

Seminar Preparation

Thursday, September 8

II. Writing Critically

A. Reading Criticism

Discussion: Our job this session is two fold: to read criticism and to develop reading to find characteristics to emulate.

To Prepare: You should cut through a couple journals. The standard would be *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Other journals are acceptable. Consult me. Your task is to select an example criticism that you admire and one you thought the editor should not have published. Contemplate how the author of the admirable essay does his/her craft.

Writing this week: Write 1-2 pages about what you admire. Illustrate your arguments from the article. Reason to “I want my own criticism to do this well and here is how I think this author does it.” Similarly, what must be avoided in the other essay? Illustrate. And make your own.

B. A Critical Exercise

Discussion: We will watch the Obama speech. Then we will do a critical exercise. I will ask each of you to declare an incipient thought on the direction of a criticism. Then I may challenge you to think about the speech in some additional ways. I will try to tease some alternative explanations out of you. I hope that each of you will take your sensitivities to the speech and point us to claims that might come from that sensitivity. Then I will tease some additional sensitivities. Caution: Don’t *just* think of this as a public platform speech. Feel free to understand the speech in some other frameworks as well.

To do this week in preparation for week 3

I have pushed the following topic into week three. But in doing so, the burden of reading this week turns out to be light and that next week heavy. So, I suggest you begin your reading on the following during this week, but no need to finish it.

C. A History of Critical Scholarship of Communication

Reading: Herbert A. Wichelns, “The Literary Criticism of Oratory.” in *Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking in Honor of James A. Winans*. ed. by Alexander Magnus Drummond. New York: Century, 1925. pp. 181-216. Available on Hathi Trust Digital Library through UM.

<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015003959684>

Lester Thonssen and Albert Craig Baird, *Speech Criticism*. New York: Ronald Press, 1948. pp. xiii-xvi; 1-26. Available on Hathi Trust Digital Library

<http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015046815836>

Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*. 1965; Madison: Univ of Wisconsin Press, 1978. pp. ix-xv; 1-9. (on ELMS)

Michael Leff. "Introduction." *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 44.4 (1980):264.

John Angus Campbell. "Special Issue on Rhetorical Criticism." *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54.3 (1990): 249-251.

David Henry. "Rhetorical Criticism: The State of the Art Revisited." *Western Journal of Communication* 65.3 (2001): 229.

Richard Leo Enos. "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Rhetorical Criticism. Introduction: The Inclusiveness of Rhetorical Criticism." *Rhetoric Review* 25.4 (2006): 357-358.

Greg Dickinson. "Introduction to Special Issue." *Western Journal of Communication* 74.1 (2010): 1-3.

Select an essay from the last three special issues to report on.