The Levels of Ambience:

An Introduction to Integrative Rhetoric

Stephen R. Yarbrough

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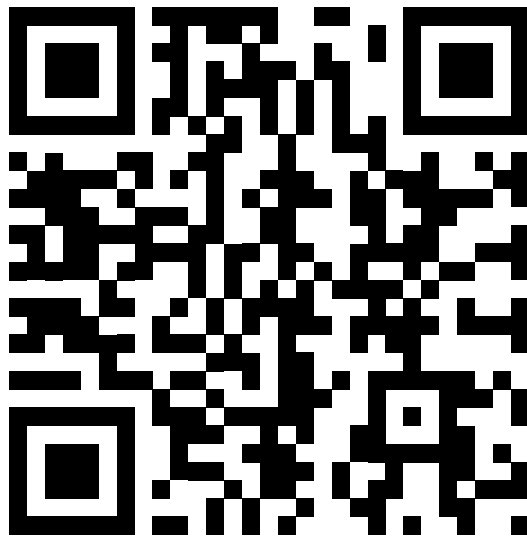
THE LEVELS OF AMBIENCE:
AN INTRODUCTION TO INTEGRATIVE RHETORIC

by

Stephen R. Yarbrough

DEDICATION

For my daughter, Anna, who has felt the answers and now seeks the right questions.

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Albert Einstein

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."
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PREFACE: RETROSPECTS

Quiz question 1 (answer at the end of this preface): **Should a story about rhetoric be written in a tragic or comic mode?**

Shortly before revising this introduction, I was preparing the opening lecture for my undergraduate History and Theory of Rhetoric class, which included selecting some definitions of rhetoric to discuss with the students (definitions from Eidenmuller). Rhetoric is

"the art of enchanting the soul." (Plato)

"the faculty of discovering in any particular case all of the available means of persuasion." (Aristotle)

"wisdom, ornately and copiously delivered in words appropriate to the common opinion of all mankind." (Giambattista Vico)

"that powerfull instrument of error and deceit." (John Locke)

"that art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end." (George Campbell)

"the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents." (Kenneth Burke)

"a mode of altering reality, not by the direct application of energy to objects, but by the creation of discourse which changes reality through the mediation of thought and action." (Lloyd Bitzer)

"the art of linguistically or symbolically creating salience." (Richard E. Vatz)

and so on. After all, from the beginning, students should have some idea of what the course is about, right?

It never fails, though, that a student will ask "what rhetoric really is." I always evade the question, telling myself that it's better, especially in a history course, to give students a sense of the range of theorists' conceptions of rhetoric as responses to various social, economic, political, geographical, and intellectual conditions. But the fact of the matter has been, and is, that even in my own work, even after publishing five books and numerous articles about rhetoric, I've never defined rhetoric, never found a definition that worked for me, and never invented one that satisfied my sense of what rhetoric is. That makes me guilty of Christian O. Lundberg's charge: "More often than not, after a brief foray into debates surrounding rhetoric, many theorists retreat,

opting, following Robert Scott, to 'not define' rhetoric at all, producing an implicit rather than an explicitly conceptually articulated definition of rhetorical theory and practice, albeit in a manner that often opens up as many problems as it solves" (Lundberg 247). Still, Lundberg gives me an excuse for my lack of commitment when he says of defining rhetoric, "To define it would be to limit its scope, and to not define it would be to lose the specificity that makes a rhetorical analytic a valuable interpretive technology" (248).

I put that last Lundberg quotation in my notes for my lecture, just in case someone asked that question. But then, only a few days later, I received, not without a bit of personal irony, the reader's reports from Intermezzo, and, sure enough, one reader said I needed to clearly define "integrative rhetoric." That's a reasonable request, of course, but to define "integrative rhetoric" I'd first have to define "rhetoric"—so I turned again to Lundberg. Lundberg does give me a way out, although not a way he intended, in that his analysis of the issue derives from his reading of Paul de Man, who in turn had couched the problem in terms of a tension between persuasion and rhetoricity. As Lundberg puts it, "for de Man the impulse to resolve this aporia ought [to] be subject to intense skepticism because this impulse elides the most fundamental question at stake in this instance: who or what really is the agent in a given moment of rhetorical effectivity—language or the subjects that inhabit it?" (251). This is a dichotomy which I emphatically reject, along with the very sense of agency it relies upon. Yet it's a dichotomy that Lundberg believes renders rhetoric

> a somewhat tragic figure, both doomed by and constituted by an essential undecidability—
> any articulation of rhetoric's substantive qualities necessarily risks a disavowal of the
> rhetoricity that refuses a resolution between the two poles. Despite the fact that our
> framings of rhetoric may implicate us in disavowing rhetoricity, we are always implicitly
> and productively lodging our affinities with one moment or side of the aporia, even as
> we unwittingly assert, rely on, or even perform the other—in putting rhetoric to work, we
> decide on a vision of rhetoric in the context of and perhaps even in spite of rhetoricity's
> undecidability. (252)

If, then, I reject the dichotomy upon which the logic of Lundberg's argument for "letting rhetoric be" depends, how does Lundberg help me avoid defining rhetoric? He helps with the final sentence of his essay, where he tells rhetorical theorists that

the only responsible thing to do is to embrace a tragic relationship between rhetoric and rhetoricity: to steadfastly refuse nonconditional renderings of rhetoric in the name of attending to the inextricable link between location and definition and in doing so, to pursue the complexities of discourses in "any given situation." (254)

Lundberg's insistence that it is the responsibility of rhetorical theory to "pursue the complexities of discourse" doesn't help me because that "defines" rhetoric far too narrowly: rhetorical processes, as I hope to demonstrate, are not confined to discursive processes. But it does help because what this book is interested in pursuing is a better understanding of what a "given situation" (Aristotle's phrase) necessarily entails. Whatever "rhetoric" is and does, it is it and does it in a given situation, so it's the position of this book that rhetorical theory first and foremost must consider what a "situation" is, what gives it, and what it gives.

"Situation," although it has a more useful definition we'll discuss later, has been most commonly discussed under the heading of "context." There's yet more personal irony here, since another of the Intermezzo reader's reports suggested that I contextualize *The Levels of Ambience* within the contemporary conversation nearer the beginning of the book than I had. As Brenda Dervin has noted, though, "there is no term that is more often used, less often defined, and when defined defined so variously as context" (Dervin 13-14). More importantly, context, etymologically "with the text," can't help but involve that same dichotomy between persuasion and rhetoricity (langue and parole, objective reality and an indeterminate language, subject and object, etc.) that I'm attempting to escape. Initially, context was conceived simply as other texts one must consider when interpreting a particular text and the linkages of one text to another. These were efforts that thought of text and context in much the same way one might think of one's browser and its "add-ons." In a recent essay, Urpo Kovala reviews attempts in the previous century to either extend the notion of context to include other influences or mediate the dichotomy by "subsuming both text and context to a wider frame, for instance theory of action (Stierle), or introducing a mediating factor, for instance social cognition (van Dijk)" (Kovala 158). He also notes several postmodern alternatives to context, such as "'universe of discourse,' 'dialogue,' 'schema,' 'reading formation,' 'rhizome,' and so on" (160). Among the postmodern theories, he discusses "radical contextualism"—theories such as Lawrence Grossberg's, which often draw heavily upon

the concept of rhizome offered by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. For these theories,

> meanings cannot be decided on outside of the multidimensional intersubjective networks and concrete contextual settings in which the object of inquiry is inserted and made to mean…. Therefore, context is neither something surrounding the object of inquiry nor something to which the object is related. Instead, it is a configuration of texts and contexts, and of various levels and perspectives. (Deleuze and Guattari 168)

Ambience, as I describe it here, has strong affinities with that notion; however, Kovala goes on to say that Grossberg "argues that contemporary theory too often treats contexts as the beginning of analysis, as a background which exists independently of the object of inquiry, and which therefore can be taken for granted" (168). Then Grossberg reverses the hierarchy, in Derridean fashion, so that for the radical contextualist it is actually the background that articulates the focus (Grossberg 54). But, as we shall see, this reversal is just as problematic as the view it rejects. Moreover, ultimately, from radical contextualism's perspective, context, contextualization, and recontextualization have no limits, as with Deleuze and Guattari, and as with Derrida in *Limited Inc*. But this book, *The Levels of Ambience*, insists that the territory within which rhetorical processes take place does have limits. It's indeed a huge territory, but a bounded one and, I will claim, fortunately so.

Similarly, the notion of rhetorical integration has strong affinities with theories of cultural materialism. Cultural materialism, according to Frank W. Elwell, "is based on two key assumptions about human societies":

> First, like most macro social theory, CM is based on the assumption that society is made up of component parts that are functionally interrelated. When one of these component parts change, other parts must adjust to that change. An institution such as the family cannot be looked at in isolation from other parts of the sociocultural system—from other institutions (say economic, political or religious) nor from cultural beliefs and ideologies…. [Second, CM is based on the assumption] that the foundation of sociocultural systems is the environment. Like all life forms, human beings must take energy from their environment in order to survive. All life, including humans, must therefore live within the constraints of their immediate environment.

Kovala describes the effects of these assumptions on the issue of context by examining the work

of Tony Bennett, who "has both launched an extensive critique of the notion of 'text itself' as an obsolete metaphysical construct and the very distinction between text and context, while sketching an alternative account that evades the notions altogether" (Kovala 169). In this account, Bennett tries to avoid "the dichotomies between text and context, subject and object" through his use of the concept of "reading formation" (169). The "reading formation" is a concept derived from Foucault's "discourse formations" that "enables a radically historical conception of text as nondetachable from the reading act and of reading as constitutive of the text in a strong sense. Thus, following Foucault, Bennett is trying to capture the network of determinations which is constitutive of readers, texts, and what appear as various contexts" (169). Here, by dissolving the textual/linguistic into the social, and exerting the constraining power of the environment upon the social, cultural materialism reduces the once-foregrounded "text" or ordered symbolicity to "a 'ghostly existence' behind the variant forms in which it exists historically" so that it becomes "inter-textuality" or the "social organization of the relations between texts within specific conditions of reading" (169). Integrative rhetoric is sympathetic with this view; however, although laudably introducing environmental conditions as a significant constraint upon social formation, for Bennet the environment is only a constraint, rather than an active participant in rhetorical interactions.

Addressing this limitation, recent versions of cultural materialism, often referred to collectively as "new materialism," do view environments as active participants in rhetorical processes. Milla Tiainen and Jussi Parikka say that "new materialism can be said to concern a series of questions and potentialities that revolve round the idea of active, agential and morphogenetic; self-differing and affective-affected matter" (Tiainen and Parikka). New materialists, they say, express a

> sustained commitment to developing models of immanent and continuously emergent relationality. Through insisting on the felt reality of relations for instance in the wake of William James, on the irreducibility of the in-betweens to the connecting terms, and on the intensive topological spaces of co-affectivity [of] these models, [the new materialists] provide some of the most effective means on offer at the moment for thinking past the traditional rigid dualisms of nature/culture, subject/object and so on and for articulating the intuited processual co-substantiality of these facets.

Yet, they also acknowledge that, as Sara Ahmed has charged, "the new materialist conceptions of dynamic human and non-human materialities that acquire shapes, operate, and differentiate … beyond human perception and discursive representational systems are … in danger of positing matter as an it-like fetish object precisely because of their insistence on its ontological distinctiveness" (Tiainen and Parikka; see Ahmed 35). In short, "many new materialist gestures actually solidify rather than 'fluidify' the boundaries between nature/culture and matter/signification" and overplay the role of nature and matter (Tiainen and Parikka).

Along with new materialism, other valuable theoretical perspectives have challenged these boundaries, including object-oriented rhetorics (Bill Brown; Karen Barad), complexity theory (Byron Hawk), affect studies (Jenny Edbauer), and animal rhetorics (Diane Davis; Debra Hawhee), and each of these, like new materialism, have forced us to question the assumption that rhetorical processes are uniquely human and subject-driven. In effect, to one degree or another, they have taken de Man's notion of "rhetoricity," with its opposition to persuasion and undue reduction to formal relations, and replaced it with what we might call rhetorical "environmentalicity" and an undue reduction to material relations—but with the same consequence. For in doing so, again, to one degree or another, they have called into question the possibility of "persuasion"—the very thing Aristotle tells us in his definition that rhetoric seeks to find the means of. Cheryl Geisler, in her report for the 2003 Alliance of Rhetorical Societies, discusses this challenge to rhetoric's traditional definition under the heading of "rhetorical agency," and there she describes how rhetorical agency is increasingly being described as "illusionary," that it is socially and materially "constructed," and this despite "the centrality of the concept of agency for rhetoricians' sense of purpose as a field" (12).

Above, in my effort to evade defining rhetoric by focusing on various characterizations of the "given situation" in which it necessarily operates, I've roughly followed the nonlinear path taken by theory of the last century or so to distinguish text from context, dissolve text into context, expand context into the social and material, reduce it to the social or material, or abandon context altogether. That's one way of describing the context of my own abandonment of "context" and explaining my pursuit of an answer to the question of how I could describe, if not rhetoric itself, then what is entailed in the "given situation" of rhetorical acts without resorting to "context,"

without sacrificing its symbolicity, sociality, materiality, or intentionality. Is there even a term that describes the whole territory?

Kenneth Burke attempted to describe the whole of a given situation with his famous pentad: act, scene, agent, agency, purpose. I prefer to think of the pentad as a heuristic scheme which elicits the range of possible answers to the question, "What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it" (Burke, *Grammar* xv). He described the pentad's elements in terms of the myriad distinctions and relationships found within them and among them, and, most interestingly, he observed that they merge and transform into one another. For instance,

> War may be treated as an Agency, insofar as it is a means to an end; as a collective Act, subdivisible into many individual acts; as a Purpose, in schemes proclaiming a cult of war. For the man inducted into the army, war is a Scene, a situation that motivates the nature of his training; and in mythologies war is an Agent, or perhaps better a super-agent, in the figure of the war god. (xx)

In a wonderfully ambiguous metaphor, Burke claimed that all such distinctions "arise out of a great central moltenness, where all is merged," and, "From the central moltenness, where all the elements are fused into one togetherness, there are thrown forth, in separate crusts, such distinctions as those between freedom and necessity, activity and passiveness, cooperation and competition, cause and effect, mechanism and teleology" (xix). One can develop, and we theorists have, of course, developed rhetorics of acts, of scenes, of agents, of agencies, and of purposes, but such reductive rhetorics are like Wallace Stevens' famous jar:

> I placed a jar in Tennessee,
> And round it was, upon a hill.
> It made the slovenly wilderness
> Surround that hill.
>
> The wilderness rose up to it,
> And sprawled around, no longer wild.
> The jar was round upon the ground
> And tall and of a port in air.
>
> It took dominion everywhere.
> The jar was gray and bare.
> It did not give of bird or bush,
> Like nothing else in Tennessee. (Stevens 76)

Rhetorics that focus on one perspective distort to that perspective the everything-else-from-which-it-emerged, that "central moltenness" or "slovenly wilderness" it orders and is ordered by, and therefore they are always in danger of rendering themselves "gray and bare." No doubt, such rhetorics are necessary if they are to be useful, as the jar can be useful as a container for delicious marmalade. Yet, while the jar's very usefulness lies in its separating its contents from all that is outside, it's also useful to understand how that marmalade itself derived from the wilderness outside, and how it, too, was once a moltenness.

So, in my search within the contemporary scholarly conversation for a key concept from which to attempt to describe what is entailed in the "given situation" of rhetorical acts, I wanted one as close to Burke's "central moltenness" and Stevens' "slovenly wilderness" as possible. I found it in Thomas Rickert's *Ambient Rhetoric: The Attunements of Rhetorical Being*, where he declares, "We are entering an age of ambience, one in which boundaries between subject and object, human and nonhuman, and information and matter dissolve" (1). "Ambience": what is it? Significantly, it's not an "it" at all, but a term that refers to something like what I. A. Richards called "a primordial generality" from which all meanings, all specific "its," arise (31). In other words, all rhetorical interactions are interactions within the ambient: "So ambience here refers to the active role that the material and informational environment takes in human development, dwelling, and culture, or to put this differently, it dissolves the assumed separation between what is (privileged) human doing and what is passively material" (3). Moreover, "ambience is itself ambient, meaning, in part, that ambience, even in such seeming subjective forms as recognition, is not solely human doing" (5). In other words, "ambience" is our meaningful and meaning-making world, a world in which we involve ourselves at each moment and which involves us in itself.

Ambience is the sense we have of place; that is, of placing ourselves and of being placed, for we emplace the ambient as the ambient emplaces us—environmentally, socially, symbolically, temporally—all at once and as a whole, a whole to which, to use Rickert's term, we are "attuned." Perhaps we can best get a grip on the notion of ambience through a thought experiment in which we vary an experience of a physical locale imaginatively. Think of what you would be experiencing—what sights, sounds, smells, signs, actions you would be noticing, seeking out,

and responding to—while walking down a back alley in New Orleans, but each circumstance is different: You are leisurely trying to get home, or back to your hotel, or to a party, or to a pharmacy, or you are hurriedly or frantically trying to escape a mugger or rapist; it's the middle of the night or the middle of the day, in a storm or under a clear sky; you are drunk or sober, well or ill; you are male or female, child or adult, New Orleans native or first-visit tourist, speak English or not, are white or not; you are lost or familiar with the alley. In each of these scenarios, you are alone, then you encounter friends, or you encounter strangers, or a police officer. In each scenario, what do you say, what do you do, and why, and how? What but your variant ambient experiences explains these rhetorical differences?

"Ambience," Rickert says, is "a useful distillation of ongoing dynamic shifts in a vibrant, robust environment that we seek to understand, explain, and work through" (5). From this idea, Rickert ventures to define rhetoric as a "responsive way of revealing the world for others, responding to and put forth through affective, symbolic, and material means, so as to (at least potentially) reattune or otherwise transform how others inhabit the world to an extent that calls for some action" (162). As I read this definition, the function of rhetoric is to reveal the ambient. I take it that this definition can go in two directions. In one, rhetoric addresses actions that reveal to others relevant elements of the ambient in a "given situation" so that they become salient. In the other, rhetoric is itself those actions that reveal the ambient. In either case, one cannot "reveal" the ambient directly; that is to say, because, as Burke put it, the molten mass is "where all the elements are fused into one togetherness," it only reveals itself, we don't reveal it, and we can describe what it reveals only by distinguishing "the separate crusts" that are "thrown forth" by this revealing. Keeping with this metaphor, we can surmise that revealed "ambience" appears in layers of these "crusts," and that to understand ambience itself, we need to study these "layers" or "levels," how they are "revealed," and how they are related to one another (Burke, *Grammar* xix). This is as close to one of the definitions of "integrative rhetoric" as I want to come: it is a theory of how the "levels" of ambience appear and how the elements of the ambient are integrated. Another of its meanings should become clearer in the introduction.

One last word before I begin to describe this revealing. My comment above, that one can read Rickert's definition in two ways, may have suggested that one way is "practical" and the

other is "theoretical." But this distinction, too, like "text and context," "agent and collective," and "persuasion and rhetoricity," relies upon an illusion, a difference that makes no difference, at least no "ontological" difference. The use of such terms can, however, induce perceptual differences, encourage us, as with the magician's sleight of hand, to focus our attention in one direction rather than another. Thus, the practice/theory dichotomy is, at times, very useful, pragmatic. In the end, however, every "application" is always hypothetical: every "real-life" example is always already abstracted from the ambience of its occurrence, every "fictional" example has already been constructed from other abstractions, and every "objective" or "subjective" description, too, is hypothetical. Similarly, every "theory" is an analogy, metaphor, or model of yet another analogy, metaphor, or model. This would worry me, except that this is a theory of ambience, and as Rickert notes, ambience itself is ambient. That is to say, as this book will emphasize, at every level, the ambient is "resistant" to our constructions of it. The "central moltenness," ambience, however amorphous, is not Silly Putty that will mold to any shape we desire. It has its own order, an order of which we are part, in which we participate. That, I think, is the point I'm about to try to make.

*Quiz question 1: **Should a story about rhetoric be written in a tragic or comic mode?***

*Answer: **A story about rhetoric should be written in a comic mode.***

Why? In Anatomy of Criticism, Northrup Frye defined the tragic theme in terms of the separation of the hero (here, rhetoric) from society, the environment, or any other order. The comic theme is the reverse, the "integration" of the hero with the world, and The Levels of Ambience attempts to describe that integration. Horace Walpole said, "this world is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel" (315). This book is a thinking about what we feel and perceive, and how it might be ordered, so I suppose one could say it's a comic moment in rhetoric's tragic life. Even if it's not very funny.

INTRODUCTION

Quiz question 2 (answer at the end of this introduction): **Does "integrative rhetoric" refer to the theory of how the various levels of ambience relate to one another, or does it describe how particular rhetorical interactions take place?**

Whenever, wherever, and however we human beings interact with one another, we do so immersed in an already meaningful world, a world of presently and previously experienced, remembered, and imagined sensory, social, and symbolic objects, agents, forces, and relationships which in their immediacy condition our potential and actual interpretations and actions at any one time. Even when we find ourselves in familiar circumstances, our awareness is to a large degree overwhelmed by all these relevant elements, and we reduce our vaguely comprehended experience of it to a felt sense of the "atmosphere," "mood," or "feeling" of a "context," "background," or "scene." We often call this the "ambience" of the situation, and we rhetoricians struggle to describe it and to understand how it affects our comprehension of events. As Thomas Rickert defines it, ambience "is not an impartial medium but an ensemble of variables, forces, and elements that shape things in ways difficult to quantify or specify. These elements are simultaneously present and withdrawn, active and reactive, and complexly interactive among themselves as much as with human beings" (7). We are always, as he says, fundamentally "entangled" or "embedded in a situation" (10).

For Rickert, ambient experience suggests that rhetoric is "an embodied and embedded practice" and "an emergent result of environmentally situated and interactive engagements, redolent of a world that affects us, that persuades us prior to symbolicity" (34). Consequently, "an ambient rhetoric opposes the rather entrenched idea that we all have 'worldviews,' or different ways of seeing the world dependent on the cultural or ideological lenses through which it appears." To the contrary, Rickert argues, worldviews are "ways of seeing an already preexistent world"; they "are not originary but derive from this more fundamental weddedness to world" (xvii). Yet at the same time we must acknowledge that for each of us the ambience we experience has emerged from our engagements with the world differently. Here we come to the problem I. A. Richards confronted that led him to define rhetoric as "a study of misunderstanding and its remedies" (3). He attempted to solve the problem with his notion of "context," which he defined as "the whole

cluster of events that recur together—including the required conditions as well as whatever we may pick out as cause or effect" (54). But Rickert has argued, and argued well, that "rhetoric cannot be understood as suasion attempted between discrete or among aggregate subjects embedded in a transitive, subject-driven view of rhetorical situations," and that rhetoric is not … a shift in the mental states of subjects but something world-transforming for individuals and groups immersed in vibrant, ecologically attuned environments" (xv). Nevertheless, such critique does not address the processes by which "this more fundamental weddedness to world" takes place (xvii).

Rickert goes on to say that ambience "is not simply surroundings but a dynamic, immersive environment composed of many coadapting elements that produce new levels of 'order.' In that sense, it is *emergent*: an ecology of elements and forces in dynamic, mutually conditioning interaction" (116). This is the quotation that inspired the questions I want to answer, or at least raise, in this book. How can we characterize the order of these levels of order? What distinguishes one level from another? Through what process does one level emerge from another, and what effects does a newly emerged order have upon the level from which it emerged? If, as Rickert argues, rhetoric is ambient, and "rhetoricity is the always ongoing disclosure of the world shifting our manner of being in that world so as to call for some response or action" (xii), will a description of the order of the levels of ambience yield a new way to order rhetoric's territory—a new canon, as it were—and will it yield new ways to understand and situate traditional rhetorical concepts, such as topoi and enthymemes; metaphor; genre; the rhetorical "appeals" of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*; *kairos*; memory; and, most importantly, "persuasion" itself?

In this brief introduction to integrative rhetoric , I propose that, at least provisionally, we can model the "levels of 'order'" within ambience toward which Rickert gestures in a way analogous to the way general systems theory has modeled the order of the scientific world. In the sciences, the theory of "integrative levels" serves as the foundation for general systems theory. Ludwig von Bertalanffy used the concept of integrative levels to describe ordered relationships among the objects of the various sciences, building upon the observation that because molecules are made from atoms, and organisms are made from molecules, sensory processes depend upon chemical processes, and chemical processes depend upon physical processes. The theory has been used in a similar way in philosophy, especially by Nicolai Hartmann, who introduced the category of

"emergence" and whose ontology describes four strata of reality: the inorganic level, the organic level, the psychical/emotional level, and the intellectual/cultural level, with each "higher" level emerging from the lower level (see Poli). I propose that rhetorical ambience can be similarly stratified into environmental, behavioral, and symbolic levels, but in order to apply the theory to rhetoric, we must shift from these earlier metaphysical perspectives to a pragmatic one.

To apply the concept of integrative levels to better understand rhetorical ambience, it is essential to recognize that the levels of rhetorical ambience are composed of various fields of the same type. Fields within the same level are distinguished by our different purposes for interacting within them, and the different objects, agents, forces, and relations we attend to when we interact within them. They are not defined by the things we could perceive, but by those we do. Thus the situations in which we engage fields can range from our own backyard when discussing the best place to plant a new azalea bush with our spouse, or the same backyard when practicing soccer with our daughter, to a chemistry lab when discussing the results of an experiment with a student, or the same chemistry lab when discussing an equipment purchase with our department head, to the local bar when watching the championship game with our friends, or the same bar when serving drinks to our customers. Our different kinds of purposive interactions with people and things within these ambient fields develop our ability to perceive their different kinds of objects, agents, motives, and topical relationships; and to the extent that we integrate them meaningfully to effect our purposes, they are rhetorical.

Every field within which we interact develops its own objects and agents in various relationships with one another with respect to the purposes of our interactions. When we play baseball, a ball that lands to the left of the left-field line is a foul ball; to the grounds crew, the same ball in the same physical place is a piece of equipment to be stored. In traditional rhetoric, we call the field relations among objects and agents topoi. Depending upon the fields we are inhabiting, human beings can attend to a nearly infinite number of *topical relationships*, ranging from those among the hues of colors we attend to when we select a paint for our living room wall, to those among the colleagues we attend to in our institution when at work, to those among the concepts we attend to in the ideologies espoused by presidential candidates when we vote, to those among the numbers we attend to in algebra when making calculations. As we

interact intentionally with the objects of various fields, we make sense of our world insofar as we organize those fields topologically, by linking them both perceptually and cognitively (i.e., enthymematically) . Thus, all our interactions take place within fields, and fields are topological to the extent that they are purposeful, organized, and differential spaces (varying according to the situation).

I have identified eight "integrative levels" of topical fields within which we simultaneously rhetorically interact. These are the physicochemical, the sensorial, the technical/ethical, the social, the discursive/genric, the linguistic, the logical, and the reflective fields. As I will describe in more detail below, because each succeeding level supervenes the previous level, although we can describe the state of a field in any level individually, we can explain the meaning of an event occurring in a field only by reference to the fields it emerged from and is embedded in. For instance, we can describe an English sentence linguistically, but we can explain its meaning(s) only by reference to the relevant discursive field(s) from which it emerged and in which it is embedded, and though we can describe those fields though discursive analysis, we can explain their meanings only through reference to the social fields in which they are embedded.

Because of critical qualitative differences among these eight levels of ambience, I have tentatively characterized three classes of fields of objects and their topics—three spatial *dimensions*: the *environmental* (the physicochemical and sensorial fields), the *behavioral* (the technical/ethical and social fields), and the *symbolic* dimensions (the discursive/genric, linguistic, logical, and reflective fields). In rhetorical interaction, these spatial, or topical, dimensions all intersect with and are integrated by the *temporal* dimension, the dimension of interaction (see fig. 1). I propose that in order to characterize a rhetorical event's ambience, we must apprehend its three spatial dimensions in relation to its temporal dimension. In short, behavioral fields emerge from and embody environmental fields, and symbolic fields emerge from and embody behavioral fields, while at the same time, symbolic fields
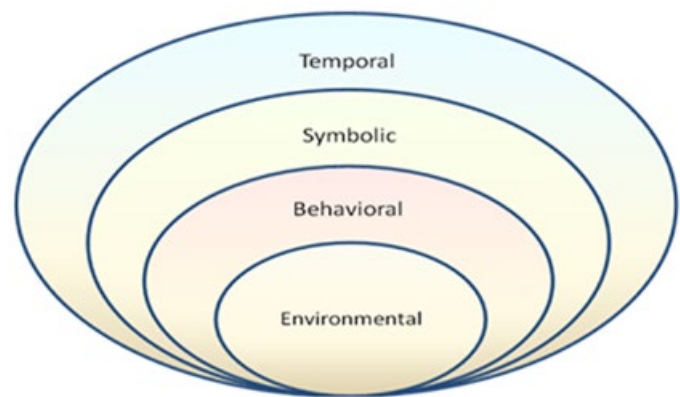
Figure 1: The Four Rhetorical Dimensions

organize and are enabled by behavioral fields, and behavioral fields organize and are enabled by environmental fields—and our interactions integrate all these temporally to create ambience. Thus, ambience conditions for us the meaning of any rhetorical event, and we can characterize those events in terms of how we interact within them. One way to think of it is in analogy to the project of cosmology, according to which, following relativity theory, in order to specify the location of an event, the scientist must coordinate all four dimensions of space-time (i.e., three spatial dimensions and time).

Because we experience multiple levels of ambience simultaneously, every ambient rhetorical experience has its environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions. Yet, although we experience these levels simultaneously, we tend to focus on them individually. As Ethel Tobach says, there are "a series of succeeding levels [of topological organization], [with] each level [beginning] a [new] integration of structure and function. Each level requires its own methods and instrumentalities and poses its own questions for analysis and study" (134). Those of us in the discipline of rhetoric tend to examine these areas in isolation from one another, focusing on linguistic, semantic, logical, or genric fields, or various social, geographic, psychological, environmental, or other issues, applying different methods to each—appropriately so—but we do so with little attention to how the rhetorical terrain we narrowly explore in one level connects to the others.

From the perspective of integrative rhetoric, however, a symbolic action is, always and necessarily, a behavioral action, and every behavioral action is an environmental action. We temporally integrate all these and the relevant fields within them in every rhetorical event, and we experience their integration as "ambience." By providing a "map" of the environmental, behavioral, symbolic, and temporal dimensions within which we rhetorically interact, and showing how these levels are related to and integrated with one another, a theory of integrative rhetoric can provide a useful heuristic from which to study ambience. Such a map can help us locate the fields within these dimensions where rhetorical interactions occur; trace them to our prior experience, or lack of it, with the elements of those fields; and analyze the dynamics of these interactions—the dynamics of how rhetorical actions simultaneously "take place" in and derive their meanings from multiple historically developed fields of interaction, which together we experience as ambience.

As a simple example, consider the statement "we need to boil this a little longer," and imagine it being said by a mother to her daughter within the ambience of their own kitchen—in front of a stove with its flame and heat, amid the clanking of utensils and pleasant odors—making candy. Making candy involves purposeful social interactions in a particular symbolic field in which particular strategic actions that are simultaneously linguistic, genric, and discursive occur, interactions between particular agents having particular social relationships—in this case, relationships having a deep history . As they boil the sugar mixture, the mother (from her position in their social field) names (an action in their linguistic field) the "stage" the candy is in by pointing out (a behavioral action in their discursive field) to her daughter its texture (and so referencing an object in their sensorial field) after she has dropped a small amount of the mixture in cold water (an action in their physicochemical field). The mother knows that when the mixture reaches what is named the "thread stage," it forms a liquid thread that will not ball up; in the soft-ball stage, the syrup will form a soft flexible ball and, removed from the water, the ball will flatten in the hand after a few minutes; and so on through the firm-ball, hard-ball, and the soft-crack stages until, in the hard-crack stage, it will form hard, brittle threads that will break when bent (see fig. 2). The mother explains this to her daughter and tells her that this candy must reach the hard-crack stage, but is now only in the soft-ball stage, and so "we need to boil this a little longer." Mother and daughter integrate these environmental, behavioral, and symbolic topics temporally, giving meaning to the event. Otherwise, the utterance "we need to boil this a little longer" is meaningless.

Figure 2: The Hard-Crack Stage

It is important to note that the specific ways the daughter can interact with her mother and the utensils and candy in the kitchen depend upon her previous sensorial, social, discursive, and other sorts of interactions in other fields, all of which inhabit the ambience of the event. It's not a matter of her merely knowing the terminology that will enable her to perceive such differences, as the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis suggests (see Kay and Kempton), but a matter of her prior experiences in the relevant fields that enabled her to apperceive such topical differences and so understand

such significations (see Cowley; Gibbs). Every day, those of us who teach communication see the results of students misunderstanding relevant fields with their particular agents, motives, objects, and topical relations. Recently, in a personal essay about conflicts with her mother and the stress she felt while helping her mother make fudge, one of my students mentioned that at one point her mother said to her, "You have to tow the line here." Upon inquiry, it turned out that this was not a mere spelling error, and the student knew what "tow" and "line" conventionally signify, but she did not know what her mother meant. For the student, "tow the line" referred to the game of tug of war, and she believed that her mother by saying it had implied that she was not doing her share of the work. When I explained to the student that it was more likely that her mother had said "toe the line" (an idiomatic reference to standing a line at roll call), so she had probably intended to imply that they needed to follow the recipe carefully, the student realized that she had very likely misinterpreted the entire cooking episode, that its ambience for her mother was quite different from how she had experienced it.

Anecdotes such as this one suggest that even the simplest communicative misunderstandings—whether on the part of speakers and writers who misunderstand how a listener or reader will interpret, or on the part of listeners and readers who misunderstand what others say or write—can be less a consequence of linguistic incompetence and more a consequence of their different senses of a situation's ambience; that is, their different perceptions of a situation resulting from the accumulated effects of their different prior interactions with things. Michael Polanyi has described the accumulated effects of our prior interactions with things upon our current conceptions as "tacit knowledge": "All thought contains components of which we are subsidiarily aware in the focal content of our thinking, and all thought dwells in its subsidiaries, as if they were parts of our body. Hence thinking is not only necessarily intentional, as Brentano teaches: it is also necessarily fraught with the roots it embodies" (x). Robert E. Innis concludes from his study of Polanyi's examination of these "roots" that "language and other formal systems … do not constitute an autonomous 'layer' of meaning or sense applied like a veneer to a perceptual field that otherwise remains the same." Rather, "the structures discerned in perception are both extended into the systems of expressions and define the basic parameters of our dwelling in and use of them." Thus, Innis says, there is "a kind of continuity from 'perception,' broadly understood,

to the highest reaches of formalization" (Innis 22).

I propose that for the purposes of integrative rhetoric, we can best describe ambience—as the "roots" or full "context" or "conditions" of meaningful discourse—in terms of our accumulated experience within various fields of interaction. Different kinds of human interactions with things and people generate the different kinds of objects, topics, forces, and agents we can attend to, organized in the different kinds of fields within which we rhetorically interact, and our ability to successfully interact in any rhetorical field depends upon our previous experience in other fields. All fields, however, share certain characteristics.

Fields

A rhetorical field is a simultaneously symbolic, behavioral, and environmental space—an ambient space—within which its objects, agents, and forces exhibit interdependence and tend toward equilibrium—wholes that transcend or are more than the sum of their parts. "Field," as I'm using the term here (and admittedly this is somewhat different from the more common usage) is the ambient space experienced in a particular temporal moment of rhetorical interaction. Depending upon the field, the consequential forces can be physical, social, or logical, just as the objects of those forces can be things, social actors, or symbols; but only when they are the objects of an agent's attention can they be objects of rhetorical concern. As a quick and dirty example: If I ask you to open the door and you do, the field explanation is that you do it because my words have somehow changed how you perceive the field we both currently inhabit: the field's elements include temperature, HVAC technology that can be on or off, doors that can be open or closed, the sweat on my brow, etc., and certain social relations between us that imply your expected deference to my wishes. It is in this sense that Kenneth Burke says a motive is a "shorthand" term for "situation," his term for a specific field event (*Permanence* 52). It wasn't that the room wasn't warm, the door wasn't closed, and I wasn't older than you before I made my request, but that you weren't aware of them, or at least not aware of them as being interrelated and consequential, until you heard my request. When you did, all these objects, agents, forces, and relationships integrated as a shared field in which you could intervene.

John Levi Martin's essay "What is Field Theory?" offers an excellent overview of social field theory and a useful list of the primary characteristics of all fields. There are several varieties

of field theory, but Martin employs the term "field theory" to "denote only those theories that do not involve a clearly existent substantial medium" (4). Such a field theory does not acknowledge any intervening substance through which impressions are conveyed to the senses or any forces which act on objects at a distance, and it does not accept linear causation. So just as physics abandoned the notion that "ether" serves as a medium for light, field theory abandons the notion that language or culture carries or mediates meaning from one agent to another. Moreover, for Martin, social field theory

> implies an understanding of social perception that flies in the face of the dominant pseudo-Durkheimian orthodoxy … that sense data come in relatively disorganized form and are sorted according to a culture that, in James's words, throws "'categories' over them like a net." In contrast, field theory implies a very different account…. Instead of being fundamentally disorganized, percepts are fundamentally organized because they come from a world or environment with its own principles of organization. (39)

So rather than saying linguistic or social categories organize our perceptions of the environment, field theory says our already-organized environment conditions what linguistic and social categories we potentially can have.

Martin outlines five characteristics of all fields that are salient to integrative rhetoric. First, when using the concept of a field to explain a change in one element, there is no need to refer to a change in another element: "Instead, one makes reference to a characteristic of the field in the position occupied by some element" (6). The idea is that a change in the characteristics of the field—a gravitational field, for example—in which the relevant element is positioned causes the change in the element. To apply this notion of change to rhetoric, we must first note that rhetorical fields are attention fields, fields of objects within which our attention is or may be oriented and toward which it is directed in various ways. Thus, we can say that to explain someone's "change of mind," say, when a senator hears a colleague's speech and changes her vote on a certain piece of legislation, we do not have to refer to a psychological process to explain a change in the senator's set of beliefs or to a linguistic process to explain a change in the senator's grasp of the meaning of the vote. Instead, we would refer to a change in the senator's perception of the field that the senator's vote would affect. In more traditional parlance, we would refer to how her perception of

the "situation" was "recontextualized"; or, in Rickert's parlance, we would refer to how the way the senator "inhabits the world" had been reattuned or otherwise transformed "to an extent that calls for some action" (Rickert 162), and we would explain the change by explaining how her colleague redirected the senator's attention.

Second, changes in the elements within a field "involve an interaction between the field and the existing states of the elements" (6-7). For instance, should an asteroid come near Earth, because of the planet's relatively huge mass, Earth's gravitational field would affect the asteroid's trajectory because mass deforms space so that the shortest distance between two locations would be curved by the attraction of a mass near the pathway—but so too would the asteroid's mass affect the earth's trajectory, however insignificantly. Martin gives a sociological example of occupational mobility, noting that there are "certain forms of upward mobility that are built into certain careers and in fact we expect that such mobility will tend to take place for persons in a certain position so long as 'nothing happens'" (6); that is, one might say, so long as there is no disruption of the inertial institutional field. Just as we explain an asteroid's change in position in terms of its trajectory before its entrance into the earth's gravitational field, we explain an employee's replacement of his immediate supervisor when she leaves the company in terms of his position and trajectory in institutional space. Similarly, in a presidential primary race, should the only moderate candidate in a field of Republicans withdraw from the race, the remaining candidates would necessarily refocus their priorities and reposition their views with respect to the issues. In such cases, the fields tend to remain stable until changes in elements within the field alter the field itself, affecting yet other elements within it.

Third, "the elements have particular attributes that make them susceptible to the field effect; the 'force' that impinges upon some object in a field is a function both of the field effect and of some characteristic of the object itself" (7). "Massless bodies," for instance, "remain unaffected by a gravitational field" (7). Similarly, students who have not read Homer will not be affected by, because they cannot apperceive, James Joyce's allusions to Homer in *Ulysses*. Rhetors cannot direct an audience's attention toward objects they are not prepared to apperceive. The importance of this characteristic of fields is that "the mere existence of some class of persons who are not susceptible to a social field effect does not disprove the claims regarding the existence of

the field" (7). This characteristic suggests that students who write, speak, or design ineffectively may lack something other than the formal linguistic and rhetorical knowledge we traditionally give them. If the apperception of the agents, objects, forces, and topical relations of a field—the "elements," as Martin calls them, of the field which our discourse affects—depends, as I will argue below, upon something like what Dewey calls "relations between doing and undergoing" (23), then knowledge abstracted and divorced from action within the field will necessarily be empty and, at best, ineffectual.

The fourth characteristic is that "the field without the elements is only a potential for the creation of force, without any existent force" (7). The only way to know a field exists is by observing the change in a susceptible object entering the field, as when we drop iron filings into a magnetic field (see fig. 3). As Martin says, "the field itself is not directly measurable; its existence can only be proved by its effects" (7; see also Rummel 27). The fact that a professor will speak and act very differently when teaching a class than when drinking in a bar argues for the existence of rhetorical fields.
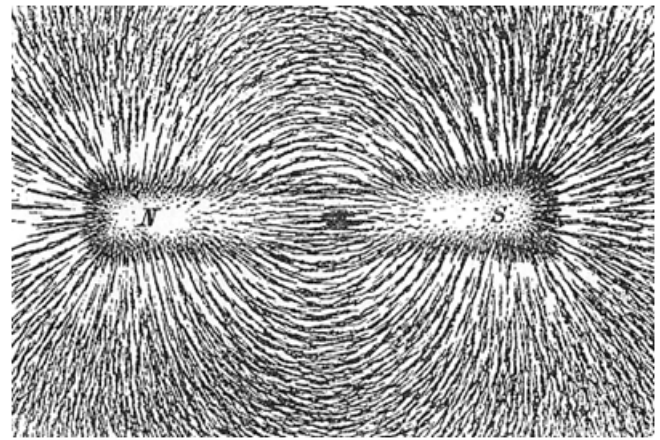
Figure 3: Effect of Magnetic Field

Finally, Martin's fifth primary characteristic of fields is that "the field itself is organized and differential" (7). He notes that, because of this characteristic, the "field may frequently be seen in topological terms of some sort" (7). For rhetoric, this means that we can describe the objects of rhetors' discursive interactions in terms of their topical relationships.

A field theory like Martin's is essential to understanding rhetorical ambience in terms of its integrative levels. However, we need to be suspicious of certain kinds of field theories , such as Pierre Bourdieu's. Bourdieu's highly influential theory of fields presents two problems that the theory I'm presenting here hopes to avoid. The first is his over-reliance, in his descriptions of field dynamics, upon metaphors from games, which are constituted by agreement to rules in advance. As Alan Warde has noted, although Bourdieu used "several other metaphors" in his

early work, such as "market, force field, and military field," later, "Bourdieu became ever more likely to use the analogy of the game to explain the dynamic processes occurring in fields. Many of his demonstrations are based upon the analysis of actual sports…. But sports … have very particular characteristics making it potentially highly misleading to think of the whole world in such terms" (15). Alan Postill, however, defends Bourdieu, stressing that some fields do share characteristics with games. For instance, politics, while obviously "not a game comparable to tennis, chess or Monopoly," is a "domain of practice" that "nevertheless resembles a game" (8). Postill argues that "despite popular misconceptions of Bourdieu as a theorist who neglects social change at the expense of social reproduction," he does "study social fields diachronically and resists the structural-functionalist idea of fields as self-regulating entities" (5). Yet Bourdieu's reliance on the concept of what Saussure called "diachronism" —the reduction of history to the timeless synchronic slices of a series of structurally describable states whose changes we can understand only by measuring their difference from other slices—is precisely the problem with his theory. Understood structurally, each synchronic slice is temporally vacuous—the present has no temporal extent—and within such "time" the constitution of the past and future within the present is unthinkable. When thought within such a conception, significations and meanings cannot be understood to develop over time at all; they can only be thought of as being established "all at once" by consensus on stipulated rules.

A second problem with Bourdieu's theory has been noted by Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam in their recent book, *A Theory of Fields*. According to them, "Almost all of Bourdieu's discussion" of his central concepts of habitus, capital, and fields is "pitched at the level of individual actors who find themselves in fields" (24) and who "are generally only responsible to themselves and motivated by a desire to advance their interest within the constraints of the situations in which they find themselves" (25). A thorough theory of fields, say Fligstein and McAdam, should focus on "collective action, which depends on cooperation," and must "rely on actors being able to convince others that their view of the problems of the field and the identity they provide for others in solving those problems work for everyone" (25).

Their consideration of the fact that collective action requires the cooperation of actors who may currently inhabit different fields, and that cooperation requires the use of rhetorical tactics to

create shared fields, leads them to recognize that, although in previous field theory "the single field . . . is almost always the focus of scholarly attention," in point of fact "the state of a field at any given moment is simultaneously shaped [both] by dynamics 'internal' to the field and by events in a host of 'external' strategic action fields with which the field in question has very close and sometimes dependent ties" (58).[1]

Thus, Fligstein and McAdam argue, fields "do not exist in a vacuum" but have relations with other strategic action fields, and these relations powerfully shape the developmental history of the field" (59). Fields can be "embedded in the broader system of fields" in "various ways" (58), and they describe three basic patterns or dimensions of relationship. The first "is one in which a number of fields are nested hierarchically in each other, in a system that resembles Russian dolls" (58). The second pattern involves "formal power relations," or patterns of dependence and interdependence, where one field may dominate, control, or heavily influence another, where two fields may influence one another more or less equally, or where the two fields may not affect one another at all (58). Finally, fields may exhibit a greater or lesser degree of embedding: "Some fields are embedded in a dense latticework of other fields, while others are comparative 'isolates,' with ties to relatively few strategic action fields" (58). Fields are related to one another in many ways, but the point integrative rhetoric needs to take away from this is what Fligstein and McAdam conclude in their chapter "Change and Stability in Strategic Action Fields": although "strategic actors" are the means of the emergence, maintenance, and transformation of fields, the changes of situation from the routine that most demand "skilled social action" are those that arise from changes in the field's relations with other fields (100-104).

Of course, as we saw earlier, fields are not only related to one another horizontally, one might say, among fields of the same level, as Fligstein and McAdam describe, leading to the need for strategic actors to negotiate cooperatively, but they are also related vertically: fields emerge from and supervene fields of lower levels. Instead of holding that individual actors and social groups encounter already constituted, static fields, a theory of integrative rhetoric holds instead that the fields within which we interact develop dynamically. Because objects emerge from these dynamic fields, and fields emerge from the interactions of the objects within them, the initial objects and relations of one field necessarily emerged from other fields such that every

field is topologically integrated with other fields not only horizontally but also vertically (see fig. 4). Objects and topics do not appear in some field ex nihilo. The frying pan one uses in the kitchen did not emerge from cooking activities in the kitchen, but from activities in the forge, and vice versa; the metal forged to make the pan did not emerge from activities at the forge, but from activities in the furnace, and vice versa; the ore smelted to make the metal did not emerge from smelting activities at the furnace, but from activities at the mine, and vice versa. Activity in one field often affects activity in another. For instance, how one will read Paradise Lost may be strongly affected by one's having read the Bible, and how one will read Ulysses may be strongly affected by one's having read the Odyssey, but in both cases the reverse is equally true.

Figure 4: Emergency of New Field Through Topical Integration

Topics and Objects

As Martin asserts, fields are organized topologically. Topological analysis does not originate with integrative rhetoric, of course, for it has been the very core of the study of rhetoric at least since Aristotle. Scott Consigny, for example, says that for Aristotle (as well as Cicero, Vico, Leibniz, Bacon, and McKeon) a topic is not only "construed as an essential *instrument* for discovery or invention" (65)—that is, a relation that can "open up and delimit a logical place in which the rhetor can discover and manage new meanings and relationships" (66)—but also "a *realm* in which the rhetor thinks and acts" (65). From this second sense the term *topos* (in Greek, a "place" or "site") gets its name. According to Consigny, topos in this second sense designates "that region or field marked by the particularities of persons, acts, and agencies in which the rhetor discloses and establishes meaningful relationships" (65). Rhetorically, then, we can understand a field's variations as the variations in the topical relations among its agents and objects, as well as the forces that its

rhetorical agents perceive and to which they attend.

What *topoi* are and how they are generated is, of course, controversial. Michael Leff reports, "The term 'topic' incorporates a bewildering diversity of meanings" (23), and Richard McKeon emphasizes that the definition of the topic or commonplace has always varied from era to era (Backman xviii). However, the simplest and broadest definition, and for the purposes of integrative rhetoric the most useful, is Donovan J. Ochs': "each topic specifies a type of relationship" (200). In its widest definition, then, a *topos* is a relationship between or among the fields, agents, objects, and forces found in a situation in space-time, and for the purposes of rhetorical ambience, we need to think of space-time as the kairotic integration of the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions. (A discussion of *kairos* will follow below.) In the Aristotelian tradition, general *topoi* are those that can be found every place; that is, any place where human beings interact discursively with people and things. Special *topoi* are those that can be found in particular places where human beings interact with things for particular purposes. The special *topoi* seem to conform best to the aspect of *topos* that Consigny describes as those "meaningful relationships" that the rhetor discloses and establishes in a "region or field marked by the particularities of persons, acts, and agencies" (65). Thus, topics appear in any place—any field—where human beings interact purposely with one another and with things. For example, in a kitchen's culinary field we find topics such as bitter-sweet, crispy-soggy, simmering-boiling, and tender-tough. In any field, we can also find special versions of general topics: in a garage's auto mechanic's field we find special relationships of magnitude such as torque, pressure, and gear ratios—topics which, when we attend to them, condition how we interact with the machine.

Topoi emerge from situations in fields as we interact with one another and with things, but classical notions of *topoi* effectively level the multiple layers of *topoi*. They do not take into account that there are different kinds of interactions, that different kinds of interactions reveal different kinds of *topoi*, and that the apperception of one level of topical meaning is necessary to apperceive others. Subsequently, classical notions do not recognize that every *topos* is multidimensional. When I bite into a piece of chicken, and, due to the felt relation between its physical structure and that of my body, I find it tough, my experience of that relation between tender and tough has not only a sensorial dimension of meaning but also supports social, linguistic, logical, and other

sorts of meanings. And what those specific meanings are depends on the occasion of that biting. Rhetorical topology is far more complicated than classical theory envisioned and requires, as we shall see, a four-dimensional mapping.

It is also important to note that the topics we attend to are not relations between and among *things* but relations between and among "objects." As I will discuss in more detail below, *topoi* emerge from a process in which we transmute "things" into "objects." There is an excess to things beyond what we have noticed of them (i.e., beyond what they are as objects of our attention). As Bill Brown has put it, poetically and only apparently paradoxically, "But the very semantic *reducibility* of *things* to *objects*, coupled with the semantic *irreducibility* of *things* to *objects*, would seem to mark one way of recognizing how … things may still lurk in the shadows of the ballroom and continue to lurk there after the subject and object have done their thing, long after the party is over" (3). This excess of the thing beyond what we have noticed is the source of the surprise that calls our attention to the thing, "the suddenness with which things seem to assert their presence and power: you cut your finger on a sheet of paper, you trip over some toy, you get bopped on the head by a falling nut" (3-4; see fig. 5). These resistances to our intentions are, as Brown draws from Merleau-Ponty, "occasions outside the scene of phenomenological attention that nonetheless teach you that you're 'caught up in things' and that the 'body is a thing among things'" (Merleau-Ponty 163; qtd. in Brown 4).

Figure 5: Man Tripping Over Toy

All this suggests that human beings inhabit a world that is already organized and meaningful—ambient—before they interact with the objects, forces, agents, and relations that they confront within it. We human beings don't simply impose an order upon the world; we integrate the order of our activity with orders that are already there: orders of objects, agents, and forces in topical relations, and orders of topically related objects integrated in fields. But fields, too, are

integrated in levels, levels ordered within dimensions of ambience.

The Concept of Integrative Levels

Field theory describes fields topologically, in terms of relationships among their agents, objects, and forces. As Fligstein and McAdams suggest, fields are related horizontally, in that the activities occurring in afield affect the activities occurring in other fields within the same level . But they are also related vertically, and to explain this, field theory needs to turn to the concept of integrative levels. As I mentioned earlier, Tobach describes the integrative process in this way: "All matter, beginning with the inanimate, [and] proceeding … to the animate forms may be seen as a series of succeeding levels, [with] each level [beginning a new] integration of structure and function. Each level requires its own methods and instrumentalities and poses its own questions for analysis and study" (134). By Tobach's ontological definition, "a level is a temporal-spatial relationship of structures whose functions are sufficiently synthesized to be categorized as an entity" (134). Of course, Tobach's scheme is of the order of "things," while *The Levels of Ambience* will describe the orders that "objects," as defined by Brown, develop as they emerge from things, but the basic process is similar. According to Tobach, the succession of levels is continuous, so that each "new level subsumes the preceding level," and as it does each level produces internal "contradictions" or conflicts. For instance, disagreements among game players jeopardize the play of the game, and these generate the need to establish a new level, one "higher" than the game, such as referees and sports associations (134). Moreover, although individuals inhabiting a level need to maintain the processes necessary to the continuance of the levels it supervenes, their ways of doing so are qualitatively different; for instance, the ways I obtain food for myself and therefore for the cells in my body are qualitatively different from the way, say, an amoeba obtains food for itself, but both my body and the amoeba's absorb nutrients similarly.

I will be applying this concept, appropriately modified, to the theory of rhetorical fields, those ambient fields whose elements include potential and actual objects of rhetors' (agents', actors') attention. Such fields, I will argue, are never independent, isolated, or ahistorical. Rather, as rhetorical fields form during recurring, interest-driven interactions, the elements with and for which the agents interact combine to produce larger functional wholes in a hierarchical series, and new properties and forms of interaction emerge. Thus, in the pages that follow below, as I move

from describing interactions in environmental fields, then behavioral fields, and then symbolic fields, I hope to show how characteristics develop in higher levels that were not present or not evident in the levels below, while the relations characterizing the "lower" dimensions persist, embodied in the "upper" dimensions.

James K. Feibleman has outlined what he calls the "laws of the levels" that characterize "the relations between the fields investigated by physics, chemistry, biology, psychology and anthropology" (59). He describes twelve of these laws, but I will briefly summarize only those most relevant to the theory of integrative rhetoric:

1. "*Each level organises the level or levels below it plus [at least] one emergent quality.* Thus the integrative levels are cumulative upward" (59). This implies, for instance, that every object in every field depends upon physicochemical properties, but not that all properties of objects in "higher" fields are physicochemical.

2. "*Complexity of the levels increases upward*" (60). Thus, "the structure of the atom is an organisation of electrons, protons and neutrons. The structure of the molecule is an organisation of atoms. The structure of the cell is an organisation of molecules, and so on" (60). In much the same way, sensorial interactions organize physicochemical experience, technical/ethical interactions organize sensorial experience, social interactions organize technical/ethical experience, discursive/genric interactions organize social experience, linguistic interactions organize discursive/genric experience, logical interactions organize linguistic experience, and thought organizes logical experience. Rhetorical interactions, therefore, are extraordinarily complex and "deep."

3. "*In any organization the higher level depends upon the lower.* That is to say, in an object which extends over more than one level, which it must if it exists at any level above the physical, then the higher level depends for its continuance upon the lower" (60). Feibleman offers examples like these: "A culture will not last if its cities are destroyed; a chemical compound will not continue if its bonds are broken…. [D]estroy the physical properties in any object and the entire object goes" (60). Rhetorical fields, therefore, are extraordinarily fragile, and require continual maintenance.

4. "*In any organisation, the lower level is directed by the higher*…. Just as the mechanism of

an organization is furnished by its lower levels, so its purpose is the product of its higher levels" (60). So, for instance, discursive/genric fields organize all our attentive interactions within linguistic fields.

5. "*For an organization at any given level, its mechanism lies at the level below and its purpose at the level above.* This law states that for the analysis of any organization three levels are required: its own, the one below and the one above. To analyse a mechanism we drop down one level…. Similarly, to find the purpose of any organization we would move up one level, for then we are considering the organization as itself a part of some higher and more complex organization" (61). This implies that the reflective analysis of rhetorical action requires, in the first instance, analysis of its symbolic "mechanisms," while the analysis of symbolic action requires analysis of its behavioral mechanisms, and so on, but, since rhetorical action is intentional, there is no level "higher" than the reflective, and thus, rhetorical purposes are established rhetorically (see fig. 6).[2] Rhetoric has always been concerned with what Kenneth Burke called the symbolic, but to truly understand the conditions under which a "sign may bring about a physical result," as Peirce puts it (150), we must understand the history of the development of those conditions which provide
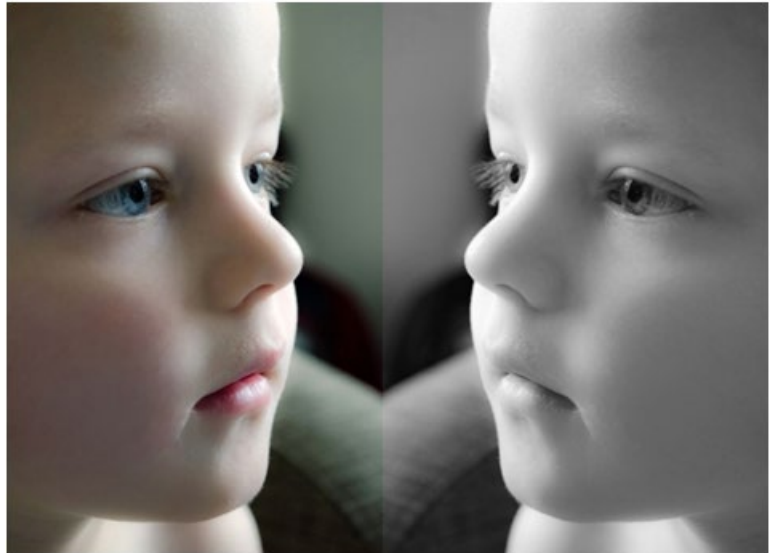
Figure 6: Mirror Effect

a sign's "inheritance" of the objects, agents, and topical relations from which it derives its meaning and rhetorical force. For this reason, a thorough analysis of any rhetorical act must consider all its dimensions, including the physicochemical and sensorial fields (which together comprise the environmental dimension); the ethical and social fields (which together comprise the behavioral dimension); and the discursive, linguistic, logical, and reflective fields (which together comprise the symbolic dimension)—and their integration

within the temporal dimension, the dimension of interaction.

Supervenience

The relationship between a previously and a subsequently developed field is called "supervenience." As McLaughlin and Bennett have noted, "Philosophers have distinguished many different varieties of supervenience," but the "core idea of supervenience" is that, formally speaking, when a set of properties **A** supervenes upon another set **B**, no two things can differ with respect to **A**-properties without also differing with respect to their **B**-properties. In slogan form, "there cannot be an **A**-difference without a **B**-difference" (McLaughlin and Bennett). So, for instance, when at a restaurant your dining partner says the spaghetti is too salty, or too savory, you may know how the word *signifies* (based on differences between *topoi* [signs] in a symbolic field [a language]), but you won't know what the word *means* if you have never experienced different social responses to tastes (based on differences between *topoi* in a behavioral field), you won't be able to respond to different social responses to taste if your tongue cannot discern a difference between different tastes (based on differences between *topoi* in an sensorial field), and your tongue won't be able to sense that difference if its taste buds can't detect a difference between the relevant *topoi* in the physicochemical field and so embody the difference in the degree of sodium ions or glutamates. Apperception of the *topoi* of one field supervenes the prior apperception of *topoi* experienced in another.

One of the most well-known contemporary philosophical advocates of supervenience is Donald Davidson. Although Davidson speaks in terms of only two broad classes of fields or dimensions, the "physical" and the "mental," his description of the relation between them is nevertheless useful.[3] Within his argument aimed at reconciling freedom with causal determinism, Davidson takes a position he refers to as "anomalous monism" (see fig. 7 on next page). Anomalous monism "resembles materialism in its claim that all events are physical," but it rejects the materialist thesis that "mental phenomena can be given purely physical explanations" (*Essays* 214). Davidson addresses the apparent contradiction of three principles anomalous monism requires us to accept.

The first Davidson calls "the Principle of Causal Interaction," a principle that states, simply enough, "that at least some mental events interact causally with physical events" (208). So, for instance, by this principle we can assume that when I type these letters in order to make

a rhetorical point, we can legitimately say that I moved my fingers to press the keys *because* I judged that moving them would make my point, and moving them made my point *because* you can now perceive that point. In short, it is legitimate to say there are physical events that would not occur if not for mental events and vice versa. Davidson goes so far as to say, "all mental events ultimately, perhaps through causal relations with physical events, have causal intercourse with physical events" (208). He goes even further to say that

A) The Identity Theory: Type and Token
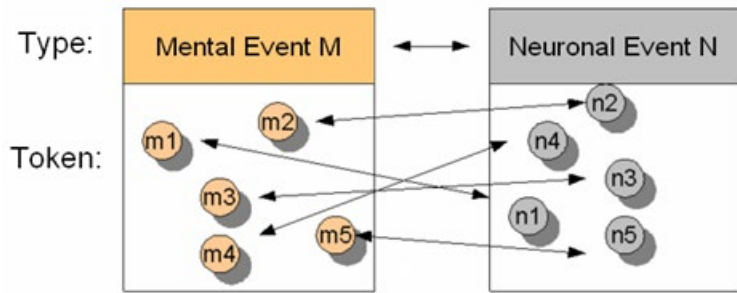
B) Anomalous Monism: Token Without Type
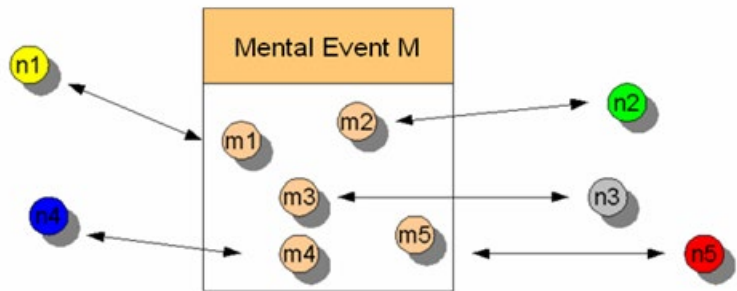
Figure 7: Anomalous Monism

"mental events are identical with physical events" (209). Not all events are mental events, however, and what distinguishes physical events that are mental from those that are not is "intentionality" (211). Here Davidson, as I do throughout this brief treatise, accepts Bretano's sense of the term "intentionality"; that is, he means that events are intentional if they are motions directed toward an object. Intentions are not necessarily conscious.

The second principle Davidson says we must accept is "the Principle of the Nomological Character of Causality," the principle that "where there is causality, there must be a law" (208). If we accept this principle—and science seems to depend upon it—and if we accept as well the first principle that mental events interact causally with physical events, then we have four positions open to us:

1) We can believe that mental and physical events are identical and that there are psychophysical laws that correlate them (nomological monism; e.g., materialism).

2) We can believe that mental and physical events are not identical but that there are psychophysical laws that correlate them (nomological dualism; e.g., cognitivism).

3) We can believe that mental and physical events are not identical and that no laws correlate

them (anomalous dualism; e.g., Cartesianism, conventionalism, constructionism).

4) But for his third principle, Davidson holds a fourth position: that mental events are identical with physical events, but no laws correlate them. This means that "there are no strict deterministic laws on the basis of which mental events can be predicted and explained (the Anomalism of the Mental)" (Essays 208). In other words, although there are no psychophysical laws (we cannot reduce moral properties to physical properties or truth to syntactical properties), we can view mental interaction as being dependent, or "supervenient," on physical interaction. As Davidson uses the term, "supervenience" means "that there cannot be two events alike in all physical respects but differing in some mental respects, or that an object cannot alter in some mental respects without altering in some physical respects" (214).

Davidson's anomalous monism implies that there are certain kinds of physical interactions we must be able to undergo in order to undergo certain kinds of mental interactions. It's not just that without the physical interaction we will not yet have developed the ability to deal with certain objects in certain ways; more to the point, we will not be able to apperceive those objects at all. Davidson's doctrine of supervenience supports integrative rhetoric's claim that the ability to apperceive an object within a particular field presupposes the ability to apperceive the *topoi* the object embodies in fields that the particular field supervenes. For example, the apperception of the mental object "baseball" when reading the rules of baseball presupposes the apperception of the *topoi* that a physical baseball embodies.   However, Davidson's doctrine that mental events supervene physical events, and that mental objects embody physical objects, although fundamentally correct, is too general a model to provide a structure for a theory of the development of the conditions that make significant discourse possible. The model I describe below, which outlines the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions and their integration in the temporal dimension, offers a fuller description of the complexity of rhetorical interactions.

To sum up, although felt as a vague yet often powerful sense of the world's presence as we engage in a rhetorical situation, ambience is the highly complex and integrated totality of the world's environmental, behavioral, symbolic, and temporal dimensions and their fields of objects, agents, relations, and forces of which we may or may not become aware and with which we may

or may not intentionally engage. Although we may feel it so, ambience is not merely a vague, amorphous background to our conscious acts which gives them meaning; rather, ambience is itself highly organized and organizing, developing from our interactions with the world in a series of succeeding integrative levels, each with its own structures based upon and providing purpose to the lower, earlier-developed structures it supervenes and each providing meaning to the higher, later-developed structures that depend upon it.

Now that, in this introduction, I have given a broad outline of ambience's territory and explicated some of the main concepts and terms of integrative rhetoric, I will briefly describe the chief characteristics of the three spatial dimensions of rhetoric, then describe those of the fourth dimension of rhetorical interaction, the temporal, which integrates them.

Quiz question 2: **Does "integrative rhetoric" refer to the theory of how the various levels of ambience relate to one another, or does it describe how particular rhetorical interactions take place?**

Answer: **Trick question.**

Why? Rhetorical interactions are actions which reintegrate agents' apperceptions of their fields of activity in order to induce and adapt to change, and the study of those interactions requires an analysis of those fields and how they relate to other fields.

CHAPTER I

THE ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

Quiz question 3 (answer at the end of this section): ***When your lawnmower won't start no matter how hard or often you pull the cord, are you crazy to yell at it?***

The environmental dimension of rhetorical ambience, as described by integrative rhetoric, refers to the fields generated by our physicochemical and sensorial interactions. All our discourse, not just our discourse about the environment, is embedded in these fields, and they condition our every rhetorical act. What is typically called "environmental rhetoric" or "environmental communication" is, of course, a worthwhile area of study, but is typically limited to a "topical focus on communication and human relations with the environment"; thus, environmental communication scholars are concerned about "dominant discourses" that are "directly about the environment" and have "an impact on the environment" (Milstein 344). Robert Cox has defined such discourse as "the pragmatic and constitutive vehicle for our understanding of the environment as well as our relationships to the natural world; it is the symbolic medium that we use in constructing environmental problems and negotiating society's different responses to them" (20). "Environmental rhetoric," then, as scholars usually employ the term, actually takes place within what integrative rhetoric describes as the behavioral and symbolic dimensions of rhetorical ambience. In contrast, the environmental dimension described by integrative rhetoric refers to those physicochemical and sensorial interactions and the fields they generate that all discourse, not just discourse about the environment, embodies. The objects, relations, and forces described in the physicochemical level of the "environmental dimension" of rhetoric, as integrative rhetoric employs the term, are not yet rhetorical because they are not intentional but fully contingent; yet sensory interactions, which can be intentional, necessarily embody them. Because of this, the "environmental dimension" is in some ways an unfortunate word choice for integrative rhetoric because it may connote an anthropocentric, hierarchical attitude that pits the "human" against the "natural" and tends to promote the notion that discourse is an autonomous activity to be understood against a "natural" background to which discourse must adjust or to which it must accommodate its inherent functioning. Here, however, by the "environmental" dimension of rhetoric I mean those fields of interactions which produce the objects and relations that every behavioral and symbolic interaction must always already embody.

Physicochemical Interactions

The interactions among things in physicochemical fields (atoms, molecules, etc.) are governed by physical and chemical forces, and these things causally affect one another, but the things of these fields have only those interactions in which the effects of their interactions upon other things will not alter their identical future reactions to similar events under similar conditions. For this reason, the things, forces, and relations of physicochemical fields seem to have no place in rhetorical study. In physicochemical fields there are no "feed-back" effects. The things of these fields do not respond, but merely react. Therefore, physicochemical interactions are themselves not yet rhetorical. More importantly, there is nothing we can do sensorially, technically and ethically, socially, discursively and genrically, linguistically, logically, or reflectively to alter the way physicochemical things can interact, although obviously we can interact with them physicochemically. We cannot persuade things within the physicochemical fields, although we, like all organisms, can manipulate them intentionally; but things, to other physicochemical things, are just things and not objects. In other words, since the physicochemical fields organize only reactions and not responses, physicochemically a thing's motions are not intentional and cannot anticipate another thing's motions.

But precisely *because* the physicochemical fields are unaffected directly by intentions, desires, emotions, conventions, and other motivational forces, our nonrecursive experience of their existence is the precondition for experiencing all subsequent fields and their agents, motivational forces, objects, and topical relations. Consequently, because of the lack of recursion between them and the higher fields, the physicochemical fields mark the firm line between truth and falsity, fantasy and reality, and expectations and their fulfillment. Just as we noted in the spaghetti-eating example above, there are things like sodium ions and glutamates of which we may have no knowledge, but the experience of them nevertheless affects the meanings of our words; we can neither wish them away nor nullify their effects on our senses, but we can intentionally use them to alter our sensorial field if we use the salt shaker. Observations like these undergird Bill Brown's "thing theory" and the paradoxical difference he explores between the "thing" and the "object" to which we attend: the "semantic *reducibility* of *things* to *objects*, coupled with the semantic *irreducibility* of *things* to *objects*" (Brown 3). For Brown, a thing lies just outside intelligibility,

and it is, Brown says, echoing Lacan, "phenomenal only in its effects" (6). That is, although the experience of these fields is the precondition of all our meaningful experience, as Jacques Derrida put it, "the thing is not an object and cannot become one" (*Signipongel Signsponge* 14, 126).

Physicochemical fields and their forces, things, and relations are the precondition for our experiencing and acting within all subsequent fields and their elements because things either *resist* or (for lack of a better word) *consent* to the imposition of further relations upon them from the perspectives of the later, or higher, fields. Brown, echoing Heidegger, notes, "We begin to confront the thingness of objects when they stop working for us: when the drill breaks, when the car stalls, when the windows get filthy, when their flow within the circuits of production and distribution, consumption and exhibition, has been arrested, however momentarily" (4). The daughter soon learns that simply wanting the syrup to reach the hard-crack stage won't make it reach the hard-crack stage. The physicochemical fields as such are not subject to our desires, beliefs, assumptions, and predilections. Without the resistance or consent of things in the physicochemical fields to the intentions of organisms, no organism could discriminate between one interaction and another, and so no adaptive or intentional interactions would be possible.

The resistance of physicochemical things to our manipulative, perceptual, and conceptual tendencies is the basis of our intentional and adaptive actions and the foundation of the sensorial fields, and together these fields of the environmental dimension of ambience are the grounds for our actions in the behavioral dimension. What an environmental object *is* to us depends upon how it resists our actions. For example, when we tie our shoes, we expect the laces not only to consent to twisting and bending but also to resist slipping and breaking. We interact with the laces in anticipation of these resistances. When I write with a pencil my act "calls" for the lead to resist the paper in a certain sort of way, and the pencil *is* a pencil for me as it so resists—as it cooperates with me, so to speak, in this endeavor. If my chair didn't resist my sitting, I would fall to the floor. If the tires on my car didn't resist the road on which I drive, I would immediately slide off the road. Everything we do depends upon the resistance of things in the physicochemical levels to our sensory organs and the resistance of sensory objects to our behavioral actions. As Bruno Latour has said of resistance, "Whatever resists trial is real…. The real is not one thing among others but rather a gradient of resistance…. No force can, as it is often put, 'know reality,' other

than through the difference it creates in resisting others" (*Pasteurization* 159; see fig. 8).

Thus, what a physicochemical thing *means* to us depends not upon the word we use to signify it, but upon how it resists our intentional actions, and what we do with it depends upon what it means to us—as the daughter quickly

Figure 8: Wall of Resistance

learns what "slotted" means when her mother asks her to spoon some sugar into the measuring cup but she tries to do so with a slotted spoon. The resistance of physicochemical objects not only to one another but also to our sensory organs is the basis of our intentional and adaptive actions in the behavioral dimension, and thus the foundation of the symbolic dimension. In short, the physicochemical fields condition—that is, limit—the possibilities of our sensorial experience, our actions, and, ultimately, rhetorical meaning, and they are the very ground of ambience.

Sensorial Interactions

The resistances that inhibit our tendencies to act arise in the physicochemical fields, and these resistances condition the development of the elements within the sensorial fields. The line between interactions like Brownian motion within physicochemical fields and interactions like tasting and touching within sensorial fields is drawn by a set of actions that things existing only in the physicochemical fields cannot perform (see fig. 9). An entity enters a sensorial field of interaction and becomes an object to an organism only once the organism has developed structural complexities that allow it to *discriminate* (when the organism has the physicochemical ability to sense differences among the objects it encounters),

Figure 9: Brownian Motion
[Click Image for Animation]

intend (when it has the sensory ability to direct its actions toward attaining or avoiding certain objects), and *adapt* (when it has the ability to modify its actions if its intentions are resisted).

Obviously, we can perceive physicochemical interactions only through our own organism, our bodies, and primarily through our sensory organs—our eyes, ears, tongues, nostrils, and skin—coordinated and integrated by our brain. Of course, we don't see, smell, taste, or feel molecules and atoms—we taste and smell them in terms of sensorial topical relationships such as dark-light, bitter-sweet, and fragrant-fetid. We interpret such sensorial topical differences variously, depending upon our individual, social, and symbolic experience, but these interpretations are always of environmental—physicochemical/sensorial—relations. Because each sensory organ interacts with things very differently from the others, even with respect to the "same" source (what our ears hear differs from what our skin feels when we are slapped on our face), each will generate different sorts of objects for our attention, objects having different sorts of relations with one another, which we may integrate neurologically and temporally to interpret as an event. Thus, all our behavioral and many of our symbolic interactions may be described as visual, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, somatosensory (including the tactile, seismic, and proprioceptive), and neural.

A crucial issue for integrative rhetoric is the question of how the *topoi* generated by our various organs' interactions with the world condition our rhetorical acts. Scholars have begun to answer this question by developing different rhetorics that focus on the different kinds of objects and *topoi* we perceive through different organs. Of these, visual rhetoric has received the most attention, followed by auditory rhetoric, and these have often been studied in conjunction with multimodal rhetoric, although usually limited to the interrelations of aural and visual to textual modes of discursive interaction. This interest in organ-specific *topoi* has been fueled primarily by the profession's need to come to grips with the profound challenges to traditional rhetorical theory that the recent proliferation of digital media has exerted on contemporary communication practices. Gustatory, olfactory, and somatosensory (including both haptic and kinesic) rhetoric have so far received little to no attention, while neurorhetoric has only recently begun to receive scholarly attention (see Jack; Bruer; Mays and Jung). Yet when we do attend to these various modes, it becomes apparent that all the modalities are "multimodal" in the sense that there are no fields of human interaction that are restricted purely to the *topoi* generated by a single sensorial

field. As Ruth Finnegan has noted, "There are many connections between smell and taste … and at one level hearing and touching merge," while "gestural and vocal actions are often integrated rather than autonomous, and verbal and non-verbal communication are usually produced in a highly coordinated fashion: they are not distinct domains" (37). As we saw in the example above of the mother and daughter making candy, our symbolic and behavioral interactions may involve gustatory, olfactory, visual, somatosensory, and auditory *topoi*. Upon these depend kinesic *topoi* (relative movements in time) and proxemic *topoi* (relationships to one another in space), and upon these depend cognitive, emotional, and ethical *topoi*. Only because all these relevant *topoi* are embodied and integrated ambiently in our linguistic signs can we understand what an utterance like "we need to boil this a little longer" means.

However, I must emphasize that in rhetorical descriptions of the environmental dimension, we are dealing with such objects and relations—how they smell, sound, feel, and so on—only insofar as they affect us behaviorally or symbolically; that is, insofar as these environmental objects and relations are embodied by and supply meaning to our actions and significations by resisting or consenting to our intentions. In other words, the objects and relations generated from within environmental fields are always already conditioned by the particular behavioral and symbolic interactions with them we have experienced, and that limits what and how we attend to them. For instance, as Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen have pointed out, "our 'visual grammar'" is "a grammar of 'visual design.'" It is not

> a universal grammar "but culturally specific." For example, Western visual communication is deeply affected by our convention of writing from left to right…. Other cultures write from right to left, or from top to bottom, and will consequently attach different values and meaning to these key dimensions of visual space…. [We] assume that the elements such as "centre" or "margin," "top" or "bottom," will be elements used in the visual semiotics of any culture, but with meanings and values which are likely to differ from those of Western cultures. (*Reading* 3-4)

Similarly, Finnegan has argued, "Our soundscapes are moulded by cultural experience as well as individual circumstances, for we screen out some noises while valuing and attending to others. In a measure, we ourselves make the sonic worlds in which we interact" (65). In other words, an

analysis confined to the environmental dimension of interaction might deal with the topic left/ right and its relations to visual, auditory, and other sensorial relations that *can* be signified and *can* be meaningful, but rhetorical analysis of the same topic must be as it is situated in a particular rhetorical occasion. One way to put this is to say that physicochemical-sensorial possibilities limit our behavioral and symbolic possibilities. Just as the molecular structure of the walls I perceive in this room condition where I can and cannot walk, our ambient environmental experience limits the relations we can intelligibly signify and what they can mean (see fig. 10). Integrative rhetoric is not concerned, therefore, with describing physicochemical and sensorial stimuli as such—that is what

physicists, anatomists, and organic chemists do—or with investigating the physical and chemical reactions that occur in our eyes, ears, brains, and so on—that is what physiologists do. Instead, integrative rhetoric is concerned with how our physical and sensorial ambient experience permeates and conditions our discursive interactions.

As Giovanni Bruno Vicario says of our symbolic actions, "we act
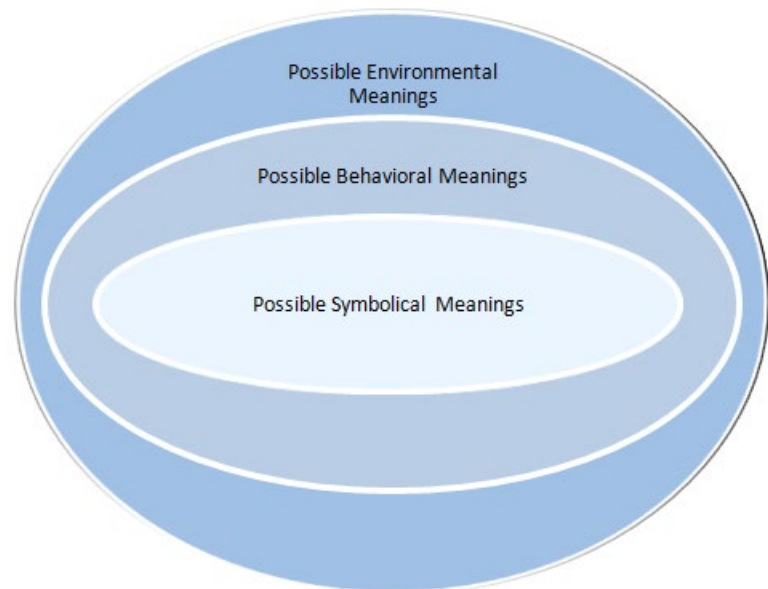
Figure 10: Limites of Semantic Possibility

on the basis of what we *see*, and not on the basis of what *there is*" (16), and "we act on the basis of what we *hear*, and not on the basis of what *there is*" (17). Vicario emphasizes that although

> the physical world [is] the source of all sorts of stimuli, living beings do not react to all those stimuli, but only to the ones useful or perilous for their survival. (It is trivial to refer to ultraviolet rays that are real stimuli for bees, but are inexistent for us, or to ultrasounds, that are real stimuli for dogs, but are inexistent for us.) The point is that behavior is not determined by the stimuli physically present in the geographical environment, but by the sole stimuli that a filtering system (sensory system) allows to enter the living being. (20)

Here Vicario echoes a claim made by Charles H. Woolbert in 1915 in the first issue of the *Quarterly*

Journal of Public Speaking: "what actually reaches the consciousness of the hearer is sensation of sound" (128).

Commenting recently on this quotation, Debra Hawhee suggests, "With this reflection on the relationship between sound sensation and meaning, Woolbert effectively sets sensations, more than words, as the focus of speech science. The sheer materiality of sensation travels into meaning itself: stirred air stirs meaning. By the end of the passage, meaning takes on a material life of its own, and its capacity to pile, break, dissolve, and yield the new depends always, at every turn, on sensation" (6). Hawhee sees this relationship between sensation and meaning as characterizing what she calls "rhetoric's sensorium." Drawing upon a comment made by Charles Darwin, Hawhee defines the sensorium as "the corporeal limn that guides sensory perception. It is the participial stem of the Latin *sentire*, a physical verb that means to discern by the senses; to feel, hear, see, etc.; to perceive, be sensible of. Sensorium therefore names a locus of feeling, and yet that locus is not confined to presumed bodily boundaries, especially when technology is considered" (5).

Hawhee comes to this definition during a study of the history of rhetoric's interest in sensation and the senses as reflected in *Quarterly Journal of Speech* (*QJS*) articles. In one of these in 1934, L. S. Judson and D. E. Rodden follow "the suggestion made in 1915 by the newly formed Research Committee of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking that researchers ought to investigate, among other things, 'what processes are most valuable in the preparation and delivery of addresses in order to secure certain definite results in the audience'" (Hawhee 3). Hawhee is especially interested in the chart provided in Judson and Rodden's article (see fig. 11), one similar to the rhetorical triangle, but in which there is a sphere shared by speaker and audience: hearing

Figure 11: Judson and Rodden: Speaker Audience Relation

(sound), sight (light), and "other senses," catalogued in the article as "external senses." These include: "touch (temperature and pressure), e.g., comfortable or uncomfortable chairs; taste, e.g., cigars or candy; smell, subtle perfumes or attention to ventilation"; and the "internal senses": "pain; muscle, tendon, joint sense; equilibratory senses; hunger; thirst; sexual sense; fatigue; and indefinite but demonstrable visceral organ senses." In other words, a host of bodily processes are enlisted in a speaker-audience exchange, most of them sensuous. (3)

Judson and Rodden are here describing types of sensual experience—types of sensorial interactions—provided by the environmental dimension of the rhetorical situation that can be shared by interlocutors. Hawhee also notes that some of these early *QJS* articles recognize this sensorium as being the source of the meanings indicated by our speech. Even more importantly, however, at least one of these articles focuses upon the organism's ability to integrate these various types of sensual experience and provide meaning to its objects of attention. For instance, in the second issue, Smiley Blanton "offers the journal's first articulation of speech's sensorium" (7):

Suppose we hold a watch in our hand. We feel its weight; its roughness or smoothness; we hear ticking; see its shape, size, color, the different parts. All these sensations enter into the mind at once, and the mind binds all these sensations together and attaches to it a meaning and the word "watch." … All of the sensations making up the perception "watch" are so bound together that we can hardly separate them by analysis. We think of them, not separately, but as the object "watch." "Sensations are welded together, therefore, under the influence or at the bidding of our physical surroundings. A perception always means something: stands for some object" or situation. (Blanton 155; qtd. in Hawhee 7)

Blanton's description of sensorium is reminiscent of Aristotle's "common sense," a "perceptual power over and above the five senses which monitors their states and co-ordinates their reports" (Gregoric 2). As Pavel Gregoric has explained it, Aristotle developed his notion of perception in opposition to Plato's argument in the *Theaetetus*, where Socrates reduces "perception to passive reception of basic sensible qualities (e.g. white, salty, hot) by means of the senses. This in turn results in an expansion of the active process in which the so-called 'common features' (*ta koiva*) are grasped" (2). According to Gregoric, "in Plato's view the senses are not integrated at

the level of perception, but at the level of thought" (5). However, "In Aristotle's theory, the senses are not integrated at the level of something that is the subject of both perceiving and thinking [for Plato, the soul]. Rather, the senses are integrated by the common sense. Thus integrated, co-ordination of the senses is achieved perceptually, and it can be attributed to non-rational animals" (6-7). But although Blanton's sensorium may address similar problems as those addressed by Plato's soul and Aristotle's common sense, his sensorium provides a very different answer to the question of what presents and organizes the objects of our attention and so our discourse. As Hawhee recognizes, for Blanton, our already organized environment presents and organizes the objects of our attention, and thus, ultimately, our discourse.

A final early interest in the rhetoric of sensation mentioned by Hawhee that is important to integrative rhetoric lies in the inaugural issue of the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*. It "featured a nine-page 'report of progress made in formulating ideals and plans for research work in public speaking'" (5), which outlined "the knowledge domains necessary for students aspiring to study pubic speaking as an academic subject" (6). One of these offers "a research agenda [that] effectively names the variety of sensory experiences … and it also dictates a certain recursivity, the way the research moves to 'higher-order' processes [such as communication processes and social processes] while still returning to basic sense impressions" (6).

Thus, Hawhee's article calls to our attention at least three aspects of sensorial interaction that were of interest to rhetorical theory in the early part of the twentieth century: the interaction of speakers and listeners within a shared environment, one they perceive similarly through their similar sensory organs; the unification and co-ordination of different sensorial experiences of common objects of attention; and the recursive relationships among sensorial, social, and discursive experiences. Although, as Hawhee points out, these interests have never entirely disappeared, interest began to fade with the introduction of epistemic theories of rhetoric in the 1960s. For instance, "Barry Brummett's intersubjective theory of rhetoric emphasizes the interpretive act layered over top of sensation: 'sense data by themselves are not experience. Experience is sensation plus *meaning*. Sensation alone is *meaningless*'" (Hawhee 10; see Brummett 28)—the complete inversion of the view taken by integrative rhetoric. Since the introduction of radical postmodernist

and constructionist epistemologies—those basically anthropomorphic perspectives which argue that the world is meaningless unless made so by human symbolic actions—scholarly investigation of the "sensorium," the sensorial interactions of the environmental dimension of rhetoric, has, as Hawhee notes, declined. And despite the renewed interest displayed by "materialist rhetoric," "thing theory," and other approaches, very little has been done to develop a clearer understanding of the topical relations generated through sensorial interactions, those topics upon which behavioral and symbolic interactions depend. In the next section, as an example, I will briefly review one of the main sensorial fields, the auditory, sketching the kinds of objects and *topoi* which make possible many of our behaviors and gestures, with respect to their potential for human interaction.

The Auditory Field

According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, sound is physically "a mechanical disturbance from a state of equilibrium that propagates through an elastic material medium," and the entry notes that "The ear can distinguish different subjective aspects of a sound, such as its volume and pitch, by detecting and analyzing different physical characteristics of the waves" ("Sound"; see fig. 12). More simply, sensorial fields of interaction interpret physicochemical fields. Acoustically, the human organism is extremely sophisticated, able to differentiate not only pitch
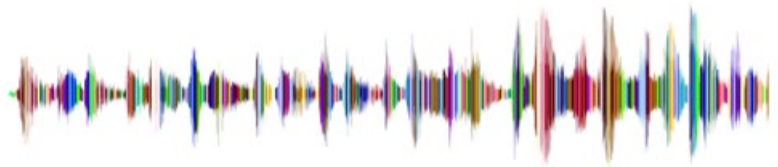
Figure 12: Sound Waves

but also timbre, duration and tempo, volume, rhythm, articulation, harmony, and other topical relations. Within an auditory field, we can associate these with their sources, and so differentiate between a peacock's call and a person's cry, between the whoosh of a door opening in a blizzard and the whish of a baseball flying past our heads.

We should note, however, that, as *things* within a physicochemical field, sounds depend upon a material medium and can be explained in terms of that medium, but as *objects* of our attention within an auditory field which supervenes the physicochemical and organizes it by our purposes which associate the sounds, the material medium is irrelevant to an explanation of their meaning (Martin 4). The whish physicochemically is different from the whish sensorially. (If this

were not the case, the "remediation" I discuss below would be impossible.) Our ability to detect phenomena such as the Doppler effect allows us to perceive the motion of some of these sources, as, in conjunction with memory, we can judge their changing distances (their kinesics); interaural time differences and other cues allow us to locate these sources in space (their proxemics). These capabilities, together with others, provide the basis for auditory spatial awareness; that is, "the awareness of the presence, distribution, and interaction of sound sources in the surrounding space" (Letowski and Letowski 1). As one recent military study concludes, "While vision is the primary human sense in providing information about the surrounding world that can be seen, the hearing system is the main source of spatial orientation allowing humans to locate objects in space, even if they cannot be seen" (Scharine et al. 455). (We can all appreciate the contribution of this aspect of the auditory field to ambience when we experience the differences in viewing a film in monaural, stereo, and then surround sound.)

Our ability to apperceive auditory objects and their topical relationships is essential to our basic orientation in space and time toward the things and people with which we interact, and all our behavioral and gestural interactions depend heavily upon our having developed through experience our ability to interpret auditory events. In many situations, our ears are our most valuable orienting sensorial organs. Finnegan notes, for example, that "the spatial range of audition is crucial…. To a greater degree than vision or, even more, touch, sound travels" (Finnegan 85). A car's horn, train's whistle, and an ambulance's siren warn us well before we see them. In part this is because, far better than light, sounds go around and through obstacles: "Vision mostly gives us the skin of things, the surfaces that can be seen and measured. Sounds and hearing take us around and inside" (Finnegan 86). This property of sound makes it more sharable than vision. For a group a people to visually experience an object simultaneously, they each must be facing the same direction, with no intervening objects. But as anyone who has shopped for groceries knows, when a special is announced over the PA system, everyone in the store hears it, no matter what each is doing, no matter what aisle he or she is in. This environmental aspect of auditory objects permits a great range of individual response to them. Yet, at the same time, "auditory fields of interaction are especially effective for incorporating and marshalling people" (Finnegan 89)—bands don't

march, and chorus lines don't dance to visual images—because hearing permits an organized response to its objects even when individuals' physical orientations in space differ widely.

More strikingly than the objects of our other senses, auditory objects and topics have the character of what later I will describe as *events*. Sound "happens" because individual sounds are temporary and perceived sequentially: once a bird tweets, even when it remains in our auditory field, we must wait for it to tweet again in order to repeat the "same" experience; in contrast, once we see the bird's visual form, so long as it remains stationary, we can turn away and look at it again and again. For this reason, and because of the importance of the auditory to our lives, we often attempt to "remediate" auditory experience to the more durable fields of the visual— we transcribe speech and notate music—and we "record" or "reproduce" all kinds of sounds today, mechanically and electronically. Except in the case of transcriptions to the tactile (Braille) for the blind, we do not commonly remediate auditory objects to the tactile, gustatory, olfactory, somatosensorial, or neural fields; we do, however, especially recently, by means of various (usually medical) instruments, remediate the objects and relations of these fields to the auditory. Of course, current technology has extended the range of many of our sensorial fields.

The rich array of topical differentiations provided by the auditory field of sensorial interaction, in conjunction with those of the other sensorial fields, supply much of the meaning to the actions and significations developed in the behavioral fields. Many of our actions and gestures make sounds or respond to sounds, and the special affordances and limitations of the topical relations of the auditory field must be brought to bear in our explanations of many of our individual actions and group interactions, and ultimately upon the symbolic significance of those interactions. Consider these two examples of one person moving closer to another before speaking to them: a political candidate in a public debate moving from his podium to within one foot of distance from his opponent before speaking to him; a friend at a noisy party moving from across the room to within one foot of distance from another friend before speaking to her (see fig. 13 on next page). We may interpret these actions' motives as respectively aggressive or cordial because of the differences in the aural ambience of the two situations with respect to volume—although, of course, we could enrich that interpretation by attending to pitch, timbre, duration, tempo, and so forth.

Such topical relations generated from within the auditory field of our sensorial interactions of the environmental dimension condition and are embedded in the habits and conventions of interactions in the behavioral and symbolic dimensions, as with the topical relations of the other sensorial fields.

Figure 13: The Cocktail Party Effect

Quiz question 3: **When your lawnmower won't start no matter how hard or often you pull the cord, are you crazy to yell at it?**

Answer: **Only if you expect the mower to respond to the yelling.**

Why? The mower has physicochemical relationships to you, but only physicochemically, and so it can react only to your physicochemical interactions with it. But the physicochemical fields in which you interact with it are, for you, supervened by sensorial, technical/ethical, social, discursive/genric, linguistic, and logical fields, so you have expectations with respect to the mower at all those levels. Your yelling is understandable. But you'll have to reflect on these relationships to determine why, whether, and how you can restore your expectations for the mower, such as by putting some gas in its tank.

CHAPTER 2

THE BEHAVIORAL DIMENSION

Quiz question 4 (answer at the end of this section): **Do we have social, and so ethical, relationships with nonhuman creatures and entities, and if so, does the world impose ethical obligations upon us toward them through our experience of its ambience?**

Just as sensorial fields interpret physicochemical fields, behavioral fields interpret sensorial fields. We begin to respond behaviorally to sensory stimuli even as fetuses (Shaw and Paul). Once similar sensorial interactions with the environment occur repeatedly, recurrent sequences of behaviors, or habits, may develop (Bachevalier), and so the next supervenient stratum, the "technical/ethical" fields, may develop, and the behavioral dimension of ambience can emerge.

Technical and Ethical Interactions

The difference between the objects and agents that only inhabit the environmental dimension and those that also inhabit the behavioral dimension depends upon an important difference that emerges from sensorial interactions, a difference that enriches ambient experience considerably. This is the distinction between two mutually constitutive relationships, *technical relationships* and *ethical relationships* (Yarbrough, *Inventive* 140-141). Technical relations arise when an organism begins to interact with a thing in order to effect a change in some other thing. In other words, the technical arises when the organism relates to things as *tools.* Technical relations determine what we can and cannot do with and to things. These relations begin to develop when an organism begins to use part of its body to effect changes in another object, as when the Cambrian *Anomalocaris* first used its mouth to bite a trilobite, and they are involved in every intentional action, including rhetorical actions, and upon these supervene the relations that develop when organisms begin to use other things as tools.

All tools, of course—from the spoon the daughter uses to stir the syrup, to the stick a chimpanzee uses to gather termites, to the numbers we use to calculate the trajectory of a missile, and even to the graduate student we use to make copies of documents for our

classes—are extensions of our bodies. Thus, an object becomes a tool when it becomes an extension of a sensory organ. As Philip Brey puts it, the extension provided by modern instrumentalities such as infrared and radiographic photography, sonogram and ultrasound, and global positioning systems "help realize human intentions by extending and building on the existing inventory of human means, including human faculties (at their current state of development) and other extensions already present" (16). They are, according to Robert E. Innis, "exosomatic organs" (132). Moreover, as Innis says, "The various systems of intertwined and mutually reinforcing exosomatic organs make up an 'artificial body' that supervenes upon and penetrates the 'natural equipment' with which we are endowed at birth" (131-132). Because of this, our interactions with things using exosomatic organs—telescopes, toothbrushes, and so on—stand in the same relation to the supervening behavioral and symbolic fields as our "direct" interactions.

It is important to note that, from the behavioral dimension through the symbolic, for every organism, every object of its attention has technical relations; that is, everything is, at least in some sense, a tool, an exsosomatic organ—even language. Donald Davidson emphasizes this point when he says, "There is a valid analogy between having eyes and ears, and having language: all three are organs with which we come into direct contact with our environment. They are not intermediaries, screens, media, or windows…. [There] is no such thing as a language apart from the sounds and marks people make, and the habits and expectations that go with them" (Davidson, *Truth* 131). In the same vein, Steven Pinker has claimed, "Language is not a cultural artifact that we learn the way we learn to tell time…. Instead, it is a distinct piece of the biological makeup of our brains" (18), just like hearing and seeing; yet, unlike auditory and visual fields, linguistic fields cannot develop until there are social and discursive/generic fields to supervene, as we will see below. Nevertheless, once we develop linguistic fields, we interact with their elements in order to cope with our environment, much as we do with our sensory organs.

The notion that everything is in some sense a tool is also one of Martin Heidegger's major insights, although Heidegger saw only that it was true for humans *(Dasein)* and did not recognize that it is true for every creature. Heidegger's view is summarized here by Fredrik Svenaeus:

The meaning-structures of the world are made up of relations, not between things, but

between tools (*Zeuge*). That is, the meaning of phenomena, according to Heidegger, is not primarily dependent upon how things look, but upon how they are being used…. For how could the world itself as something independent of human beings lead us to an understanding of the function of any tool? A tool always refers to its user. We will only learn what a hammer is by using it, never by staring at it. It is important to stress that the concept of tool or availableness (*Zuhandenheit*) in *Sein* und *Zeit* is meant to cover *all* phenomena, not only human artifacts in the common sense. The sun, for example, would be a tool for time measurement…. The relations between the different tools are explicated as an 'in order to' (*um zu*). The tools in this way relate to each other; their meanings are determined by their places within the totality of relevance. One uses a hammer in order to nail the palings, in order to raise the walls, in order to build the house, in order to find shelter from the rain, etc. (85)

In other words, Heidegger's characterization of things as such (as "present-at-hand" [*Vorhandenheit*]) as opposed to things as tools (as "ready-to-hand" [*Zuhandenheit*]) is very similar to what Bill Brown describes as the difference between "things" and "objects." But Svenaeus goes on to note that, in Heidegger's view, "the final meaning of every tool is the existence of human being—*Dasein*" (85). The anthropomorphic arrogance of that claim is breathtaking, but in a sense, it is true. It may very well be the case that the final meaning *for a human being* of every tool is the existence of human being, but the tool has its final meaning only because of preexisting meanings that did not originate from human purposes: the human's rifle has its meaning in protecting its user from the tiger's teeth only because the tiger's teeth already had their meaning in procuring its food. Human being made its appearance in a world whose organisms had already organized it in order to suit their needs, an organization that determined how human beings could further organize it to suit their needs. And you and I made our appearance into a world where other humans had already organized it in order to suit their needs. This is what Heidegger called the "thrownness" (*Geworfenheit*) of *Dasein*. For Heidegger, having-been-thrown produces our sense of *Befindlichkeit*, which W. J. Richardson translates as "already-having-found-oneself-there-ness."[4]

If technical relations were the only relations generated by an organism's interactions with

its environment, then the motive to manipulate the things within it in order to use them to achieve already-determined ends would indeed govern the supervening social fields. However, an organism's interactions with its environment generate not only technical relations to its environment, which condition what it can and cannot do, but also *ethical* relations to its environment, which condition what it will and will not do. As I mentioned earlier, technical/ethical relations cannot emerge until the organism has developed the ability to discriminate, intend, and adapt. When *Anomalocaris*, intending to eat, bit a stone, it must have been able to distinguish between a stone and a trilobite

if it were to adjust its future behavior in order to avoid the stone's resistance to being its food (see fig. 14). The simple topical relation between *Anomalocaris* and the stone (which we can describe as a "not food" relation) and the relation between *Anomalocaris* and a trilobite (a "food" relation) that resulted from the stone's physicochemical resistance and the trilobite's physicochemical consent to being bitten and organic consent to being digested generated for *Anomalocaris* the ethical perceptual relations (ethical *topoi*) which, for us (who inhabit the symbolic dimension), describe its disposition to act (its attitude) toward those objects in the future. We can describe *Anomalocaris'* disposition

Figure 14: Anomalocaris Saron

in this way because, as a consequence of our own prior interactions, the signs we use to describe it embody these topics.

As an organism's interactive processes continue, fields of objects and relations among them unify technically and ethically with respect to the organism's purposive interactions. These fields are not only technical but also "ethical" because they are already pragmatically, although

not yet consciously, evaluative. An organism's attitudes—that is, its dispositions to act toward physicochemical objects with respect to certain ethical relationships—are determined by how it distinguishes those objects, and how it distinguishes objects is determined by its experience of those objects' resistance or consent to its intentions within the developing field of technical/ethical activity. Particles suspended in a liquid do not *select* objects and *determine* actions with respect to their purposes, but even the most primitive organisms do. Thus, the environmental fields condition the technical/ethical interactions of the behavioral fields, but technical/ethical interactions organize the environmental fields. Although we are accustomed to thinking that the ability to act ethically is a characteristic of "higher-order" beings such as ourselves, in fact ethical discrimination arises early in the origins of species as well as in the development of the individual. And, as discussed earlier, an organism's ability to discriminate ethically between one technical action and another depends upon the even earlier-developed ability to perceive the resistance or consent of physicochemical things to sensorial interactions because these determine the organism's potential technical relations. An organism must be able to apperceive all these fields of objects, topics, and their forces before it can develop into a social agent.

Social Interactions

The physicochemical fields with their elements are already there for sensory organisms to interpret, and the sensorial fields are already there for social agents to interpret. The continuity that the individual organism's interactions within a technical/ethical field generates, by countering the randomness of its encounters with physicochemical objects, provides the stability—an order of expectations—essential to the development of subsequent social fields shared by groups of social agents. In the same way that tools extend our organs, social objects extend our tools and "help realize human intentions by extending and building on the existing inventory of human means" (Brey 16), but social interaction requires further capacities than the ability to discriminate, intend, adapt, and evaluate. When an organism's ability to apperceive a technical/ethical field is emerging, sensorial interaction is not yet *social* interaction because these organisms cannot yet *anticipate* the actions of others within the field, and therefore they cannot yet gesture to others to take those actions. Piranha may attack a victim *together*, but they are merely reacting together, not

coordinating. We can still describe their actions adequately in terms of stimuli and responses. But organisms cross a major behavioral threshold when they begin to *gesture*; that is, when they act not simply in reaction to another's movement but in response to the other's movement as being a phase in a sequence of movements they anticipate, and when they intend the gesture to resist or consent to—that is, to initiate, interrupt, modify, submit to, or encourage—that sequence (Mead, *Selected* 109-113; Joas 105-106). In other words, a social field emerges for an organism when, as an agent, it can distinguish between an object that is not an agent and one that is an agent or a "social actor" and when it can anticipate how that other agent, within the constraints of the environment, will adaptively respond—through resistance or consent—to the environment and to the organism's own intentional gestural actions.

Organisms that experience their environment in similar ways may come to perceive similar objects and share them gesturally, providing the basis for the formation of social groups and the generation of social fields. We have known for some time that many creatures use social gestures: crows, for instance, use a number of different vocalizations to gesture toward various environmental objects (see Chamberlain and Cornwell). For an organism to gesture to others of its social group toward some object is for it to anticipate not only how members of its group will react to its gesture but also how that object will resist or consent to its and other social actors' interactions with it. In other words, although gestural interaction is necessarily (explicitly or implicitly) social, to be social effectively, individuals must share something besides their gestural habits: they must share perceptions of the same objects. For one crow to alert another that the thing at the top of the neighboring tree is a hawk, both have to be able to perceive a hawk and not just a thingy in a tree. Having such shared objects with which to interact allows social agents to "converge" their attention upon the common causes of their responses (Davidson, *Subjective* 119). Without such objects upon which responses can converge, there can be no significant gestures. The *meaning* of a gesture is a relation between the effects the agent expects the gesturing event to produce and the effects it actually does produce, so that meaning continually emerges as the agents and the objects of their attention interact. Even without sharing a "language" or "culture" (in the sense of an established system of conventions) in advance, social agents must engage in some such process in order for each to gesture toward the same objects.

Jumping ahead a bit, we can see that this process is similar for those agents who inhabit not only social fields but also linguistic fields. For them, the process is more complicated because linguistic agents can modify the meanings of their linguistic gestures during the course of the process by gesturing toward their own signs. During the shared inferential process in which "things" transmute into "objects," linguistic agents, like nonlinguistic agents, engage in a triadic interplay with a thing to constitute a common object of concern, an interplay which Davidson calls "triangulation" (see Davidson, *Subjective* 107-122). But unlike agents that inhabit only one social field, linguistic agents (as I will discuss below) apperceive multiple fields and so anticipate the possibility that others may be relating their signs to a different field and so may not be using a sign in the same way as they are. For instance, suppose a student should respond differently than I expect when, during an advising session, she asks whether she should take some specific class and I say, "You should pass," but she replies, "Well, what about this class?" I might respond by telling her I'm not using the word "pass" as I would in a card game. Typically, linguistic triangulation involves an agent employing signs to indicate objects in the way that agent anticipates another will anticipate how the agent will use signs in that particular situation. But all participants continually revise their linguistic behavior in response both to their counterparts' responses and to the reactions of the objects with which they are engaged. During this finite recursive process, as the participants interact together with the same

Figure 15: Finite Recursion

things, linguistic agents can modify their use of signs and their interpretations of the other's use of signs until they each perceive the same things as the same objects and can each anticipate the other's actions (see fig. 15).
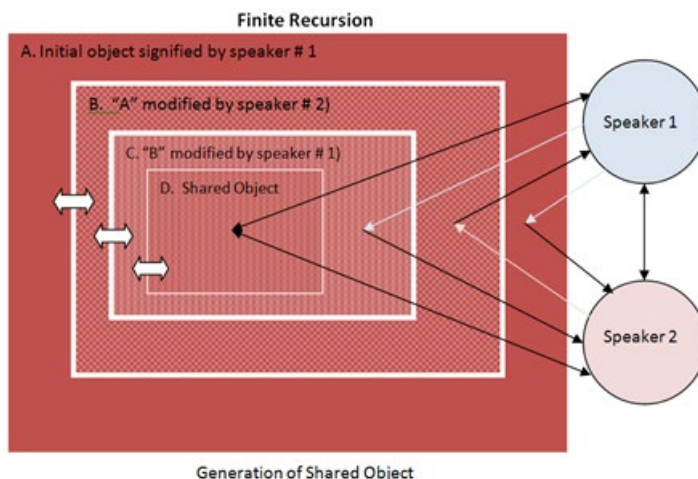
The very function of triangulation is to direct another agent's attention to those objects with which the agent is concerned, and to dispose the other agent to act toward those objects in certain ways. Yet it is also important to note that things have "perspectives" and "attitudes" themselves in

the sense that they too are disposed to act toward other things in certain ways. As we noted earlier, things may "resist" actions that result from perspectives that disregard or disrespect their own—as when I attempt to pick up an empty box and its resistance to my effort tells me it's full of books— and the ways the things resist is precisely what agents can "know" about them as actual objects of their attention: one of the things I can know about a rock is that it can crack a walnut, and I can indicate that topical relation to you by saying a rock is harder than a walnut, but you can resist and say, "That rock is soapstone and can't crack a walnut," inducing me to search the field for another rock. Accordingly, as Bruno Latour's "actor-network-theory" suggests, both agents *and* objects act and interact—that is, make differences to the webs or "networks" (I would say "fields") they make up—and they are, in a sense, in dialogue with one another (Latour, *Reassembling* 53). Whether a rock that in certain conditions resists an agent's intentions to squeeze it, lift it, fit it within a wall, polish it, etc. or someone's use of a spoken word that in certain conditions others may resist, no things, including the marks and noises which symbolic agents use as signs, are mere ideations that bend fully to our inclinations. The same goes for those things we call "people." All we can know of things, signs, or people is how they resist or consent to our intentions toward them.

The triangulation process I described above details what is known in sociological disciplines as "social action," but most sociologists are concerned only with human social groups and assume that social actions depend upon symbolic ability. "Symbolic interactionism" attempts to subvert this assumption. Herbert Blumer, one of the theory's earliest proponents, says that symbolic interactionism "rests in the last analysis on three simple premises" (2). His first premise is "that human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them" (2). Because action is intentional motion—that is, purposeful and goal-directed action (although not necessarily consciously so)—*his second premise* is that the "meaning" of anything toward which we act arises "in the process of interaction between people"; that is, it "grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing" (4). The meaning of something is not fully intrinsic to the thing: the meaning is not *entirely* somehow "already there" waiting for us to discover it. At the same time, however, "meaning" not a merely subjective quality imposed upon the thing, an expression of the perceiver's psyche or a "construction" of a language. Meanings are social products, "creations that are formed in and through the defining activities of people as they

interact" with one another and with things (Blumer 5). This does not imply, however, that meanings

once formed are ever afterwards simply applied to similar cases. Accordingly, Blumer's third premise is that "these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (2). Blumer does not explain this process in detail, as Davidson's triangulation theory does, yet for Blumer as for Davidson meaning is continually generated and revised such that "interpretation should not be

Figure 16: The General Social Interaction Cycle

regarded as a mere automatic application of established meanings but as a formative process in which meanings are used and revised as instruments for the guidance and formation of action" (5; see fig. 16).

Blumer's three premises support a doctrine that completely inverts the primary assumptions of modernist, post-Kantian thought. According to this interactionist doctrine, "It is the social process in group life that creates and upholds the rules, not the rules that create and uphold group life" (Blumer 19). As Norman K. Denzin has said in characterizing social interactionists in general, "they believe that 'society' is an abstract term which refers to something that sociologists have invented in order to have a subject matter" (22). We can say the same holds true for linguists and their invention of "language" understood as an abstract entity and for anthropologists and their invention of "culture." As Donald Davidson has argued, however, "there is no such thing as a language apart from the sounds and marks people make, and the habits and expectations that go with them" (Davidson, *Truth* 131). The principle that "process generates structure" holds for all the issues that the discipline of rhetoric usually studies as well. This does not mean, however, that "rules" are not necessary to complex symbolic interaction. Although sharing conventions and genres—sharing symbolic fields—is not a sufficient condition of successful interaction, sharing

them provides symbolic agents with (to borrow Davidson's terminology) "prior theories," that is, initial assumptions or structured expectations of how other agents will interpret their utterances in a particular situation.

Much as agents revise the prior theories of the symbolic field during the finite, recursive inferential process Davidson describes, agents revise prior theories of the social field a symbolic field supervenes. Anthony Giddens describes these prior theories as social "structures." In his attempt to avoid the tendency of conventionalist theories to characterize the relationship between what Davidson calls the "mental" and the "physical" as a dualism, Giddens introduces the notion of (mental) "rules" that structure (physical) "resources." For Giddens, these ruling structures are not "underlying codes" that "have to be inferred from surface manifestation" (16); rather, they are "structural principles" or "rules of transformation" that "make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them 'systemic' form" (17). However, Giddens insists structure is produced in "practice" and used recursively to reproduce that practice (see the discussion of genres below) so that "structure exists, as time-space presence, only in its instantiations in such practices and as memory traces orienting the conduct of knowledgeable human agents" (17). Thus, according to Giddens, structures and practices "are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality" such that "the structural properties of social systems [Giddens' equivalent to what I have been calling 'social fields'] are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize" (25).

Giddens' use of the term "medium" here is unfortunate. It is one of the "serious gaps and deficiencies" William H. Sewell, Jr., refers to in his critique of Giddens, which calls attention to his heavy reliance on the Saussurian distinction between *langue* and *parole* (6). According to Sewell, Giddens attempts to distinguish his theory from French structuralism "by insisting that [social] structures include not only rules but also resources" (6). Sewell believes that, because Giddens has defined structure as both rules (Sewell prefers the term "schemas") and resources (what I call the established elements of the environmental fields), and has argued that structure is "virtual" and not actual, "Giddens' notion of structure turns out to be self-contradictory" (10): "Schemas—mental structures—become the only form-giving entity, and agents become agents of these mental structures, actors who can only recite preexisting scripts. To define structures in this

way threatens, in short, to deny their duality and, consequently, to annihilate the central premise of Giddens' theory" (12). According to Sewell, then, "If the duality of structure is to be saved … we must take the other alternative and conceive of structures themselves as having (appropriately) a *dual* character. Structures, then, should be defined as composed simultaneously of schemas, which are virtual, and of resources, which are actual" (12-13). If, as Sewell claims, "structures are dual in this sense, then it must be true that schemas are the effects of resources, just as resources are the effects of schemas" (13).

Blumer's, Giddens', and Sewell's projects to eliminate dualities of rules and group life, structure and practice, or schemas and resources and replace them with "dualisms" are admirable alternatives to the view of integrative levels, which, like these theories, explains why certain sets of objects of our attention—such as linguistic signs—and other sets—such as social objects—are organized and function very differently, yet affect one another in coherent ways. Fligstein, too, has a similar project, as he argues that the "preexisting rules of interaction and resource distributions" that "operate as sources of power"—or motivational forces—"both enable and constrain social actors" ("Social" 107).

Blumer, Giddens, and Sewell are each focused on human interaction and presuppose linguistic ability. Certainly, once social agents begin to inhabit linguistic fields, linguistic action can and does generate additional field elements and impose symbolically generated rules upon actors' interactions in the environmental and behavioral dimensions. Sociologists call this bridge between the linguistic and the social fields "institutions," linguistically constituted structures which supervene and organize existing social fields. This institutionalization necessitates what Giddens has called the "double hermeneutic" governing the social sciences:

> There are no universal laws in the social sciences, and there will not be any—not, first and foremost, because methods of empirical testing and validation are somehow inadequate but because … the causal conditions involved in generalizations about human social conduct are inherently unstable in respect of the very knowledge (or beliefs) that actors have about the circumstances of their own action…. The point is that reflection on social processes (theories, and observations about them) continually enter into, become disentangled with and re-enter the universe of events that they describe [*sic*]. No such phenomenon exists in

the world of inanimate nature. (xxxii-xxxiii)

In other words, institutionalization, like object formation, is a recursive process. I have tried to show that this process is the process of rhetorical integration, which takes place between every field level in every dimension except for the physicochemical level ("the world of inanimate nature"). As Fligstein defines it with respect to the behavioral dimension, "Institutionalization is the process by which rules move from abstraction to being constitutive of repeated patterns of interaction in fields" (Fligstein 108; see also Jepperson 144-145). Every human engages in numerous symbolically constituted institutions of various types.

Fligstein points out that for years now, the social sciences have been offering explanations for "how social institutions, defined as rules that produce social interaction, come into existence, remain stable, and are transformed ("Social" 106; see Meyer and Rowan 1977; Scott and Meyer; Shepsle; March and Olsen; Scott). However, none of these sciences have addressed how these institutions remain constrained by the preexisting orders constituted by environmental interaction; rather, they take the symbolic dimension as sufficient to explain social action. If it is the case, however, that institutions and other higher social orders are constrained by environmental fields (that is to say, if during social interaction environmental resistance continually forces agents to revise their "prior theories" of the environmental order), one would expect these environmental fields to limit the number of kinds of social relations available to organisms who share similar environmental and technical/ethical capabilities and experience (i.e., the social relations available to organisms of the same species). And if that is the case, then there must be another integrative level between the social and the institutional.

Arguing that there are, in fact, a limited number of "models" for human social relations, Alan Page Fiske has developed a theory which "postulates that people in all cultures use just four relational models to generate most kinds of social interaction, evaluation, and affect," and that people "construct complex and varied social forms using combinations of these models implemented according to diverse cultural rules" (Fiske 689).

According to Fiske, all of the "domains and aspects of social relations may be organized by combinations of just four elementary models (*i.e.* schemata, rules, or grammars): communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching, and market pricing" (690). That is, for humans,

there are only four basic types of institutions and other social fields. In a social field modeled on communal sharing, "relationships are based on a conception of some bounded group of people as equivalent and undifferentiated" in which "the members of a group or dyad treat each other as all the same, focusing on commonalities and disregarding distinct individual identities" (691). In a social field modeled on authority ranking, "relationships are based on a model of asymmetry among people who are linearly ordered along some hierarchical social dimension" (691). In a social field modeled on equality matching, "relationships … are based upon … even balance and one-for-one correspondence." Here, "The idea is that each person is entitled to the same amount as each other person in the relationship, and that the direction and magnitude of an imbalance are meaningful" (691). In a social field modeled on market pricing, "relationships are based on a model of proportionality in social relationships." Here, people "usually reduce all the relevant features and components under consideration to a single value or utility metric that allows the comparison of many qualitatively and quantitatively diverse factors" (692).

Finally, in addition to the relationships of the four types of social fields, there are asocial or "null" relationships in which the "interactions involve little or no coordination with reference to a shared model of what the interaction is and ought to be" (708). As Fiske notes, people "rarely use any one of these models alone; they construct personal relationships, roles, groups, institutions, and societies by putting together two or more models, using them in different phases of an interaction or at different, hierarchically nested levels" (693). However, the "overall structure of the interaction can frequently be described in terms of one predominant model" (693), and "[e]ach model generates a social structure that is characterized by a distinct set of relations and operations, whatever the domain" (711). Fiske argues that "these same structures emerge in all the major domains of social life because people everywhere have just four fundamental models for relating to other people. People are not using distinct, unrelated schemata for making decisions and making contributions" (710). Of course, "each of the four universal models can be realized only in some culture-specific manner," and the "cultural rules for the application of the elementary models often permit people to adopt different models on different occasions or to realize different potential in any social situation" (713).

Fiske goes further to apply the concept of integrative levels to these four models of social

relations, arguing that each "structure builds on the relations and operations that are meaningful in the previous structures, and incorporates additional ones as well" (716). Because of this, "Awareness of the four modes of relationship and motivation to impose the models on others will emerge spontaneously, in a fixed ontogenetic order" (717)—communal sharing, then authority relations, then equality matching, then market pricing. Both communal sharing and authority ranking "are widely observable in other mammalian genera and vertebrate families" (716), but equality matching and market sharing are specific to humans. Fiske doesn't offer an explanation for why, but clearly it is because the latter two require symbolic ability.

As we have seen, in their initial stages of development, social fields are not yet complicated by being integrated through symbolic rules, and this observation has led many to claim that there is a clean break between what I've been calling the behavioral and symbolic dimensions, sometimes concluding that language functions in two distinct ways. For instance, in his two-field theory of language, Karl Bühler referred to these initial stages as the emergence of the "deictic" field (see fig. 17) because this field functions by means of "perceptual pointing and presenting" (gesturing) by one agent to another, actions dependent for their interpretation on the presence of the actual situation in which they occur;
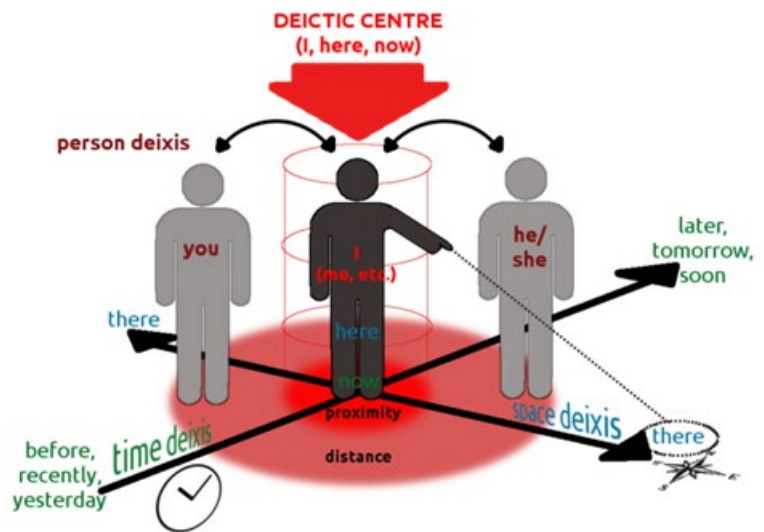
Figure 17: Deixis

but Bühler distinguished the deictic field only from the symbolic field, which, he says, functions through "abstraction and the conceptual grasp of the world" (Bühler v, qtd. in Innis 55). According to Holger Diessel's description of Bühler's distinction,

> The two fields determine the meaning (or interpretation) of linguistic expressions: the meaning of deictic expressions is determined by a reference frame for pointing [i.e., the environmental field], and the meaning of symbolic expressions is determined by their relationship to other linguistic items in the language user's linguistic knowledge and/or

language use (i.e. co-occurring lexemes). (40)

Bühler's distinction reflects the notion, commonly held at least since Aristotle, that humans can interact with the world in a qualitatively different way from nonhumans, although humans can also interact in an "animal-like" manner. I would argue, however, that once we consider the way that fields are involved in deictic and linguistic interactions, the distinction appears not nearly so sharp: we can see that Bühler's distinction leaves out an entire, very significant, integrative level. By his account, deictic interactions can take place only when two or more agents interact within the same field ("the actual situation in which they occur"), while only through language can we employ the abstract generalities required to interact with fields other than the one we currently inhabit. Bühler does not account for the possibility that some other species may also interact as agents with other organisms who may be acting as agents within a different field altogether, and may do so without the benefit of language. As we will see below, because of our symbolic ability, we humans are able to integrate and so coordinate multiple social fields to a greater degree than members of other species, but that indicates only a difference in complexity afforded by language, one that is nevertheless based upon a perceptual ability many other species share with us. This ability, the ability to interact intentionally with respect to more than one field, is prelinguistic, and it makes possible the development of an integrative level of fields that develops from the social levels and makes the "institutional" levels that Fligstein and Fiske describe possible. The organization of the fields within this new level accounts for the limited number of "models" for human social relations Fiske describes. This level has been neglected by all social theory. It is the "discursive" level, the "missing link" in contemporary social theory, and it is the foundation of the symbolic dimension.

Quiz question 4: **Do we have social, and so ethical, relationships with nonhuman creatures and entities, and if so, does the world impose ethical obligations upon us toward them through our experience of its ambience?**

Answer: **Yes.**

Why? We owe not only our continued existence but also, as we shall see below, our

sense of self to the behavioral and environmental fields from which we emerged—and to the agents, objects, forces, and relations which comprise them. So yes, we are, and to the extent that we are attuned to them, feel just as deeply obligated to the rocks, the rivers, the soil, the raccoons, and the mosquitos with which we interact as we are to our parents, countries, and religions within the symbolic fields. As we consider motives and preferences in the section on temporality, we should bear that in mind.

CHAPTER 3

THE SYMBOLIC DIMENSION

Quiz question 5 (answer at the end of this section): **Once a creature—say, you—inhabits the symbolic dimension, can it ever intentionally leave it to dwell only in the behavioral or even the environmental dimension? As the title of one reality TV show puts it, can you "Be the Creature"?**

Just as sensorial fields of interaction interpret physicochemical fields and behavioral fields interpret sensorial fields, symbolic fields interpret behavioral fields. But that means neither that language confers meaning upon otherwise meaningless things nor that language associates a symbol with a previously established meaning. Neither thesis in this dichotomy can adequately characterize human symbolic interaction or explain the peculiarly human use of signs because neither acknowledges the embodiment, supervenience, and recursivity we have found to govern every integrative level. The inadequacy of this dichotomy comes into view, for instance, when we consider that dogs and many other animals which have no "language" can apparently "understand" a fairly large number of words and respond to them as we expect in certain situations, although they sometimes respond to those same words in the same way in different, inappropriate situations. My corgi, for instance, upon hearing the word "go," even in the wrong situations, often heads excitedly to the front door. Animals like my corgi seem to apperceive the elements of only one social field, although the number and sorts of agents, objects, and topics they can discern within it is very large. That observation seems to be the grounds for some dog-training practices, like those of Cesar Milan, who claims that owners must establish themselves as the "alpha dog" or pack leader to deal successfully with their pets, even if the owner needs to be aggressive toward the dog, "a wolf by any other name" (Derr). But, as we will see, the claim that wolves and dogs can perceive only one social field is probably a false inference.

Discursive Interactions

Generally, the more complex the organism's biological structure, the more elements it can discern within its field of social interaction. Wolves, for instance, relate to pack members differently from other members of their species, to males differently from females, and to juveniles differently from adults, and they distinguish and anticipate several different behavioral sequences from each sort. They also distinguish individuals of their species from those of

prey species and other species that are not prey, and they relate to each accordingly; that is, according to how each resists or consents to its own actions. Nevertheless, we can explain all this complexity fairly adequately using concepts such as "instinct," habit," and the "stimulus and response" of classical conditioning theory. I argue, however, that organisms enter a whole new dimension of interaction once they can not only perceive a social field and act in response to changes of agents, objects, and relations within that field, but also perceive other social fields not their own and act in response to and in anticipation of the interactions of agents inhabiting those other fields. This is interaction that immediately supervenes the social fields and integrates them, and such interaction establishes the discursive fields. Integrative rhetoric reveals that discursive actions in the first instance are not constructed by language; they are the precondition for developing language.

Like such "higher order" animals as primates, wolves seem to interact *strategically*—a phenomenon usually associated with cognitive ability. But I argue that strategic ability is founded upon a new perceptual ability, one which allows wolves to perceive *more than one* social field at a time. Because of this ability, they can interact not only socially but also, at least at times, *discursively*— within that integrative level of interaction between the social and the linguistic that most previous scholarship has neglected.

The question of whether wolves hunt strategically is currently unresolved, but L. David Mech raises an important issue when describing some observations of wolves' hunting
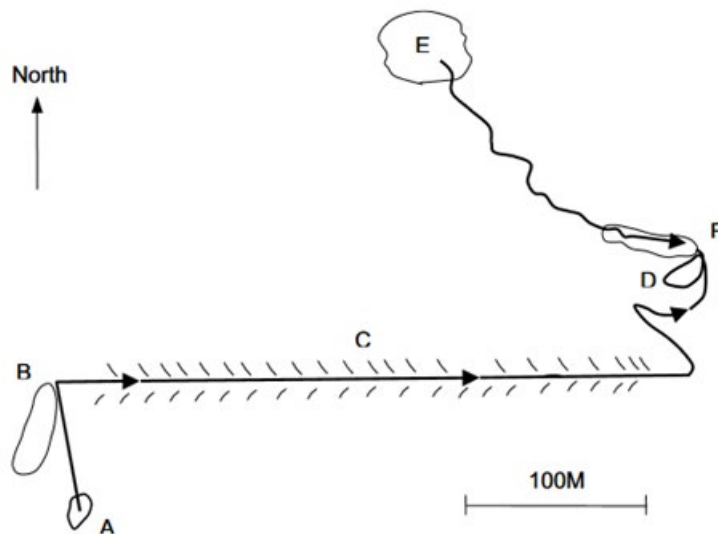
FIG. 2. Diagram of 6 July 2006 hunt of muskoxen by two arctic wolves on Ellesmere Island. Bold arrows represent the paths and direction of the two wolves and the muskoxen, and short diagonal marks indicate the low valley through which the wolves traveled. A – hill from which wolves appeared to see muskoxen at 1629 hours; B – wolf den; C – valley down which two wolves began traveling at 2025 hours; D – point where wolves waited from 2034 to 2342 hours; E – muskox herd; F – meadow to which muskoxen traveled and where wolves confronted them.

Figure 18: Mech's Diagram of Wolves Lying in Wait

behavior (see fig. 18):

> This waiting-in-ambush behavior [wolves waiting in hiding in a different direction from the one in which their prey was currently heading] implies that the wolves expected the muskoxen to become available eventually and that they understood that waiting in hiding would improve their chances of getting nearer to the muskoxen. It is even possible that the wolves chose a hiding place that was near a meadow they expected the muskoxen to visit…. When the wolves first started toward the herd, I could not have predicted which direction the herd would move. There was an adult muskox some 400 m southeast of the herd ... and possibly this animal provided the clue for the wolves to position themselves correctly. If so, that strategy also implied foresight, understanding, and planning. If they did not take their cue from the single adult, perhaps the wolves associated the meadow with the type of terrain muskoxen choose for their travel routes, also demonstrating the same mental processes.
>
> In any case, the strategy worked. After a three-hour wait, the muskox herd traveled to within 100 m of the hidden wolves, and the wolves charged them. (Mech 148)

This and similar studies (see Fox; Packard) conclude that wolves exhibit "foresight, understanding, and planning" (Mech 148).[5] However, we need not further conclude that foresight, understanding, and planning indicate cognitive ability—an ability, I contend, that comes only with linguistic ability. But perhaps wolves can interact discursively, and the existence of discursive fields may provide the basis for an explanation of why wolves can act strategically.

Many creatures can exhibit foresight, understanding, and planning within a single social field. If the wolves had been acting solely within the pack's own social field, each wolf would have been able to act cooperatively and anticipate how the other wolves would respond to its own actions in pursuit of the prey according to some habitual sequence of pack action—such as see prey, chase prey, kill prey, eat prey—and do so with respect to its role and each other wolf's role in that social activity. This is primitive social interaction. "Sociality," as Mead has defined it, "is the capacity of being several things at once" (*Present* 75). That is to say, it is the capacity to act with respect to *more than one position* in a field simultaneously, to anticipate how one agent within a group will respond to another's actions. However, being in *more than one field* at once, I contend,

requires interaction in not only a social but also a "discursive" field.[6]

The "discursive fields" supervene the primary behavioral fields—the technical/ethical and social fields which themselves supervene environmental fields—and an agent's ability to apperceive certain discursive fields is necessary to its ability to develop certain symbolic fields. Let's look at our wolf example again. Wolves hunt in fields of such objects as grass, trees, hills, rocks, creatures, and others, which they perceive in such topical relations as shape, distance, odor, height, and density—relations organized in technical/ethical fields, fields in which the wolves distinguish objects they might perceive as cover or exposure, prey or competitor, escape or attack routes, on so on. The wolves' social field organizes their actions within these fields, and wolves clearly do hunt with respect to it and to one another's social positions within it—such as the alpha male and alpha female, betas, subordinates, omegas, and the young—so they are indeed social creatures. But are they yet "discursive" creatures? Quite possibly. Wolves are apparently emerging into a level of interaction between the social and the symbolic. In the above example, for the wolves to have behaved as they did, at least one of the wolves had to have anticipated not only how the other wolves would behave in response to its actions, but also how the muskoxen would behave socially in response to *their* environment *before* becoming aware of the wolves. This means the wolves (or at least the pack leader) had to have had a sense of the elements comprising the environmental, technical/ethical, and social constraints of the muskoxen's grazing field—the agents, objects, forces, and topics motivating them. Because both wolves and muskoxen are mammals, they have similar organs, although with somewhat different sensory ranges, and so the muskoxen's grazing field is comprised of many of the same "things" as the wolves' hunting field— both can perceive what we would call the grass, trees, hills, rocks, and other objects in our field of observation. Yet the wolves and muskoxen inhabit very different technical and ethical fields, so that they perceive the same things as *actually* different *objects*, for each interacts with these same things for very different purposes (e.g., grass is food for the muskoxen, but not for the wolves), and this underlies their very different social fields, which organize those different uses. Thus, for the wolves to have anticipated where the muskoxen would move next, and to have strategically positioned themselves accordingly, they must have been able to perceive, at least to the extent necessary for their own purposes, not only their own social field but also the muskoxen's social

field in order to coordinate their own actions with those of their prey.

But then the question arises as to how it could be possible for the wolves to perceive the muskoxen's grazing field if they had never participated in the same group activities as the muskoxen and triangulated shared objects of attention gesturally as the muskoxen had, and thus had never generated the same shared objects of perception? It may be possible if the wolves engaged in a perceptual process similar to what Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner describe as the "blending" process of perceptual integration necessary to the production of metaphor. In this process, given the perception of two (in this case social) spaces, an agent will create a "generic space" that "contains what the inputs have in common" by "cross-space mapping" two (or more) "input spaces" or different perceptual scenarios (Fauconnier and Turner 41), noting the relationships within each space and then connecting the relations within one to those with which they correspond in the other. In this case, perhaps the muskoxen's eating grass could have been linked to the wolves' eating meat; their search for grass by grazing could have been linked to the wolves' search for meat by stalking and so on. Finally, the agent will create a fourth perceptual space, the "blend," by "projecting" the two scenarios onto a single scenario, "fusing" the matching elements. The hybrid space produced would be an "emergent structure that is not in the inputs" (42). Within this blended space, the wolves would not perceive the muskoxen's interactions the way the muskoxen do, but metaphorically, so to speak, in relations of similarity to their own interactions (see fig. 19). In other words, for the wolves to have anticipated where the muskoxen would move next, they must have been able perceptually to metaphorically "blend" the muskoxen's grazing field with their own hunting field into a single field.
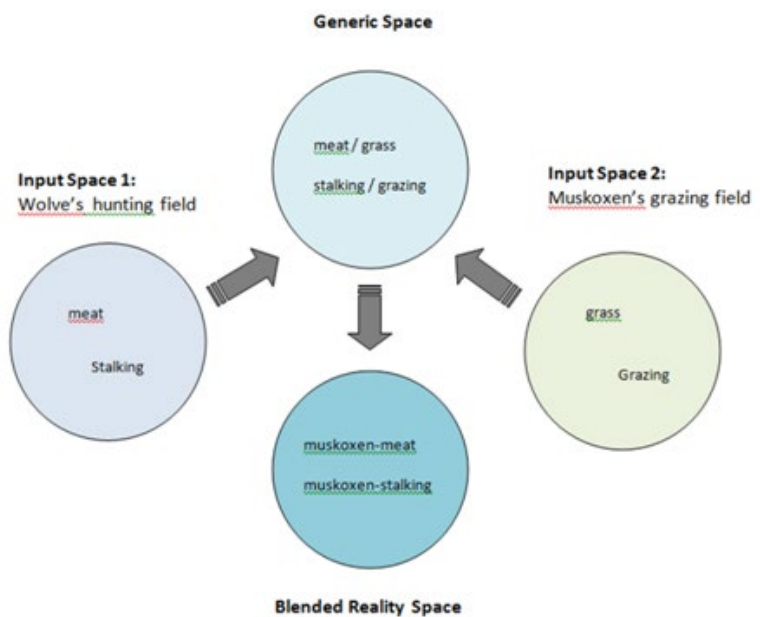

Figure 19: Discursive Field-Mapping

The coordination of action between two fields is no longer merely social interaction; it is now

discursive social interaction.

Genric Interactions

"Discourse," etymologically, is from the Latin *discursus,* signifying "running to and fro," and it refers directly to the concept of passing from one place to another. "Topic," in turn, is from the Greek "*topos*," signifying "a place or site." Here I use the term "discursive" to describe interactions, such as the wolves' interaction with the muskoxen, that require the individuals of a social group to "shift" their attention between their own social field and its topology and another (Yarbrough, "Getting It"), modifying their typical sequences of action within their own field in response to and in anticipation of the typical sequences of action performed by agents inhabiting another specific social field, one composed of objects and actions discursively linked to objects and actions in their own field. Organisms recognize typical sequences or patterns of action insofar as they are recurrent, and thus the discursive fields are best characterized as genric—because when discursive fields are engaged linguistically, we refer to them as *genres.* As Carolyn Miller has defined it, a genre is "a system of actions and interaction that have specific social locations and functions as well as repeated value or functions" ("Rhetorical" 70). In the same way, to the wolves, the muskoxen's patterns of grazing behavior are genric, but of a specifically different genre than, say, caribou's patterns of flight behavior.

In the symbolic dimension, linguistic interactions embody the objects and elements of specific discursive fields (genres), just as discursive (genric) interactions embody the elements of specific social fields. Miller implicitly restricts the concept to human phenomena, saying that genres are "middle-level phenomena," "located *between* … the micro-level of natural-language processing" and the "macro-levels of 'culture' and 'human nature,' … connected to levels above and below by a semiotic system of constitutive and regulative rules" (68). That is true for linguistic creatures, but there is no reason to so restrict the concept, and if my analysis of the wolves' behavior is correct, it is likely that some animals, like wolves, exhibit discursive/genric behavior yet do not exhibit linguistic behavior. But, if the theory of integrative levels is correct, no animal can exhibit linguistic behavior whose linguistic fields have not emerged from and embodied discursive behavior.

Miller explains how genres work in terms of Anthony Giddens' "structuration theory" by

implicitly answering Sewell's call to "conceive of structures themselves as having (appropriately) a dual character" (12). According to Miller, genres exist at a level between Giddens' social structures and linguistic structures. Genres, then, roughly correspond to what Giddens and Fligstein call "institutions," and Miller argues that genres have what Giddens' calls the duality of structure (Miller, "Rhetorical" 70; see Giddens 25). That is to say, for a structure to recur is also for it to reproduce that structure, and that means that, in order for it to make sense, an initial structure at one level must reproduce a structure at a lower level. I argue that genres are a characteristic of discourse fields, since they describe recurrences of similar social interactions among similar agents, objects, and forces, and this is why they can serve as transitional links between the linguistic and the social fields. Moreover, linguistic fields are also linked to the fields of the environmental dimension through their supervenience upon discursive/genric fields because social fields have reproduced the structures of environmental fields. As Miller says, genres "provide reproducible speaker and addressee roles, social typifications of recurrent social needs or exigences, topical structures (or 'moves' and 'steps'), and ways of indexing an event to material conditions, turning them into constraints or resources" (Miller, "Rhetorical" 71). We therefore cannot appropriately respond to a symbolic action in a linguistic field (e.g., with a statement) without understanding the discursive field (the genre) it embodies. And, as Miller puts it: "We cannot fully understand genres without further understanding the system of commonality of which they are a constituent" ("Rhetorical" 72). To take this all the way down, we cannot understand a discursive/genric field without understanding the social fields it embodies; we cannot understand those social fields without understanding the technical/ethical fields they embody; and we cannot understand those technical/ethical fields without understanding the sensorial and physicochemical fields they embody. In other words, that "commonality" to which Miller refers can be understood as the previously developed shared environmental and behavioral integrative levels upon which discursive interaction depends.

Some recent scholarship has attempted to explain how multimodal communication works by referring to such levels. For instance, Joddy Murray has argued that while discursive communications appear to be linear, multimodal texts do not: "Whereas discursive texts rely on sequence, one utterance elaborating on the previous utterance, non-discursive texts rely on no specific ordering" (178). He goes on to argue, "In fact, it is through image that meaning

(discursive or not) is assembled and made available through our senses: our world is experienced in multimodal ways" (57), and he further argues that these underlying levels of nondiscursive meaning "provide depth, texture, complexity, nuance, even contradiction" (178)—or what I have been calling ambience—to discursive interaction. Thus, while the discursive levels of interaction depend upon the behavioral and environmental ones, the linguistic levels of interaction depend upon the discursive ones, specifically those we call genres.

Linguistic Interactions

Discursive fields develop into linguistic fields when agents begin to relate elements of one social field to elements in another by means of linguistic signs; that is, signs that signify concepts that are systematically related to one another by other signs. Through their habitation in the environmental and behavioral dimensions of ambience, creatures develop the abilities necessary to emerge from them into the symbolic dimension. As we have seen, creatures inhabiting an organic/sensorial field can discriminate, intend, adapt, and evaluate, and those inhabiting a social field have these abilities plus the ability to anticipate, gesture, and act communally. But those that inhabit a discursive field have not only all these abilities but also the ability to perceive *stereotopically*. With this ability to perceive and coordinate activities in two or more fields at once, they can then associate recurrent gestural objects with recurrent environmental and social objects, and coordinate communal actions strategically. All this prepares creatures to inhabit a linguistic field in which they can attend to gestures as objects, relate them to one another as signs, signify relations between signs to create concepts, and rationally relate concepts to other creatures inhabiting the same linguistic field. The following illustrates how this works.

Modifying our previous example to compare two hypothetical scenes, let's say that in one scene a pack of wolves and in another parallel scene a group of humans were hunting muskoxen; and let's say one of the wolves and one of the humans, apperceiving the muskoxen's current field of activity and anticipating their next move (see Johansson; Poulter), inferred that in search of grass the muskoxen would likely alter their course to turn toward the nearby meadow. Because both wolf and human can inhabit two social fields within a discursive field, both can anticipate the muskoxen's movements within their grazing field and make deictic gestures within their hunting

field that would indicate to their respective groups, "Follow me." The major difference between the two is that (as far as we know) only the human can use linguistic signs to link two objects, one within the humans' hunting field and one within the muskoxen's grazing field, *and* convey *why* his or her group should "follow me." The humans can do this because, unlike the wolves, they inhabit a shared linguistic field. "Language" is that field that supervenes all the previous ones and provides an entirely new set of objects (signs) and *topoi* (grammar, etc.) that enable symbol-using agents to make those conceptual topical linkages (for instance, of "grass" to "food") necessary for making reasons known to others, and so convey motives for action. Wolves can act based upon relations they immediately perceive among objects they can deictically gesture toward—relations between interactions in their own social field and those occurring in another—but they cannot explain their motives or actions. That requires language.

Language is required to generate reasons because its signs can indicate not just particular objects (things), but also generic objects (concepts): they can indicate not just *this* grass in *this* meadow the groups can see, but grass in general. One wolf cannot indicate to another *why* they should change their position to intercept the muskoxen because although the grass in the meadow may well be an object in the wolves' hunting field, within their field grass is not a food object as it is for the muskoxen. However, humans have an additional perceptual ability: they can attend to an additional kind of recurrence. For them, sounds (for instance) can take on a generic referential character after being repetitively associated with similar objects in similar discursive situations.[7] Such sounds become words when they come to reference the discursive field (which encompasses both the humans' hunting field and the muskoxen's grazing field) as such and not merely particular objects in a particular field. At that point, words become perceived as linguistic objects (signs). Signs have general meaning, but they emerge from particular interactions having particular purposes. As V. N. Vološinov once noted, "the form of the sign is conditioned above all by the social organization of the participants involved and also by the immediate conditions of their interaction" (21). But once sounds are perceived as signs, they can become objects of attention in their own right and transferable from one recurrent, generic situation to another. Then the signs themselves can interact with one another to form a field of their own, or a "language." Once they do so, signs can indicate not only the elements of their own field of immediate technical/ethical interaction

(with other signs), but also the elements of other fields, and relate those in one field to those in another. This suggests that the coordination of interactions among multiple fields is the essential function of language. This further suggests that language, to be language, must be based upon perceptual metaphor, like that produced by Fauconnier and Turner's "blending" process, and must be capable of producing linguistic metaphor—"metaphor" defined as a signification which identifies a topical relationship of an object inhabiting one field with a topical relationship of a different object in a different field to produce a sign for a conceptual object which does not yet have a sign (see fig. 20). Concepts are born, so to speak, as signs because signs are necessarily metaphorically generated for a reason. Gunther Kress describes the process. In the construction of metaphor, he says,

Figure 20: Emerging Linguistic Field

> An aspect of the object or event to be represented by being drawn into the metaphoric relation is selected by the speaker or writer as having, at that point and in relation to the speaker/writer's purposes, criteria characteristics in respect to the object to be represented; that is it becomes the signified. This criteria aspect simultaneously specifies the characteristics which will make an apt signifier…. All signs are formed in this metaphoric process. All signs are metaphors. ("Against" 174)

Signs, then, are never constituted arbitrarily, but emerge in order to further the purposes of some interaction within some field.

According to Umberto Eco and Christopher Paci, "The chronicle of the discussion on metaphors is the chronicle of a series of variations on a few tautologies, perhaps on a single one: 'A metaphor is that artifice which permits one to speak metaphorically'" (Eco and Paci 218). Accordingly, they say,
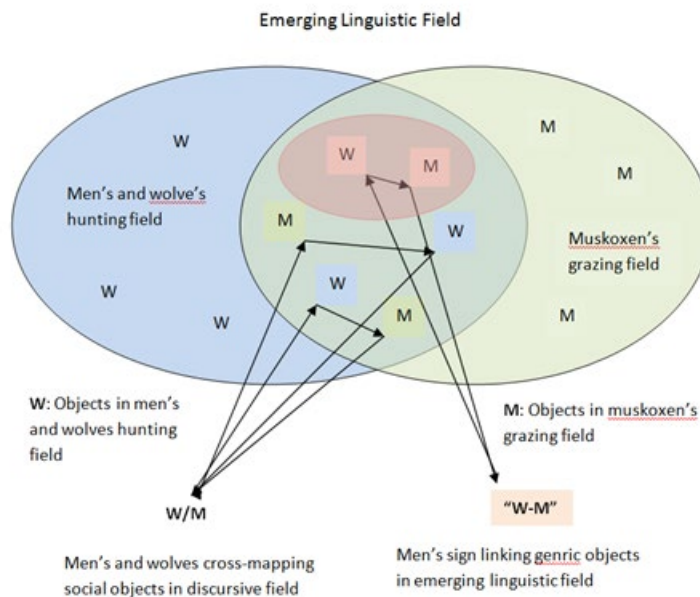
> Every discourse on metaphor originates in a radical choice: either (a) language is by nature, and originally, metaphorical, and the mechanism of metaphor establishes linguistic activity, every rule or convention arising thereafter in order to discipline, reduce (and impoverish) the metaphorization potential that defines man as a symbolic animal; or (b) language (and every other semiotic system) is a rule-governed mechanism, a predictive machine that says which phrases can be generated and which not, and which from those able to be generated or "good" or "correct," or endowed with sense; a machine with regard to which metaphor constitutes a breakdown, a malfunction, an unaccountable outcome, but at the same time the drive toward linguistic renewal. (218)

Yet the existence of discursive/genric fields tells us that we do not really find ourselves in a dilemma in which there is either a linguistic field that gives meaning to an otherwise meaningless reality or an already meaningful reality that lends its meanings to otherwise meaningless symbols. As with the relation between other integrative levels, the integrative relationship between "higher" and "lower" fields is recursive; in Giddens' terms, the relationship is not a dualism, but a duality.

Integrative rhetoric suggests that using metaphor linguistically requires not only the discursive ability to integrate perceptually one social field (in our example, the humans' hunting field) and its elements with a second social field (the muskoxen's grazing field), but also to integrate them genrically, and so conceptually. By using a sign (typically a word) within a supervening linguistic field, the humans can indicate one kind of object in the primary social field (let's say "meat") and fuse it metaphorically with a different object in the second social field—an unnamed social object (that is, one the humans do not yet habitually associated with some sign, such as "forage"), but one that can be understood in terms of certain relations (topics) that define the sign for "meat," the known object in their primary social field. In the present scenario, whatever sign the humans might use to indicate meat (for the wolves, a food object in their social field) they might also use metaphorically to indicate forage (for the muskoxen, a food object in their social field), such as by saying "muskoxen meat" to indicate "forage," "food" for "muskoxen." Thus, although a wolf may be able to deictically indicate to other wolves to "follow me" to the meadow, a human can also say "muskoxen meat" to convey *why* the others should follow him to the meadow. In other words, the defining characteristic of the linguistic fields within the symbolic dimension is

that they give those who inhabit them the ability to integrate discursive fields and their elements not only purposefully and genrically but also conceptually. Thus, for the humans, the meaning of the event—unlike its meaning for wolves and muskoxen—is distinguished by its inclusion of a reason, a reason generated by linguistic metaphors that recursively integrate the perceptual metaphors generated within the discursive field. Because the discursive fields are so embodied by the linguistic field, discourse is freed from the immediate situation required by deictic gestures, thus allowing linguistic significations about situations that are not immediately present so that later, perhaps as they sit by their evening fire, the humans can recount the day's hunt.

"Languages," then, from the perspective of integrative rhetoric, are not abstract entities, not closed "systems" that mediate between ourselves and our world, but fields like any others. They supervene and depend directly upon discursive fields, fields that integrate behavioral and environmental fields with one another, but unlike discursive fields, linguistic fields consist of objects (signs), agents, and topics (grammatical relationships) that can indicate why and how the elements of other fields relate and communicate those reasons to others who share the field. Many of linguistics' various disciplines attempt to describe linguistic elements in abstraction from the ambience in which they actually interact. However, like the other fields, linguistic fields develop over time and persist through habit and recurrence, and like other fields, they supervene "lower" fields.

Robert E. Innis, drawing upon the work of cognate language theorists Karl Bühler, Alan Gardiner, and Philipp Wegener as well as the American pragmatists John Dewey and George Herbert Mead, has explored "the problem of the genesis and structure of meaning" (7). He argues, "Language as meaning-giving … cannot be studied apart from the total perceptual, behavioral, and social situations and fields in which it is found." These "fields and 'situations,'" he says, "frame language just as much as language frames them" (7). Although integrative rhetoric is sympathetic to this view, we can now see that language is not something that can be "found" in fields and does not "frame" them. Innis comes closer to the integrative view when he affirms, following Michael Polanyi, that although "language and other formal systems involve a kind of 'break' with perception, they nevertheless do not constitute an autonomous 'layer' of meaning or sense applied like a veneer to a perceptual field that otherwise remains the same" (22). Rather,

Innis insists, there is "a kind of continuity from 'perception,' broadly understood, to the highest reaches of formalization" (22).

Logical Interactions

It's safe to say that logic lies in those higher reaches of formalization, but logic formalizes the very kind of enthymematic process that could have led the human hunter to say something like "Muskoxen meat is over there. Follow me there." (Formally, "animals move in search of their food, which to us is meat" is the assumed and unstated major premise; "muskoxen meat," meaning "grass is to muskoxen as meat is to us," supplies a minor premise.) I have argued that some nonhuman creatures, such as wolves, are likely to be able to interact with their environments strategically within a discursive field because they can adjust their actions within their own social field in order to accommodate actions occurring within another social field. I've also argued that other creatures, specifically although perhaps not exclusively humans, have developed the ability to interact within another kind of field: the linguistic. When sharing a linguistic field, one human can convey to another human its reasons for taking a certain action in a discursive field. Now I want to argue that because they inhabit and share not only discursive fields but also linguistic fields, humans can interact with their environments not only strategically but also tactically. That is, humans can respond not only to actions occurring within another social field and convey to others their reasons for doing so, but also compare alternative responses and use reasons to promote one way to respond to a situation over others. In other words, they can use what we call "enthymemes" in order to *argue*. And importantly, although linguistic ability is necessary to employ and interpret enthymematic logic, because of the recursion between the linguistic and the discursive/genric levels, enthymematic logic can be induced by nonlinguistic gestures—using visual images, for example (see fig. 21).

Figure 21: World Upside Down

A number of scholars (Jackson and Jacobs; Walton, "Enthymemes"; Bitzer, "Aristotle's")

accept the classic description of the enthymeme as a truncated syllogism, and allow that for the enthymeme to do its work, speakers and audiences must draw upon knowledge not stated explicitly in its premises. Jeffrey Walker offers a cognitive characterization of that "outside" knowledge when he suggests that an enthymeme's "motivating force will derive not simply from a propositional logic … but from what Perelman has called a 'web' or network of emotively significant ideas and *liaisons*" (55),[8] that is, the perceived context in which the argument is embedded. Walker's important contribution to the conversation is his claim that, by referring to such a web or network, an enthymeme "constructs or shapes its audience's perception of just what 'the argument' is" (63).

The theory of integrative rhetoric supports Walker's claim that enthymemes affect their audiences' perceptions of "just what 'the argument' is." Walker argues that the context, the "web or network" an enthymeme refers to, can shape that perception, but he does not explain how an enthymeme can specify which of the myriad contexts we experience it refers to. This is because the concepts of "context," "web," or "network" do not account for embodied environmental and behavioral meaning, but only linguistic significations. A better explanation is that, for an enthymeme to work, the audience must be attuned to the ambience of which the enthymeme is a part. Only then can the enthymeme make sense and be subject to logical analysis. If this is so, it raises two important questions. The first is, how can an enthymeme induce the audience to attune to its appropriate ambience? The second is, how does its ambience affect its argument? I suggest that these questions can be answered if we remember that ambience is an integration of various fields, and that changes in our perception of one field can affect our perception of other fields and thus change our perception of ambience. I will argue that rhetors may use certain types of enthymeme, particularly the abductive enthymeme, to induce a change in an audience's perception of a rhetorical situation by shifting attention away from the field the audience assumes to be relevant to another field—the field the rhetor considers to be relevant, the field within which the conclusion of the rhetor's enthymeme makes sense—and that the field determines the meaning of the argument's terms. To use a visual analogy, a field shift is required if, when arguing with someone about Jastrow's famous duck-rabbit sketch, you want to make a claim about the duck (e.g., "this is a mallard") but your partner sees only the rabbit (see fig. 22 on next page). Despite sharing the same language and belonging to the same social groups, etc., nothing but wrangling

can occur until, using verbal cues, you induce your partner to shift her attention toward the visual field in which she can see the duck by pointing to a specific area in the visual field and saying something like, "See, the duck's bill is what you see as the rabbit's ears." Only after your interlocutor perceives the sketch as a representation of a duck can you make any
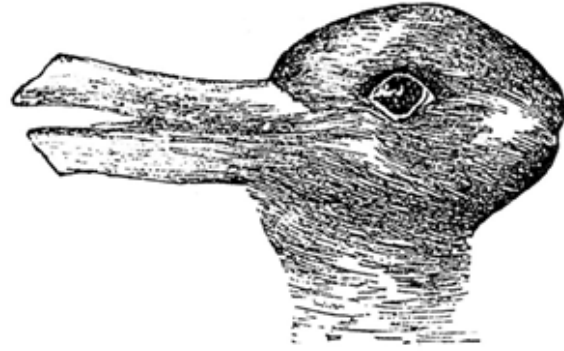
Figure 22: Jastrow's Duck-Rabbit

persuasive progress about duck issues.[9] Abductive enthymemes can induce their audiences to make similar perceptual shifts, and in this sense enthymemes are tactics of arguing, if arguing "is an attempt to make the force of reasons apparent by calling attention to some reason an audience might not have properly incorporated, or taken heed of, in their reasoning or deliberations" (Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden 225).

To know the right enthymemes to use, rhetors must be familiar with the field conditions and the interactions that generate the topics that comprise enthymemes. Importantly, because topical relations are generated in and often associated with particular fields, when a rhetor uses a field-specific term, she necessarily directs attention to the field with which it is typically associated and that field's pertinent issues (its relevant topics). As Kenneth Burke said in his explanation of terministic screens, "any nomenclature necessarily directs the attention into some channels rather than others" (*Language* 45); consequently, field-specific terms "direct the attention to one field rather than to another" (46).

As a very simple example of how this works in everyday conversation, consider a group of students arguing over where they should go to get a burger. One says they should go to Burger King because "they have the tastiest burgers"; one says they should go to Wendy's because "it's closer"; one says they should go to McDonald's because their burgers are "cheaper"; one says they should go to Steak 'n Shake because "some of our friends just left the dorm to go there." Each of these reasons actually indicate different relationships (topics) among different objects, and they therefore address different fields of intentional activity and those fields' pertinent issues. Considered in isolation, any one of these arguments could be analyzed independently (say, "We

should eat the tastiest food. Burger King has the tastiest burgers. Therefore, we should go to Burger King."). However, as tactics of argument anticipating or responding to others' arguments, they do not address others' premises, but use specific terms ("tastiest," "closer," "cheaper," "friends") to attempt to shift their audience's attention from one field to an entirely different kind of field (culinary, strategic, financial, social) that allow for stating premises that present very different topics (taste, distance, cost, friendship).

In scholarly literature, we most often find descriptions of such attempts to induce perceptual change under the heading of the "rhetoric of deflection." For instance, in "*The Rhetoric of Deflection: John F. Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962,*" the second chapter of her book The Presidency and the Rhetoric of Foreign Crisis, Denise M. Bostdorff looks at how Kennedy's discourse "deflected questions of scruples from the United States to the Soviet Union" (26). Using Burkean dramatism, she analyzes how "the crisis scene of Kennedy's talk focused attention on the Soviets' missile buildup and away from questions about Kennedy's own inflammatory acts of instituting a naval blockade and issuing ultimatums" (46). In his essay "Why We 'Support the Troops': Rhetorical Evolutions," Roger Stahl notes that "the contemporary call to 'support the troops'" is "a rhetoric that includes but goes beyond the strategic and argumentative use of the phrase itself" (533). "Support-the-troops rhetoric," Stahl argues, "has two major functions: deflection and dissociation." Its deflective function "involves discursive trends in play since Vietnam that have redefined war as a fight to save our own soldiers—especially the captive soldier—rather than as a struggle for policy goals external to the military. As such, this discourse directs civic attention away from the question of whether the particular war policy is just" (533). And, of course, political debates are rife with such deflection. During a March 10, 2016, Republican debate in Miami, for instance, debate moderator Jake Tapper said to candidate Ted Cruz, "Senator Cruz, Colin Powell this week said that the nasty tone of this presidential election is hurting the image of the U.S. abroad. He said, quote, 'foreigners of the world looking at this are distressed.' Does it matter to you what the rest of the world thinks of the United States?" This was Cruz's response:

> Of course it does. And we've seen for seven years a president that has made the presidency
> and has made, sadly, his administration a laughing stock in the world. This administration
> started with President Obama sending back the bust of Winston Churchill to the United

Kingdom within the opening weeks. Then he proceeded to go on a worldwide apology tour apologizing for the United States of America. Our friends and allies quickly learned America could not be counted on. ("Transcript")

In each of the preceding examples, attention is deflected from one rhetorical field with its topics to another with different topics—from the ethics of administrative action to the effectiveness of military tactics, from the justice of the nation's policy goals to the nation's responsibility for its military personnel, from the decorum of political debates to the symbolism of presidential actions. But whether in ordinary conversation, political debate, or any other type of rhetorical situation, enthymemes often function primarily to shift an audience's attention from one field to another and only secondarily to link conceptually its premises to its conclusion.

Not every type of enthymeme can perform this primary function, however. Syllogisms are said to be hypothetical, disjunctive, or categorical and to involve at least three propositions in sequence. These propositions are related deductively through the implications of their terms' definitions so that the first two necessitate the third. In the *Prior Analytics,* Aristotle defines a syllogism as "a discourse [*logos*] in which, certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so. I mean by the last phrase that it follows because of them, and by this, that no further term is required from without in order to make the consequence necessary" (24b18-23). So in the classic syllogism, "All men are mortal, and Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal," Socrates is defined (categorized) as a man, and men are defined as mortal things, so Socrates must be a mortal thing (see fig. 23). However, enthymemes are more complex, use inference instead of generic implication, and require what Michael Polanyi calls "tacit knowledge": knowledge of topics developed from interactions within a particular field (4) For example, suppose that in the mechanic's
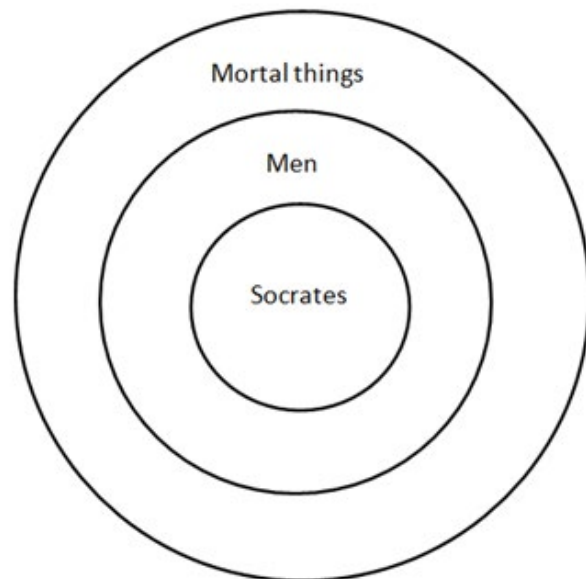
Figure 23: Syllogistic Implication

garage I say, "The carburetor smoked when I tried to start the car, so the fuel mixture is probably too rich." As in that example, when rhetors link objects using any topic besides definition (that is, besides implication[10]), they do so not through deduction but through either abduction or induction from prior experience.

Inductive inferences are, for the most part, inferences based purely on examples or "statistical" data. Michael D. Bybee has argued that we accept deductive arguments as certainly true, in the sense that the conclusion is implied by the premises we accept as true, and if we accept that at least one case—the one cited in the premises—is actually true, we accept related inductive arguments as probably true. In contrast, we accept abductive premises as being only possibly true, and only if "no known facts contradict the conclusion" (288). As Douglas Walton has defined it, "An abductive argument is an inference to the best explanation" (*Media* 215). In this vein, John Woods schematized abductive syllogisms as follows:

> The surprising fact C is observed.
>
> But if A were true, C would be a matter of course.
>
> Hence there is reason to suspect that A is true. (365)

In such a scheme, an inductive enthymeme might look like this:

> If A were true, C would be a matter of course.
>
> Hence there is reason to suspect that A is true.

However, such schemes do not explain why an audience would suspect A is true rather than some other reason like D, E, or F. For abduction to work persuasively, the audience must infer the best of many possible conclusions—by referring the premises to the most likely relevant field or by introducing previously unnoticed relationships within a field. In other words, in Woods' scheme, within the phrase "a matter of course" is buried the assumption that "if A were true, C would be a matter of course" within a certain field in a certain state, one assumed by both parties. But that assumption is seldom valid. For this reason, I would suggest that abductive enthymemes are those which may induce us to perform perceptual field shifts, or at least induce a perceptual reconfiguration of a currently apprehended field.

When we infer abductively, we appeal to what we typically call "context" or, more accurately, to the relevant field(s) of interaction. Here is an example of abductive inference

given in the online *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*: "You happen to know that Tim and Harry have recently had a terrible row that ended their friendship. Now someone tells you that she just saw Tim and Harry jogging together. The best explanation for this that you can think of is that they made up. You conclude that they are friends again" (Douven; see fig. 24). Unlike our earlier examples of a group of students arguing over where they should go to get a burger and politicians deflecting issues, this inference does not require us to shift our perception from one field to another; rather, it requires us to reconfigure our perception of a

Figure 24: Jogging Partners

currently apprehended field. Yet it is an abductive inference that conforms to Woods' scheme, perhaps in a manner like this:

The surprising fact C [Tim and Harry were jogging together] is observed.

But if A [Tim and Harry are friends again], C [Tim and Harry jogging together] would be a matter of course.

Hence, there is reason to suspect that A [Tim and Harry are friends again] is true.

What has happened here to induce you to accept the conclusion? It is that someone you know (and presumably with whom you have a relationship of trust) directed your attention to a field-specific interaction between two objects (i.e., jogging partners); that is, an interaction that, according to your prior experience, normally persists only when a social field is in a certain state (such as friendship). You infer that Tim and Harry are friends again. This inference might be wrong, of course—one can imagine many reasons for Tim and Harry to be jogging together, even if they are no longer friends—but this inference is far more actionable than if you had drawn your conclusion from a less field-specific observation, such as "Tim and Harry were seen together."

By "more actionable," I mean something like Stephen Toulmin's distinction between

"retrospective" formal arguments, which involve "scrutinizing and checking the formal relationship between the propositions embodied in earlier arguments," and "prospective" arguments, which have "a reliable, well-established place" within a field and where "the considerations that carry weight depend on the purposes and procedures of the particular enterprise" (342). We find a similar attention to the temporal dimension of arguing in Walton's revision of Thomas F. Gordon's notion of "simulative reasoning." Gordon had defined such simulation as "pretending to have the same initial desires, beliefs, or other mental states that the attributor's background information suggests the agent has" (Gordon 189), but Walton avoids such subjective attribution of mental states by suggesting instead that "simulation proceeds by understanding the problem faced by the primary agent" (*Media* 143). Imagine, for instance, the jogging example above as part of a larger argument about whether you should invite both Tim and Harry to your New Year's Eve party, asserted in response to your prior deliberations about which one you should invite since the two were not getting along. Here your interlocutor sees your problem as determining who you can invite to your party without risking any discord, then offers an argument for why you need not worry: because the two are jogging together again.

Walton sees a similar form of simulative reasoning in Sandra Carberry's notion of "plan recognition," a method by which "an agent attempts to reconstruct from the available evidence a plan that was previously constructed by another agent" (17). Walton summarizes one of Carberry's examples:

A motorist driving along the freeway sees an empty car parked along the edge of the road. She sees that the car has a missing tire. As she drives a little further, she sees a man rolling a tire along the edge of the freeway. He is carrying a baby in one arm as he rolls the tire. Three small children are walking behind him. By observing these facts, the driver draws several conclusions. She concludes that this man she saw rolling the tire was the driver of the empty car with the missing tire. She concludes that the man was rolling the tire along in order to get it repaired. She concludes that he did not want to leave the three small children alone in the car along the highway. The motorist did not see these conclusions as facts. They were all conclusions drawn by inference from what she saw. She drew them by attributing a plan of action to the man she saw rolling the tire. This capability is plan

recognition. (Walton, *Media* 345)

As Walton explains,

> How the process works is that the observer attributes practical reasoning to the agent whose actions she has observed. She then draws conclusions in the form of hypotheses that seem to explain what she has observed. She attributes goals to this agent, and hypothesizes that he sees actions and pursues goals in much the same way she does. But of course, the conclusions drawn by the motorist could be wrong. They are just plausible attributions or hypotheses. (345)

The motorist's internal argument, as Walton explains it, clearly has all the attributes of abduction as Woods describes them, but Walton goes further to note that although here "one agent has to grasp the practical reasoning of another in plan recognition," it is also the case that there is "a lot of domain-dependent knowledge required":

> For example … the observer agent needs to understand that a tire is part of the wheel on the car, that a tire can go flat if punctured, that a tire can be removed from the car, and so forth. She also needs to understand that it would be dangerous to leave children alone in a car at the side of the highway. (346)

Walton describes "domain-dependent knowledge" as "so-called common knowledge," knowledge "we all know"; but, of course, such knowledge is not common at all, but field-dependent, and although field-dependent knowledge is indeed "the basis of all human communication," it is hardly the case that all humans are familiar with the automotive discursive fields the motorist referred to when making her inferences.

Logicians call such inferences about past states and future actions, such as those the motorist makes and those made in the jogging example, "ampliative" in that the conclusions contain information not present in the premises, data, or reasons that were inferred, in one case, from visual experience and, in the other, from verbal information given by "someone you know." Agents obtain this absent information from their prior knowledge of the fields in which the abductive enthymeme situated the reported interaction. The motorist concludes that the man was the driver of the car with the missing tire and you conclude that Tim and Harry are friends again because the topology within which the opinions were formed changed. In other words, as agents, rhetors can

use enthymemes to abductively guide someone to re-cognize the relevance of a specific field or specific elements within a field to a specific situation by using terms that call attention to a topical link commonly found between objects, agents, or forces within that field.

At bottom, all "informal," "practical," or "substantive" arguments used in the course of arguing may be ampliative and require rhetorical agents to use enthymemes tactically in order to direct attention toward the fields relevant to their argument and toward objects, forces, and topics within those fields,[11] but such "logical" tactics are possible linguistic interactions only because they supervene the "strategic" interactions of discursive fields, which in turn supervene the interactions of social fields, and so on. In short, as Polanyi claimed, there is "a kind of continuity from 'perception,' broadly understood, to the highest reaches of formalization" (22). Within the symbolic dimension, logical fields are embedded in linguistic fields, and linguistic fields are embedded in discursive fields, but discursive fields are embedded in social fields, social fields are embedded in sensorial fields, and sensorial fields are embedded in physicochemical fields. Our every thought has its ambience.

Reflective Interactions

Just as we found not a dualism but a duality—or a relationship of supervenience and embodiment—between the linguistic and genric/discursive fields, we find a duality between the reflective (i.e., thought) and the logical. As we saw earlier, the first of James K. Feibleman's "laws of the levels" asserts, "Each level organises the level or levels below it" (59), but here, although reflective thought supervenes logic, we have to acknowledge that no other fields supervene those of thought, so there is a dualism within thought itself. We find this dualism in our experience that reflective interactions can become infinitely recursive, attending only to themselves as objects. That is, in the reflective fields, we can find ourselves thinking about what we are thinking about, playing games of thought, one might say, on fields made from the elements of our previous thought (see fig. 25).
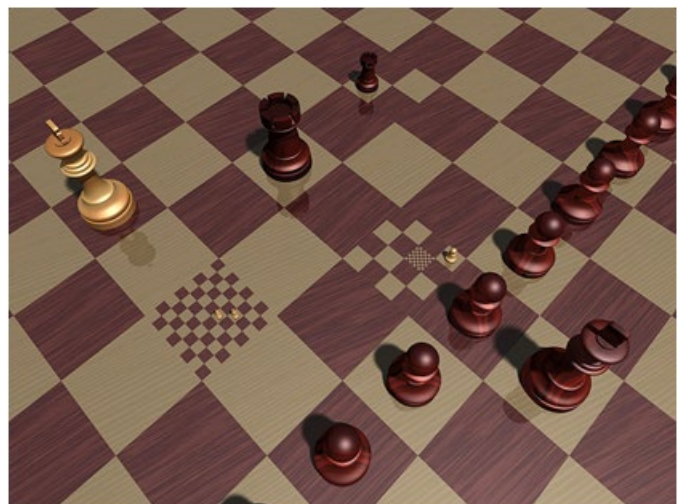

Figure 25: Infinite Game

The Sense of Self

Obviously, logical action directed at logical action is reflective action. In order for a belief, an enthymematic conclusion, to be a belief and not merely a habitual response, we must believe we have the belief. In the same way, in order for a linguistic sign to be a sign, we must be able to signify that it is a sign, and so we must be aware that it *is* a sign. As Peirce says, "All thinking is by signs; and the brutes use signs. But perhaps they rarely think of them as signs. To do so is manifestly a second step in the use of language" (*Collected* 534). Moreover, a linguistic field is unified by an intention to indicate to others not only the objects in it but also the objects, agents, and relationships in and among other fields. It is the field through which we can relate the objects, relations, and events of different fields to one another, but in order to be linguistic at all, its signs must be able to indicate other signs and their relations.

Without metasignification, there is no symbolicity. But the self-reference of the linguistic fields' objects is also why linguistic objects differ pragmatically from the objects of the other fields with which they interact. This is the "break" between language and perception Innis and Polanyi refer to: signs as such are not actual (that is, do not interact directly with and do not affect the actions of nonlinguistic objects) but virtual, and so they cannot resist the actions of thought. For example, as a sign, sign X indicating the concept of dog (in English, "dog") cannot resist our using it as we use sign Y (let's say, "table," the sign we habitually use to indicate the concept of table) for the simple reason that we can stipulate that X means Y, such that, if I now say, "This morning I took my table for a walk," I can intend to mean that I took my dog for a walk. Yet because the objects of the linguistic fields supervene the resistant objects of the discursive, and therefore the resistant social, ethical, sensorial, and physicochemical fields, I simply cannot use whatever word I want to and have it mean whatever I want it to mean (as Humpty Dumpty asserts) *and be understood* without the consent of the others who share the relevant discursive field that the linguistic field supervenes. Only in this consensual sense are signs conventional, although, as we have seen, they are never arbitrary. Signs as such *mean* nothing when they signify only other signs; yet because they mean nothing (being virtual or dis-embodied, so to speak, when unconstrained by discursive fields) they can signify *anything*. Within a linguistic field, we can signify objects that have never existed in worlds that have never existed, invent virtual worlds, and envision new ways

of perceiving our world—and we can lie, deceive, distort, and cheat.[12]

The self-referential power unique to objects in the linguistic fields is extremely important for several reasons. First, only with signs can we indicate linkages between elements of one field and those of another and make them known to others. Second, because only within linguistic fields, where our signs themselves can be the objects of signs, can we become aware that others are aware of and responding to our significations. We then can become aware of when others do not respond to them as we intend—that is, we can become aware of our being misinterpreted when others respond to our significations in ways we do not expect, implying that they assigned meanings to our significations we did not intend. Because of this, the development of the linguistic fields introduces two extremely important relations that, although based on relationships already developed within the nonlinguistic fields, do not exist in nonlinguistic fields: the "self" understood in relation to others and "error" or falsehood understood in relation to "truth."

Mead has argued that there are at least two preconditions for the development of self-awareness: the first is "that there should be such a community perspective, that there should be objects which exist in their relationship to the group"; that is, there should be what I have been calling shared "social fields." As we have seen, for these to develop, individuals must interact purposely together with those objects. The second precondition is that "different responses of the different individuals in corporate activities should be such that they can be called out in all the different individuals" (*Act* 203). That is, each individual must be able to take on the attitude toward an object (that is, apperceive the same ethical topic) that any other individual in the group takes toward it. For instance, in a game of baseball, each player must be able to put herself in the other players' positions to anticipate how they will react to the batter's hitting a line drive to left field (see fig. 26 on next page). The interactions of numerous species meet the first of these preconditions of the social field, and some, like wolves, may even inhabit discursive fields and have become able to perceive, if not indicate, not only objects that exist within their own group's field(s) of activities but the objects of another group's field(s). Mead has argued, however, that the second precondition is crucial: "What has made human society possible has been a co-operation through communication and participation" in which the "very stimulus which one [person] gives to another to carry out his part of the common act affects the individual who so affects the other in the same sense. He tends
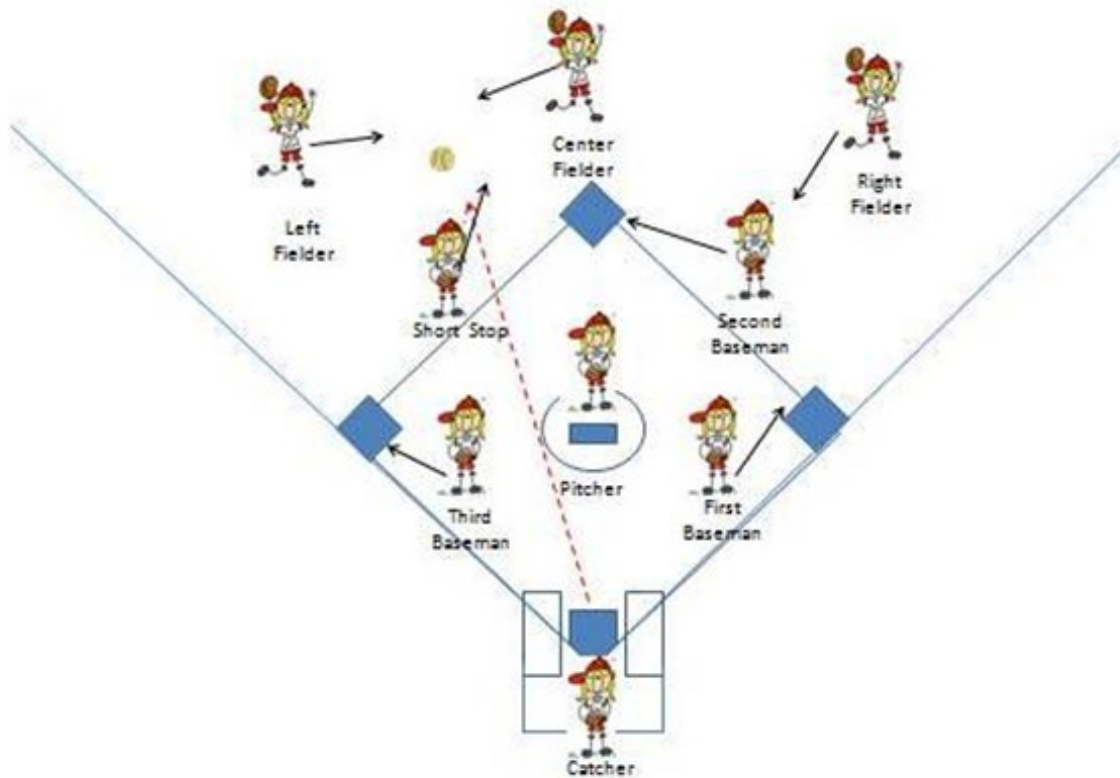
Figure 26: Hit to Left Field

to arouse the activity in himself which he arouses in the other" (*Act* 137).

Mead concludes that this capability is only possible once gestures refer not only to objects in nonlinguistic fields but also to the gestures themselves—that is, only once they become signs. Thus, the self-referentiality of a self presupposes the self-referentiality of signs. The self-referentiality of a self, in turn, implies a division within the self: "the self cannot appear in consciousness as an 'I,' … it is always an object, i.e. a 'me'" (*Selected* 142), and the "I" is conscious of that "me" as it is of any other self, as a "perspective" or "role" within a particular situation.

In other words, "I" think of "me" as one who is disposed to act in such-and-such a way in such-and-such a position in a discursive situation. If this is so, then my "me" at any one time is in a mutually determinative relationship with the objects of the fields within which "I" act to the extent that I will tend to remain "me" so long as the objects and relations I apperceive remain stable. The "me" that "I" reflect upon is, largely, what Mead calls "a mere organization of habit," and it "is this self which we refer to as character" (*Selected* 147). This I-Me relationship helps to explain how the self may be induced to change its disposition to act in a particular circumstance; that is, it

helps to explain how "persuasion" works. The habitually disposed self, our "character," will remain stable until, as Mead says, "an essential problem appears"—that is, when an event that we cannot anticipate becomes a problem that our habitual interactions cannot resolve. When that happens, "there is some disintegration in this organization, and different tendencies appear in reflective thought as different voices in conflict with each other. In a sense, the old self has disintegrated, and out of the moral process a new self arises" (*Selected* 147). Typically, in Mead's view, when we encounter a situation in which events conflict with our expectations and new objects come to our attention, we *should* attend to the new objects and topics and not to our habitual self's response to their unexpected emergence (and the force of this should is pragmatic, in the sense that we actually do take this approach when we interact effectively). We should perceive the situation differently so that "different and enlarged and more adequate personalities may emerge" (147). That is, we *should* merge the conflicting fields and take up a perspective that can comprehend both our habitual self's perspective (of the state of the discursive field) *and* the perspective with which it conflicts.

Just as Mead says, the emergence of the sense of self depends upon the ability to take a community perspective, one of a shared "social field," and we must be able to take on the attitude toward an object that any other individual in the group takes toward it. However, we need to go beyond Mead here and note that, once the self has emerged, in order to cope with the new state of affairs and take on the attitude toward an object that any other individual in the group takes toward it, the newly emerged self has to change, and it can change only by being persuaded. Persuasion takes place in logical fields, and, just as linguistic fields can emerge only once social actors can merge two social fields to create a discursive field, reflective fields can emerge only once social actors can merge two discursive fields and take on perspectives toward objects that are not their own.

This does not mean that persuasion requires interlocutors to simply sacrifice their old selves and convert to an opposing perspective. When discursive conflict arises, "solution is reached by the construction of a new world [that is, in the parlance I'm using, a new discursive field] harmonizing the conflicting interests into which enters the new self" (Mead, *Selected* 149). But if the new self enters the "new world," or field, then it is not the new self that constructs it: "The new self can not

enter into the field as the determining factor because he is consciously present only after the new end has been formulated and accepted" (148). In other words, we must act from the attitude of the new self before we can in reflection recognize that new self as our own. As field theorist John Martin has pointed out, "Not only is it mistaken to assume that people choose their allies and tactics, in many cases there is no reason to assume that they choose their goals … because the only way to reach conditions that we cognize and wish for is to make use of those conditions that we have not wished for" (44).

One's self, then, alters to the extent that the discursive fields in which one acts alter, and the only way to direct another's transformation (to persuade another) is to induce them to alter their attention. Effective discourse, especially so-called persuasion, cannot be a consequence of acts directed toward selves, but can be only a consequence of acts directed toward those selves' attention to objects and topics. One cannot change another's mind, but one can induce another to attend to different objects. Change the objects and topics that someone attends to and you change their attitudes, the fields they inhabit, and so their sense of self.

Of course, what the self attends to cannot change, and so the self cannot change, unless that self can recognize that the objects and relations it had attended to in a particular situation were in some way the wrong things to attend to in that particular situation. One must be able to acknowledge that if what one expects to happen has not happened as one expected, then whatever one believed that led to the contradiction of one's expectations must have been in some way wrong.

The Sense of Error

In his essay "The Emergence of Thought," Donald Davidson argues that for there to be mental fields, for creatures to be able to think, they must meet at least two preconditions. (These preconditions presuppose, of course, certain physicochemical and sensorial developments the creatures share.) The first condition is that there must be "social interaction" in the form of what he calls "triangulation," the same process I described above with respect to the formation of shared objects. As we have seen, triangulation "involves two or more creatures simultaneously in interaction with each other and with the world they share" (Davidson, *Subjective* 128). During this process, "each creature learns to correlate the reactions of other creatures with changes or objects in the world to

which it also reacts" (128). Triangulation is essential to the development of thought because without engaging in this process, we would have no environmental or behavioral objects to think about. This is the process Bill Brown describes as the reduction of "things" to "objects" (3). As Davidson puts it, without social interaction, "there is no answer to the question what it is in the world to which we are responding" (129). We see this when, for instance, we teach a dog to fetch a ball but not, say, a stuffed toy. Most dogs will tend to chase a thrown object, not discriminating between a ball and a toy unless we have first interacted with the dog in some appropriate, consistent way (see fig. 27).

When we throw the toy instead of the ball, once the dog fetches the toy and hears a stern "No!" instead of the usual "Good boy!", the conflict between the expected and actual response will motivate the dog to notice differences between the objects, until what were once the same things (thrown objects) become two different objects (ball and not-ball). That is to say, in the terminology I am using here, the conflict between the expected and actual response induces the dog to notice—sensorially, through sight and smell—the physicochemical differences between the

Figure 27: Fetch!

ball and the toy that the dog had not attended to before. Following Wittgenstein, Davidson suggests that such a "failure of expectation" introduces "the possibility of error" (129), and that without that possibility, there can be no common social objects to think about. By making error *necessary* to communicative success, Davidson avoids being subject to the critique Derrida, in "Signature, Event, Context," directs at J. L. Austin's speech act theory:

> Austin's procedure … consists in recognizing that the possibility of the negative (here, the infelicities) is certainly a structural possibility, that failure [of interpretation] is an essential risk in the operations under consideration; and then, with an almost immediately simultaneous

gesture made in the name of a kind of ideal regulation, an exclusion of this risk as an accidental, exterior one that teaches us nothing about the language phenomenon under consideration. (*Margins* 323)

In contrast to Austin, for Davidson, error is essential, not marginal, to symbolic interaction because sociality requires the ability to discriminate between met and failed expectations, and having a sense of error is a necessary precondition of thought. But it is not a sufficient precondition.

Besides having participated in social interactions, the second condition a creature must meet before it can think, according to Davidson, is having "language." Without language, he says, there could be no objectivity in a second sense, "the sense that it [thought] has a content which is true or false independent (with rare exceptions) of the existence of the thought or the thinker" (129). Here, it's not just a matter of "getting right" what I say but of whether what I say gets it right. Imagine a scenario in which I took a young boy, who had been about to eat an orange in the kitchen, outside to play fetch, as I had been with the dog, and had taught the boy the difference between "ball" and "toy," as I had the dog. Then further imagine that later, back in the house, I asked the boy to "Bring me the ball that's on the kitchen counter." In such a scenario, the boy, unlike the dog, could have known that I was in error, that what was on the counter was an orange, not a ball. Here, it's not just that "ball" is the wrong word to indicate oranges, but that it's wrong that the orange is a ball.

What's the difference, you ask? Well, the point is that, for creatures inhabiting symbolic fields, there is no difference in practice: for those who inhabit symbolic fields, the process of learning language and the process of learning how to interact in the world—in its environmental and behavioral dimensions—are the *same* process. This is why understanding the meaning of an utterance cannot be separated from knowing the truth—or, in Dewey's terms, the "warranted assertibility"—of the utterance. Moreover, the unitary process of learning both language and how to interact in the world is a *social* process: "it is the social sharing of reactions that makes the objectivity of content available" to thought (Davidson, *Subjective* 130). That is, social sharing provides the contents, the meanings, for concepts, the objects of thought. Here, the set of topical relations that establishes an object of our attention during the interaction of triangulation is its "concept." This definition of "concept" conforms to that described by C. S. Peirce's Pragmatic

Maxim: "Consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then the whole of our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (*Selected* 124). For those who inhabit symbolic fields, the concept is something we can grasp because we have the tools—the linguistic signs—that enable us to interact with concepts.

Moreover, because we can apperceive multiple fields and relate the objects and concepts of one field to other fields, for us the social sharing of objects can extend across *different* social situations in different fields. For instance, the ball we throw when playing fetch outside may be the same ball we store in the closet when straightening the house inside. Because we can share objects and their meanings across different social fields, the ball can be more than only a thrown object, but for the dog, "ball" is something to fetch and only something to fetch, not something to store in its proper place, buy at the store, offer someone as a gift, sell at a yard sale, and so on.

In answer to the question of "why language is essential to thought," Davidson says that "unless the base line of the triangle, the line between the two agents, is strengthened to the point where it can implement the communication of propositional contents, there is no way the agents can make use of the triangular situation to form judgments about the world" (*Subjective* 130). This is true, but it doesn't tell us what it is about language—that is, what it is about interaction within a symbolic field—that strengthens the connection between agents and makes the proposition possible.

To answer that question, we first should remember what a proposition is. In rhetoric, a proposition, if it makes sense, is always a premise or conclusion of what we call an enthymeme. As we have seen, enthymemes always occur in a discursive situation, and therefore also in every case imply alternative sets of objects and *topoi*—alternative fields of discursive interaction—that cannot be inferred from the proposition alone, that cannot be inferred from its signs' linguistic relations alone, but must be inferred from topical relations within the environmental and behavioral fields the signs embody. Perceiving the alternative sets of possible relevant fields is essential to responding appropriately to any proposition, but the perception of alternative sets of possible relevant fields also increases the chance of situating a proposition in the wrong field. Linguistic discursive interaction can decrease that chance because language can restate a proposition in

another way. Consider the difference between a primitive social response to a nondiscursive action and a linguistic social response to a discursive signification. In the one case we have, for example, a fish in a school that reacts to the appearance of a predator by turning hard to one side, and the rest of the school follows suit. The fish has no other way to indicate the appearance of a predator. In the other case, my wife says, "The cat is on the mat," and I respond by calling the dog. The fish's hard, sudden turn can mean only one thing to the other fish: make a hard, sudden turn in the same direction too (see fig. 28). The other fish can be right or wrong in their reaction, but they have no

Figure 28: Sailfish Chasing Sardines

way to know if the reaction might have been wrong—wrong in the sense that their turning hard is not what the first fish "intended." They only will or will not be eaten. They cannot know because their gestures cannot refer to their gestures, and because of that, to them no gesture can mean more than one thing.

My wife's linguistic gesture and my response to it make for a very different story. If me calling the dog is not the response my wife intended, she can speak again, and she will need to, because "The cat is on the mat" can be true or false in innumerable ways depending upon the problematic situation within which my wife said it. Perhaps I had thought she meant that the cat, not the dog, is on the mat, in order to raise the question of where the dog, which usually is on the mat, is. But she may have intended to indicate that the cat is *still* on the mat—that the cat has been on the mat all day and hasn't moved—in order to suggest that the cat might be ill and that I should attend to it. She may have meant that when the cat gets on the mat, it needs to go outside to urinate, thus suggesting that I should let the cat out. In each of these scenarios, the same statement implies a different enthymeme and a different intent. For my wife and me, our cat inhabits numerous fields of our interaction, and because of this, the same gesture or statement

that may be relevant in one field may not be in another, and it may mean one thing in one field but something entirely different in another. Since my wife and I typically inhabit the same linguistic field (use the same language), if, after my wife has told me "The cat is on the mat," I start calling the dog, she can retort, "Just let the cat out!" In order to make that revision, my wife has to recognize the error of her expectation that I would respond by letting the cat out, a conflict that indicates to her that she misgauged how I would interpret her, or that I misinterpreted her (which is the same thing). By making the revision that she does, she indicates her further expectation that if I had understood her I would have done what she wanted. Moreover, the way she revises indicates that she does not interpret my unexpected response as a misinterpretation of the *signs* she used (she doesn't revise to say, for instance, "The *cat*, not a *rat*, is on the mat") but as my mistaking the discursive field she was concerned about. In addition, her interpretation of my misinterpretation implies that she understood the discursive field in which I had interpreted what she said (that is, she understood what I mistakenly believed she had meant).

My wife's ability to recognize her error and use linguistic signs to say and understand the same statement differently is essential if she is to use language to redirect my attention toward the behavioral and environmental elements she intends for me to attend to and so recognize my error. This ability is necessary in order for either a linguistic revision ("The *cat*, not a *rat*, is on the mat") or a discursive revision ("Just let the cat out!") to occur. So although it is true that language as such means nothing ("The cat is on the mat" is meaningless isolated from a problematic situation—when not part of an enthymeme, and so of a certain discursive field, and so of certain social fields, and so of certain sensorial fields, etc.), it means nothing because it can mean almost anything. It means something only as a result of a complex of inferential acts based on prior physicochemical, sensorial, ethical, social, and discursive interactions: *The dog normally lies on the mat at the front door. The cat lies on the mat only when it needs to go outside. Whenever my wife and I have failed to let the cat out when it has lain on the mat, it subsequently urinated on the furniture. Neither my wife nor I want the cat to urinate on the furniture, and so when the cat lies on the mat, either my wife or I will let the cat out. My wife noticed the cat on the mat, and she told me "The cat is on the mat." Since she didn't let the cat out, I thought she was calling my attention to the fact that the dog wasn't where it normally should be, and it was the dog's dinner time, so I called for the dog.*

But after I called the dog, my wife told me "Just let the cat out!", so I revised my inferences and interpretation of "The cat is on the mat" and I let the cat out.

All these inferences from physicochemical, sensorial, technical/ethical, social, discursive-genric, linguistic, and logical relationships, guided by the sense of error through discursive triangulation, are needed in order to make sense of this particular usage of "The cat is on the mat"; that is, to negotiate the complex possibilities of meaning for this apparently simple domestic scene. Such inferences provide sense to and, to use Toulmin's terminology, the warrants for any enthymematic claims we might make, such as, "The cat peed on the couch because you kept watching TV!" None of these inferences that make such a claim rational would be possible were it not for the shared ambience developed historically from the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic interactions that occurred previously among my wife and me and our cat and dog and the things in our house.

If we, like the fish, inhabited but one social field, we would not need a sense of self, we would not need a sense of error, we would not need language, and we would not need the objects within our symbolic fields to have multiple functions and significations that can change *during* our interactions. At the same time, language does us no good unless we have a history of interacting together discursively, socially, sensorially, and physicochemically, for without our having the ability to apperceive the fields such sharing produces, and without a sense of error that allows us to negotiate the nearly infinite meanings our signs could embody, they could refer only to themselves. Using language enables us to live far more complex, richer lives than fish. Yet the richness and complexity of a self-referential language has its price. David Abrams has issued this warning:

> The apparently autonomous, mental dimension originally opened by the alphabet—the ability to interact with our own signs in utter abstraction from our earthly surroundings—has today blossomed into a vast cognitive realm, a horizonless expanse of virtual interactions and encounters…. [Our] organic attunement to the local earth is thwarted by our ever-increasing intercourse with our own signs. Transfixed by our technologies, we short-circuit the sensorial reciprocity between our breathing bodies and the bodily terrain. (265-267)

> Using language in ways that alienate us from the very environmental and behavioral

dimensions of interaction that made the symbolic dimension possible exposes us to far more error-making possibilities than any fish or dog is exposed to. It exposes us constantly to the tendency to reify concepts, accept superstitions, and attribute causality to the supernatural—errors possible only for species inhabiting self-referential symbolic fields. This same self-referential language, ironically, enables us to imagine alternative scenarios and to envision different ways of interacting, unlike any fish or dog. Like the fish, we are open to error at every turn, but unlike the fish, we can sense our errors and construct alternatives. Because of language, we have many, many more turns to make than fish, and many, many more objects and *topoi* and fields to negotiate—all at the same time. This is the urgency behind our need to understand rhetorical ambience in all its integrative levels.

Quiz question 5: **Once a creature—say, you—inhabits the symbolic dimension, can it ever intentionally leave it to dwell only in the behavioral or even the environmental dimension? As the title of one reality TV show puts it, can you "Be the Creature"?**

Answer: **Another trick question.**

Why? Perhaps you could, through drugs or neurosurgery, intentionally disable or destroy the physicochemical or organic structures on which the symbolic levels you interact within depend, but once you did, you would not be you. Still, because symbolic fields necessarily embody behavioral and environmental fields, you can—and we do all the time—discursively engage with nonsymbolic organisms, and even nonorganic things, through the metaphorical processes that establish the discursive fields. For instance, in the film adaptation of Isak Dinesen's Out of Africa, when Karen Blixen is having her workers dam the river for irrigation, Farah shakes his head and warns her, "This water lives in Mombasa, Msahib." When the rains come and the river breaks the dam, Karen concedes, "Let it go, let it go. This water lives in Mombasa anyway." In this sense, you can, as they say, "commune with nature."

CHAPTER 4

THE TEMPORAL DEMINSION

Quiz question 6 (answer at the end of this section): **Are you as you read this question the same person who lied to your teacher about your homework in the eighth grade?**

Ambience is organized topologically throughout its environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions. However, rhetoric is concerned with interactions, and we experience ambience only as its three spatial dimensions integrate through our interactions in the fourth dimension—the temporal. Throughout the preceding pages, I have described these levels of fields with respect to the interactions that occur within them, and so, without calling your attention to it, I have been describing these "spatial" dimensions in temporal terms all along. That cannot be helped, for ambience is always temporal. Moreover, although fields in the spatial dimensions develop historically, because of the recursive relationships of supervenience and embodiment, every rhetorical interaction is at the same time environmental, behavioral, and symbolic. Paradoxically, we experience that simultaneity temporally as changes in the states of the field or fields we are attending to as they converge and diverge and capture and release our attention. As a result, the character of our temporal experience is conditioned by its spatial ambience and our spatial experience is conditioned by our temporality. Consider, for example, our ambient experience when walking down a busy city street, with the intrusions upon our consciousness of blaring horns, rushing cars, passing pedestrians, music, stinking diesel fumes, and flashing lights coming from various spaces of field activity, some relevant to our purposes and some not, as we frantically hurry to make our way to an office to meet an appointment, all the while talking to a client on our cell phone. Now compare that to the acute difference in our ambient experience when fishing at the shore of a pond, having our attention drawn only occasionally to a honking goose, a fluttering butterfly, or the wafting odor of honeysuckle, as we wait patiently, intent upon the float we hope to see slip below the water's surface. Clearly, these ambient experiences are strongly differentiated by their temporal structure; yet in both examples, the patterns of our actions are determined by strategies for achieving some purpose, but also continually modified by our interactions with other agents and objects pursuing purposes different from our own.

Kairos

If the interactionist description of time is correct, then the apperception of convergences and divergences of temporal orders is possible only for creatures that can act discursively, that is, act simultaneously with respect to more than one social field at a time (see fig. 29): as a pedestrian standing at a crosswalk, a green light is a sign to us that it is time to cross because we are attuned to the drivers on the street we face who see a red light that, from within their field of activity, is a sign for them to stop. And if only discursive creatures can act simultaneously with respect to more than one social field at a time, then only they can experience what the ancient Greeks called *kairos*, in the sense that James L. Kinneavy described as the "right or opportune time to do something, or right measure in doing something" (80). From an interactionist field theory perspective, a "right time" or "right measure"

Figure 29: Kairos

is always an apprehended relation between the recurrent interactions defining one field and those defining others, as when a baker knows the "right time" to remove the bread as a relation between the dough's duration in the oven's heat and the progression of the dough's deepening color and hardening texture. The duration of cooking and measure of the intensity of heat may vary in relation to one another, but the "event" of the bread's being "done"—the purpose unifying these fields discursively—remains the same. In the examples above, the sense of *kairos* comes into play as we attune to the ambience that determines for us when and at what pace to cross the street or when to take the bread out of the oven.
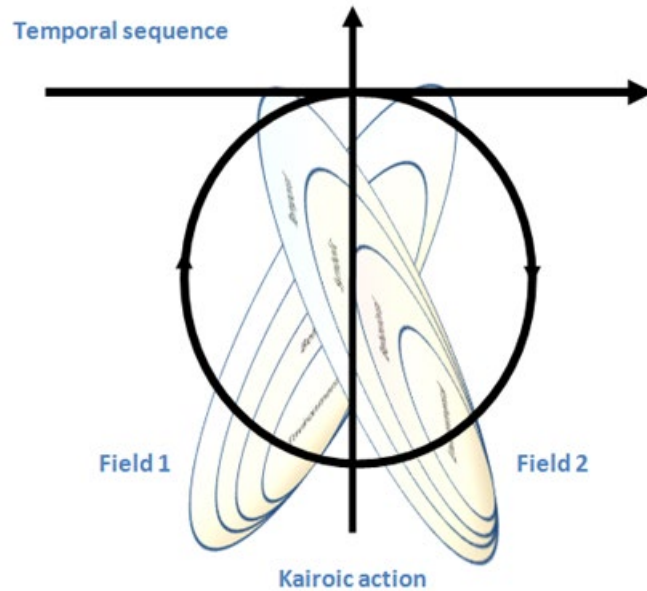
There is a tendency to think the temporal dimension of ambience is purely subjective and under our conscious control, as in Simon and Garfunkel's "The 59th Street Bridge Song": "Slow down, you move too fast. You've got to make the morning last." Yet as Thomas Rickert has argued, "The kairos of a situation is a moment placed not as something between a subject and exterior

situation but as mutually involved and evolving vectors of material force" (90). Rickert believes that we need "to embed kairos more concretely in *place*, to see what happens when we attend to kairos's material emplacement and unfolding and not just its timeliness or decorum," and that "without a more materialist understanding of emplacement, kairos is an empty concept" (76). He goes on to say,

> No "subject controls" what occurs; rather, actions emerge as willed by the situation precisely because there are no discrete subjects absent their relations and connections. However, the environs here are not just a material reality to which we adapt or a material situation that somehow "determines" us. Instead, the environs *enable*, but they enable *inclusively* of human beings insofar as human beings take shape within the environs. Thus, the emplacement of [agents] is essential to their activity, for the context makes all that occurs possible. The point is not that [agents] do not make choices but that their choices are already immersed in the context in which they get played out. (93)

Thus, I think Rickert would agree that the integrative relationship between the temporal dimension and the spatial dimensions is recursive, in the same way that the integrative relationships between the "higher" and "lower fields" in the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic spatial dimensions are recursive. *Kairos* is not merely the imposition of a temporal structure upon a spatial structure. In Gidden's terms, the relationship is not a dualism, but a duality. However, there is much more to understand about temporality than that simple fact. In order to understand how we can intervene, act rhetorically or kairotically, in the world—to understand how we can intervene in what Rickert calls "kairos's material emplacement and unfolding and not just its timeliness or decorum" (76)— we must first understand what brings time to our attention.

Exigence

We become aware of the temporal dimension when we undergo what Dewey and Mead called an "event," what Lloyd Bitzer says we experience as an "exigence." Most contemporary rhetoricians will argue that even when interlocutors do share a common knowledge of the linguistic signs, of the context in which they are deployed, and of the circumstances of their utterance, the interlocutors may very well misunderstand one another's intentions if they do not recognize the same "rhetorical situation." According to Lloyd Bitzer's famous definition, a rhetorical situation is

> a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence. ("Rhetorical" 386)

Bitzer argues that what interlocutors have to come to share, what their speech's very purpose is to persuade others to understand, is the situation's "exigence," which he defines as "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (386).

From an interactionist perspective, it is indeed true that the need to resolve exigencies induces discursive interactions. Bitzer assumes, however, that interlocutors necessarily already commonly apperceive the "complex of persons, events, objects, and relations," as well as the exigence:

> The exigence and the complex of persons, objects, events and relations which generate rhetorical discourse are located in reality, are objective and publicly observable historic facts in the world we experience, and therefore available for scrutiny by an observer or critic who attends to them. To say the situation is objective, publicly observable, and historic means that it is real or genuine—that our critical examination will certify its existence. (390)

Bitzer's description of a situation seems to conform to the definition of a social field, but it conflicts with John Martin's second characteristic of a field, which suggests that fields tend to remain stable until changes in elements within the field alter the field itself. In other words, from a field theory perspective, we are always already in a field, a situation, *before* an exigence occurs. Given this, we can say that an exigence is not part of the current situation; rather, it disrupts the situation in which we are currently habitually interacting, creating an urgent need to reapperceive its field to account for changes in our situation. Fligstein calls this urgent need "crisis," noting that "these crises can have their origin from outside the field," and that these crises can be resolved only by "skilled social actors" (in other words, rhetors) who "design alternative frames for the organization of the field, propagate those frames, and convince other actors to cooperate toward newly defined identities and interests" (Fligstein 123). This is because, from a rhetorical field theory perspective, the elements of discursive fields exist for us only insofar as we apperceive them. Yet as we have

already seen, while those who actively participate or have actively participated through collective action in the emergence, maintenance, and transformation of a social field immediately perceive its elements, those who interact discursively with fields other than their own can coordinate interactions within those fields through their own interactions "only" metaphorically through a deictic or linguistic intervention. Similarly, when an exigence, "a thing which is other than it should be," arises, the elements that rhetors must call to their audience's attention are those they do *not* yet apperceive, particularly those being introduced to the field by elements intruding from other fields. Such previously unperceived elements are what make an exigence an exigence, what make a situation a *rhetorical* situation. The very function of rhetorical action is to direct attention to those field elements with which we are concerned and believe others should be as well so that we may dispose those others to act toward those elements in certain ways. If the elements were already "objective" and "publicly observable," then there would be no need for rhetorical action because there would be no need to raise concern, no motive to direct another's attention to the elements they are not noticing. Richard Vatz raises this issue when he argues that exigences are not "there" for anyone, but are created by rhetors' discourse (Vatz; see also Edbauer 6). But if that is so, why would rhetors create them? If a rhetorical exigence is not there and "available for scrutiny by an observer or critic who attends" to it, how does a rhetor come to attend to it in the first place, and by what means does a rhetor subsequently induce an audience to attend to it? What is the force of those elements newly introduced into a field?

I alluded to the question of how we come to attend to new elements earlier during the discussion of enthymemes and the tactics of argument, using Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden's definition of an argument as "an attempt to make the force of reasons apparent by calling attention to some reason an audience might not have properly incorporated, or taken heed of, in their reasoning or deliberations" (225). Enthymemes are tactical, I suggested, when a rhetor uses a field-specific term to direct attention to the field an object typically inhabits and that field's pertinent issues (i.e., its relevant elements). Thus, I argued, enthymemes can use signs tactically to induce their audiences to perform the perceptual actions presupposed by the required cognitive actions.

In an earlier work, I addressed the question of the force of new elements newly introduced into a field when I redescribed the classical rhetorical appeals—*logos, ethos,* and *pathos*—as

phases of a simultaneously cognitive, perceptual, and emotional inferential process, phases that mutually determine one another as we encounter expected and unexpected discursive events (see Yarbrough, "On the Very Idea" 507). Today I would revise that earlier work and describe the cognitive in terms of the symbolic dimension, the perceptual in terms of the behavioral dimension, and the emotional in terms of the environmental dimension. But back then, aligning the rhetorical appeals with Davidson's process of triangulation, I suggested that when we interact with a field's elements, we initially perceive it in some particular state, a perception that induces us to cognitively (logically) anticipate how the elements will respond to our actions; but as we do we emotionally (sensorially) feel the difference between our expectations and the elements' actual responses to our actions so that we alter our attention and attitudes toward the elements in response to these discrepancies, changing our (social) perception of the situation, and thus revising our cognitive expectations for them, and so on—all in a continuous cycle (see "On the Very Idea" 502). Thus, cognition, the process that determines for us our expectations of what will happen in a field, both conditions and is conditioned by the perceptual process that determines the state of the elements within a field in relation to ourselves, and our cognitive and perceptual processes both condition and are conditioned by the emotional process, which conditions our affective responses to the field. Because of the mutual conditioning of these phases, our experience of a situation is simultaneously cognitive, perceptual, and emotional. As I would say today, the three dimensions are integrated recursively.

The phase central to changing our discursive routines, however, is the emotional phase. Our emotions direct our attention and our emotional displays direct others' attention to a field's elements by signaling to ourselves, and to others who observe the displays, those discrepancies between responses we expect and those we actually receive. Just think of that kiss you once unexpectedly received from someone with whom you had only had perfunctory professional interactions before. What we "feel" bodily as emotion is a distance or discrepancy between some relation we habitually expect to hold between ourselves and some object or agent in that situation. One might say that emotion provides the "urgency" that Bitzer says mark exigences. In other words, emotion does not merely register the discrepancy, but induces a temporal sense of imminence and so of compulsion; it prepares us to act—before we cognitively understand why we should act. Nico

H. Frijda similarly defines emotions as "modes of relational action readiness, either in the form of tendencies to establish, maintain, or disrupt a relationship with the environment or in the form of a mode of relational readiness as such" (71). In short, "An emotion … is … the adjustment to sometimes radical discrepancies" between the behavioral and environmental *topoi* one expects to govern a field and "the actual or potential circumstances' resistance to our expectations." At the same time, an emotional display "is an improvised 'performance' intended to alter a situation in some way" (71). Most importantly, however, and also at the same time, "emotion prompts us to reconceive" a situation that has been altered by an exigence (Yarbrough, "On the Very Idea" 505). We can conclude that, because the cognitive, perceptual, and affective processes occur as phases of the same moment—that is, because the symbolic, behavioral, and environmental dimensions are recursively integrated—an exigence, by disrupting the habitual regularity of those processes, throws us "out of time," out of the tempo of our usual routine, motivating us to change our perceptive, emotional, and cognitive states—that is, it induces us to reattune ourselves to the situation's ambience.

Why do we perceive an exigence as an exigence in the first place? What initiates "a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (Bitzer, "Rhetorical" 386)? As I previously described, when we repeatedly interact with things and people for similar purposes, common objects of our attention emerge and organize topologically into fields. As the activities within a field proceed and elements within it emerge, the topological characteristics of the field itself change, continually reorganizing the field and continually altering the characteristics of those individual objects within it that are susceptible to the field's forces. Changes occur within fields all the time, but usually these are changes of the same kind and changes of similar agents and objects; they are steady states of activity governed genrically. Anthony Giddens referred to this process as the *"routinization"* of social life "as it stretches across time-space" (xxiii). This routinization "implies that most of our discourse, including linguistic discourse, is habitual. We engage in similar patterns of interaction when encountering similar situations—commonplace lines of thought from a commonplace [perceptual] stance [i.e., attitude] in a commonplace emotional tone" (Yarbrough, "On the Very Idea" 507-508). We go about our lives doing more or less the same things with more or less the same attitudes toward them in more or less the same ways (see

fig. 30). We seldom feel moved to change radically our beliefs, purposes, or actions. Our discourse, usually, is quotidian, uneventful, and repetitious. We make similar remarks and answer similar questions in similar situations in similar fields. All this habitual and repetitive interaction is necessary to our developing and maintaining objects and *topoi* we can discourse about within the genres of fields we can share. And as we have seen, the objects and agents we interact with have "inherited" their meanings from the fields they emerged from. But this is not the case with the interactions themselves. Recurrent interactions are not themselves meaningful no matter how meaningful

Figure 30: Routine

the objects of those interactions may be. Most of what we say and do "goes without saying" and can be summed up as the "same old same old," or "yada-yada." It is virtually insignificant. Yet it is highly satisfying when most of our expectations are met. So why would we alter our routines? What could motivate us, persuade us, to give up such satisfying habitual perceptions, emotions, and conceptions of objects whose familiar meanings give us our world and our sense of who we are?

Motive

The dominant model for explaining rhetorical motive in the twentieth century was Kenneth Burke's dramatism, and the dominant interpretation of Burke's concept of motive, according to William Benoit, was that of "a mental construct, a cognition that motivates, impels, or shapes human behavior, including symbolic action" (68). Benoit rejects this interpretation of Burke's motives, taking his cue from C. Wright Mills, who, Benoit says, "situates motives in words or linguistic behavior rather than the internal states of people" and "explicitly denies motives the status of internal, private, or cognitive states" (69). Benoit then goes on to argue that "motives are not cognitive, private, or situational factors that prompt, impel, create, or cause action, but are accounts, linguistic devices that function to explain, justify, interpret, or rationalize actions.

The actions accounted for by motives include, but are not necessarily limited to, other symbolic acts (and 'action' can include acts of omission as well as commission)" (70). He concludes that Burke, in fact, uses the term "motive" in at least two different ways: "as internal motivating states (motive[I]) and motives as discourse intended to explain, interpret, rationalize, characterize, justify, or account for our actions (motive[D])" (77, brackets original). This conclusion, it seems to me, elides the question of what exactly Burke believes motives are. If a motive is a cognitive state, what is the cognition of, and what induces that state? If motive is discourse, how does it differ from other discourse? In Benoit's interpretation of Burke, motives are rationales, explanations of actions already taken. A more promising approach is a much older interpretation which Benoit dismisses, that of R. E. Crable and J. J. Makay, who, according to Benoit, "appear [to] see motive as congeries of forces that act on an agent, resulting in an event" (69). Here motives are closer to inducements than rationales. Crable and Makay take their cue from Marie Hochmuth Nichols, who, they say, "admits that she found the use of the word 'particularly troublesome, until she asked Burke himself about it.' She implies that motive can really be considered the *interrelationships* existing among all of 'the factors in a given situation'" (Nichols 90, qtd. in Crable and Makay 13)—which is basically the very definition of the topography of a field. Crable and Makay also refer to Fogarty, who, paraphrasing Burke, says that "motive is but a shorthand term for situation" (72; see Burke, *Permanence* 52). As we have seen, a change in the topography of a field can be induced by a change in its elements and vice versa, so Nichols' and Fogarty's definitions fit better with an integrative rhetoric approach. Unfortunately, according to Crable and Makay, both Nichols and Fogarty "utilize the elements of the pentad as rubrics for analysis, and the concept of motive remains a term equal to interrelationship, situation, and/or purpose" (13). This "view that motive is 'interrelationship,' or situation, ignores the dynamics of the individual and interacting elements"; that is, the effect of the temporal dimension, whereas to Crable and Makay, "purposive motion is prompted by an elaborate interaction of forces acting upon the agent" (13). Burke, they note, sees these forces, or motives, as infinitely pervasive: "in everything there is a power or motive of some sort" (*Grammar* 118). According to Crable and Makay, then, for Burke, "motive" describes "the totality of the compelling force within an event which explains why the event took place" (17). So, for Crable and Makay, motive is a rationale for the force creating the event rather than a

rationale for the responsive action induced by the event. This is where Crable and Makay stop. They do not explain what *generates* "the compelling force within an event"—which I have identified as emotion—because they do not explain what an "event" is. But we have already seen that a rhetorical event is an "exigence" that disrupts the habitual regularity of our perceptual, emotional, and cognitive processes, throwing us "out of time," out of our comfortable rhythms of interaction within the field we currently inhabit. Thus, emotion motivates us to alter our attitudes, and so our perceptions of and cognitive expectations for a situation. And emotions, I can't emphasize enough, are bodily—sensorial. They are the environmental drivers of the behavioral/perceptual and the symbolic/cognitive processes. From the perspective of integrative rhetoric, that is what a motive, as an inducement to change from a habitual routine, is—an urgent, simultaneously cognitive-perceptual-emotional (symbolic-behavioral-sensorial) response to a disturbed field of interaction. But if we are to understand *how* we make and *why* we make these changes, and not just *that* we make them, we must first understand in more detail the character of the rhythms of interaction; that is, the temporal orders that a disturbed field motivates us to change, and, unlike Burke's theory, integrative rhetoric must take into account our simultaneous interactions among multiple fields.

Recurrence

As we saw earlier, we, and perhaps some other creatures, are discursive beings who can interact in more than one social field at a time. It is true, I think, that the habitual interactions that take place within a single social field can be adequately described by the five elements of Burke's pentad: scene, act, agent, agency, purpose. We can describe the motives of a mockingbird that chases a hawk from its territory with the pentad, although, to attribute purpose to the mockingbird, we must do so metaphorically, as a resemblance to human purposes, and from within symbolic/discursive fields. The pentad can describe an already-established perception of a recurring situation, a field with its elements that we and others already attend to and interact with in familiar ways and that we do not feel compelled to change. However, the pentad does not describe the patterns of interaction within the field—its temporal orders—and these, as I have claimed, are what an exigence, an event, disturbs. And we have to remember what creates an exigence: the interference of one field with another. Humans are discursive agents, agents

who interact simultaneously in more than one social field. When discursive interactions take place among multiple social fields, the temporal logics of these fields can intersect, collide, and merge.

Every discursive field is defined not only by the objects, agents, forces, and topical relations of the social fields it supervenes, but also by the sequences and timing of the habitually repeated motions or actions that constituted them. When you drive your car, there is a temporal order, a rhythm, to your interactions with the car and with the road and the other vehicles on it, as well as with pedestrians, traffic signs and signals, and so on. Most of the people in the other vehicles are interacting within the field much as you are, following similar sequences of action and reaction as you are, and that is why you can anticipate that when the traffic light ahead turns red, the car in front of you will slow and stop. Sometimes, however, we encounter agents who are not operating within the same field—the robber racing from his crime, the child chasing a ball, the deer crossing the road (see fig. 31). We experience something similar when we in our routine disciplinary activity encounter the activity of other scholars in different disciplinary fields interacting with the same "things" as we. It may be a bit humbling for me to accept the notion that my encounter with a new epistemological theory is at the

Figure 31: Deer Crossing the Road

social level not all that much different from my dog's encounter with a raccoon in her backyard, but so be it. Such encounters can interrupt our usual ways of thinking, force us to reapperceive what's "going on," and perhaps even reconfigure the field. When something like that occurs, a convergence between the fields we inhabit and the fields others currently inhabit interrupts the habitual repetitions within both our and the others' fields' causal sequences—their temporal orders. Such convergences produce what Lloyd Bitzer calls "exigencies" and Mead calls "events."

Events are unique. They are not anticipated recurrences. They disturb our prior habitual patterns of thought, perception, emotion, and action and provoke us to create new patterns. An event pulls relevant pasts and possible futures into the present, reconfiguring remembered and expected patterns into new pasts that will have conditioned the event and new futures that will have

been conditioned by it. It is important to notice that events, as opposed to a regular recurrence within a field, "take place" temporally only as they converge with other fields. The repetitions within a field become temporal events and consequently significant and measurable only when we experience them in relation to the repetitions within another field. The ticking of a clock is actually timeless, uneventful, and meaningless until we correlate it with another recurrent pattern, such as the rising and setting of the sun, or the beginning and ending of the television evening news. The melting of glacial ice becomes urgent in relation to the increasing of greenhouse gases. A change in weight becomes measurable against a numerical scale. Events—whether a supernova, a wave of nostalgia, or a pregnant pause in a conversation—are kairotic, intelligible, and meaningful only as relations between two or more fields of interaction.

Moreover, as Mead says, because time "can only arise through the ordering of passage by these unique events" (*Present* 62)—that is, only by the process of an event's reordering of a field's recurrences—the present, as the locus of reality and meaning, has what he calls "a temporal spread." The present, as it were, is a duality of past and future—it is an embodiment of a past it supervenes, as well as the future past that a future present will embody and supervene. Neither reality nor meaning can "be reduced to instants," as structuralist and poststructuralist theories claim, and the "earlier stages" of meaningful interaction "must be conditions of later phases" (*Present* 62). In summary, *the only meaningful interactions are events,* and events are always convergences of temporal orders that alter their order. Because of this alteration, understanding events necessarily requires us to reinterpret pasts and to reconfigure futures. Thus, from the perspective of an interactionist description of time, the structuralists' notion of "points" or "slices" of time—that is, of synchronic states, slices of a temporal continuum cut off from other slices and compared to them in their differences to describe changes as "diachronic"—is incorrect.

Spatio-Temporal Shifting

Meaningful actions, therefore, necessarily "take place" temporally *between and among* fields, in transitions of our attention between what Mead calls "consentient sets" of relationships; that is, relationships that make sense together from a certain perceptual perspective or "attitude." To put this slightly differently, the meaning of an event—its importance to our lives—lies in an agent's change of attitude, a change in an agent's disposition to act toward an object in a certain

way, for we become conscious of our attitudes toward things only in the act of changing those attitudes, and as Mead says, "meaning is consciousness of attitude" *(Selected* 111).

Such attitudinal shifts may occur within, and therefore meanings may arise from, any level of the fields above the physicochemical, and so sensorial meanings may be embodied in behavioral and symbolic interactions. Recognizing how such attitudinal shifts depend upon the sensorial fields may help us to understand what "happens" in the behavioral and symbolic dimensions when, upon the perception of an "event," we change the way we respond to a situation. Let's think about what happens in visual perception—perception of the visual relations among objects—when we make such a shift. An "attitude" that organizes a "consentient set" of social interactions may depend upon a visual perspective that organizes a gestalt, a set of topologically organized objects within a visual field. A gestalt, typically, is defined as a pattern or configuration of visual elements that is so unified that we cannot describe it merely as the sum of its parts; in other words, it is an organized visual field. More importantly to our current context, however, a gestalt is a set of visual relationships we perceive between and among elements within the whole of an object that we could perceive differently from the way we currently do.

Consider again Jastrow's famous duck/rabbit sketch. When we look at this sketch, we see a readily identifiable image of either a duck or a rabbit. Most of us can, however, easily "shift" from seeing a duck to seeing a rabbit and vice versa. For other types of "optical illusions" (or "ambiguous figures," according to Peterson et al.) such as stereograms, we may need to stare rather intently, changing from stereoptic vision to parallel vision or strabistic (cross-eyed) vision before, quite suddenly and with astonishing clarity, we see, say, an image of a bee where before we had seen only a chaotic jumble of colors (see fig. 32).

Gestalt shifts in a visual field, such as the one we make when seeing a duck instead of a rabbit, may condition
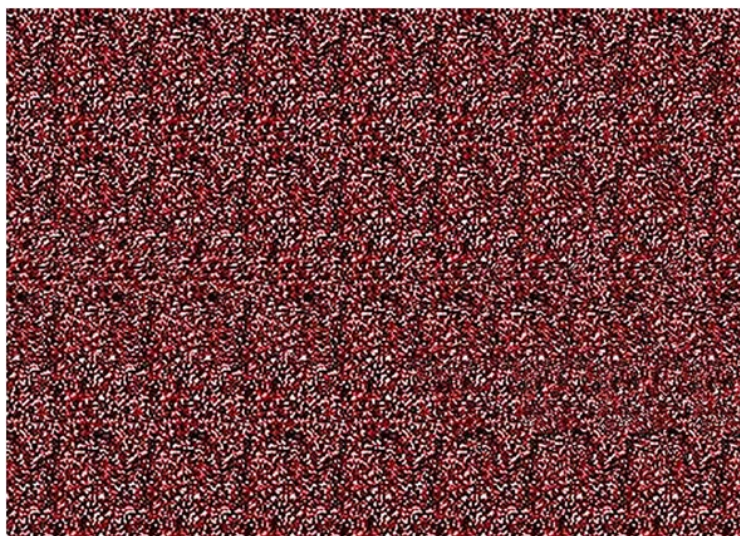

Figure 32: Bee Stereogram

the attitudinal changes we make within a social field when we perceive convergences of temporal orders having conflicting interactional patterns. Temporal attitudinal changes in a social field occur when, for example, someone who interacted with us according to one habitual pattern begins to act in some other pattern, as when our coworker friend is promoted to become our boss. Now we must enter a new discursive field within the institutional field we both inhabit. We find that, at least in the workplace, we have to interact differently with our friend than we did before, and that our behavior will mean something different to our friend now than what the same behavior would have meant to her before, just as her behavior will mean something different to us now than what the same behavior would have meant to us before. The gestalt shift from duck to rabbit within a visual field is in many respects like the attitudinal change we make from coworker to boss within an institutional field. When we make either shift, neither the thing itself (the sketch or friend) nor the "sensory data" received by our brains has changed; we can neither see both the duck and the rabbit at the same time nor interact with the friend and the boss at the same time in the same way, and once we have successfully made a gestalt or attitudinal shift, we can perform it at will (see the discussion on agency below). Moreover, one cannot persuade another agent to believe that what they see as a rabbit or friend is actually a duck or boss until the other actually makes the shift. More importantly, some people cannot make the shift at all. For instance, someone who has never seen a duck and does not know what one looks like is unlikely to see one in the image, and your friend's brother who does not work for the company is unlikely to interact with her as his boss. In other words, both types of perceptual shifts, visual gestalt shifts and social shifts, are temporal attitudinal shifts, and they conform to what John Martin describes as the third characteristic of fields: "the elements have particular attributes that make them susceptible to the field effect; … the mere existence of some class of persons who are not susceptible to a social field effect does not disprove the claims regarding the existence of the field" (7).

One important consequence of all these characteristics is that those who can and do make the shift are discursively cut off from those who can't or won't make it. This is because, first, the purpose that organizes a field comes from the field immediately above it; second, a shift at a higher field level may embody and depend upon a shift at a lower level; and, third, a spatial, topological shift always involves a temporal, interactional shift and vice versa: the objects, agents, forces, and

topical relations we perceive condition how we interact with things in a situation, just as the way we interact with things determines the objects, agents, forces, and relations we perceive. Imagine a group of people who have made the gestalt shift standing in front of the stereogram poster discussing the bee, arguing whether the image is of a bee or a wasp. As those in another group who have never made the shift listen to their conversation, nothing the first group says will make sense to the second group—even though they may share the same "language"—and so, unless the members of the second group make the gestalt shift so that they can see the bee, both groups will have to make a temporal shift and interact with the members of the other groups differently from the way they interact with members of their own group. If Davidson's theory of triangulation is right and discursive interaction requires that two interlocutors interact not only with one another but also with a common object, then it follows that the two groups with different attitudes toward the object will not be able to discuss the bee together, and that nothing the first group can say will convince or persuade the second that the bee is even "there," much less that what they say about the bee is true. We observe such situations in politics quite commonly these days when opponents accuse one another of living in "their own reality." This phenomenon has enormous rhetorical consequences because it has enormous logical consequences.

Charles Sanders Peirce calls attention to the convergence of perception, thought, and discourse when he describes what happens when novelty is introduced into our regular pattern of thought:

> Abductive inference shades into perceptual judgment without any sharp line of demarcation between them; or, in other words, our first premises, the perceptual judgments, are to be regarded as an extreme case of abductive inference, from which they differ in being absolutely beyond criticism. The abductive suggestion comes to us in a flash. It is an act of *insight*, although of extremely fallible insight. It is true that the different elements of the hypothesis were in our minds before; but it is the idea of putting together what we had never before dreamed of putting together which flashes the new suggestion before our contemplation. (*Collected* 181)

Abductive inferences, you will recall from our earlier discussion of enthymemes, are those inferences from the best of many possible explanations, which we use when we appeal, implicitly,

to an object's position within a field of interaction. We answer a question or solve a problem not in a sequence of formal logical steps but instantaneously by resituating it. It follows that those who have had the "insight" Peirce refers to will not be able to debate what it means with those who have not.

If the two groups before the stereogram is an example of unsuccessful discourse, what conditions must change to allow the two groups to interact successfully with respect to the stereogram? To answer that question, we must remember that the purpose that organizes a field comes from the field immediately above it. Earlier, we discussed an important difference between the two mutually constitutive relationships that emerge from and supervene sensorial interactions, *technical and ethical* relations. I claimed that technical relations arise when an organism begins to interact with a thing in order to effect a change in some other thing. The technical are the organism's relations to things as tools, as means of effecting purposeful change in some other thing, and they include not only our use of our bodies but also our use of "exosomatic organs" that serve as extensions of or substitutions for our bodies. Technical relations constitute a class of potential ways of interacting that extends well beyond purposeful relations with inanimate objects as they are embodied in purposeful relations with animals, humans, signs, and even imaginary objects. The technical includes the many ways we relate to objects as *tools*, as means of effecting purposeful change in some other object. These relations determine what we can and cannot do. Thus, it may be that the members of the second group, who cannot see the bee, simply have a technical problem; they may be unable to focus their eyes from stereoptic vision to parallel or to strabistic vision, perhaps because of a lack of experience or exercise in this action or perhaps because of a genetically caused difference in the structure of their visual organs, and so be technically incapable of apperceiving the bee (see the discussion of Davidson's anomalous monism in my introduction). Consequently, if the members of the second group are to be able to discursively interact with members of the first group, they must first *do*, physicochemically and sensorially, what the members of the first group already do physicochemically and sensorially to constitute the objects of their discourse before they can perceive the relevant ethical or evaluative issues constituted by the technical. They will never be able to interact socially in the behavioral dimension, much less linguistically and logically in the symbolic dimension, with members of

the first group until they have interacted sensorially and physicochemically in the environmental dimension with the objects of the first group's discourse.

But even if the members of the second group were technically able to make the shift so that they could successfully interact with the first group, they also must be *ethically* willing to do so. Our social relationships depend upon technical/ethical relationships, and these supervene the sensorial. Just as each thing stands in some potential technical/ethical relation to us, so does every person; and just as each person stands in some potential social relation to us, so does every creature, idea, sign, and image. All objects of our attention are socially, technically/ethically, and sensorially integrated as we interact with our world. Thus, if those in the second group are to make the change necessary to apperceive the bee and successfully interact socially, linguistically, and logically with those in the first group, not only will those in the second group have to be technically able; they will have to be ethically willing to make the shift, and I suggest that they will not become ethically willing until they have to, and they will not have to unless their inability to successfully interact with the first group interferes with their ability to maintain their ordinary, but satisfying, habitual routines of interaction. In other words, an exigence provides a motive to change our attitude when it disrupts our environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions because it disrupts our temporal dimension—those recurrent patterns in which our interactions take place.

All this suggests that, when an event occurs, we must change our attitudes in order to perceive the affecting objects, agents, forces, and topics—that is, we must shift fields in order to interact with those elements. However, because a single event can take place in multiple fields and can have not only multiple significations but also multiple meanings, both to an individual and to other agents, no event determines our responses with certainty. According to Mead, we can understand different attitudes spatio-temporally as different "intersection[s] by different time systems of the same body of events" (*Present* 174). There are thus "an indefinite number of possible simultaneities of any event with other events, and consequently an indefinite number of possible temporal orders of the same events" (*Present* 174). However, as the discipline of rhetoric has maintained since its inception, although any event within a field can elicit an indefinite number of possible responses, making prediction uncertain, one can determine the probability

of a possible response. This is because, as Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam have shown, "Fields do not exist in a vacuum. They have relations with other strategic action fields and these relations powerfully shape the developmental history of the field" (59). According to Fligstein and McAdam, "The relations between strategic action fields are of three types: *unconnected*, hierarchical or *dependent*, and reciprocal or *interdependent*" (59). Further, they have argued that "there can be a form of embedding whereby actors that make up smaller collectivities are located within larger strategic action fields that contain larger collectivities." They describe this as "the 'Russian doll' quality of strategic action fields" (59). Because of this nesting quality,

> higher order groups can sometimes command lower order groups. But it is possible for lower order groups to dominate these relationships as well. This can happen because sometimes the lower order strategic action fields are dependent on higher order strategic actions fields, and at other times, the higher order strategic action fields can be dependent on lower order strategic action fields. There can also be cooperative relationships within groups of strategic action fields organized as Russian dolls. (59-60)

In short, power relations are field relations. The ability of one field to constrain another is the source of the rhetor's ability to negotiate the course of response to an event in a way that is most likely to return activity to a habitual flow.

For instance, if my daughter were getting ready for a date while I was reading a book and the doorbell rang—an event signaling the boyfriend's early appearance—my attitude toward the ringing bell, and therefore the meaning of the event to me with respect to my evening's leisure, would be very different from its meaning to my daughter because the event interrupts the flow of my expected activity very differently from the way it interrupts hers. Thus, what the ringing bell would mean to me—that is, the response I would have—is very different from what it would mean to her. For me, it would be mildly annoying to have to stop before reaching the end of the chapter and to have to pretend to be glad to visit with the young man, but the same event would throw my daughter into mild consternation and frenzied activity. I don't even want to think about what the ringing bell would mean to the boy. The singular event would affect multiple temporal orders. This implies, of course, that each event has an indefinite number of meanings.

Such a plurivocity would render events meaningless (because an event that means

everything means nothing) if we were not socially discursive creatures occupying multiple fields that can be organized dependently or interdependently by other fields. A discursive act can coordinate several social fields because it is "an actual organization of perspectives," and so it can limit our response to and organize those temporal orders that are relevant to *us* (not just me) at the time. In this case, the field of my family's domestic activities and relationships has the power to constrain the fields of my personal domestic leisure activities. My actions after the doorbell rings result not just from my immediate attitude, but also from my taking up my daughter's and the boy's attitudes. If my attitude as a leisurely reader were the only thing governing my action, I would simply ignore the bell just as I would ignore it if it were coming from a television show playing in the background. The limit of discursive action, as Mead says, "is found in the inability of individuals to place themselves in the perspectives of others" (*Present* 174-75); conversely, the potential for effective discursive action lies in the individual's ability to enter into "the perspectives of others"; that is, to "take their attitudes, or occupy their points of view" (175)—to shift apperceptual fields in order to enter their time and so order our own time and actions accordingly.

This ability to shift spatio-temporally from one field to another (including the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic fields others inhabit), to shift "positions" or "roles" within a field, adjusting our sense of time and self, is absolutely essential to our social (and symbolic) agency and therefore to our rhetorical competence. We necessarily perform continual temporal shifts every day because we share the world with other agents (not just human agents, remember) who at the same time perform different acts from ourselves, with different purposes from ourselves, attending to different scenes from ourselves, using different agencies from ourselves. Other agents perceive different significant relationships among the world's objects, and they therefore interact with them in patterns of action different from our own. We accommodate their different temporal patterns primarily by altering the *timing* of our actions within our own current field of conduct. Sometimes it may be necessary to shift to a different field altogether or shift within a field to accommodate the different positions (the functions and duties, the "roles") assumed by others. Most of the actions we take are accommodations to the actions of others, others whose actions are often motivated by different exigences from those that motivate our own. We speed up, slow down, and stop in traffic because of others, we rush our lunch and hurry to a meeting because of them, we adjust our

syllabi because of them, we postpone washing our clothes because of them, we wait in line at the theater because of them, and on and on. Because of what others do and say, we alter what we do and say, how we do and say it, and when we do and say it.

Because events are always intersections of different spatio-temporal orders—environmental, behavioral, and symbolic—events disturb our world's ambience. To remain attuned to ambience, we must adapt to changes in our world, including the changing temporalities of others. To do so, we must integrate these orders within what Mead calls the "temporal spread" of the present. Integrating events necessarily requires us to reinterpret our pasts even as we reconfigure our futures. We respond to the different times of the same event, to the different relevant ways the same thing is what it is, and to the different fields in the different dimensions to which that thing belongs as an object at that same time. During any symbolic interaction, even when we say or hear something as simple as "shut the door," we are simultaneously interacting within multiple fields and within every ambient dimension. Thus, as objects come to our attention from different fields in different dimensions, they, at any one time, have multiple potential meanings from which we can choose.

Agency and Preference

How can we choose? When we discussed *kairos* earlier, I quoted Rickert as saying, "The point is not that [agents] do not make choices but that their choices are already immersed in the context in which they get played out" (93). In a similar vein, Daniel Robichaud has argued that agency is a "relational configuration ... , a situationally embedded connection of connections between heterogeneous entities" (102), such that we should consider agency as being "best described as the result of action, not as the source of action" (105-06). This definition of agency resembles Benoit's interpretation of Burke's motives as rationales and Mead's doctrine that a self will change character only after it has acted from another's perspective: in all three cases, attribution of agent or agency can only follow upon the act. But each of these theorists, including Rickert, consider action only within a single field or "context" of activity. As we have seen, however, human agents can apperceive two or more fields of activity simultaneously and coordinate their actions in order to accommodate the interactions within more than one field simultaneously. This is what creates the opportunity for decision, choice, and therefore agency, and without agency, there

can be no rhetorical action. Recently, some poststructuralist theories have denied our need to recognize human agency, and in certain limited circumstances, we really don't need to. If you are interacting within only one field, you have no real choices. If you are playing chess, for example, the game requires you to make the best possible move you recognize in order to win, which is the purpose organizing the game/field. The field is so structured and rule-bound, the relevant objects and their relations are so limited, and the aims and purposes are so fixed that we could say it is the game itself that determines our moves.

Often modeled on such games, many contemporary theories, especially those strongly influenced by structuralism, tend to discount agency. As Carolyn R. Miller has said,

> Poststructuralist or posthumanist theories detach agency from the agent, challenging our syntactic habits of treating agency as a possession and of using agency after transitive verbs—tropes that reify the agent. Agents do not "have" or "acquire' agency. Instead, agency is said to "possess" the agent, or to "precede" the agent, to "discursive and aesthetic conditions," to Lacanian tropes or the Symbolic, to "the spaces in and from which rhetorical situations take shape and meaning," to "the structures and dispositions that constitute the habitus." Many have questioned whether rhetoric can survive this dispersion of agency. (Miller, "Automation" 143)

Games like chess have been models for structuralist and poststructuralist thinking since Saussure (see Yarbrough, *After* 130-132). In such thinking, choice is a fictional attribution such that the death of the author or agent seems assured. But if you have what we call "ulterior motives" for playing the game—say you are teaching a child to play chess, or you are playing in a tournament and have asked a friend to place a bet against you—then you may very well intentionally make what from the perspective of the game of chess alone is a poor move in order to demonstrate to the child its consequences or to win the money you need to pay your rent. Since the dynamics of chess are not necessarily affected by the dynamics of either parenting or personal finance, we can say it would have been your choice to allow them to do so. It's your simultaneous apperception of multiple fields that gives you that choice and the ability to make it, whether you want to make it or not. Rhetorical power lies in our power to shift fields and to induce others to shift fields.

That is why Miller's promising alternative to the postmodern dispersal of agency will not

save the concept of rhetorical agency. Miller has suggested "that we think of agency as the *kinetic energy* of rhetorical performance." She says,

> In invoking the distinction that physics makes between potential and kinetic energy, I'm comparing agency not to the energy of a stone sitting at the top of the cliff but rather to the energy it has as it falls, the energy of motion. But in this case, we're interested not in the motion of stones but in the symbolic actions of rhetorical performers. If agency is a potential energy, it will be thought of as a possession or property of an agent (like a stationary stone), but if agency is a kinetic energy, it must be a property of the rhetorical event or performance itself. Agency thus could not exist prior to or as a result of the evanescent act. ("Automation" 147)

Even if we ignore in Miller's analogy, the obvious physical fact that the stone's energy at rest (potential) is the *same* energy as the stone's energy in motion (kinetic), and that if it weren't for the one it could not have the other, the real problem is that in either case the stone has no choice, and no preference if it had a choice. Its motion is constrained absolutely by the gravitational field. It's in the same position as my computer's chess program, which will make the best move its algorithms can generate no matter what: the stone can move in no other field besides the one it's in; it cannot shift to another field in which gravitation is not an issue.

A better approach to the question of agency, in my view, is the one Marilyn M. Cooper presents. Like Miller, Cooper believes that "individual agency is necessary for the possibility of rhetoric" (426), but she thinks of agency as an emergent property of organisms that "are not epiphenomena, nor 'possessions' in any sense, but function as part of the systems in which they originate" (421). Somewhat like Fligstein's notion of fields that may supervene one another, nest within one another, and interact and intervene with one another, Cooper's notion of "complex systems" allows for nonlinear causes: "change arises not as the effect of a discrete cause, but from the dance of perturbation and response as agents interact" (421). Furthermore, similar to my argument that rhetors do not change others' minds or change the "language" others use, but instead change the configuration of the fields in which the others interact, Cooper agrees with complexity theorists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela that "the changes that result from the interaction between the living being and its environment are brought about by the disturbing

agent but *determined by the structure of the disturbed system*" (qtd. in Cooper 426, emphasis original); that is, by what I described as an "exigence." What is most important for Cooper is that we do "experience ourselves as causal agents"—as having brought about changes—and that "we need to hold ourselves and others responsible for what we do" (437). Just because this change is the result of "a process of mutual adaptation that occurs when organisms or systems perturb one another in a prolonged interaction, gradually becoming more attuned to one another" (437), and just because "the thought processes involved can be both nonconscious and conscious" and the changes are as much acts of listeners or readers as they are acts of speakers or writers (438), that does not mean that rhetors are not agents. As Cooper insists, "Agency is a matter of action; it involves doing things intentionally and voluntarily, but is not a matter of causing whatever happened" (438).

So if our need to exercise agency, our need to recognize and to acknowledge agency, is the consequence of our ability to perceive and interact in more than one field simultaneously, that leaves us with the question of why we would choose to persuade or be persuaded to act to achieve this goal rather than another, to pursue this avenue toward it rather than another. This is the question of preference, of desire. The question, of course, is extremely complicated, one that could not be answered adequately with a book or series of books, much less in the concluding paragraphs of this chapter. Nevertheless, I will offer a quick and dirty answer: we can assume that, because what an exigence does is disrupt the habitual regularity of our interactions, throwing us "out of time," and because the disruption of our satisfying habitual temporal order is our motive to act, we ordinarily prefer to choose the goals and paths toward them that we determine will restore us to a habitual regularity and a steady state of activity—perhaps not the same habitual regularity, but some habitual regularity. What we "want" is for our logic to be coherent, our emotions to be stable, our social relations to be dependable, our technics to be reliable, and so on. We don't want to be surprised, to be taken unawares, confused, perplexed, lost, startled, betrayed, or bewildered.

Others, of course, have given similar answers to this question. Hegel believed that we are driven to resolve every contradiction we confront. Under the impulse to achieve "freedom," a state in which "in what confronts the subject there is nothing alien" (97), we "struggle to cancel

[any] situation of unfreedom … to make the world one's own in one's ideas and thought" (98). Freud postulated that the basic drive of every living thing is not to change for the sake of change but to "constantly repeat the same course of life," and that any change in a course of action "must be attributed to external disturbing and diverting influences" (32). Burke thought that we were driven to strive for "perfection," that "there is a kind of 'terministic compulsion' to carry out the implications of one's terminology" (*Language* 19). Peter Brooks has argued that the plot of a narrative carries out a desire for the end that is inherent in the beginning, using repetitions that "force us to recognize sameness within difference" (290) and create "an energetic constant-state situation which will permit the emergence of mastery" (289), the sense of control over a diversity of elements while remaining in the same basic rhythmic pattern. John Rawls has argued that our "sense of justice" is driven by our need for social stability, and that the "circumstances of justice" are those "conditions under which human cooperation is both possible and necessary" (109). Similarly, Fligstein and McAdam note that "the desire to resolve a field crisis often reflects 'existential' motives as much as narrow instrumental ones. That is, all manner of field actors—even those who stand to benefit from severe and prolonged crisis—have a stake in restoring the shared sense of order and existential integrity on which social life ultimately rests" (22). Finally, Alan Fogel et al. have argued that although our "emotions are continuous and always present," they are usually in a state of "dynamic stability." Their research indicates, "Periods of time that are often called 'emotional' reflect particular dynamic processes that motivate a change in the individual's relationship to context" (133). This happens "when a new component is added to the system, or when one or more of the existing components of the system is changed" (133). As a result, "at a certain point the stable pattern suddenly breaks up and the system reorganizes into a new pattern" (133). The whole point of emotional work, therefore, seems to be to return to a state of "dynamic stability."

To sum up, we human beings are very complex creatures perceiving and interacting with the elements of multiple fields in multiple spatial dimensions simultaneously, and therefore we are temporal creatures. The integration of these fields constitutes our sense of time, our habitual routine pace of activity, until the activities of these fields conflict in the form of events. Such events force us to choose among the possible meanings and courses of action the fields afford, shift our

attitudes, and readjust our actions and their timing, always in an attempt to restore our lives to a satisfactory state of activities, a new routine—that is, in an attempt to reattune to the ambient. The choices we make depend upon the fields we inhabit and their relationships to one another, the character of the exigences we confront, and the meanings available to us as a consequence of our prior developmental experiences, but no matter how monotonous, desperate, thrilling, deliberate, or risky our activities, in the end all we want, as the test pilots in *The Right Stuff* put it, is to "maintain an even strain."

Quiz question 6: **Are you, as you read this question, the same person who lied to your teacher about your homework in the eighth grade?**

Answer: **You are, but you don't think you are.**

Why? This question is usually thought in terms of whether personal identity is relational or substantial. We are born from, into, and are part of an ambient world, but what aspects of the ambient we can attend to develops over time, and what we do attend to at any one time changes all the time. Nevertheless, all of the ambient is present even when we are focused intently on even the most minute of details. So our self is a relation to everything we could attend to, while our sense of self is a relation to what we are attuned to. Burke's notions of "identification" and "consubstantiality" hint at the significance of these relationships to rhetorical interactions.

Conclusion

Summary and Prospects

In this brief introduction to integrative rhetoric, I have attempted to explain rhetorical ambience—not how it feels but how it works. I began by quoting Thomas Rickert's claim that ambience "is not an impartial medium but an ensemble of variables, forces, and elements that shape things in ways difficult to quantify or specify. These elements are simultaneously present and withdrawn, active and reactive, and complexly interactive among themselves as much as with human beings" (7). I went on to quote Rickert as saying that ambience "is not simply surroundings but a dynamic, immersive environment composed of many coadapting elements that produce new levels of 'order.' In that sense, it is *emergent*: an ecology of elements and forces in dynamic, mutually conditioning interaction" (116). Rickert's analysis was largely philosophical, and primarily Heideggerian, but for this study I took a more pragmatic approach. My exploration was guided by questions beyond the scope of Rickert's inquiry, questions such as these: What are these "variables, forces, and elements"? How do these elements "shape things"? In what ways are these elements "interactive among themselves"? What are these levels of order within an immersive environment? How are these levels related to one another and how do they emerge from, supervene, and embody one another?

To answer these questions, I suggested using a heuristic approach, modeling the "levels of 'order'" within ambience toward which Rickert gestures, in a way analogous to the way general systems theory, and particularly the theory of integrative levels, has modeled the order of the scientific world. For this model, I postulated a "map" of the rhetorical territory—four *dimensions* of order: the *environmental,* with its physicochemical and sensorial fields; the *behavioral*, with its technical/ethical and social fields; the *symbolic*, with its discursive/genric, linguistic, logical, and reflective fields; and the *temporal*, which integrates the three spatial orders. I also proposed a theory of rhetorical integration, which holds that although we experience these levels of fields simultaneously, we have developed our ability to perceive them sequentially, with each later level emerging from, supervening, and embodying the earlier levels' already established orders so that each level has a "dual" structure and each level is linked to and integrated with the others through these dualities, from the lowest to the highest. This simultaneous temporal experience of the three spatial dimensions is what we call rhetorical "ambience." In this journey, I began with

the topography of the environmental dimension and showed how the objects, agents, forces, and relations developed through experience within it condition and enable the possibilities of the meanings of interactions in the behavioral dimension, and then I showed how the objects and relations developed through experience within the behavioral dimension condition and enable the possibilities of the meanings of interactions in the symbolic dimension. But my description of the topography could just as easily have gone in the opposite direction. I could have begun with the symbolic and focused on how the topography of its levels supervene and organize the topography of the behavioral dimension, and then how interactions within the behavioral dimension supervene and organize the topography of the environmental dimension. Both paths are valid because the relationships between every level are dual and recursive, and I tried to make that clear throughout.

One significant exception to this integrative recursion between levels is the physicochemical, for these fields embody no lower level that limits their randomness and contingency. Consequently, we cannot alter the *way* physicochemical things purposelessly interact with one another. Because physicochemical things move to no purposes, actions at the higher levels cannot alter their purposes. Alchemy and magic are simply nonstarters. Technologically, we can alter the organization of our environment, of course. Governed by the purposes we develop at higher levels, our bodies can interact somatically and exosomatically with things physicochemically: we can split logs and split atoms. But the purposes of the higher levels cannot alter how the physicochemical can be organized. As a result, the absence of a recursive relationship between physicochemical fields and those that supervene them conditions our experiences and interactions within all subsequent fields. Physicochemical fields draw the lines between what we can and cannot do. In short, the physicochemical fields determine—that is, fix the possibilities of—our sensorial experience and, ultimately, social and symbolic meaning, and they are the grounds of ambience.

The other significant exception to this integrative recursion between levels is the reflective. Whereas interactions in all the other fields beyond the physicochemical find their meanings conditioned by fields they immediately supervene (e.g., the objects of actions in the discursive fields are initially those generated in social fields), because no higher fields supervene the reflective fields, reflective actions not only can embody linguistic objects, they also can embody themselves.

Thus, when untethered from our immediately experienced ambience, the interaction of thought with itself frees us to think with respect to nonexistent imagined situations and use the objects and topics generated within them to organize our perceptions of and interactions in the lower fields in the "double hermeneutic" Giddens describes. At this point we enter Jean Baudrillard's "strange new world constructed out of models or simulacra which have no referent or ground in any 'reality' except their own" (Poster 5-6). The physicochemical and the reflective thus stake out the limits of rhetorical territory. This territory is forever expanding, but it is bounded.

Of all the integrative levels, the discursive level is the most crucial to rhetorical interaction. None of the fields beneath the discursive are rhetorical except to the extent that they are embodied by the social fields that are themselves embodied in discursive fields. All our rhetorical interactions take place in time, in the temporal dimension we traditionally call *kairos*. *Kairos* opens only in the discursive fields in which we apprehend relations between the recurrent interactions defining the social field we inhabit and those defining other fields. Every social field has its temporal orders of recurrence, but repetitive activities within a field become temporal events, and consequently significant and measurable, only when we experience them in relation to the repetitions within another field. Rhetorical activity, then, which is intended to induce change, is necessarily temporal, the temporal is necessarily symbolic, the symbolic is necessarily behavioral, and the behavioral is necessarily environmental.

Thus, its recursivity bounded at one extreme by physicochemical singularity and at the other by reflective infinity, ambience, in its three spatial dimensions, is stratified in integrative levels of various fields and their multitudinous elements, but unified temporally through our interactions within it. Ambience is the territory within which we rhetorically and temporally interact, the territory revealed to us through our rhetorical interactions and to be explored by us through integrative rhetoric. It is a huge and ever-expanding territory to explore. Consequently, compiling this new map has necessarily been a highly interdisciplinary and eclectic effort. In many respects, past theoretical descriptions of the rhetorical territory have resembled the blind men's descriptions of the elephant (see Saxe): careful descriptions of the parts that lack a sense of the whole (see fig. 33 on next page). So finding answers to the questions raised by Rickert's definition

Figure 33: The Blind Men and the Elephant ("The Blind Men").

of ambience required bringing to bear a number of theoretical approaches, including pragmatism, interactionism, phenomenology, field theory, thing theory, discourse analysis, Marxism, systems theory, complexity theory, cognitive science, actor-network-theory, semantics, semiotics, hermeneutics, activity theory, analytic philosophy, and others, and it crossed over to find help from such other disciplines as physics, philosophy, biology, environmental science, sociology, and psychology. Although some may view integrative rhetoric as unacceptably eclectic, what it in fact does is gather into itself inherently rhetorical issues and questions that have been dispersed over history to newer, less comprehensive disciplines. Some of these disciplines have been busily absorbing rhetorical issues into themselves. Kenneth Burke said in his Introduction to *A Rhetoric of Motives* that he "would but rediscover rhetorical elements that had become obscured when

rhetoric as a term fell into disuse, and other specialized disciplines such as esthetics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and sociology came to the fore (so that esthetics sought to outlaw rhetoric, while the other sciences … took over, each in its own terms, the rich rhetorical elements that esthetics would ban" (xiii). We have seen, for instance, how sociologists Fligstein and McAdam, in *A Theory of Fields*, propose what they call "a unique theory of 'social skill' peculiar to humans" (16), which they link to "the possibilities for change in strategic action fields at different moments in their evolution" (17). People with these skills "discover, articulate, or appropriate and propagate" what Fligstein and McAdam call "broader conceptions of the world and of themselves" in order to "create and sustain social worlds by securing the cooperation of others" (17).

From another point of view, integrative rhetoric can be said to respond to Serge Moscovici's call for a synthesis of "anthropology, psychology, economics and the rest." "These sciences," he says,

> should become more permeable to one another, more attuned to the events and problems which arise within the historical context. In an expanding world like ours, those sciences which are congealed within their ancient frontiers are destined to lose more and more of their relevance and reach. In sum, the real trajectory of critical thought towards its proper effect will be achieved by promoting communication, by reconceiving diversified clumps of knowledge as a network, and by modeling that on emerging realities. (3)

In a sense, then, integrative rhetoric promotes Moscovici's demand for "establishing the ground of renewal, indeed a new terrain which will see a flexible union of sociology, economics, psychology, history. And this will not be just a question of some specialized sectors—ecological history, the psychology of ecology, etc.—among others, as is the case at present" (19).

From a more practical perspective, we can regard the exploration of ambience through integrative rhetoric as establishing new canons, offering another way to view our very old discipline. It may not only help us to, as I. A. Richards put it, "realize how far back into the past all our meanings go, how they grow out of one another … and how they are inseparable from one another" (30), but it also may offer a new approach to rhetoric pedagogy by giving us new paths to traverse rhetorical territory and clarify the nature of the relationships among the various elements

and forces that condition every rhetorical act. The traditional canons—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery—gave us categories that for centuries guided our pedagogy, basically serving as a rubric for showing students what they must attend to if they were to successfully respond with discourse to a particular situation or analyze a rhetorical act in order to understand why it did or did not succeed. The new canons, the four dimensions, cannot replace the old, but they may give us new ways to teach the processes that the old canons describe: even the brief treatment of rhetorical integration presented here has redefined and resituated many of the classical areas of concern: *topoi* and enthymemes; metaphor; the rhetorical "appeals" of *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*; *kairos*; memory; and, most importantly, the nature of "persuasion" itself.

Additionally, these new canons let us raise very different questions from those the traditional canons, with their originally almost exclusive concern with formal, oral rhetoric, have let us raise, especially questions concerning the conditions that make successful discourse possible in various circumstances. Because of the traditional canons' limitations, many of these are the questions that other disciplines have taken on as their own, such as questions about language development, social stratification and inequality, "new" media, diplomacy, education, personal relations, international relations, gender relations, learning, childhood development, and so forth. Integrative rhetoric, by providing a "map" of the "integrative levels" of the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions and descriptions of the temporal orders through which we interact within these spatial dimensions, may offer rhetoric a more comprehensive and subsequently more useful heuristic from which to orient students within the discipline's continually expanding interests and issues.

Finally, as we have seen, a theory of ambience's integrative rhetorical levels holds that although we experience these levels of fields simultaneously, as individuals having unique experiences and as members of groups having shared experiences, we have developed our ability to perceive these levels historically, with each later level emerging from, supervening, and depending upon the earlier levels' already established orders. If this is the case, then integrative rhetoric could ground a theory of developmental rhetoric, somewhat like the developmental branches of psychology and sociology. As a subdiscipline of rhetoric, developmental rhetoric could, on the one hand, investigate the development of an individual's rhetorical competence,

comparing her actual experience within the four dimensions to the expectations and assumptions shared by her social group, while on the other hand, it could investigate the effects of changes in the environmental, behavioral, and symbolic dimensions upon the rhetorical practices and processes of groups across historical time. In either case, an understanding of the levels of the rhetorical fields, their elements, and their integration could provide an invaluable heuristic guide for the investigation of such developmental issues.

The study of ambience through integrative rhetoric offers numerous prospects for future work, but perhaps even more importantly, it can help us understand how past investigations relate to one another within that vast territory we call rhetoric.

ENDNOTES

1. Later I will argue that rhetorical action always involves the integration of multiple fields, and, even further, that the very purpose of symbolic fields is to organize and negotiate other fields.

2. This last characteristic does not imply that actions can have no unintentional rhetorical consequences, but that unintended purposes are not rhetorical. As I will explain below, events are intentional if they are motions directed toward an object. Intentions are not necessarily conscious.

3. What Davidson calls the physical dimension corresponds roughly with what I will call the "environmental" dimension, and what he calls the "mental" corresponds roughly with what I will call the "symbolic" and "behavioral" dimensions.

4. Heidegger is primarily interested in the phenomenological experience of being an alienated human and how the individual can achieve an "authentic" relation to a world that others have already organized, one authentic because different from the everyday experience that "they" (*Das Man*) experience. For Heidegger, then, technical *topoi* do not provide an opportunity for understanding a layer of the perceptual structures that make communication and coordinated interaction possible, for he sees such commonality as oppressive. As Julian Young has pointed out, this attitude undergirds Heidegger's authoritarianism:

    > The observation that the *communis opinio*, public opinion, is never 'in the truth" … is a formulation of the Heideggerian view that the public view of things is always, to a greater or lesser extent, a covering over of insight and originality—always subversive phenomena from the point of the One [the "they," *Das Man*]—with the clichés, the pre-packaged opinions and covert values of "idle talk" (*Gerede*). The disclosure of truth … thus demands the 'dissolution' of 'elemental public opinion.' (76)

5. In a recent study, Cristina Muro et al. used computational simulations to study the hunting strategies of wolf packs. As summarized by Lin Edwards, the study concluded that only "two simple rules were sufficient to reproduce the actual wolf-pack behavior of tracking, pursuing and encircling prey seen in the wild. The rules were, firstly, move towards the prey until at a close but safe distance … and then secondly, when at the minimum safe distance, to move away from the other wolves which are also in position." According to the study, "The results

suggest that theories requiring the wolves to display a strict hierarchy along with superior intelligence and ability to plan the chase may be off the mark, since simply following the two rules result in the virtual wolves in the computer simulation behaving remarkably like wild wolf packs…. The results of the study do not prove, however, that wolves are not intelligent and do not show foresight or planning" (Edwards).

The behavior studied by Muro, however, did not include the kind of waiting-in-ambush behavior described by Mech, which seems to be a of higher order than simply tracking, pursuing, and encircling prey.

6. It is worthwhile to compare the notion of "discourse" as I describe it here with that described by Michel Foucault. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault stresses that in his descriptions of discourse, "*words* are as deliberately absent as *things* themselves; any description of a vocabulary is as lacking as any reference to the living plenitude of experience" (1441). Although he attempts to preserve the social levels, he strips away the remainder of the behavioral dimension and all levels of the environmental and symbolic dimensions in order to discover "a group of *rules* that are immanent in a [discursive] practice, and define it in its specificity" (1440). He thus seeks "to substitute for the enigmatic treasure of 'things' anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse," and to "define these *objects* without reference to the *ground*, the *foundation of things*, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance" (1441). In this process, as he admits, instead of treating discourse as a specific kind of interaction, as integrative rhetoric does, he reduces discourse to a set of "statements," treating the term "discourse" "sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements" (1445). He is unable to define "statement" itself, but insists it has a "special mode of existence" (1459): "it is that which enables such groups of signs to exist, and enables these rules or forms to become manifest" (1449).

Foucault goes on to insist that a statement is not defined by its "correlate"—"a group of domains in which such objects may appear and to which relations may be assigned" (1451);

rather, it is linked to a "'referential' that is made up not of 'things,' 'facts,' 'realities,' or 'beings,' but of laws of possibility, rules of existence for the objects that are named, designated, or described within it, and for the relations that are affirmed or denied in it. The referential of the statement forms the place, the condition, the field of emergence" (1452). But Foucault seems to assert that the relations within a discursive field are immanent to it, established solely from within that field, rather than from embodying relational orders already established by prior interactions within the social, technical/ethical, and sensory fields. In fact, in "The Order of Discourse," he goes so far as to mock the notion of "originary experience," a "primordial complicity with the world" that "is supposed to be the foundation of our possibility of speaking in it." Not having a principle of recursivity, of supervenience and embodiment, Foucault's theory characterizes originary experience in terms of a dichotomy of language and reality, disparaging the idea that "things are already murmuring meanings which our language has only to pick up" (1470). By thus suppressing ambience, he drains discourse of meaning, very much as the methods of certain kinds of linguistics drain words of their meaning.

Nevertheless, Foucault not only says that the "enunciative function" of a statement, its function as an utterance, "cannot operate without the existence of an associated domain," but he also says that a statement "must be related to a whole adjacent field" (1455): "a statement always has borders peopled by other statements" (1455), and it is "the associated field that turns a sentence or a series of signs into a statement, and which provides them with a particular context, a specific representative content, forms a complex web" (1456). Thus, much as for integrative rhetoric, for Foucault discourse establishes discursive objects and relations between social fields.

7. In a recent study, Dharshan Kumaran and James L. McClelland argue, "Understanding the world relies upon the ability to remember both specific events from the past (e.g., where we just parked the car) and the general structure of our experiences (e.g., that dogs tend to bark)" (573). As they note, "These two goals, however, pose very different challenges, suggesting the need for separate neural systems based on different representational schemes" (573). Their study addresses the conclusion of complementary learning systems (CLS) theory that "the

hippocampus is primarily involved in the fast learning of individual episodes" whereas "the task of extracting the general structure of the environment" is left "to a slow learning neocortical system" (573). They propose a resolution of this "fundamental tension" by introducing "a model called REMERGE (recurrency and episodic memory results in generalization), which illustrates how a neural system optimized for episodic memory can also exhibit an emergent capacity for efficient generalization resulting from the dynamical interactions that occur within a recurrent system" (575).

Kumaran and McClelland do not extend their theory to other animals, but Howard Eichenbaum has suggested,

There is now growing evidence that the hippocampus may fulfill the same basic functions in animals as it does in humans. Of course … it's likely we'll never be able to do the kinds of tests of subjective experience one has the impression of in humans. In humans, when we want to find out if you remember something, we simply ask them and they tell you about their experiences from the past. In animals of course, we can't do that sort of thing. But to the extent that we can define objectively, our capacity for recollection, the ability to remember the context in which items were experienced before, the ability to remember sequences of events that together compose a whole experience played out in time, and to the extent we can remember how experiences are related to one another, those things we can actually test in animals and all the evidence so far suggests the hippocampus is as crucial to those functions in animals as it appears to be in humans.

8. Perelman's approach, upon which Walker relies, has been described by Ray D. Dearin as "rhetorical rationalism" (214), which strives to undercut notions of metaphysical certainty but remains rationalistic nevertheless. My approach relies upon the interactionist view, a form of epistemological constructivism that was first formulated by Herbert Blumer. According to Blumer,

the empirical necessarily exists always in the form of human pictures and conceptions of it. However, this does not shift "reality," as so many conclude, from the empirical world to the realm of imagery and conception…. [This] position is untenable because

the empirical world can "talk back" to our pictures of it or assertions about it—talk back in the sense of challenging and resisting, or not bending to, our images or conceptions of it. This resistance gives the empirical world an obdurate character that is the mark of reality. The fact that one can accommodate or resolve the resistance only by forming a new image or conception does not free the empirical world of its obdurate character. (22)

9. The "shift" is a very different kind of perceptual act from the "blend" which completes the construction of a discursive field. You're not trying to induce your partner to see a duck-rabbit, but a rabbit instead of a duck.

10. Ed Dyck argues that, for Aristotle, whereas all syllogisms are governed by the relation of implication, enthymemes "overwhelmingly and consistently" share this feature (111): unlike syllogisms, they substitute *another kind of relation*, or *topos*, for the relation of *implication* to link the premises to the conclusion. In this view, syllogisms are a special form of enthymeme; enthymemes are not a special form of syllogism, which is the usual account.

11. The notion that "informal" or "substantive" abductive arguments are ampliative may usefully contribute to theories of visual rhetoric. Recently, Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden, referring to Susanne Langer's characterization of the difference between discursive and presentational forms of argument, make the point that "presentational as well as discursive forms (including but not limited to visuals) contribute to argumentation" (225). Whereas Langer suggests that "the Gestalten or fundamental perceptual forms which invite us to construe the pandemonium of sheer impression into a world of things and occasions, belong to the 'presentational' order" (Langer 98, qtd. in Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden 225), Groarke, Palczewski, and Godden go further with this claim:

> Even in the case of purely verbal statements, their presentational aspects may mean that they are not adequately accounted for by a strictly discursive account of propositions. When argumentation theorists rephrase the arguments with significant presentational content into words that fit a particular scheme or model they can, in the process, change the argument. The remedy for such problems is a model of argumentation that pays

attention to the presentational/rhetorical/extra-discursive when it is argumentatively relevant. Without such a model, argument analysis can flatten the argument and direct attention away from important elements that are key ingredients in the force of the argument. (226)

From this perspective, enthymemes may in some instances be said to "present" a visual field, as well as a social field.

12. William A. Searcy and Stephen Nowicki have noted, "Whether signals are reliable or deceptive has been a central question in the study of animal communication in recent years" (1). This question has implications for both morality and cognition, especially the latter, because "some definitions of deceit are framed so as to require cognitive processes of considerable sophistication, such as the ability to form intentions and beliefs and to attribute beliefs to other individuals" (1). For Charles F. Bond, Jr., and Michael Robinson, such issues hinge on the definition of deception:

> If deception is defined as "an act that is intended to foster in another person a belief or understanding which the deceiver considers false" (Zuckerman, DePaulo, & Rosenthal, 1981; p.3), deceivers must, by definition, be human. Lies must be intentional, and lies must be conscious, thus lying must reflect human intention and consciousness. For a biological discussion, we find these assumptions too restrictive…. [T]o us, a deception is a false communication that tends to benefit the communicator. (295)

For R. Haven Wiley, the central issue is whether animals actually intentionally deceive or whether what we interpret as deception is a matter of one animal's making a signaling mistake or the recipient animal's making a mistaken response. He contends that "animals make mistakes and that this simple but neglected circumstance has deep implications for the evolution of animal communication" (157).

> I don't doubt that a mockingbird will deceive another bird by mimicking another species' song, or that a young baboon will scream as if he's being attacked by a nearby adult and steal his mother's food while she is chasing the apparent offender away (Bond and Robinson 299), and I don't doubt that "deception confers a selective advantage: liars leave

behind more offspring, and the progeny inherit their parents' advantage" (Bond and Robinson 296). However, because they don't inhabit linguistic fields, animals can't lie about why another bird should flee from the hawk its cry imitates, and they can't lie about being attacked in an incident that happened the day before. Humans can deceive at higher levels.

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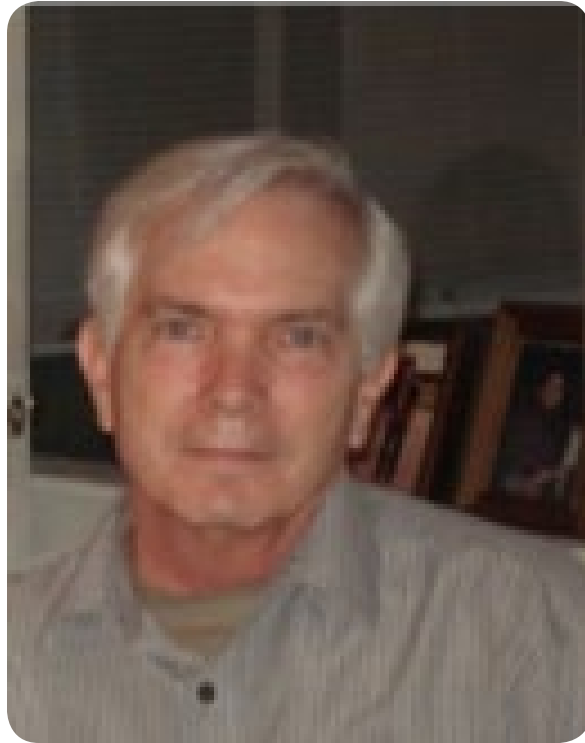
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