Punctuating Rhetorical Acts

Alternative accounts and their imprint
Purposes

- Importance of Perspective in Criticism
- Consistency of Model of Communication
  - Sharp versus blurred vision
Burke’s Pentad

Criticism: accounts of rhetorical acts

- The terms
  - Act
  - Agent
  - Agency
  - Purpose
  - Scene

- The ratios
A traditional acct of rhetorical act

- Agent: The speaker
- Act: ... plans a speech
- Scene: ... to address a particular audience and situation
- Purpose: ... with a particular goal in mind
- Agency: ... using techniques (which we map as rhetorical strategies)

Our main critique of Obama
Alternative Acct: A society responds to events

- Agent: A society (social grouping) . . .
- Agency: . . . uses discursive exchange (which we map as rhetorical strategies) . . .
- Act: . . . to understand and respond to . . .
- Scene: . . . events . . .
- Purpose: . . . to which it must respond appropriately.

Alternative Acct: Situation
dictates strategies

- Scene: The situation . . .
- Act: . . . dictates . . .
- Agent: . . . to the speaker (or speakers) . . .
- Agency: . . . the techniques available (which we map as rhetorical strategies) and . . .
- Purpose: . . . what s/he must achieve with them.

Know an example?
Alternative Acct: Situation dictates strategies

- **Scene:** Our multi-racial society, its traditional colorblindness, and the emergence of social media...
- **Act:** ...dictates...
- **Agent:** ...to Obama and users of social media...
- **Agency:** ...new strategies akin to a chorus...
- **Purpose:** ...that address colorblindness differently.

**Important ratios:**
- Scene/agent
- Scene/agency
- Purpose/agency
Alternative acct: Languages contain possibilities

- Scene/Agent: The Language &/or ongoing praxis of language in a culture
- Act: . . . defines the possibilities and limits (which we map as rhetorical strategies)
- Subagents: . . . through which the speakers of a society
- Agency: . . . respond to the needs of the culture
- Purpose: . . . to coordinate their responses to the events encountered by the culture

Terri and Alyssa?
Alternative acct:

- Corporate agent: A movement (or its leaders?)
- Agency: . . . uses a protest event (which we map as rhetorical strategies)
- Purpose: . . . to overcome
- Scene: . . . efforts to silence them
- Act: . . . thus, creating voice.

Know an example?
Alternative acct:

- Corporate agent: The Wisconsin Statehouse protest (or its leaders?)
- Agency: used their sit-in (with chants, signs)
- Purpose: to overcome
- Scene: Governor & Republican efforts to silence them
- Act: thus, creating voice.

Important ratios
- Scene/purpose
- Act/purpose
- Agency/purpose