates in what materiality is rhetorically for Foucault—that is to say, through Lanigan, Foucault's science of rhetoric becomes a phenomenological "discussion of intra- and interdiscursive dependencies." To this end, for Foucault's purposes, if *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* hold "intra- and interdiscursive dependencies," this is not only in terms of what both mean to one another as manifestations of the self and to others, but also in light of self-examined facts always-already being a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretation is always-already the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations.

I want to return to Lundberg for a moment, before considering how Lanigan ties the science of rhetoric to phenomenology. For Lundberg, notwithstanding his reference to Lacan, "the materiality of rhetoric centers on two issues: on the logic of reference that relates discourse to the world and on the distinction between the Real and 'reality'" (100). Though Lundberg, in

this case, is contextualizing what he means by the materiality of rhetoric within a psychoanalytic construct, the two issues that he details can certainly point towards phenomenology, where, Lundberg makes clear, "the subject is both given in advance and primarily engages the world by interpreting data" (130). While this sentiment allows for a phenomenological reading of what Lundberg means by "world" and "discourse," it also allows for a phenomenological understanding of how self-examined facts are always-already a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretation are always-already the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations.

All of this holds true, when recalling Lanigan's assertion that the science of rhetoric "entails a phenomenology of discourse"—to Lundberg's point, the subject "engages the world by interpreting data," doing so through a phenomenology of discourse. The term "phenomenology," as Lanigan uses it, makes explicit use of Merleau-Ponty's brand of phenomenology, rather than Edmund Husserl's. It is with the help of Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* that Lanigan argues, "it is most explicitly in the history of sexuality that the phenomenology of the sayable is conserved in memory to be reactivated for appropriation" (199). Reading Foucault this way, Lanigan opens the possibility of entertaining the science of confession, as Foucault derives from the history of sexuality, and its materiality, as the implications of the Foucault's science of confession, through *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* as phenomenologies of the sayable. Not only is it possible, then, to say that what is "conserved in memory" are self-examined facts, but it is equally possible to say that what is "reactivated for appropriation" are self-renounced interpretations, which are materially manifested through *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*.

Moreover, by ultimately relying on Merleau-Ponty's notion that "the body is eminently an expressive space" (Merleau-Ponty 1962, 146), Lanigan is implicitly giving an account of

materiality under the rubric of the science of rhetoric, while Lundberg does so more forthrightly. Here, as far as Lanigan is concerned, by the body being an "expressive space," through which a phenomenology of discourse takes place, what Lanigan understands as Foucault's science of rhetoric yields more significance to what I have explained as Foucault's science of confession and its materiality. This is certainly all the more significant, given that, in addition to "intra- and interdiscursive dependencies," Lanigan explains that there is "a third, more complex level of analysis that involves '*extradiscursive dependencies*' between discursive transformations and formation outside of discourse" (196), which prescribes a third way that science of confession and its materiality works for Foucault.

Considered collectively, Lanigan's notions of "intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies" directly informs the ways in which the science of confession and its materiality works—each of these dependencies point to an intra-, inter-, and extradiscursiveness. In one sense, there is a discursiveness between self-examination and self-renunciation, as discussed in Chapter 3, and even a discursiveness between facts and interpretations, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. Subsequently, when I have proposed that self-examined facts are always-already a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretations is always-already the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations, this is done so through a discursiveness. In another sense, there is a discursiveness between what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others. In yet another sense, there is a discursiveness between manifestations of the self and manifestations to others, as well as a discursiveness between *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*. For that matter, there is a discursiveness with the science of confession as they do

with materiality. In all of these instances, along various hierarchal levels, "intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies" point to a materiality of rhetoric, which Lundberg defines, as discussed in Chapter 2, along two fundamental, albeit incongruent lines of inquiry, speaking to two different trajectories: first, "the formal qualities of discourse as a durable productive system" (161) and secondly, a reliance "on processes of communicative exchange" (161).

Given what Lanigan and Lundberg argue about the science of rhetoric, the cross-pollination between the two on their respective descriptions of materiality, and Lanigan's use of Foucault, this opens the possibility to place Foucault's science of confession makes a place for Foucault within materiality of rhetoric. To this end, this allows us to say that this placement means something to recent, congruent discussions into rhetorical new materialisms, or "RNM," which has been briefly sketched in Chapter 2, from the recent forum in the *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*. In particular, for the purpose of the discursiveness between *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* as they arise in Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, they "not only *reflect on* entanglements of time, space, sounds, environs, objects, affects, and intra-actions so central to new material," Laurie Gries writes, "but they also *reflect* the longstanding entanglement between the rhetorical and new material" (139), In this way, as with Burke, Foucault becomes a posthumous contributor to this forum, where Foucault's sense of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* "reflects on" entanglements, to Gries's point. To this end, Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, like Burke's *The War of Words*, "reflects," just as Gries points out, "the longstanding entanglements between the rhetorical and new material," insofar as Foucault is as aware of what Gries is articulating as Gries is of what Foucault argues, even if both are outside of the other's purview. For Foucault, through the discursiveness of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, a

transposition of the two occurs in time and space, but they also, to further Gries's point, develop as affects, to the degree that their "intra-actions" shape environs into communities.

From Gries's sense of "intra-actions," it is possible to expand this into inter-actions and even extra-actions, when respectively considering the material significance of "intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies" in the discursiveness of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*. By way of "intra-actions" as well as inter-actions and extra-actions, Gries provides a way to understand what is materially significant about Foucault's preoccupation with the confession, particularly as it culminates, it seems to me, in the *Confessions of the Flesh* text.

Just as I have noted in Chapter 2 towards Burke, but recast, now, for Foucault's preoccupation with the confession, Gries makes clear the degree to which "[scholars] must come to acknowledge that rhetoric's role in all these communities is not just a negotiation of different perspectives but an ontological and ethical conditioning of worlds that are radically unique even as they may be intimately connected" (143). Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* certainly contributes to Gries's rubric. This is certainly the case, when giving an account of Foucault's science of confession and its materiality with respect to self-examined facts always-already being a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, self-renouncing through interpretation always-already being the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations. This speaks to "an ontological and ethical conditioning of worlds" through various levels of transposition, just as much as it underscores how self-examination and self-renunciation, as well as *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, are "intimately connected" in "entangled enactments that constitute everyday life" (Gries 2022, 138), emerging as rhetorical new materialisms.

These entanglements, as Gries points out, can be explained in terms of trans-corporeality, which will be discussed later in this chapter. But, for now, by "trans-corporeality," I am simply suggesting that what is entangled is one corporeality with another, to the extent that these entangled corporealities traverse one another. To this end, when considering the material implications of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, particularly as they appear in Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, they are "intermingling entities" (Gries 2022, 143), from the standpoint of their "bodily natures" (Alaimo 2010, 3-4).

Given what all of this means to the science of confession and its materiality, I will codify this into what I will refer to moving forward as Foucault's confessional rhetoric, in terms of the material implications of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*.in relation to a matrix of other concerns that appear in *Confessions of the Flesh*, such as "*parrhesia*" (frank speech, free speech, or speaking candidly), "*metanoia*" (penitential change), "*l'aveu*" (translated loosely as "confession"), "*l'chair*" (flesh), and the relation between the flesh and the body.

4.4: Foucault's Confessional Rhetoric

To be fair, the term "confessional rhetoric" has been evoked in a variety of ways, which are certainly worth acknowledging, before ascertaining what I mean by Foucault's "confessional rhetoric." Though by no means exhaustive, the following either evoke "confessional rhetoric" in its title, conceptualize the term somewhere in its argument, and provide the term with an adjectival qualifier: a dissertation on the English Romantics (McClatchy 1974), a dissertation on Anne Sexton's poetry (Capo 1978), on the novel, *Wuthering Heights* (Mascovski 1987), in terms of anabaptism (Rempel 1993), in terms of Lord Byron's poetry (Elfenbein 1995), in *Confessional Subjects* (Bernstein 1997), a dissertation on German confessional autobiographies

(Luscher 1997), on *Rousseau, Robespierre and English Romanticism* (Dart 1999), as "anti-confessional rhetoric" (Blair 2001), on Bill Clinton's "Rhetoric of Contrition" (Lee and Barton 2003), as "inter-confessional rhetoric" (Pelinka 2004), John W. Jordan's "The Rhetorical Limits of the 'Plastic Body'" (2004), a dissertation on twentieth-century Spanish and Latin American women writers (Marquis 2006), as "radical confessional rhetoric" (Biesecker-Mast 2006), "ritual storytelling" (Schultz 2008), in *Presidential Campaign Rhetoric in an Age of Confessional Politics* (Kaylor 2011), in "Revisiting the Confessional" (Wolfart 2012), in "'The Suitable Language of Love'" (Bloom 2014), in terms of Samuel Beckett and Fyodor Dostoyevsky (Kalinić 2015), in "Between Entrenchment, Reform and Transformation" (Nagle 2015), a dissertation on the Synod of Jerusalem (Rene 2020), in terms of "maternal resentment" (Arnold 2022). To the best of my knowledge, though Macovski, Bernstein, Dart, Kaylor, and Bloom, in particular, give specific accounts of Foucault in relation to their respective broader arguments, none of them, nor any of the others, discuss the science of confession as such, and none of them, nor any of the others, consider the science of confession and its materiality. What is also clear, generally speaking, is that none of the texts that particularly consider the meaning of confessional rhetoric in relation to Foucault do so with Foucault's notion of "parrhesia" in mind.

Here, I want to define confessional rhetoric, particularly for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, not only in terms of the confession, but also in terms of what has been previously discussed about "avowal." While "confession," as discussed in Chapter 3, is cast as the rhetoric of confession and "avowal," as discussed earlier in this chapter, as confession that is scientized, I see the two terms synthesizing into what "parrhesia" is for Foucault. In effect, for Foucault, "parrhesia" is partly a rhetoric of confession and partly a science of confession and its materiality. To engage is "parrhesia," then, means to self-examine and self-renounce, but it also

means to make oneself a manifestation of self-examined facts and self-renounced interpretations. To the extent that "parrhesia" serves as the implications of or significance to what has been materially manifested and its rhetorical importance, this is rooted, it seems to me, in what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others.

Granted, the term "parrhesia" means anything from "frank speech," to "free speech," to "speaking candidly." For Foucault's purposes, "parrhesia" is "truth-telling," "speaking truly," or "telling the truth," as it appears, for instance, in Foucault's last three Collège de France lectures. Consider some brief assertions Foucault makes in the three. In the March 3, 1982 session of "The Hermeneutics of the Subject" lecture, Foucault explains "parrhesia" as "both a technique and an ethics, an art and a morality. […] on the way in which [the] discourse of truth is formulated" (368). In the January 12, 1983 session of "The Government of Self and Others" lecture, Foucault tells is, "we should look for [parrhesia] in the effect that its specific truth-telling may have on the speaker, in the possible backlash on the speaker from the effect it has on the interlocutor" (56). In the February 1, 1984 session of "The Courage of Truth" lecture, Foucault considers "parrhesia" as "a constitutive component of truth-telling about self, or, more precisely, as the element which qualifies the other person who is necessary in the game and obligation of speaking the truth about self" (7).

The very notion of "truth-telling about self" is as much about self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self as it is about a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others. In this, there is, indeed, a "discourse of truth," not only from the standpoint of what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others. For this to be "both a technique and an ethics," it means that the

material significance of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, as previously discussed, is in what "is necessary in the game and obligation of speaking the truth about self."

Contemporarily to these Collège de France lectures, Foucault remarks about "parrhesia" in three other venues: in the "Parrhesia" lecture on May 18, 1982 the University of Grenoble, "The Discourse on Self-Disclosure" lecture on May 31-June 26, 1982, and the "Discourse and Truth" lecture on October 24, 1983 at the University of California-Berkeley. Consider some things Foucault says in the three. Early in the "Parrhesia" lecture, for example, Foucault makes it clear that "one can take care of oneself […] only on the condition of being helped by someone, and it is for this person, this person, this other person in the care of self, that [parrhesia] is an obligation" (5). In the June session of "The Discourse of Self-Disclosure," Foucault suggests, for instance, that "[parrhesia] is both a freedom and an obligation" (172). In "Discourse and Truth," Foucault argues, "in [parrhesia], the words, the discourse, are supposed to give an exact account, a complete expression of what the speaker has in mind, so that the audience is able to catch exactly what he says" (40).

In this sense, "an exact account" and "a complete expression" is as much about the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self as it is about a manifestation to others, by others, and for others. From this, the extent that "one can take care of oneself" and do so only on the condition of being helped by someone" comes by way of the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and, then the self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others.

Considering the six lectures together and what they say about Foucault's conceptualization of "parrhesia," I view these studies as more than just about Foucault, Gros explains in the forward to *Confessions of the Flesh*, "launching yet another new field of research" (xi). Rather, Foucault's concerns with "parrhesia" are inextricably linked his concerns

with confession and avowal, insofar as there remains a through-line between the three terms. In my view, Gros is oversimplifying the significance of Foucault's approach to "parrhesia" and, for that matter, minimizing what "parrhesia" means for *Confessions of the Flesh*. In other words, it is not so much that Foucault is "launching yet another new field of research" as it is that he is refining, rearticulating, and reconceptualizing what has continued to do with the "confession," from its earliest evocation in the first volume of The History of Sexuality series, as "confessional science" tied to "*scientia sexualis*" (Foucault 1978, 58-64) to what he does with "avowal" (Foucault 2014, 125-126).

Even if his "[early] concern with confession shifts, along with Foucault's major theoretical interests, from a mechanism of power and its relation to knowledge to an intersection between the production of truth and subjectivity" (Elden 2016, 205), there remains a through-line predicated on an overarching view of confessional rhetoric, with "parrhesia" as its conceptual capstone and *Confessions of the Flesh* as a practical capstone. That is to say, given how often "parrhesia" is discussed in Foucault's last three Collège de France lectures as well as the three aforementioned non-Collège de France lectures, "parrhesia," accordingly, holds a significance for *Confessions of the Flesh*. Yet, there is, admittedly, a problem. Though confession is obviously evoked in *Confessions of the Flesh*, with "avowal" appearing twice (Foucault 2021, 53; 75), as far as the section of the text "The Formation of a New Experience" is concerned, the term "parrhesia," to the best of my knowledge, is never explicitly mentioned in *Confessions of the Flesh*. There are, however, instances in *Confessions of Flesh*—when considering only the first section of the text—when Foucault implicitly references "parrhesia," without explicitly using the term.

In one instance, when Foucault writes in *Confessions of the Flesh*, "the practice of penance and the exercises of the ascetic life organize relations between 'wrong-doing' and 'truth-telling'; they bundle together relations to oneself, to evil and to truth" (35), the terms "avowal" and "parrhesia" are certainly being respectively implied, with the latter reference to "truth-telling," in particular, having special significance. In the same sense, at a later point in *Confessions of the Flesh*, also with the connection between "avowal" and "parrhesia" in mind, Foucault writes, "telling-the-truth-about-oneself is essential in [the] game of purification and salvation" (53). He sees this as a "truth act" (53), or a "a 'deliberate' act in the sense that the catechumen is urged to explicitly manifest, in the form of an avowal, his recognition of being a sinner" (53). This catechumen—a convert prior to baptism and conformation (Hamma and Crilly 1999)—must engage in an "avowal" for the manifestation of the self, but also must engage in *parrhesia* for the recognition of the manifestation of the self. What Foucault is detailing, here, it seems to me, is how "avowal" is about what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self in the manifestation of the self, while "parrhesia" is about what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others in the recognition of the manifestation of the self. This is supported, in turn, by Foucault writing in *Confessions of the Flesh*, "two ways of making the truth appear: telling the truth about the sin and manifesting the being-true of the sinner" (73).

The reason for Foucault only implicitly referring to *parrhesia*, rather than using the term explicitly as he did in the six aforementioned lectures is certainly up for debate. What matters, if *parrhesia* remains, in my view, a capstone to *Confessions of the Flesh*, is that there is plenty of direct evidence to support what "parrhesia" continues to mean for Foucault. What *parrhesia* is for Foucault in *Confessions of the Flesh*, then, requires giving an account of *parrhesia* as it

appears in Foucauldian scholarship, through various entanglements with the notion of confession and the meaning of rhetoric itself.

To the best of my knowledge, the first of these assessments of Foucault's *parrhesia* is Thomas R. Flynn's "Truth and Subjectivation in the Later Foucault" (1985), In it, Flynn surmises, "Foucault's concern is practice of truth […] truth as dividing and excluding, truth as constraining and liberating, truth as political and ethical" (533). To this end, "the practice of truth" is the practice of discursiveness, such that *parrhesia*, it seems to me, is what constitutes, as the title of Flynn's article proposes, notions of "truth" and "subjectivation." In terms of the two, Flynn notes, "[Foucault's] uses of 'truth' in the constitution of moral subjectivity" (532). If these uses of truth occur through Flynn's reading of Foucault's "preference for spatial metaphors" (532), this spatiality is a rhetorical and material space, predicated on a rhetorical and material situation, articulated through *parrhesia*, which produces truth as subjectivation and subjectivation as truth. How, Flynn points out, in the third volume in the *History of Sexuality*, Foucault "wr[ites] that his abiding interest was a 'history of truth'" (532), and how this is prefigured by Foucault's notion of *parrhesia*, implies, in my view, a centrality of *parrhesia* in the productions of truth and subjectivation. With this in mind, if, Flynn suggests, "we can presume that the next revolution of [Foucault's] work, which was to deal with the history of the 'production of truth," would reveal his earlier writings in this new light" (532), not only does the *Confessions of the Flesh* manuscript become "the next revolution of his work," but, as a "history of the 'production of truth,'" it is also embodies a history of the production of subjectivation.

Even though *Confessions of the Flesh* remains wholly outside of Flynn's purview, when extending Flynn's assertion, it is essentially as much a history of the production of subjectivation as it is a history of the production of *parrhesia*, even with the notion of "confession" functioning

synonymously with *parrhesia* and being reminded that Foucault does not begin his investigations

of *parrhesia* until after completing the draft of *Confessions of the Flesh*. Even so, to Flynn's

point, though still outside of Flynn's purview, Foucault's notion of *parrhesia*, in Foucault's final

two years of lectures, seminars, and talks, presumes the "next revolution" of Foucault's work, if

we can say that what links Foucault's notions of *parrhesia* to confession is the process of

discursiveness between the two. This process provides for a production of sexuality, such that it

arises from productions of history, productions of truth, and productions of subjectivation, with

parrhesia optimizing what is produced and to what end, for the sake of the confession—Flynn

hones this a bit further, it seems to me, by arguing, in "Foucault as Parrhesiast" (1987),

"Foucault's last lectures on parrhesia advance his thought […] with respect to the 'triangular'

relationship of knowledge, power and subjectivation and the corresponding multiplicity of

truths" (113). In this sense, at the intersection of knowledge, power, and subjectivation,

parrhesia becomes someone's "brave act of true saying" (Wellausen 1996, 113), which is

directed towards someone else capable of critiquing this "true saying" within the rhetorical

situation of a "brave act," allowing *parrhesia*, then, to become more than just a confession or

even rhetoric.

　　Thereafter, from the standpoint of subjectivation, is Michael A. Peters's "Truth-Telling as

an Educational Practice of the Self" (2003) and Michalinos Zembylas's "Reframing Emotion in

Education through Lenses of Parrhesia and Care of the Self" (2003), both of which, ultimately,

place *parrhesia* in relation to a reading of the care of the self, insofar as both attend to how this

connection can contribute to the field of education. Both Peters and Zembylas give accounts for

the notion of the confession, with Peters characterizing it as "giving an account of one's life or

bios" (214), Zembylas arrives at a similar understanding, noting, "talking about one's emotions

in public can function as a form of confession" (329). To this latter view, Zimbylas considers

what a confession is as "a practice of the care of the self" (329), while, to the former view, Peters

largely agrees, suggesting that central to Foucault's analysis, in "Discourse and Truth," there

arises "the importance of education and its relations to 'care of the self,' public life and the crisis

of democratic institutions" (209). If, Zimbylas finds, "parrhesia was then an educative practice in

which one overcame fear by speaking out honestly and directly" (327), Peters comes to a similar

conclusion, viewing "Foucault's approach to truth-telling in relation to the changing practice of

education" (208).

Though Peters and Zimbylas draw a relationship between *parrhesia* and "confession"

that is mostly circumstantial, within the context of "educative practices," neither view the two

notions as constitutive of rhetoric. In fact, though Zimbylas never addresses rhetoric at all, Peters

sees *parrhesia* as operating in a way that is unlike that of rhetoric, since rhetoric "provides the

speaker with technical devices to help him persuade an audience, covering up his own beliefs

[and] in parrhesia, the speaker makes it manifestly clear what he believes" (212). This is so,

Peters implies, because *parrhesia* "is linked to truth" (212) and rhetoric is not, which Peters

assuredly draws from how Foucault contrasts *parrhesia* and rhetoric, which is particularly makes

clear from the very beginning of "The Courage of Truth" seminar (2009, 14).

Following the respective articles by Peters and Zimbylas, while M. Francyne Huckaby

(2008) is predominantly focused on charting how Foucault defines "parrhesia," Nancy Luxon

(2008) also emphasizes a conceptualization of *parrhesia*, drawing a distinction between

"confessional technologies" and "parrhesiastic techniques" (388), and Alison Ross (2008)

devotes a critical examination of the topic of *parrhesia* as it pertains to truth. In each of these

cases, Huckaby, Luxon, and Ross all consider *parrhesia*, in varying degrees, as integral to

practices that construct and maintain subjectivity, by providing an ethics to the care of the self—

in each of these cases, though, confession never fully figures into these discussions about

parrhesia, while discussions about rhetoric are largely anemic. Not until Carlos Lévy's "From

Politics to Philosophy and Theology: Some Remarks about Foucault's Interpretation of Parresia

in Two Published Seminars" (2009) do we see a more robust grappling with what *parrhesia*

means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to *parrhesia*, even though the notion of the

"confession" remains absent in it—the extent that, Lévy explains, "rhetoric was, in Foucault's

opinion, wholly alien to the concept of [*parrhesia*]" (315) is situated in terms of what Foucault

says in "The Government of the Self and Others" and "The Courage of the Truth" lectures,

having recently appeared in French at the time of Lévy's writing.

As critical as Lévy is of the problems inherent in Foucault's conceptualization of

parrhesia, this speaks to Lévy's sense that there is, indeed, a connection worth making between

parrhesia and rhetoric. As much as Lévy views this as something that Foucault misses, we must

remember that Lévy's situates his view entirely on Foucault's final two lecture courses at the

Collège de France—which Lévy freely admits—it is clear that the "Discourse and Truth" lecture

is outside of Lévy's purview, though it would have been available to him by 2001, as well as the

"Parrhesia" lecture. Not only is the "Parrhesia" lecture, too, out of Lévy's purview, but the text

of what Foucault said in the "Parrhesia" lecture is not made available until 2016 in French. Still,

though Lévy could not know the content of the "Parrhesia" lecture—which, I admit, I can only

presume, since Lévy makes no mention of it at all— Lévy effectively sets the stage for working

through and working out what *parrhesia* means to rhetoric and what rhetoric means to *parrhesia*

for Foucault.

Following Lévy, in "Parresia, Foucault, and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition" (2013), Arthur E. Walzer attends to what role Foucault has in the rhetorical tradition, pointing out, in particular, how Biesecker's observation about Foucault rarely writing or speaking about "rhetoric per se" is only accurate up to the publication of Foucault's the third volume in the *History of Sexuality* series (1). Moreover, Walzer challenges Biesecker's claim that Foucault's "neglect of rhetoric changed when [he] took up [parrhesia] (fearless or frank speech) in the lectures he presented during the last three years of his life, 1981-1984" (1). Consequently, Walzer sees Foucault's handling of *parrhesia* as problematic, especially "since claims to speak frankly always have rhetorical implication, [parrhesia] would seem to have an inherent rhetorical dimension" (2). To this extent, Walzer maintains that "[*parrhesia*] has a history within rhetoric," which disagrees with Foucault's genealogy of *parrhesia*, which appears in the first session of "The Courage of Truth" lecture. Because of this, Walzer surmises, "Foucault programmatically conceives of [*parrhesia*] as conceptually opposed to rhetoric" (2). Rather than presuppose why Foucault conceives of parrhesia "programmatically"—given this would require a more complete history than what is afforded to Walzer's purview—Walzer seeks "to offer an alternative analysis of [*parrhesia*] as well as a critique of Foucault's description of classical rhetoric" (2).

Walzer's "alternative analysis of [parrhesia]," which offers a reassessment of what *parrhesia* is, what it has to do with rhetoric, and what it means for Foucault, sparked a 2013 forum, as part of a fourth volume of *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, between Walzer, Pat J. Gehrke, Susan C. Jarratt, and Bradford Vivian. For Gehrke, in response to Walzer, "what [Walzer] compares seems peculiar and unexplained" (360), insofar as Walzer sees *parrhesia* as being like rhetoric. To this end, Gehrke warns, "neither [*parrhesia*] nor rhetoric have a substance or definition outside of their historical moment of emergence and practice" (360). Consequently,

Gehrke challenges both Walzer and Foucault, with regards to how *parrhesia* and rhetoric are "unspecified" (360), and, more importantly, that "neither [*parrhesia*] nor rhetoric is reducible to a single form or tradition over the ancient period—though this directly questions Walzer, it is clearly, more poignantly, questioning how Foucault places *parrhesia* over and against rhetoric. To Gehrke's point, Jarratt calls for "the need [for] more work with the late lectures to discover which practices that Foucault brings to light are normative and where we might find forms of resistance" (367)—though this questions Foucault, it is clearly a question for Walzer, too. In light of Jarratt's point, Vivian offers the following assessment: "the very space between [Walzer and Foucault], however, reveals significant definitional and methodological challenges for future understandings of rhetorical phenomena and its cardinal descriptive categories: speaker, discourse, audience" (368).

Setting aside Walzer's specific responses to Gehrke, Jarratt, and Vivian, it is clear to me that the relationship Walzer sets up between *parrhesia* and rhetoric, in how Foucault envisions the two, is one of both conceptual and methodological tension. As much as this tension arises from the different genealogies from which both separately hail, this tension is also rooted in a shared genealogy, insofar as the former is like the latter. However "unspecified" this likeness appears to be, or how it remains difficult to reduce either, as Gehrke tells us, "to a single form or tradition over the ancient period," when working through Foucault's final lectures, the significance of the "definitional and methodological challenges," as Vivian acknowledges them, arise in the fact that Foucault's final lectures at the Collège de France only made available part of Foucault's overall vision. If the intent, then, is to allow, just as Vivian points out, "for future understandings of rhetorical phenomena" that make sense out of Foucault's final years, we will need to broaden our scope of what the "cardinal descriptive categories: speaker, discourse,

audience," to borrow Vivian's words, mean to Foucault. To Jarratt's point, "the need [for] more work with the late lectures," insofar as understanding Foucault's conceptions of speaker, discourse, and audience, will require considering parrhesia as an expansion of what confession is for Foucault, on the way towards, to reconsider Walzer, a "programmatically" confessional rhetoric.

Not only is Foucault's use of the term "confession," to the best of my knowledge, mostly missing from Foucauldian scholarship on *parrhesia* leading up to Walzer's article and, for that matter, in Walzer's work itself, but it is also largely missing from Foucauldian scholarship on parrhesia since Walzer. Though there are notable exceptions to this, with Mihal L. Fuiorea's "Michel Foucault and the Concept of Parrhesia" (2014) and Nancy Luxon's "Authority, Interpretation and Space of the Parrhesiastic Encounter" (2014), while Fuiorea draws upon Foucault's final two the Collège de France lectures, particularly drawing "confession" from Foucault's last the Collège de France lecture, Luxon casts a wider net by considering "confession" in terms of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, the first volume of the *History of Sexuality* series, the "Wrong Doing, Truth-Telling" lecture, and with an emphasis on Foucault's "Parrhesia" lecture. Though Fuiorea places the meanings of *parrhesia* and "confession" alongside one another, so that the latter "is different from the obligation of telling the truth about oneself" (100), *parrhesia* pertaining to "the system of Christian confession" (Fuiorea 100), Luxon, to the contrary, sees a through-line from the "Parrhesia" lecture, writing, "insofar as it serves as a hinge between Foucault's earlier work on the production of truth through "confession" […] and his turn to a different mode of truth-telling that would sidestep the relations of power so constitutive of his earlier work" (71).

As much as Luxon draws attention to "parrhesia"—and the extent that very little, if any, scholarship in the past decade acknowledges this, to the emphasis of *parrhesia*, such as in Yegen (2014), Zagan (2015), Dyrberg (2016), Maxwell (2018), and Gotman (2021)—she does not address what role "confession" plays in Foucault's non-Collège de France lectures, even though, to Luxon's credit, she names a few of these lectures, noting this significance from the very outset of her article. Yet, even in 2014, more of these non-Collège de France lectures remain out of Luxon's purview than what is within it with the "Parrhesia" lecture, towards making sense of Foucault's reference to confession in relation to *parrhesia*. Nevertheless, Luxon prescribes what *parrhesia* means to confession, and vice versa, by codifying what is at stake, it seems to me, in all the accounts from Flynn to Lévy, from Walzer to Fuiorea, within what Luxon programmatically calls "parrhesiastic relationships" (81).

If, as Luxon tells us, "for parrhesiastic relationships to play out in a politically and ethically robust manner, participants need to trust that these engagements and pacts will find a context to sustain them" (81), it is not only that these "engagements" arise within a rhetorical situation, but it is also, it seems to me, that these "pacts" are laid bare by a rhetoric, of some sort. If these relationships are predicated on the notion of *parrhesia*, these relationships are oriented towards, I view, the notion of confession, within a given rhetorical situation, as that which allows these relationships to "find a context to sustain them." In drawing this understanding from the "Parrhesia" lecture, as Luxon does, insofar as the "lecture pushes readers to inquire into the contexts or communities opened up by frank speech" (81), in the need for Foucault to "turn to the parrhesiastic relationship to organize practices of truth-telling" (81), what is contextualized and what is organized is relegated to and regulated by a confessional rhetoric.

Though Luxon reads into the "Parrhesia" lecture Foucault's "concerns about space and publicity" (81), but finds these concerns operating in contrast to confession, what "reads differently" (81) for Luxon, to the extent that "confession amounts to the performance or externalization of faults and sins so as to make these legible" (81), what is at issue, for Foucault, it seems to me, is more than what *parrhesia*, in itself, can give an account for, and, in fact, more than what rhetoric, in itself, can. For that matter, as Luxon makes clear, given what "confession" means to do, insofar as "the obligation to say everything is an invitation to express […] the movement of [curiosity, desire, and discourse] across the simultaneous threshold of personality and public" (81-82), Foucault's approach to the notion of confession is rhetorically tied to the notion of *parrhesia*, such that the latter precedes the former. Notions of "the performance or externalization of faults and sins," that which makes these notions "legible," that which is predicated on "the obligation to say everything," that which is conditioned by "an invitation to express" various movements of thought, in my view, encapsulates what Luxon means by a "parrhesiastic encounter," which points to, as an entanglement of *parrhesia*, "confession," and rhetoric, Foucault's articulation towards a confessional rhetoric.

The way in which we can, to Luxon's point, "work on [the] ruminations on [parrhesia] forward into our own present" (89) is by doing so in terms of Foucault's confessional rhetoric and by viewing the *Confessions of the Flesh* as a culmination of it. This culmination is not just of Foucault's thought on *parrhesia* and "confession," or even of what Foucault means now with the posthumous significance of the recently published work, but it is also of network of concerns towards, within, and through the "parrhesiastic encounter." This encounter is the "moment of avowal, of confession," to Foucault's point in "The Hermeneutics of the Subject" lecture, insofar as, here, it manifestly encapsulates "avowal," as well as the material significance of

exomologēsis and *exagoreusis,* respectively as a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others. What arises from this, in turn, is the material, corporeal significance of the body and the flesh, through "*metanoia*," which I have previously defined as "penitential change."

If "*metanoia*" has always-already been integral to, as discussed in Chapter 3, what initiates self-examination as facts and self-renunciation as interpretations and, then, influences the very science of confession towards the manner in which self-examined facts always-already being a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretation is always-already the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations, there is a material significance to "*metanoia*" for *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis,* respectively as a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others.

For Foucault's confessional rhetoric, "*metanoia*," as explained in *Confessions of the Flesh*, is, cumulatively speaking, "the movement by which the soul turns toward the truth in detaching itself from the world, from errors and sins, but also as an exercise in which the soul must reveal itself, its qualities and its will" (48). Given that "the soul must reveal itself," and do so through manifestations of the self, the body and the flesh are the most materially and corporeally significant manifestations of the self—the way that this happens is through what I will describe, moving forward, as "hamartiological flesh" and "soteriological body," in terms of how Foucault's confessional rhetoric becomes trans-corporeal rhetoric.

4.5: Confessional Rhetoric as Trans-corporeal Rhetoric

At this point, if confessional rhetoric, as it has been defined, is an entanglement of parrhesia, the notion of confession, and the meaning of rhetoric, it is also an entanglement of the rhetoric of confession, the science of confession, and the materiality of confession scientized, all of which are cumulatively expressed in Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*. It is through this fundamental entanglement, predicated on one normative conception of reality, where self-examined facts are always-already a self-renunciation through the interpretation of those self-examined facts and, in turn, what it means to self-renounce through interpretation is always-already the self-examined facts of those self-renounced interpretations, and for that matter, what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self is also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others. From there, another entanglement exists between *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis,* respectively as a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others.

Each of these entanglements, as discussed with respect to rhetorical new materialisms, both earlier in this chapter and in Chapter 2 for Burke, are "of time, space, sounds, environs, objects, affects, and intra-actions so central to new material" (Gries 2022, 139). These "intra-actions," as it has been discussed, yield inter-actions and extra-actions, particularly through what has already been noted about "intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies." This discursiveness arises from entanglements, which are especially the case, as Foucault points out in the "Parrhesia" lecture, when "one acknowledges one is a sinner," what is being acknowledged is the hamartiological flesh and, when "one has to deliver [discourse] continuously" about oneself, what is being delivered, in another sense, is the soteriological body. This entanglement of the flesh and the body, which will be drawn from

Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, has always-already been interwoven, however implicitly, into the underpinnings of the entanglement of *parrhesia*, the notion of "confession," and the meaning of rhetoric—what is means to do confessional rhetoric means to do it through material and rhetorical negotiations between the flesh and the body. Before explaining what material and rhetorical significance of the flesh and the body are for Foucault, I want to provide more context, by beginning with an account of what has been discussed about the rhetoric of confession up to this chapter's discussion of the science of confession and its materiality, which will help scaffold the concerns of Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*.

Returning to where Chapter 3 concluded, insofar as the rhetoric of confession is concerned, the self-examination of facts and the self-renunciation of interpretations is explained in *Confessions of the Flesh* as an "examination-confession" (108), which Foucault sees as a "game in which one's focus on oneself must always be combined with 'truth-telling regarding oneself" (108). This entanglement arises in a "continuous sorting and verification of thoughts" (105), and "the battle within" (102-105), towards what Foucault describes in the following way:

> The exercise of oneself upon oneself, knowledge of oneself, the constitution of oneself as an object of investigation and discourse, the liberation or purification of oneself and salvation by means of operations that carry light to one's innermost being, and drive one's deepest secrets up to the light of redemptive exposure […] a form of experience—understood both as a mode of presence to oneself and a program for self-transformation (35-36).

The extent that, for Foucault, "what is at issue, in fact, is the form of subjectivity" (35), all of this speaks to the entanglements of self-examined facts and self-renounced interpretations. The very "constitution of oneself as an object of investigation and discourse" is, indeed, indicative of what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, as well as the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self. Yet, it also captures how the science of confession and its materiality, as discussed earlier in this chapter, become "a program for self-transformation,"

through what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others, and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others.

It seems to me, if "a form of experience" can be partly understood "as a mode of presence to oneself," the material significance of this cannot be divided nor compartmentalized from the most materially significant "form of experience" that is the most corporeal "mode of presence to oneself." This is what was precisely inherent in the rhetoric of confession, from Chapter 2, the science of confession, as discussed earlier in this chapter, and, thereafter, made all the more central to what happens when confession is scientized for the sake of materiality. The point here is that what initially allows for an active engagement in the rhetoric of confession, in the first place, through "*metanoia*" as, Foucault defines, "the movement by which the soul turns toward the truth in detaching itself from the world," all of this is in material conversation with the most corporeal "mode of presence to oneself": the flesh and the body. Indeed, when "the soul turns toward the truth," it does so to a soteriological end, by "detaching itself from the world" and what is hamartiological—what influences "the agitations of the mind" is the "agitations" or discursiveness between the flesh and the body.

Though "the agitations of the mind," as Foucault describes them in the "Parrhesia" lecture, are immaterial, metaphysical and incorporeal, even if they are consequential to subjectivity, Foucault recognizes that there is another "form of experience" or "mode of presence" that is distinctly material, physical and corporeal, which is just as problematic to "the agitations of the mind." This is "the problem of the 'flesh' at the center of [the] apparatus (*dispositif*)" of the program for self-transformation (Foucault 2021, 36), with the body, presumedly, for this rhetorical-material dichotomy, not as problematic.

As Foucault makes clear, "one will have a fundamental relationship with the flesh that runs through one's whole life and serves as a ground for the rules that are imposed on it" (36). This is as consequential to Foucault's proposition that "Christianity is a confession" and the rhetoric of confession, as they were discussed in Chapter 3, as it is to the science of confession and its materiality, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The "fundamental relationship with the flesh" lays bare, too, the degree to which *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* are always-already about the flesh, where the flesh is situated a problem in "the program for self-transformation. The same can be said about the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others are being always-already about the flesh, just as much as "intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies," as entanglements of the self and others, all hold their discursiveness with and base their dependencies on the flesh.

Yet, if there is a problem of the flesh, as Foucault explains, this problem affects "the program of self-transformation" and, essentially, the flesh becomes something that must be mitigated, navigated, traversed, or handled, since we "have a fundamental relationship with the flesh," the very nature of self-examined facts and self-renounced interpretations, as discussed in Chapter 3, are mitigated through the fundamental relationship with and the problem of the flesh. What is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self is also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others is navigated through the flesh, just as the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others is traversed through the flesh. To this end, Foucault writes:

> The "flesh" should be understood as a mode of experience—that is, as a mode of knowledge and transformation of oneself by oneself, depending on a certain relationship between nullification of evil and a manifestation of truth (36).

Though this is the most full-throated that Foucault in *Confessions of the Flesh* is about the meaning and meaningfulness of the flesh, it carries a great deal of significance for what I mean by "confessional rhetoric" and what this has to do with trans-corporeality. Even if it is rather brief, it has a particular commerce in what Christianity is for Foucault, as discussed in Chapter 3. Here, when Foucault suggests that flesh "should be understood as a mode of experience," the word, flesh, in scare quotes, he is undoubtedly operating under the rubric of what the flesh is for Christianity. The "flesh" is a mode of experience in the same way that Christianity is a mode of experience and the confession is also a mode of experience—because, as Foucault tells us, "Christianity is a confession," and this arises from Christian technologies of the self, these technologies are imposed upon the self in terms of the flesh, insofar as the *parrhesia* articulates "the renunciation of the flesh" (Foucault 1988, 17).

Just as the flesh is "a mode of knowledge," the same can be said about what occurs through the rhetoric of confession, as discussed in Chapter 3, and through the science of confession and its materiality. What occurs through *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* is also predicated on a mode of knowledge, as are the following: self-examined facts and self-renounced interpretations, what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self is also what is made admissible to others, by others, and for others, as well as the self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and a self-manifestation to others, by others, and for others. Even discursiveness—"intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies"—is "a mode of knowledge," even though it also produces modes of knowledge in intra-actions, inter-actions, and extra-actions, as previously discussed. Yet, the flesh is a particular mode of knowledge that produces particular modes of knowledge, aiding in, to Foucault's point, the "transformation of oneself by oneself," based on "a certain relationship

between nullification of evil and a manifestation of truth." This respective relationship, in my view, is corporeally and discursiveness between "hamartiological flesh" and "soteriological body," which begins with Foucault's particular understanding of the flesh.

The way that Foucault highlights the flesh is noteworthy in *Confessions of the Flesh*, even if it is not isolated. Across the History of Sexuality volumes, Foucault mentions the "flesh" in ways that are, it seems to me, contributive to what he writes in *Confessions of the Flesh*, but not quite as consequential. In the first volume, for instance, Foucault cites "the confession of the flesh" (19), "the technology of the 'flesh' in classical Christianity" (113), and "[the] deployment of sexuality; its formation on the basis of the Christian notion of the flesh" (114). In the second volume, *The Use of Pleasure*, for instance, Foucault refers to "the question of the flesh, or of sexuality" (38), "the ethics of the flesh and the notion of sexuality" (42), "the Christian doctrine of the flesh" (50), "in the world of the flesh" (124), and "commit[ting] the sin of the flesh" (184). In the third volume of *The Care of Self*, only one reference appears: "a domain such as sexuality or the flesh" (36). In all these cases, though sexuality is thematically linked to the flesh, this is not necessarily the case in *Confessions of the Flesh*, which, it seems to me, is moving away from such a thematization and considering the rhetorical-material significance of the flesh to itself, by itself, and for itself. In other words, "the flesh is a mode of subjectification," which, curiously, Foucault crosses out from the original typescript of *Confessions of the Flesh*, along with the assertion of "the processes of subjectification," according to Gros (36)—because of this, it remains impossible to know exactly why Foucault omitted this proposition, and, for my purposes, I will not provide a speculation.

Nevertheless, though Foucault crosses out the aforementioned assertions from the original typescript of *Confessions of the Flesh*, there are earmarks of their sentiments in the

"Subjectivity and Truth" lecture. I will begin, first, with considering the concluding remarks

Foucault makes in the final session on April 1, 1981:

> On the basis of a history of technologies of self, which seem to me a relatively fruitful
> point of intelligibility, on the basis of a history of governmentalities—governmentalities
> of self and others […] a certain type of relationship of self to self was formed that has
> itself undergone certain transformations, since we have seen it developed, organized, and
> distributed in an apparatus (*dispositif*) that was first that of the flesh before becoming,
> much later, that of sexuality" (Foucault 2017, 288-289).

Here, what immediately stands out, for me, is how Foucault's sense that there is "a certain type

of relationship of self to self [that] was formed that has itself undergone certain transformations"

is relatively congruent with the notion of "transformation of oneself by oneself," as

aforementioned from *Confessions of the Flesh*. This sort of argument is all the more important,

given the broader theme of the "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture, what has been previously

discussed about *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* as particular manifestations of the self through the

science of confession and its materiality, and the degree to which, for Foucault, the flesh, as a

mode of experience, plays a material, albeit corporeal role in "a certain relationship between

nullification of evil and a manifestation of truth," by way of the hamartiological flesh.

I propose that, if the flesh, as Foucault explains, is "a mode of knowledge and

transformation of oneself by oneself," the body is its own mode, where the body, too, "depend[s]

on a certain relationship between nullification of evil and a manifestation of truth," from the

standpoint of the soteriological body. The corporeal distinction Foucault makes between the two

can certainly be read into what he writes about the flesh in *Confessions of the Flesh* and what is

made implicit about the body.

For that matter, the distinction is made all the more explicit by a "fragments of [a]

partially destroyed manuscript" that Foucault entitled, "The Flesh and the Body" ("*La Chair et le

Corps*"), as Gros's footnotes to the first session of the "Subjectivity and Truth" lecture

acknowledge (23). Insofar as this partially destroyed manuscript "was to have contrasted the

modern biological concept of the body with the traditional Christian notion of the flesh"

(Bernauer 1999, xiv), there are traces of Foucault's interest in this corporeal distinction as far

back as the February 19, 1975 and February 26, 1975 sessions of "The Abnormals" lecture, "in

order to trace how this has informed psychiatry" (Elden 2016, 71). Even so, in light of "The

Abnormals" lecture, what is significant about "The Flesh and the Body" manuscript is that

"Foucault had used it when delivering ["The Abnormals"] lecture course" (Elden 2016, 77). This

is exemplified, for example, when Foucault characterizes the corporeal distinctiveness between

the flesh and the body at the beginning of the February 26, 1975 session in the following way:

> In a word, we can say carnal disorder corresponds to spiritual direction, that is to say,
> carnal disorder as a discursive domain, field of intervention, and object of knowledge for
> this spiritual direction. The complex and floating domain of the flesh as a domain of the
> exercise of power and objectification begins to stand out from the body, from the
> corporeal materiality that the penitential theology and practice of Middle Ages merely
> identified as the origin of sin (201).

Notwithstanding the reference to "carnal disorder," what is particularly important about what

Foucault says here, in terms of how it ultimately relates to *Confessions of the Flesh* is that "the

complex and floating domain of the flesh" corporeally"stand[s[out from the body." In this way,

if the flesh is "a mode of experience," this is so due to "the complex and floating domain" of it.

Insofar as the flesh is "a discursive domain," its corporeal discursiveness is with the body, where

the flesh is also "a domain of the exercise of power and objectification" corporeally imposed

upon it by the domain of the body.

The through-line from what Foucault says in "The Abnormals" lecture to what is laid

bare in *Confessions of the Flesh* is the extent that the flesh "stand[s] out from the body,"

operating under the rubric that "Pauline flesh was not a body but rather an entire way of existing,

an embrace of the carceral and slavish in contrast to that freedom of spirit discovered in living as

children of God" (Bernauer 1999, xv). Given that Foucault only references Paul once, to the best

of my knowledge, at the very beginning of "The Formation of a New Experience" section of

Confessions of the Flesh, doing so about "the markedly Hellenizing letters of Saint Paul" (3),

Foucault's Pauline theological understanding of the flesh, it seems to me, is only implied.

Though implied, considering Foucault's Pauline theological understanding of the corporeal

distinctiveness between the flesh and the body, as two "discursive domain[s]" is essential to what

has previously been discussed about Foucault's confessional rhetoric and, at this point,

indispensable to how Foucault's confessional rhetoric is explicitly a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

Admittedly, there is not a great wealth of scholarship devoted to the relationship between

Pauline theology and Foucault. Though there are certain cases where Paul's and Foucault's

discursive conceptualization of power, sexuality, and the subject have been thoroughly compared

(i.e., Castelli 1991; Hack-Polaski 1999; Chrulew 2010; Nicolet-Anderson 2010; Nicolet-

Anderson 2012; Fuggle 2013; Castelli 2017), none explicitly consider what Pauline theological

understandings of the corporeal significance of the flesh and the body scaffold Foucault's

understanding of the two corporeally, especially as they hold a trans-corporeal significance to

what Foucault accomplishes in the confessional rhetoric of *Confessions of the Flesh*.

To be fair, insofar as it is possible, for the purposes of Foucault, to find a corporeal

discursiveness between the flesh and the body in Paul's theology, it requires carefully

considering what Paul says in his epistles about the implications of living by the flesh (i.e.,

Galatians 5:16-17 and Romans 8:13) in relation to what Pauline scholarship says about this

distinction (i.e., Robinson 1952; Ridderbos 1975; Dunn 1998; Schreiner 2001; Wright 2013;

Sanders 2015; Keener 2016; Gorman 2017; Keener 2019). Though Foucault is working within

this Pauline framework about the flesh and the body, Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* takes

the problem of the flesh and "the question of corporeality" (Kirby 1997, 1) towards something that holds trans-corporeal significance.

The extent that this trans-corporeal significance is Foucault's "hermeneutic of the Christian flesh" (Senellart 2014, 345), and this hermeneutic is concerned with the material entanglements of the flesh and the body, the implications of Foucault's confessional rhetoric, as it has been previously discussed, yields a corporeal discursiveness between the hamartiological flesh and the soteriological body. This is so, not only for the sake of, to Foucault's point, "a program for self-transformation," but also for what Foucault perceives as the problem of the flesh, where "dramatization of oneself as a sinner," as *exomologēsis*, reckons with hamartiological flesh through "a discourse that is in principle continuous […] to the person who is one's director," as *exagoreusis*, attends to the soteriological body. All of this corporeal discursiveness—"intradiscursive dependencies," "interdiscursive dependencies," and "extradiscursive dependencies"—between the hamartiological flesh and the soteriological body.

As corporealities, the hamartiological flesh and the soteriological body have their own permeability, traversing one another porousness in "a program for self-transformation." This program, and the transposition of hamartiological flesh and the soteriological body becomes a trans-corporeal apparatus, or *dispositif*, establishes the rhetorical situation between two corporealities, based on "hav[ing] a fundamental relationship with the flesh" as well as the body. This *dispositif* becomes a "theoretical site" (Alaimo 2010, 2), where trans-corporeality happens, between what flesh is "as a mode of experience" and soteriological, ascetic embodiment—the theoretical site of Christianity as a *dispositif* and the material significance of the confession evoked as *parrhesia* sets the stage for, it seems to me, Foucault's conceptions of hamartiological

flesh and soteriological body as trans-corporeal subjects, and how confessional rhetoric undergirds them situationally.

Foucault's confessional rhetoric, as a trans-corporeal rhetoric, is contingent on the sustaining material force of "*metanoia*," from the self-examination of facts and the self-renounced interpretations about oneself, from what is made admissible to the self, by the self, and for the self, but also what is made admissible to others to a self-manifestation to the self, by the self, and for the self and the manifestation to others, by others, and for others, through the transposing of hamartiological flesh with a soteriological, ascetic embodiment. All of this allows for, to Foucault's point in *Confessions of the Flesh*, "a manifestation of the self—a manifestation that is both awareness and confirmation of that which one is ceasing to be, and of the regenerated existence according to which one is already living" (40). The extent that the corporeality of what "is ceasing to be" and the corporeality of "the regenerated existence" are traversing one another is due to their bodily natures of the flesh and the body, as trans-corporeal subjects, this is due to their material agencies "emerging across different domains" (Alaimo 2010, 4).

Insofar as these trans-corporeal subjects engage in trans-corporeal rhetoric, they do so, beginning with the rhetorical act of confession, as what has been discussed in Chapter 3 as the rhetoric of confession, proceeding with the science of confession and its materiality toward the material significance of *parrhesia* and culminating with a confessional rhetoric that, for Foucault, "constitutes a complex act that is the soul's movement acceding to truth, and the manifested truth of this movement" (41). This movement, for Foucault's confessional rhetoric and its trans-corporeality "emphasiz[es] the movement across bodies, [where] trans-corporeality reveals the interchanges and interconnections of various bodily natures" (Alaimo 2010, 2). This

"movement across different sites […] opens up an epistemological space" (Alaimo 2008, 238) where Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* is a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

4.6: Epilogue

Rather than simply considering the *Confessions of the Flesh* as an extension to or merely working within the framework of his "History of Sexuality" series, the text, it seems to me, more directly contributes to Foucault's conceptualization of rhetoric in a way that ventures beyond whatever rhetoricization of sexuality is laid bare in the three volumes appearing in Foucault's lifetime. In much the same manner as Burke's *The War of Words* accomplishes more than the boundaries of the "motivorium" volumes provide, Foucault's Confessions of the Flesh also accomplishes more. In serving as a codification of and a culmination to Foucault's preoccupations with confession and what it means to the flesh, within the bounds of certain technologies imposed on the hermeneutics of the self, *Confessions of the Flesh* advances a particular approach to rhetoric that, for Foucault, is situated in what confession does rhetorically and materially to the flesh. What results, then, is a confessional rhetoric that is not only concerned with the separate issues of what Christianity is, what Christian technologies are, how these technologies exercise an ethics upon the flesh, and how these ethics of the flesh informs a corporeal aesthetics of embodied beings—all of these concerns are interconnected into a rhetorical triangularity hinging on how confessional rhetoric fundamentally points towards a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

In a post-factum way, Foucault's confessional rhetoric, as trans-corporeal rhetoric, is concerned with the ways and means that the self is constructed within a specific genre of Christianity, with a particular ethics of the flesh, and with a certain corporeal aesthetics. For Foucault, the very notion of confession, avowal, and rhetoric codified into *parrhesia* initiates a

trans-corporeal process through *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*, which separate the flesh and the body into different corporeal, aesthetic concerns, so that the two can transpose one another. These handlings of *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* open the possibility for the flesh and the body to be paradoxically conditioned in terms of the ethics of the self, in order to suppress the flesh and reify the body into embodied beings, for the sake of presenting a trans-corporeal rhetoric.

CONCLUSION

STUDIES IN TRANS-CORPOREAL RHETORIC

> Trans[-]corporeality emphasizes that there are a multitude of
> possibilities for human agency.
> —Stacy Alaimo, An Interview with Julia Kuznetski (2020)

> [Trans-corporeality] implies that we're literally enmeshed in the
> physical world.
> —Stacy Alaimo, An Interview with Julia Kuznetski (2020)

5.1: Burke and Foucault

This dissertation has presented "trans-corporeal rhetoric," predicated on Alaimo's term, "trans-corporeality," by reconceptualizing Burke's *The War of Words* and Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* as contributive to what it means to do "trans-corporeal rhetoric." Though Burke's and Foucault's respective texts are posthumous, and similarly function largely at the respective margins of Burkean and Foucauldian studies due to their very recent publications, they become integral to what matters to "trans-corporeal rhetoric," even when considering the two texts as post-factum contributions that are already doing it, and even when broadening what Alaimo's trans-corporeality is and portends to do.

In giving an account of how "trans-corporeality" has contributed to posthumanism as a "post-humanist mode" of thinking and, in particular, new materialism and material feminisms, both of which are concerned with what materiality is, how materiality works, and why materiality is important, this dissertation has sought to expand "trans-corporeality" into rhetorical theory and rhetorical studies. This has been argued in terms of aligning Alaimo's "bodily natures" to a concept that is already integral to contemporary rhetoric: rhetorical bodies.

Insofar as "trans-corporeal rhetoric," as it has been presented in this dissertation, is concerned, like Alaimo's trans-corporeality," with how "bodily natures" or rhetorical bodies engage one another in a rhetorical situation, which, for Alaimo, is a "theoretical site." It is within the rhetorical situation as a "theoretical site" where "bodily natures" or rhetorical bodies, to Alaimo's point, "meet and mingle in productive ways." Indeed, it is within the rhetorical situation where entanglement occurs—for Burke's *The War of Words*, these entanglements are between facts and interpretations, while, for Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, these entanglements are between *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis*.

Given that there is already a robust engagement between the field of rhetoric and new materialism, which has been made all the more significance in the most recent issue of *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, devoted to "rhetorical new materialism" or RNM, what has been presented as "trans-corporeal rhetoric" interfaces with the concerns of rhetorical new materialism. The difference, however, is that, while rhetorical new materialism, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4, consider Alaimo's trans-corporeality as part of a broader network of concerns, this dissertation more fundamentally centers Alaimo's trans-corporeality within what matters to a materiality of rhetoric. For the purposes of Burke and Foucault, though a materiality of rhetoric remains implicit, this dissertation has sought to demonstrate the explicit material significance to what Burke and Foucault are accomplishing respectively in *The War of Words* and *Confessions of the Flesh*. This been presented through Burke's place in the debates of the rhetoric of science and those of the science of rhetoric, for the sake of Burke's understanding of what the scientific is and what this means to journalism and the "technologies" of news and information, and, in turn, Foucault's place in the rhetoric of confession and those of the science of confession, for the sake

of Foucault's understanding of what the confession is and what this means to Christianity and technologies of the self.

This dissertation has considered Burke's "scientific rhetoric," as evoked in *The War of Words*, in terms of debates in the rhetoric of science and those of the science of rhetoric, both of which are implicitly concerned with a materiality of rhetoric—with facts and interpretations holding material significance to what scientific rhetoric is, they become "bodily natures" and rhetorical bodies, entangled in a rhetorical situation of the ethics of news, where they traverse one another into matters of disinformation and misinformation.

Similarly, this dissertation has considered what has been referred to as "confessional rhetoric," derived from *Confessions of the Flesh*, along with what has been prescribed as the rhetoric of confession and the science of confession, both of which are implicitly concerned with a materiality of rhetoric—with *exomologēsis* and *exagoreusis* holding material significance to what confessional rhetoric is, they become "bodily natures" and rhetorical bodies, entangled in a rhetorical situation of the ethics of the flesh, where they traverse one another into matters of the hamartiological flesh and the soteriological body.

5.2: Further Study

If "trans[-]corporeality emphasizes that there are a multitude of possibilities for human agency" (Alaimo 2020, 140), and the rhetorical situation also provides for a multitude of possibilities of human agency, then trans-corporeal rhetoric also has a multitude of possibilities of human agency. Indeed, as this dissertation has shown, Burke's *The War of Words* and Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh* are just two examples of this "multitude of possibilities of human agency," within the genres of journalism and Christianity. Consider, for instance, what Alaimo

suggests in "Oceanic Origins, Plastic Activism, and New Materialism at Sea," which appears in

Material Ecocriticism (2014):

> It is my hope that trans-corporeality—in theory, literature, film, activism, and daily life—is a mode of ecomaterialism that will discourage citizens, consumers, and embodied humans from taking refuge in fantasies of transcendence and imperviousness that render environmentalism a merely elective and external enterprise (187).

Here, not only does Alaimo prescribe the possibility of other genres, grounded on other ethics

and aesthetics of the body, which can be translated through trans-corporeality as "a mode of

ecomaterialism," but she also prescribes possible genres in the forms of "theory, literature, film,

activism, and daily life." If the baseline is that trans-corporeality as "a mode of ecomaterialism

[…] will discourage citizens, consumers, and embodied humans from taking refuge in fantasies

of transcendence and imperviousness," and this baseline is fundamentally about everyday

entanglements that underscore the extent that environmentalism cannot be rendered "a merely

elective and external enterprise," then this undoubtedly opens up other everyday possibilities for

what trans-corporeal rhetoric is and does, in the identification of genres, ethics, and aesthetics.

Take Alaimo's reference to film, for example. If we broaden this to film theory, and to

how cinema's visual rhetoric works, for instance, then "trans-corporeality" and trans-corporeal

rhetoric allows for a discussion of the corporeality of images as "bodily natures" or rhetorical

bodies. The corporeality of images, in cinema, are porous and have fleshy permeability, when

thinking about how images can transpose one another in a given film, for the sake of a specific

cinematic effect.

Now, consider sound studies, in terms of what recently matters to sonic rhetoric,

musicological rhetoric, and the rhetoric of sound. If we broaden what Alaimo means by "theory"

to the theory invested in sound studies, for instance, then "trans-corporeality" and trans-corporeal

rhetoric allows for a discussion of the corporeality of sound as "bodily natures" or rhetorical

bodies. The corporeality of sound, in a score, is porous and has fleshy permeability, when thinking about how notes can transpose one another in a given musicological structure, for the sake of a specific musicological effect.

In another sense, if we broaden what Alaimo means by "daily life" to include queer studies, queer theory, and queer rhetoric, for instance, then "trans-corporeality" and trans-corporeal rhetoric allows for a discussion of the corporeality of queerness as "bodily natures" or rhetorical bodies. The corporeality of queerness, for sexuality, is porous and has fleshy permeability, when considering gender construction as binaries that can transpose one another in a given person, for the sake of a specific identity.

Finally, if we think about architectural theory as a constituent of "daily life," for instance, then "trans-corporeality" and trans-corporeal rhetoric allows for a discussion of the corporealities of buildings, structures, and constructions as "bodily natures" or rhetorical bodies. These corporealities, in architectural design, are porous and have fleshy permeability, when considering how the roles and intents of architects and burglars transpose one another, for the sake of the balance between a specific building's or particular structure's functionality and security.

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