

# Rhetorical Recap

# What is Rhetoric?

The **art** of using language effectively so as to persuade or influence others.

The **analysis** of language as a means of persuasion.

# What can be analyzed rhetorically?

(this is a trick question)

(the answer is: anything)

# What is a rhetorical analysis?

Case study: The Vaccination Controvers(ies)

# THE SCIENCE NEWS CYCLE

JORGE CHAM © 2009

Start Here



...eventually  
making it to...

WHAT YOU DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT "A"...  
CAN KILL YOU!  
MORE AT 11...



4 LOCAL  
EYEWITNESS  
NEWS

...and caught  
on ...

CNC Cable NEWS

We saw it on a Blog!

A causes B all the time  
What will this mean for Obama?

BREAKING NEWS BREAKING NEWS BREA

...then noticed by...



Your Research

Conclusion: A is correlated with  
B ( $p=0.56$ ), given C, assuming  
D and under E conditions.



...is translated by...

UNIVERSITY PR  
OFFICE  
(YES, YOU HAVE ONE)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
SCIENTISTS FIND  
POTENTIAL LINK  
BETWEEN A AND B  
(UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS).

...which is then  
picked up by...



NEWS WIRE  
ORGANIZATIONS

A CAUSES B, SAY  
SCIENTISTS.

...who are  
read by ...

THE INTERNETS



Scientists out to kill us again.

POSTED BY RANDOM DUDE

Comments (377)

OMG! i kneew it!!  
WTH???????

# Peer-Reviewed, Scholarly Articles:

Are they credible?

Are they rhetorical?

Are they persuasive?

# “Descriptive” Journalism

Is it credible?

Is it rhetorical?

Is it persuasive?

# “Persuasive” Journalism

Is it credible?

Is it rhetorical?

Is it persuasive?

# Mass Media

Is it credible?

Is it rhetorical?

Is it persuasive?

**RHETORIC**

**RHETORIC EVERYWHERE**

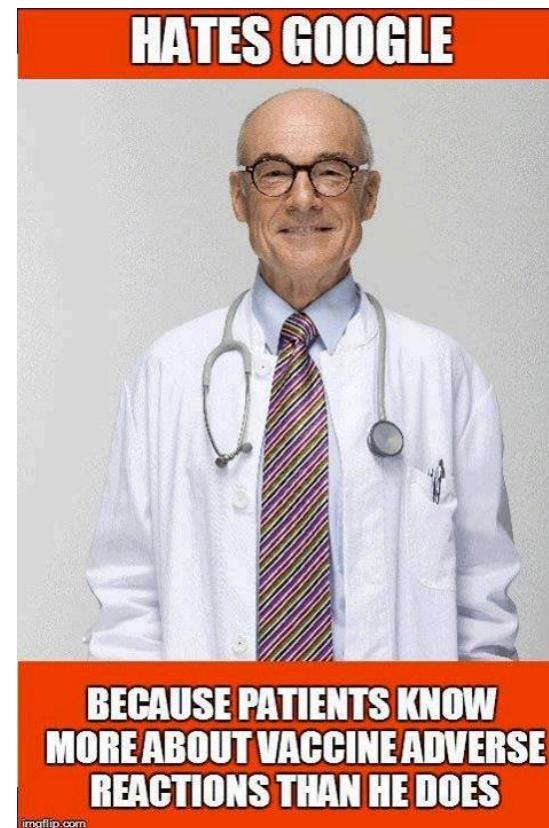
quickmeme.com

# Methods of Rhetorical Analysis

- Understand the “shape” of the controversy
  - What are the positions?
  - Who are the stakeholders?
- Analyze the rhetorical strategies of the text
  - Evaluate “truthfulness”
  - Evaluate “truthiness”
  - Identify strategies beyond the scope of truth
- Determine underlying systems of meaning

Determine systems of  
meaning!

# Rhetoric & Mass Media



Back up.  
Memes in college,  
seriously?



**NO, BUT SERIOUSLY...**

# Context: Cultural Studies

An academic field that we can define ... as the engaged analysis of contemporary cultures. Cultural studies is *engaged* in three different senses. First, in the sense that it is not neutral in relation to the exclusions, injustices and prejudices that it observes. It tends to position itself on the side of those to whom social structures offer least, so that here engaged means political, critical. Second, it is engaged in that it aims to enhance and celebrate cultural experiences: to communicate enjoyment of a wide variety of cultural forms in part by analyzing them and their social underpinnings. And third, ... it aims to deal with culture as a part of everyday life, without objectifying it. In fact cultural studies aspires to join – to engage in – the world, itself.”

- Simon During, Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction

# Horkheimer and Adorno: The Culture Industry

# De Certeau and Jenkins: Textual Poaching

What can you study in  
cultural studies?

# Advertising

- Roland Barthes: *The Rhetoric of the Image*
- “How does meaning get into the image? Where does it end? And if it ends, what is there beyond?”
  - Italianicity
  - Freshness & domesticity
  - Total culinary experience
  - The Still Life



# Television

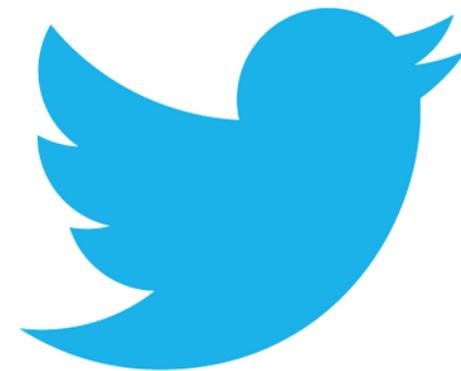


- Henry Jenkins, fandom
- De Certeau: “Users make innumerable and infinitesimal transformations of and within the dominant cultural economy in order to adapt it to their own interests and their own rules.”

# Social Media

## Weller, Katrin et al: Twitter and Society

- Twitter and the Rise of Personal Publics
- Structural Layers of Communication on Twitter
- Metrics for Understanding Communication
- From #FollowFriday to YOLO: Exploring the Cultural Salience of Twitter Memes
- Perils and Pleasures of Tweeting with Fans
- Twitter and Sports: Football Fandom in Emerging and Established Markets
- Twitter in Politics and Elections: Insights from Scandinavia
- The Gift of the Gab: Retweet Cartels and Gift Economies on Twitter



What questions does  
cultural studies seek to  
address?

Politics  
Power  
Gender  
Sexuality  
Race  
Class  
Capitalism

# Unpacking Pop Culture

Some examples from the vaccination debate

Thursday:  
Rhetorical Analysis  
Peer Review

# Project Proposal

**Justification:** Why is this controversy important and interesting, in general? Why is this topic important and interesting to you?

**Stakeholders:** Who (besides you) is invested in this topic? List individuals who might have a stake in the controversy.

# Project Proposal

**Primary article:** Provide an APA citation for at least one published scientific article at the heart of your project.

**Article abstract:** Paste the abstract here.

**Article summary:** In 1-2 paragraphs, summarize the article. What research questions is the article addressing? What methods does it use to address those questions? What conclusions did the authors come to? How is the article relevant to your chosen controversy?

# Project Proposal

## Popular references:

Provide APA citations for 5-10 popular articles (not academic studies) related to your controversy. At least three must take a position related to your controversy. At least one must refer to your primary article. For each article, provide a 1-3 sentence description in which you summarize the content of the article, describe the position of the author, and describe the publication source (does it come from a prestigious academic journal? A tabloid? A blog?)