POSTHUMANIST RHETORIC:

THEORY AND CRITICISM FOR THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN

by

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Posthumanist Rhetoric: Theory and Criticism for the More-Than-Human

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This dissertation historicizes the way posthumanist values have been infused in theories of rhetoric from classical antiquity through our contemporary moment. There are many versions of posthumanism utilized by rhetorical scholars; however, these conversations have not yet been gathered for metacritical reflection. This project begins this process. I put contemporary rhetorical scholars interested in psychoanalysis, technology, the built world, the body, and animals in conversation with one another in ways that demonstrate a common thread in their writings. Terms such as transference, energy, relationality, affect, aesthetics, and physical materiality assist in the constitution of rhetoric as an intra-activity that continuously shapes our becomings in time and space through its many manifestations. I argue that what we call posthumanism emerged simultaneously with, if not prior to, humanism. I show that by solely attending to how rhetoric moves through discourse, scholars privilege a humanist inspired individualistic, masculine, and human-centered orientation to knowledge production. I argue for the reconceptualization of key rhetorical terms in place of those that privilege language as separate from materiality: rhetorical milieus instead of rhetorical texts, evolving rhetorical selves instead of rhetorical subjectivity, and rhetorical invention through chora rather than topos. I then demonstrate this approach through a critical essay that critiques the spread of androcentric and anthropocentric transhumanist rhetorics.

DEDICATION

To my parents, my sister, and my Thomas Ryan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

More Than a Human-ist Rhetoric

Once upon a time, in some out of the way corner of that universe which is dispersed into numberless twinkling solar systems, there was a star upon which clever beasts invented knowing. That was the most arrogant and mendacious minute of "world history," but nevertheless, it was only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths, the star cooled and congealed, and the clever beasts had to die. (Nietzsche, 1873/2001, p. 1171)

In our daily activities we make implicit assumptions about who we are as humans, our human nature, and the human condition. These assumptions have accumulated through a complex history of ideas, affecting how we experience and act in the world and how we go about our intellectual inquiry of it. Throughout remembered time in Western thought such tacit ontological beliefs have tended towards a concern for designating a human exceptionalism, commonly argued as "first, the ability to use language; second, the ability to make and use tools; third, a sense of consciousness about oneself; and fourth, the ability to transmit culture" (Candland, 1993, p.3). Each distinction, however, "as is true of all icons scientific and spiritual, has crumpled and fallen" (Candland, 1993, p. 3). That is to say, we are animals and beyond that our exceptionalism is of our own construction.

Based on what we "know" about other environmental organisms, we deem ourselves the cleverest of our kind. However, our existence is amongst a larger more intricate universe filled with galaxies upon galaxies of ecological systems, phenomena, and most probably life forms far beyond possible comprehension or indexing. Thus, Nietzsche (1873/2001) observes that humans

are relatively unimportant, and yet somehow have acquired an infatuation with our person and an inflated sense of self significance, "as though the world's axis turned" by mere human intellect (p. 1172). As humans, he insists, we are flawed, fallible, and fools at our core, deceptive to each other and even ourselves, possessing a keen ability to anthropomorphize our environments, turning nature into natural resources. He (1878/1996) refers to this as being *human, all too human*; that is, all too invested in the human species to realize our very insignificance.

Nietzsche's, however morbid, conclusions assist philosophers in breaking from the epistemologies or regimes of truth that have guided their intellectual inquiry throughout the Western tradition, a regime such as post-enlightenment humanism that distinguishes man from other animal species as autonomous and special, possessing universally shared qualities of rationality, and which promotes the separation of mind/soul from the body (Balibar, 1991; Foucault, 1966/1970). How did this knowledge come to be? To answer this question, we must consider the emergence of knowledge as an ontological predicament.

Humans, like other living organisms, have the ability to negate or recognize differences in phenomena they perceive. All creatures, to different extents, negate for survival and this negation is constant since all matter is active and morphogentically pregnant, that is, capable of generating new forms through exposure to other intensive differences. The sciences are based on the negation of different phenomena and their pressures, temperatures, and speeds. Humans recognize difference based on their physical sensations of sight, sound, taste, smell, and touch. Some organisms have the ability to apprehend electrical and magnetic fields, water pressure and currents, infrared emissions and ultraviolet wavelengths, stimuli not immediately available to the bare human body. Certainly, there are stimuli in creatures that we may never be aware. Our limited perceptions cause part of the antropocentric orientation to the world through sheer

ignorance. What our species can negate—for example, the mineral difference between gold and silver—another species, like fish, likely do not distinguish. Conversely, we are cognizant that fish detect currents and vibrations in water, but perhaps we are oblivious to other sources of their perception for which we have no tools to observe.

The process of negation relies on a threshold of difference within the movements of matter that a sense perception can recognize. Matter is always moving through waves of fluctuating intensities and as significant difference emerges from these waves the motion can be *symbolically* arrested. Thresholds of difference emerge through processes of change, such as when ice transforms into water. They are environmental artistic expressions that provide the opportunity to represent the difference when the phenomena is absent, when it has *moved* on. While all organisms are aware of their environmental expression—the thresholds of difference available to their sense perceptions—not all organisms attempt to double, or represent, the first ephemeral expression.

This second act of expression is dependent on an innate relationship, or intra-activity, between that which is sensible and that which perceives. For humans, the second expression becomes another artistic production created through our aesthetic capacities, typically in sight and/or sound. The artistic representation, the attempt at arresting movement, is not the actual phenomena; it is a lie (Nietzsche, 1873/2001), a simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1981/1994), a metaphor (Grassi, 1986) that tends to be forgotten as such and which is used by clever beasts in the production of tools, practices, and communities. Since these stop-operations have become socialized into human development from birth, many humans are entrained to ignore the constant becomings of a world in process and to hold fast to traditions, truths, and knowledge whose complex history of emergence becomes forgotten.

The unintended consequence of passing on tradition is that values become engrained in those who may not be aware of how phenomenal difference makes signification possible in the *first place*, a choric generation through constant becoming. The rhetorical tradition is no exception. Rhetorical scholars have made many epistemological assumptions about how rhetoric functions socially without engaging its ontological generation. The study of rhetoric, until recently, has remained human-centered and neglected the negation abilities of other organisms, as well as disregarding rhetoric as a sensuous mattering.

In order to challenge the anthropocentrism embedded in rhetorical theory and criticism we must rethink what the human means in relation to rhetoric (Stormer, 2004). If the human of the humanist tradition is autonomous, rational, and disembodied, the human of the posthumanist tradition is interdependent on local spaces as a sensible thinking-body. Humans are cyborgian "in terms of complex, structurally embedded semiosis with many 'generators of diversity' within a counter-rationalist (*not* irrationalist) or hermeneutic/situationist/constructivist discourse" (Haraway, 1991, p. 213).

In addition to rethinking what the human means in relation to rhetoric, we must immerse ourselves in a rigorous exploration of rhetoric's ontogenesis. On the whole, humanism has been censured in the contemporary study of rhetoric. However, critiques have dealt with epistemological issues rather than rhetoric's ontological emergence. As a result, scholars have struggled to reveal the submerged traces of humanism found within disciplinary discourse, the traditional rhetorical vocabulary that has sustained the field. Additionally, scholars have been hesitant to engage materiality as an active sensuous agent in the rhetorical process, especially after the linguistic turn. In this dissertation I argue that posthumanist philosophy allows

rhetoricians to retain lessons learned from critical cultural studies, while still engaging our ecologies as active agents in the rhetorical process.

My selection of the term posthumanism derives primarily from the continental philosophy tradition. I draw substantially from the writings of Gilles Deleuze (1986/1988; 1968/1994), Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1980/1987) and Donna Haraway (1991; 1992; 2003). These authors combine poststructuralism, bodily materialism, and ecological philosophy to continue the humanist inspired project of asking 'how ought we to live together,' while recognizing that the human is not distinct from or superior to animal or machine. Their writings typify the imaginative lens that is necessary for thinking beyond traditional notions of the human. Together they share distrust in the tautological fiction, or in Lyotard's (1979/1984) terms metanarrative, that has come to surround contemporary understandings of "human nature." They push against language's disciplining norms and play with its possibilities, making space for new ways of thinking, acting, and living.

My desire to activate a posthumanist inspired rhetoric is guided by two questions. First, how have posthumanist sentiments been infused in the field of rhetoric throughout its tradition? In other words, if we are to take Katherine Hayles (1999) claim seriously that "we have always been posthuman," what is the posthumanist tradition of rhetoric? As I show, posthumanist conceptions of rhetoric can be traced back to Homeric writings. Second, how does a posthumanist approach to rhetoric revise key rhetorical concepts of the humanist tradition? The terms I am primarily interested in here are text, subject, and topoi. To begin this engagement I comment on the developments of rhetorical studies within the past few decades as scholars began to critique the humanist tradition due to technological innovation, ecological changes, and philosophical commentary in late modernity.

Contemporary Moment, Contemporary Rhetoric

There was never a time when human agency was anything other than an interfolding network of humanity and nonhumanity. What is perhaps different today is that the higher degree of infrastructural and technological complexity has rendered this harder to deny. (Bennett, 2005, p. 463)

I like walking because it is slow, and I suspect that the mind, like the feet, works at about three miles an hour. If this is so, then modern life is moving faster than the speed of thought, or thoughtfulness. (Solnit, 2000, p. 10)

The field of rhetoric finds itself at an interesting moment in history. In this contemporary moment, information comes "indiscriminately, directed at no one in particular, in enormous volume, at high speeds, severed from import and meaning" (Postman, 2004). The field of media ecology has long tracked the effects of this proliferation of information, of messages that are now, more often than not, constituted and exchanged through digital mediums in our hi-tech postindustrialized society (Spiller, 2002). If it is the case that we now learn to use electronic media before we learn to speak and write (Ong, 1967) then the resulting aural, visual, and haptic aspects of our environments organize our senses differently than previous generations and give rise to new conditions of knowledge.

In our construction and use of new technologies, technologies, in turn, construct and use us (McLuhan, 1964). From youth, these ever evolving tools have trained us in new media grammars and literacies that frame our consciousness through codes and conventions, thereby shaping our perceptions, values, and worldly perspectives (Gumpert & Cathcart, 1985). In our

present day digitally mediated environments, we have moved from the apparatus of orality and literacy to what Gregory Ulmer (2005) calls electracy: the embodied skillset needed to navigate electronic terrain. For example, instead of processing information linearly, as was done during the dominance of print media, we learn to think like the online hyperlink, spatially networking ideas through associations (Cali, 2000). The immediacy with which we can acquire information and operate systems wirelessly engrains in us an overarching desire for speed and control (Brummett, 2011). We depend on new media that increase our efficiency and disperse them throughout our homes, offices, public spaces, and bodies, "saving" us one of our most valued commodities: time (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

As electronic technologies continue to surround our everyday environments seeping into our very embodiment, new habits influence us as social subjects. Scott McQuire (2008) remarks that "in an era in which media have become mobile, ubiquitous and personalized, technology and person have merged, and this merging is fast becoming taken for granted" (p. 7). We find it increasingly easier to avoid "here and now" human interactions, if we so choose. Enveloped by aural enclaves of smart phones, laptops, and mp3 players and with the help of kiosks and uniform customer-service practices, our technological environments can lead us into an anywhere feeling of everywhere and a stark sense of loneliness (Wood & Wood, 2004). It is not that technology determines our actions and alienations, but that the accessibility of being constantly stimulated can comfortably replace a pursuit of face-to-face human interaction. Simultaneously, technologies also provide openings for new forms of human connection across space and time in networked communities.

In the mid-1990s, the internet caused the largest and quickest revolutionary shift since the industrial revolution in contemporary US history (Qualman, 2009). Today, going online is an

expected social practice for individuals, social groups, and businesses alike. Currently 76.68% of the US population is online with numbers on the rise (US Department of Commerce, 2009). The use of the internet has been perpetuated by participants of late-capitalism who can do what was typically done offline at a more rapid pace: read the news, buy a book, look up directions, get consumer recommendations, and socialize. Web 2.0 software allows for more user interactivity and user-generated content resulting in the acceleration of information sharing and connectivity. The sheer amount of information that the internet and other technologies produce have made macro-politics increasingly difficult to grasp: "no panoramic view is possible, for the space is always folding, dividing, expanding, and contracting. …multiple speeds, times, and spaces overlap" (Shaviro, 2003, p. 7). Instead, late-capitalism is a period where individuals are enmeshed in highly complex ecological habitats.

Ecology is a shifting, moving, pattern of relations between organisms and their environments. In the opening quote of this section, Jane Bennett (2004) identifies these ecologies as the "interfolding network of humanity and nonhumanity" that our bodies are enveloped by (p. 463). The internet is just one example of how our everyday lives have been transformed by a nonhuman infrastructure with autopoietic tendencies. Our ecological embeddedness has become more obvious through continued technological development and global alliances. We have recently been reminded, as well, that natural disasters are participants in shaping public life: Hurricane Katrina, Japan's 9.0 earthquake and resulting tsunami, and global warming. Weather is not controlled by humans nor can it be predicted, for however much we have tried, but it does impact the ways in which we live together. Both the technological and natural changes that have taken, and will continue to take, place in our physical world have made attending to discourse as the exclusive realm of rhetorical agency increasingly difficult.

Extending the work of body materialists who emplace the fleshy human form within an active bio-culture, Bennett (2004) suggests, "entities not entirely reducible to the contexts in which (human) subjects set them," have a force and vitality that is "never entirely exhausted by their semiotics" (p. 351). The philosophical tree that falls in the forest makes a sound and produces a cascade of effects within its ecological system. This thing-power, as Bennett calls it, has a philosophical lineage indebted to the writings of David Thoreau, Baruch Spinoza, and Gilles Deleuze, and is further inspired by "De Landa's solition, Kafka's Odradek, and Vernadsky's living matter," to name a few (p. 353). Thing-power surrounds us, shaping the possible: in the length of our arms, in the air that we breathe, in the walls that protect and phones that connect. At the most miniscule mineral level, there is a kinship between people and things, "a vitality of immanent forces…flow through us as well as course over and under us. …forces not fully knowable or predictable" (p. 364). Vegetable, animal, and mineral are simultaneously things (life sustaining enrichment for the human body) and the body itself. We are enmeshed in a dynamic flow of activity, much of which is not of our own conscious doing. Given the role technology now plays in our daily lives, our global interconnectedness, and the recent tragedies caused by natural disasters, it is ill-advised to discount the agential qualities of the physical (i.e. technological and natural) that contribute to our meaning-making practices.

Our gradual progression into late-modernity has caused a declaration that the once known *polis* of Ancient Greece is now dead (Farrell, 1993, p. 150). Amin & Thrift (2002) claim that the "authentic city" of modernity "held together by face-to-face interaction" has become a nostalgic memory (p. 32). They argue that cities have become "a set of constantly evolving systems or networks, mechanic assemblages which intermix categories like the biological, technical, social, economic, and so on, with the boundaries of meaning and practice between the categories always

shifting" (p. 78). Farrell (1993) claims that it is becoming increasingly difficult to locate "the sense of lived experience and engagement that makes rhetoric and its rhythms part of our civic lifeblood" through humanist methods of analysis (p. 152). A posthumanist approach allows for the fully immersive dimensions of rhetorical selves to be assessed within our local physical, cultural, and simulated spaces.

The study of rhetoric is profiting from a new poetics that appreciates the infrastructure, energy, and pace indicative of our contemporary moment, to be reviewed in chapter one. However, I will propose retheorizing what we understand to be the territory of rhetoric's mattering, different from the Marxist sense that Michael McGee (1982/2009) endorsed, but which unifies and updates the three materialist stances that have been pursued throughout the 1980s and 1990s: "a traditionalist one that insists upon considering the material conditions of discourse, another that focuses upon the lived-in body as a condition and consequence of rhetoric, and still another that understands rhetoric as itself material" (Blair, 2001, p. 288).

The study of rhetoric as physical materiality, affective, and animalistic has not always been considered relevant in the field as a traditionally humanist enterprise. However, its import is valuable for at least two reasons. First, recall the argument of literary theorists that the naked portrayal of the sign as merely an ephemeral transference of the utterance is a myth. Both Roland Barthes's (1977, 1984) grain of the voice and *punctum* and Julia Kristeva's (1984) genotext and semiotic *chora*, for example, propose that language and materiality are always a simultaneous experience. Any attempt to analyze one without the other is only a partial and incomplete analysis of rhetoric's force. Rhetoric is not only a meaning making phenomena; it is a physical energy or affect that makes the very act of signification possible. The contemporary study of rhetoric has perhaps only recently become aware of this relationality as a result of our historical

moment. As feminists note, the mind/body split was a humanist invention deployed as a way to cleanse the human from its creaturely "past" (Grosz, 1994). Indeed, the intimate relationship between culture, the body, and its enfolded environment was a celebrated one in ancient understandings of rhetoric (Hawhee, 2004).

Second, in the twenty-first century strictly traditional or cultural understandings of rhetoric that rely on humanist assumptions, such as the centrality, symbolic capacities, and autonomy of the human, "strike us as lacking" (Ballif, 1998, pp. 53). "The postmodern challenges to history, to politics, to communications, to political agency, along with our increasing digital and virtual experiences," states Michele Ballif (1998) "have radically altered our conceptions of time, place, and rhetorical purpose" (p. 53). Our historical moment has created new circumstances to be addressed by rhetoric. The existence and pace of indefinite change, as a quality of the nature/culture/technology folding, has made attending exclusively to the realm of symbolism and hermeneutics insufficient. Nearly two decades have passed since the proliferation of online media in the US and the field of rhetoric has little to show for our understanding of how simulated mediations intersect with physical experiences of place and how it constrains and makes possible our capacities to act socially.

This has not been without lack of trying. As McGee observes (1982/2009) "by the twentieth century, the pace of technological, economic, and political change was too rapid for even philosophers to understand and synthesize the principles involved" (p. 20). In an attempt to account for these changes, rhetorical scholars turned to a vocabulary that was comfortable to them and primarily leaned on discursive, symbolic, constitutive, epistemic, and post-structuralist theories of rhetoric. In the earliest attempts of addressing materiality, matter was portrayed as a passive, non-factoring component that was only significant after discourse had its say. However,

in the past ten years a growing number of scholars have begun to reconfigure their approach to rhetoric, attempting to understand how psychoanalysis, technology, the built world, body materialism, ecologies, and animals can help us say something insightful about the rapid changes of late-modernity. In this process they are reconsidering the centrality of the human in our larger eco-system, our ability to freely act and have choice, and the limitations of conscious reason. These conversations contain common threads, but have not yet been gathered for disciplinary metacritical reflection. The following two chapters begin this process by collecting posthumanist approaches to rhetoric and engaging them in conversation as a community of scholars.

The field has arguably spent more time theorizing our condition and its impact on rhetoric, than on modifying our tools for rhetorical criticism. For that reason, chapters two through four metacritically reflect on the choices made by rhetorical critics and in particular the vocabulary used to describe the rhetorical process in posthumanist rhetorical criticism. Metacriticism analyzes "the conceptual assumptions, methods, and procedures that guide critics and critical practice" (p. Jasinski, 2001, p. 364). The study of metacriticism dates back to the emergence of contemporary rhetorical studies, in particular with Wichelns's (1925) seminal essay "The Literary Criticism of Oratory" which offered neo-Aristotelian methods to be used by speech communication critics. Metacriticism, as a form of rhetorical scholarship, has been exhibited throughout the years by such authors as Rosenfield (1968), Black (1978), Gaonkar (1993), Nothsetine, Blair, & Copeland (1994) and has received renewed attention through engagements with non-representational rhetoric and rhetoric's materiality in its manifold forms (i.e., Conley & Dickinson, 2010; Davis, 2010; Biesecker & Lucaites,2009; Hawk, 2007; Stormer, 2004; Vivian, 2003). My project will continue this line of inquiry, questioning modern humanist principles that have come to be understood as integral to the study of rhetoric.

Metacriticism requires the consideration of rhetoric's intellectual history. Although this will be an important component of my dissertation, my project is not to "restore" a posthumanist sense of history, which Michelle Ballif (1998) calls an "untimely and impossible goal." Instead I plan to draw attention to posthumanist interpretations of ancient and contemporary conversations surrounding the rhetorical process (p. 54). Rather than assuming I can understand writings and practices as they were deployed in their historical moment, a goal that is even challenged in the study of contemporary texts, I will show how scholars have utilized key rhetorical concepts such as text, agency, subjectivity, *kairos*, invention, and situation by drawing on ancient writings of rhetoric, demonstrating, or rather grafting on, a pre- of posthumanism. Thus, the prefix "post," referring to "after," is somewhat misguided. This irony, however, has been noted by Katherine Hayles' (1999) famous assertion that "we have always been posthuman" (p. 291). So while humanism is often linked to antiquity, so too has posthumanism. The pre/post dynamic draws our attention to the disruption of linear histories and humanist assumptions of progress. Humanist configurations of time, place, and purpose mask the more inconsistent, illogical, and regenerated patterns of history.

A posthumanist approach to rhetoric revises traditional rhetorical concepts that are embedded in our disciplinary vocabulary. Traditional terminology prevents us from thinking differently about rhetorical criticism. Additionally, scholars should move beyond mere theorizing of our environmental embeddedness and start putting posthumanist methods of analysis into practice through rhetorical criticism. The unfolding dissertation will do just that: the front end will engage in metacritical and ontological issues of a posthumanist approach to the study of rhetoric, specifically taking on the terms text, subject, and *topoi*, while the final chapter will provide a piece of rhetorical criticism that illuminates this perspective. Given that this is a new

approach to rhetoric that requires intensive philosophical engagement with the ontology of rhetoric, the writing may at times feel theoretically dense. I illuminate challenging concepts when possible with examples from empirical data provided by other scholars and at times my own. However, I hope to be pardoned for the lack of qualitative demonstrations of the theory, as this is meant to be the first step for such projects in the future.

The first chapter discusses how the field of rhetoric has been linked to humanism(s). I discuss the different ways that contemporary scholars whose theories are infused by posthumanist sentiments talk about the rhetorical process and put these scholars in conversation with one another in ways that demonstrate a common thread running through each of their work. Terms such as transference, energy, relationality, affect, aesthetics, and physical materiality paint a picture of rhetoric as an activity, later to be explained as an "intra-activity," that continuously changes our becomings in time and space through its many manifestations (Barad, 2003).

Chapter two will engage the intellectual history of the term "text" within contemporary rhetorical criticism. It traces how the postmodern sense of "text" came into popular usage in rhetorical studies during the 1990s and will discuss the long running debate between Michael Leff and Michael McGee over contextualism. Whereas Leff argued we should analyze the artistry of the self-contained bodies of discourse that exist in a definite context (close textual analysis), McGee popularized the movement towards fragments, privileging ideology over technique or artistry (cultural-critical analysis). Essays like McGee's Ideograph (1980), McKerrow's Critical Rhetoric (1989), and Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci on the Vietnam War Monument (1991) assisted in the naming of smashed up cultural artifacts as texts. However, contemporary rhetorical criticism has begun analyzing phenomena such as desire, affect, rhythm, and relationality that resist textualization and push against the reduction of agency to a human-

discursive structure relationship (Ott & Keeling, 2011; Conley & Dickinson, 2010; Ott, 2010; Hawhee, 2009; Gunn & Hall, 2008; Rickert, 2007; Edbauer, 2005). These pieces contribute to the dissolution of rhetoric's humanistic past by rejoining that which has been separated: mind/body/environment. "Text" becomes an inadequate label. The chapter proposes that we think of the rhetorical palette differently, beyond symbolic substance, a combination of texts and textures. I propose milieu from the work of Deleuze as an appropriate alternative in the posthumanist tradition.

Milieus constitute fields of deterritorialization and reterritorialization where bodies and environments act as counterparts, but never a stable territory. It is through these territories that bodies enfold into themselves and into their environments and where agency is produced as a possibility. Chapter three argues that in a posthumanist approach to agency we cannot begin with subjects who are already indoctrinated into cultural systems of production. We must instead start with a primary conception of the body that moves through and enfolds with spaces of physical, cultural, and simulated striations, who gain entry into social realities by spatial performances that are inclusive of, rather than limited to, human-made discursive and material structures. I elaborate on Bradford Vivian's (2000) notion of the rhetorical self to demonstrate how we are in a constant process of becoming with our surrounding rhetorical milieus, folding into smooth and striated spaces. I argue we should understand rhetorical agency through the intra-activity (Barad, 2003) of how our physical, cultural, and simulated milieus are consubstantiated. Milieus provide the resources for rhetorical invention, for how we participate as social selves.

The rhetorical canon of invention has always been closely paired with the canon of memory. The *topoi* or commonplaces, for example, were used for remembering something previously unknown or for creating new arguments to be stored and used at a later time.

However, as I will argue in chapter four, this conception of invention wrongly assumes that time is a linear unfolding and that we can have fully-present "real" experiences of this or any moment. Consistent with Bergson (1908/1991), time is a folding of force that produces subjectivity rather than memory. It regenerates past perceptions as something that accounts for present intensities and flows that are being folded into and passing. To accommodate this notion of time and to remain consistent with my understanding of the evolving rhetorical self, I suggest reconceptualizing the rhetorical canon of invention through *chora*. This inventive process relies on a spatial approach to the generation of the thinking-body. Utilizing *chora* in research requires that we reinvestigate ontological assumptions embedded in understandings of place. I examine conversations surrounding the rhetorical situation to do just that. The three widely accepted views of rhetoric's emergence assume a realist, epistemological, and poststructuralist ontology. Each configures a different set of relationships between subject, object, the physical and the cultural. I overview each model and highlight the benefits and consequences of each from a posthumanist perspective. I suggest that if a posthumanist model of rhetoric is to consider ongoing movements in a field of human-nonhuman relations, then subject/object distinctions are not as useful as understanding ourselves as abject bodies.

To demonstrate how a Deleuzian-inspired posthumanist approach to rhetorical criticism can be put into practice, I offer the remaining chapter. The integration of advanced technologies in the everyday lives of North Americans has led to the intellectual reconsideration of humanist philosophy, causing two responses of note: the intensification of humanist philosophy through *transhumanism* and a resistance to humanist philosophy through *posthumanism*. Chapter five critiques the spread of transhumanist rhetorics through the convergence of football, man, and technology. Specifically, I analyze the FOX graphics used to present Super Bowl XLII while

simultaneously making connections to ongoing rhetorics at FOX Sports, the National Football League, and the sports lifestyle industry. The folding of the smooth (male) body into the striated spaces of sport and technology reproduces two performances that are particularly problematic in combination: 1) a hyper-masculine one where aggression, strength, and dominance are celebrated over femininities and alternative masculinities and 2) a transhumanist one where the human pursues perfection through science and technology. The inability to ever achieve the hyper-masculine transhumanist ideal maintains its pursuit through a virtual regeneration of memory that can be affectively operationalized for purposes of war.

Chapter 1

Rhetoric as Philosophy: The Posthumanist Tradition

What is it that makes the human species unique? A student of rhetoric versed in the Greco-Roman tradition could answer "the power to persuade" through "the art of discourse," as Isocrates (1929/2000) once claimed (p. 253). Speech is what distinguishes humans from "other living creatures," he insisted, creatures that would otherwise be better in "swiftness and in strength and in other resources" (p. 253). These sentiments carried over two centuries later as Cicero (1945) pronounced that "men excel beasts" through their "splendid possession" of speech (1.4.5). Without a system of language democracy would not be possible, and it is through this tradition that rhetorical skills were used to decide how to live together, found cities, make laws and establish institutions, to organize in ways that are seen superior to other living creatures. The endeavor to proclaim human beings as not only unique but more exceptional than other species has undergirded Western philosophy since its incipience, most recently through modern humanism.

The Greco-Roman tradition of rhetoric is an important historical precursor to humanism. Humanism's emergence is typically attributed to the Italian Renaissance where Latin scholars sought to recover ancient Greek literary and oratorical texts that were only accessible to Byzantine intellectuals (Reynolds & Wilson, 1968). What developed out of this recovery was an interest in "the perfection of civil societies" as achieved through the individual orator's command of language, "the primary medium of agency" (Stormer, 2004, p. 257). Renaissance humanism maintained an "innate commitment to truth, reason, and civic virtue, [which] established the modern civic precedent that one's humanity is defined by the moral and socially

virtuous application of one's rhetorical abilities" (Vivian, 2003, pp. 6-7). Indeed, the Latin

humanitas relates "to the practical affairs of secular life" as distinct from the divine (Davies,

2008, p. 126).

As Davies (2008) appropriately notes, "the meanings of 'humanism' have operated most

powerfully precisely at the moments when they have been most contested, and thus most elusive

or opaque to a definition" (p. 125). Humanism has been uttered in different historical contexts to

mean surprisingly different things. During the Renaissance, humanism and scientific philosophy

were separate subjects. However, as Foucault (1984) notes, "at least since the seventeenth

century what is called humanism has always been obliged to lean on certain conceptions of man

borrowed from religion, science, or politics" (pp. 43-44). As the secular humanist movement

emerged in the 20$^{\text{th}}$ century "humanism" acquired meanings from both the Greco-Roman

tradition of rhetoric and scientific methods based on Cartesian rationality. While humanism has

many historical varieties, "modern humanism" is a philosophy of the human that distinguishes

man from other animal species as autonomous and special, possessing universally shared

qualities of rationality and promoting the separation of mind/soul from the body (Balibar, 1991;

Foucault, 1966/1970).

As discussed in the introduction, the field of rhetoric has been vocal about the harmful

implications of humanist philosophy. Nonetheless, theories remain "haunted," in the words of

Gunn (2006), by a continued desire to recenter the human as the primary medium of agency,

giving the subject an autonomous sense of self and choice. As I argue below, one cause of this is

that there is too strong an emphasis in the field on the study of discourse and symbolism, having

derived from the Western history of human exceptionalism in language use. By neglecting the

ontological emergence of rhetoric from a sensuous material world, the humanist hauntings

continue. As evidence of the field's tendencies toward the sign, I turn to Jasinski (2001) who outlines five prominent ways scholars have defined rhetoric throughout the history of its study in his *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*. Each definition envisions the rhetorical process as occurring through discursive or linguistic means:

"(a) rhetoric as practical persuasive discourse; (b) rhetoric as the use of tropes and figures; (c) rhetoric as a type of *middle ground* practice concerned with justice and/or creating and maintaining a community (intersubjectivity); (d) rhetoric as attitude, perspective, and/or discursive force (universalized rhetoric); (e) rhetoric as the persuasive *dimension* of discursive and symbolic practice; and (f) rhetoric as public or civic discourse." (p. xxiii)

While some definitions could garner a material explanation through crafty argument, such as in (c) and (d), they ultimately emphasize the importance of the sign. Jasinski's list, of course, was made a decade ago, prior to a considerable amount of conversation that has begun to utilize posthumanist philosophy in the pursuit of a material rhetoric.

As a potential contribution to this list, Stormer (2004) offers a metacritcal definition of rhetoric that illuminates a posthumanist perspective. He states, "rhetoric is always 'becoming' through the mutual production of bodies and languages and their configurations into complex orders. …a set of acts that produce specific orders of discourse, things, and the spaces of their relative, historical disposition" (Stormer, 2004, p. 262). Stormer studies the historiography of rhetoric, how different rhetorics have emerged throughout history from material developments. Using articulation theory from scholars in the critical sciences—Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour—he traces how different configurations of rhetoric emerge through discursive and nondiscursive practices. He notes that while rhetoricians have typically discussed the order of

discourse as distinct from the order of things, this is misguided (p. 258). Quoting Latour, he states "the world of meaning and the world of being are one in the same world, that of translation, substitution, delegation, passing" (p. 261).

This chapter will elaborate on Latour and Stormer's (2004) sense of translation, substitution, delegation, and passing as a rhetorical emergence, thereby challenging the modern humanistic assumptions that have come to constitute the field of contemporary rhetoric and contribute to our performances of self in everyday life. I continue to bridge a relationship between rhetoric and posthumanism. However, the prefix "post," meaning after, suggests not everything is to be chastised from the humanist tradition, in particular Italian Humanism. Scholars of Italian Humanism and posthumanism share a similar resentment towards the supremacy of rational methods in philosophy. Furthermore, posthumanists continue to "think about the ways in which human beings have lived, do live, might live together in and on the world," as the humanist tradition initiated, even while it did not always provide the best model (Davies, 2008, p. 141). Without Italian Humanism rhetoric might have become "mere technique without content or memory, an endless trail of uninspiring handbooks, or a tool for deconstructive language games" (Crusius, 2001, p. xvii). What the "post" reflects in posthumanism is a desire to rethink the individualism and superiority of the human in our worldly relations, a position that is understood as intrinsic to many contemporary models of rhetoric. While the antagonist of this story will ultimately be the caricature of humanism that has come to represent anthropocentric, androcentric, and individualistic –laden rhetorical theory, Italian Humanism has been a necessary participant in rhetorical theory's never-ending conversation and it will not simply be dismissed.

In the following pages I narrate a story about another tradition within rhetoric, a posthumanist tradition. I highlight different ways that contemporary scholars whose theories are infused by posthumanist sentiments talk about the rhetorical process and put these scholars in conversation with one another in ways that demonstrate a common thread running through each of their work. Terms such as transference, energy, relationality, affect, aesthetics, and physical materiality will come to paint a picture of rhetoric as an activity that continuously changes our relationship to time and space through its many manifestations. As a starting point for thinking about the important contributions of Italian Humanism, I turn to contemporary rhetorical theorist Ernesto Grassi whose defense of rhetoric against scientific reasoning helped solidify rhetoric as a philosophical enterprise. Grassi's description of the rhetorical process will be appreciated for its sensuous theorizing and inventiveness. However, his reliance on a human-centered model of rhetoric will be critiqued through the insights of George Kennedy and Diane Davis.

Transference

Few scholars have been so dedicated to celebrating the humanist tradition in rhetoric than Ernesto Grassi. Grassi used Italian Humanism to show that rhetoric and philosophy were intimately entwined at a time when philosophy was dominated by Cartesian rationality and rhetoric linked to mere ornamentation. Grassi's project was to reinvigorate 20th century rhetoric through the work of Italian Humanists, drawing especially from Giambattista Vico. He defined Italian Humanism as interested in "the problem of words, of metaphorical thought, and of the knowledge of the philosophical function of rhetorical thinking and speaking that was perfected as a new way of philosophizing in the fifteenth century" (Grassi, 1986, p. 125).

Born in Milan, Italy in 1902 and educated in Germany with Husserl and Heidegger, Grassi studied both Italian Humanism and German Idealism. His contributions to philosophy and

rhetoric "emerged from the tension" between these two traditions (Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 1991, p. 146). German Idealism depends on the rational deduction inherent in the scientific method. Grassi believed that the reliance on this method ignores "an entire realm of reality—the realm of contradiction, paradox, silence, and hiddenness—that cannot be captured in logical terms" (Foss, Foss, & Trapp, 1991, p. 146). He viewed rationalism as limiting and partial because it begins and ends with the disembodied mind. The human's ability to sense is central to Grassi's theories of rhetoric.

Although a rationalist seeks to discover first principles, Grassi (1976b) observed that *archai* were never investigated for how they came into existence. The *archon*, or an ultimate principle, is what must be true in order for a logical proof to function. However, the primary assertion is non-deducible because it cannot be reasoned into existence. A first principle is derived through induction, which "arises to unity through abstraction" (Grassi, 1976b, p. 207). "If the original assertions are not demonstrable," Grassi (1976b) explained, they cannot have a "rational-theoretical character" and as a result the primary character of rationality is itself nonrational (p. 201). *Archai*, instead, possess a rhetorical character, necessitating that rhetoric come before rationality. *Archai* come into existence through a transference of sensation into meaning—a metaphorical leap. The metaphor, from the Greek *metapherein* (to transfer) "lures the human being standing in the semantic realm into the world of explanation" (p. 206). The semantic realm is one of chaos, of sensations and indications, but not a realm of causal explanations. The human is able to abstract similarities through sense perceptions and transfer them into premises, bringing them into the rational realm. Grassi (1980/2001) cites Vico's poetic explanation:

"Fantasy collects from the senses and connects and enlarges to exaggeration the sensory effects of natural appearances and makes luminous images from them, in order to suddenly blind the mind with lightning bolts and thereby to conjure up human passions in the ringing and thunder of this astonishment" (p. 7).

Vico names the process of conjugation "*ingenium*" meaning "the creative imagination, which expresses the abyssal mystery of life in ever new metaphors" (p. 106). *Ingenium* is an inventive faculty that creates new ways to address and share our experiences: "The experience of life urges us to consider the new and unexpected as something for which there is not yet a language ready at hand" (pp. 105-106).

Rhetoric for Grassi is a force that exists in the middle of two fields—the semantic (chaos) and the rational (the explainable). It is a relationality between a body and its environment that impels meaning into existence. Movement is an important concept for rhetorical transference to take place; it "represents a fundamental phenomenon in the realm of existence; whatever is perceived through the senses shows *a becoming*, that is, a movement in itself (change) or a movement in space" (Grassi, 1976b, p. 213). The constant becoming of the world with the body offers opportunities for rhetorical invention. Grassi's view of rhetoric as a relational concept—a movement between body and environment that inspires meaning's production—is unique to other contemporary models of rhetoric that see it as already within the realm of language or explanation. Grassi's rhetoric is in between or even before meaning's emergence.

However, Grassi's theory contains an anthropocentric bias. He asserted that to be human is to have the ability to organize and control nature in ways other creatures cannot. The motivation behind his work was to demonstrate the special capacities of the human, as is the case with most, if not all, humanism(s). He inherited this bias from Vico and the majority of

philosophers writing throughout the Renaissance and Enlightenment. Vico (1968) suggested that we are able to control our environments through the "humanization" of nature, an achievement that occurs through the successful transference of sense perception into a system of meaning. Humans are not controlled by instinct, as other animals are—so the argument goes—but can decide for themselves how they will act. "Animals live *in* nature; but we human beings live over and against it," Grassi (1979) argued; we are "not 'bound' by nature" (p. 189).

Only the human, Grassi (1976a) claims, possess the special gift of *ingenium*: "It is shown in and through imagination that the human being, unlike the animal, does not stand under the dominion of ruling patterns which give sense perceptions an unequivocal meaning. He therefore can, and does, give sensory phenomena the most varied interpretations" (p. 290). Yet Grassi's abstractions about the human, made through *ingenium*, were created through a particular relationship with animals. As humanity's relationship with animals has evolved, new abstractions have been made that contrast Grassi's experiences. As elaborated in the introduction, all species are able to negate environmental expression in order to survive. The second act of expression, which Grassi seems to be calling *ingenium*, is utilized by more species than just human. Just as Grassi challenged the acquisition of first principles in rationalism, so too have other scholars challenged the anthropocentrism embedded in the work of Grassi, Vico, and other humanists.

Energy

Perhaps the most respected and renowned historian of classical rhetoric in modern times is George Kennedy. Thus, it came as a shock to many when Kennedy (1992), directly after the publication of his translation of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, turned on the humanist—human and language centered—tradition of rhetoric. In "A Hoot in the Dark" Kennedy challenges the notion

that rhetoric is a purely human experience by questioning the human-animal boundary of communication practices. In his pursuit to find "some universal rules of the rhetorical code" he argues that rhetoric is a form of energy driven by a basic instinct to survive (p. 3). Using physics and evolutionary biology, Kennedy locates rhetoric within all animal life who adapt to their changing environments. The rhetorical energy of adaptation can be found in emotional, physical, encoded, and experienced (decoded) communication practices of human animals as well as nonhuman animals.

Kennedy (1992) offers eight theses to support his definition of rhetoric. While they seem oddly ordered, they are coherent when taken together: (1) "Rhetoric is prior to speech" historically and biologically, existing before humans and present in all animal life—genetically transmitted and open to cultural variation (p. 4). (2) Intention does not determine interpretation, although some direction and form are given through intentions. (3) Rhetoric exists prior to intentionality. The ability to send a sign is basic to rhetoric, but knowledge of the sign's meaning and effects come after rhetoric. (4) "The function of rhetoric is the survival of the fittest" (p. 10). Rhetoric is used to adapt to environmental changes. All species share the ability to adapt to their surroundings for survival. This commonality creates the parameters of a general rhetoric: "what nature has favored in particular environments" (p. 9). (5) Rhetorical code is constantly evolving through "selective variation" based on mistakes, novel combinations, chance, and play. An animal self is either more or less successful at adapting to environmental changes. (6) Delivery (actio) is prior to the other four rhetorical canons. Although Kennedy recognizes that in traditional rhetoric actio refers to "facial expression, gesture, and tonal inflection," he draws upon the Latin translation of actio meaning action: "Physical motion in response to some exigence occurs in the earliest and most primitive forms of life" (p. 12). Movement and sensation

happen simultaneously to create feelings and these then lead to invention, arrangement, style, and memory. (7) Rhetoric is prior to marking. Marking includes more than written symbols, such as the mark of bodily scent as animals mark their territory. Marks are like imprints of a presence. An energy must impel a marking into existence. Here Kennedy pushes on the boundaries of his own definition of rhetoric:

> "In speaking of rhetoric, I have defined it as an energy existing in life. But energy exists apart from living organisms and the energy of the life force, and thus rhetoric is perhaps a special case of the energy of all physics as known from subatomic particles. Since matter can be converted into energy and energy into matter, and since in the origin of the universe we do not know which existed first, I leave open the question of the ultimate sources of the qualities of being that made possible the evolution of both rhetoric and marking. They may be two aspects of the same thing" (pp. 13-14)

In this complex passage, Kennedy is working through the implications of naming rhetoric an energy. If, as he explains, energy can be converted into matter and matter into energy, matter contains its own rhetorical force. Finally, (8) the rhetorical canons "are phenomena of nature and prior to speech" (p. 14). They are found in nonhuman animal communication as well as human animal communication. Animals *invent* ways to adapt to their environments, *arrange* rituals, develop *aesthetic* sensibilities related to fitness and sometimes beauty, and pass this knowledge on to future generations, whether explicitly or genetically. In sum, the study of rhetoric is "distinct from the study of speech or language" because it is a prior phenomenon (p. 20).

Throughout these eight theses Kennedy provides detailed examples from ethologists of how animals, to varying degrees across species, fulfill each of these principles. Animals of all kinds share in the rhetorical process, which Kennedy labels a natural phenomenon. Although

Kennedy and Grassi differ in terms of theorizing animal capacities, they share a number of similarities when describing the rhetorical process: Both understand rhetoric as prior to, but leading towards, meaning; both see physical movement (actio or becoming) as related to rhetorical emergence; both place rhetoric between bodies and their environments; and both recognize that the environment, what Grassi calls the semantic realm, changes and influences systems of meaning, encouraging invention. However, Kennedy further extends the distance between rhetoric and language. By the 17th and 18th century, language was at "the core of rhetoric" and has since retained this position through either "the view of literary theorists that rhetoric is a quality of the use of language" or in theories of public discourse "in which cultural and political values find expression" (Kennedy, 1992, p. 1). Kennedy (1992) wants to locate rhetoric outside of language and in nature "that possibly constitutes the starting point from which [rhetoric] has culturally evolved" (p. 1).

Relationality and Affectivity

Taking a similar approach to theorizing the rhetorical process is Diane Davis (2010) who believes that rhetorical scholars have been so caught up in the world of symbols and reasoning they have ignored the conditions that make possible symbolic action, "an originary (or preoriginary) rhetoricity—an affect*ability* or persuad*ability*" (p. 2). She discusses how persuasion often works without cognitive scrutiny because there is always a prior rhetoricity built into our relationships, what she calls our solidarity. She elaborates on this concept through the rhetorical concept of identification.

Although Kenneth Burke taught us that identification occurs through symbolic means, Davis (2008) argues that this identification depends on an already prior "primary identification" that is pre-symbolic (p. 125). Davis talks through the similarities between Burke's theory of

identification and Freud's identification, from which Burke's theory was inspired. Burke's identification relies upon on the individuation of subjects who are naturally discrete from one another and whose identities are the product of symbolic structures outside and prior to the self. Identification occurs through a shared world view articulated through language. Freud, on the other hand, argues there is "already an *affective* identification with the other (the 'm/other'), who is not (yet) a discrete object or image or form" (p. 125). So while Burke understands identification as a function of shared meaning, Freud understands it as a condition *for* shared meaning. Davis provides new biological research on mirror neurons to demonstrate her, and Freud's, point. Mirror neurons are what prepare the body for its next move in a motor sequence. She elaborates:

> "What's so interesting about them is that they act as both sensory and motor neurons, firing in association not only with the execution but also with the observation of an action. This means that the same mirror neurons fire in my brain whether I actually grab a pencil myself or I see you grab one, indicating no capacity to distinguish between my grasping hand and what is typically (and hastily) described as a visual representation of it: *your* grasping hand" (p. 131).

An affective identification already precedes the symbolic representation of my and your actions. "The 'centrality' of each individual nervous system can hardly be characterized as 'divisive,'" Davis explains, "when it doesn't manage consistently to distinguish between self and other" (pp. 131-132). Identification exists before any sense of autonomy, similar to what Judith Butler (2004) calls corporeal vulnerability—a result of coming "into the world unknowing and dependent" on the other in a way that never fully leaves us (p. 23). We are always exposed, open, and able to be affected by others.

The question then shifts from "how do we identify with others?" to "how did we ever come to feel disidentified with others?" Freud attributes this to the voice of conscience experienced when one sees a person with whom they are identified with die (or the idea of their death). Anxiety is experienced as though the death was one's own. In these moments we feel a responsibility for the other as to our self; life continues with an ethical relation to alterity. Davis (2011) extends this prior rhetoricity and responsibility beyond the human realm. Rhetoric is possible among all affective existents—any corporeal creature that has the ability to be affected. Even if we cannot ever fully understand the communication practices of a different species, we can understand that they build relationships, they give signals, they are self-aware, and they experience affects such as wounding and panic-fear, what Kennedy (1992) describes as "emotional energy" (p. 2).

Although Davis (2011) praises Kennedy's article as one that "should have been pathbreaking," she critique's Kennedy's reliance on "an essence or property '*in* the speaker' (a natural function of biology)" (p.89). She charges Kennedy with assuming that the body is "a discrete phenomenological entity" as is understood through the biological construct of self-preservation (p. 90). If energy exists *in* the speaker it is not relational and therefore must not be rhetoric. While Kennedy (1992) does not use the language of relationality or trouble the boundaries of the body, he does not reject what Davis feels should be present. Kennedy's sixth thesis argues the Latin *actio* or motion is prior to any other canon—we need sense experiences to invent, order, ornament, and remember. Motion is always a relationship between the body and its surrounding environment. In his seventh thesis he also examines the boundaries of the body through markings. Animals who mark their territory leave a part of themselves—their scent—on

exterior surfaces, causing territory and body to blend. So the relationality is present, although implicit.

Davis joins both Grassi and Kennedy in theorizing the rhetorical process as prior to meaning. In particular, she shares with Kennedy a desire to remove the human-centered imperative in rhetoric and to include an energetic or affective attribute. Davis' former student Jenny Edbauer Rice (2008) elaborates on the concept of affect in her call for Critical Affect Studies (CAS) within rhetoric. CAS is the interdisciplinary study of affect and its mediating force in everyday life. It explores forms of affective life that have not yet solidified into institutions. Affect as understood through the work of Massumi is "a degree of intensity that is prior to an indexed or articulated referent" (p. 201). It is an energetics prior to signification.

Rice (2008) offers four topos of affect as they connect with rhetoric in her review of CAS books. The first topos is that social bodies have a physical life. Affects emerge physically and biologically through the transmission of energy between and among human subjects. Our biological makeup changes through the ways we feel and interact with our atmosphere. This creates a structural and reciprocal relationship between our environments and our body's biological composition. A body is always relational, never singular, and always more than cultural. The second topos is that affects can become articulated to political causes and invested in discourses that may be injurious, devastating, or fallacious to our personhood. Signs accumulate affect in their circulation and create an affective economy, which is the third topos. The stimulation of affective energy is the goal of a global economy dependent on consumption. The circulation of consumptive affects is the "*telos* within this economy" (p. 208). The final topos is that through affect "language often works 'outside of its official content'" (p. 208). Linguistic affect "forms an outward unconscious which hovers between people" (p. 208). By

exchanging communication we are "outed" or vulnerable to others in ways that we cannot control.

Rice concludes that the study of affect in rhetoric will allow us to have a more complex understanding of pathos and the physiological character of rhetoric. Affect highlights rhetoric as an energy or an intensity among bodies that exists outside of language. As Kennedy (1992) reminds us, "energetics" shares an intimate relationship with materiality, for energy exists within or through all matter and all matter is at some level moving through waves. Matter is itself an affective rhetorical force. Affect does not only occur from others, but also from our physical environments both natural (ecological) and built (technologies). These ontological investigations of rhetorical emergence from Grassi (1979), Kennedy (1992), Davis (2008), and Rice (2008) activate what Steve Whitson and John Poulakos (1993) argued for in the early 1990s, an aesthetic sensibility towards and of rhetoric.

Aesthetics and Physical Materiality

Responding to the dominance of the epistemic tradition within rhetoric, Steve Whitson and John Poulakos (1993) assert that language-centered models of rhetoric fail to account for the sensuous elements that inform knowledge. They reference Robert Scott's inability to move away from *a priori* knowledge when he claims that "rhetoric is epistemic," which is itself an epistemological claim to truth. Scott (1988) surrendered, "Knowledge must be something solid and prior to the communicating about it. Thus goes the way of epistemologizing" (p. 235). Scott recognized that, similar to Grassi's (1979) argument, the first principle of any logical argument or claim to truth is itself unprovable. Instead of resorting back to the epistemological trappings of how truth and knowledge should be conceptualized, Whitson and Poulakos offer another route to anti-foundationalist plurality—the aesthetic by way of Nietzsche. Nietzsche "helps us understand

the debate not by siding with one form of knowing over another but by showing that the epistemic endeavor is a derivative of something greater: primordial desires, irrepressible passions, and blind drives, all of which characterize, more than anything else, the make-up and the life of human beings" (Whitson & Poulakos, 1993, p. 132).

Viewing rhetoric as aesthetic implies that our ongoing becomings in and orientations to the physical world have always been a principal feature of rhetoric left neglected for privilege of the sign. In Whitson and Poulakos' (1993) words, "consciousness itself is predicated on and structured by concepts whose origin is to be traced to the senses"—sight, sound, smell, taste and touch (p. 137). Similar to Kennedy's (1992) assertion that rhetoric is used to adapt to environmental changes, Whitson and Poulakos (1993) argue that the signs that compose language and culture "reflect human needs and desires." Such drives organize sensuous matter into "artistic illusions" of representation (p. 136). Language illuminates appearances derived from aesthetic phenomena. The linguistic images temporarily "satisfy the perceptual appetites or aesthetic cravings of audiences," (p. 136) but eventually these cravings are forgotten and language begins to "correspond to things-in-themselves" (p. 138). Grassi (1976b) would explain this as a metaphorical leap that was made between the semantic realm and the realm of explanation. Through a process that reiteratively articulates senses with signs, language and discourse produce the appearance of knowledge that comes to predate its orator. While these appearances never completely represent the phenomenal world, they are nonetheless the only reality possible given the condition of our sociality until new appearances are invented, an *ingenium* opportunity. Claims of truth are therefore compliments to the power of illusions rather than a validation of an epistemological certainty. Whitson and Poulakos (1993) encourage scholars to expand purely epistemological understandings of rhetoric, replace the concept of

truth with art, and consider the "unrecognized aesthetic impulses" that epistemology relies upon (p. 132).

Celeste Condit does something to this affect. As a scholar who studies the rhetorics of science and genetics, Condit (1999) recognizes that "all known communication is a matter of physical contact among material particles" (p. 328) even though this is "not a widely held presumption in rhetorical studies" (p. 330). Answering Kennedy's (1992) query on the relationship between matter and energy, Condit (1999) states that the universe is made up of "matter/energy in constant motion, taking on shifting forms through shifting relationships" (p. 332). Condit appears to be channeling our aforementioned posthumanist-inspired rhetoricians as she describes the process in which meaning comes into existence:

> Meaning arises out of the matter/form configurations as they take on and move through specific relationships and relationship patterns that are specified by language; that is, they are abstracted and categorized as members of a set with similarities significant enough to name--to treat as sharing significance. 'Essence' then appears as such only because language is an essence-making machine. Language carves out a specific set of relationships and simultaneously generalizes these relationships by naming them. The process of naming (generalization) eliminates the specificity of each relationship (which is always temporary) and thereby makes it appear that the world holds classes of objects-- permanent material forms that have essential characteristics" (p. 332)

Condit wants to make room for the study of materiality, but does not want her readers to conflate her interest in materiality as objectivity. She believes there are exciting relationships to be discussed when materiality is allowed its thing-ness in the rhetorical process. Physical materiality highlights discursive limitations of bodies and environments. We should be able to

cautiously discuss a material substance's thingness without objectifying it. The implications are that our models of the rhetorical process will become increasingly more complex and increasingly more sophisticated.

Physical materiality is important to a posthumanist conception of rhetoric; however, scholars writing in this tradition have not necessarily let go of an anthropocentric bias in their work. Whitson and Poulakos (1993) only speak of human capacities in their formation of an aesthetic rhetoric and it is unclear whether they believe animals are affected by or use rhetoric. Nonetheless, their reliance on Nietzsche implies that at least the underlying tone of the article is that humans need to be more in touch with their animality. Condit (1999), on the other hand, explicitly discusses the differences between human animals and nonhuman animals, arguing that nonhuman animals are simpler and "do not remake their environments extensively" as humans do (pp. 338-339). Humans have unique abilities because of their considerable use of language. Animals, in contrast, "evolve rapidly into different forms when placed in different environments" (p. 339). By suggesting that nonhuman animals be studied differently than human animals it is unclear whether nonhuman animals be excluded from the rhetorical process. Still, she maintains an anthropocentric bias by calling nonhuman animals "simpler" and lacking communication mastery. Yet, how could one fully understand the communicative practices of a species that possesses different aesthetic sensibilities? Perhaps nonhuman animals have an ethical insight unbeknownst to most humans—that by attempting to control our environments we wreak havoc on the entire ecological system.

Posthumanist Rhetoric

This chapter has attempted to pull together pieces of an emergent conversation in posthumanist rhetoric related to Stormer's (2004) sense of translation, substitution, delegation,

and passing as a rhetorical emergence. Starting with Italian Humanism, it celebrated the notion that rhetoric is a transference between different realms and that reasoning is made possible through a prior rhetorical process. It highlighted contemporary theories of rhetoric that have troubled the human and language-centered focus, offering instead notions transference, energy, relationality, affectivity, aesthetics, and physical materiality. In many ways, this breaks with the humanist tradition.

While language-centered models of rhetoric have been marginalized here in the same way nonrepresentational rhetorics have been throughout our intellectual history, this project is not out to show that language and sound reasoning are unnecessary. Rationality is a particular way of knowing and experiencing the world. It is certainly useful in this dissertation since it breaths life through claims to knowledge that are supported by evidence. As Kate Soper (1986) shares, most scholars responding to the humanist tradition "secrete a humanist rhetoric" themselves (p. 182). I, however, maintain that these are artistic appearances and am not deterred from my larger argument that reasoning, and in particular rationality, is not the sole domain of rhetoric. People are persuaded in irrational and nonconscious ways, and theories of rhetoric must also account for this. Some scientists suggest that reasoning is an evolutionary development that is past its prime, no longer being the best route to win arguments (Begley, 2010). As Grassi (1979) shared, rhetoric is prior to rationality; it is what makes rationality possible.

In this chapter's discussion of rhetorical emergence I've described a number of scholars as inspired by posthumanism theory. This is not the phrasing each of them would necessarily embrace. The interest in posthumanist-inspired rhetorical theory and criticism is a fairly recent occurrence in the field and many scholars have thus far not rallied around the term posthumanism. Any term that I choose will have its own set of complications. I see

posthumanism as a broad enough to encompass the work of scholars who seek to dismantle modern humanistic assumptions embedded in traditional rhetorical theory and criticism and in the everyday lives of living beings. Two issues still vex this symbolic selection. First, posthumanism has a complicated history that at times becomes conflated with transhumanism. Transhumanism is arguably an intensification of humanist though with androcentric and anthropocentric biases. I recognize that some scholars unfortunately see posthumanism and transhumanism as interchangeable as a result of the term's complex history emerging in part through cybernetics (Wolfe, 2010). I retain the usage nonetheless in hopes that my distinction has been made clear. Second, the "post" in posthumanism suggests posthumanist rhetorical theories came after humanist ones. As I will discuss in chapters three and four, this is not the case. Posthumanist conceptions of rhetoric can be traced back to Homeric writings. Antihumanism, another term which was considered, feels too crass for a discipline that has developed through the Enlightenment with humanist philosophers. Rather than outright condemning humanism, I agree with Stormer (2004) that rhetoricians need to be more "self-aware" in how they use humanist tenants (p. 258).

This chapter has argued that rhetoric is not an individualistic experience or practice, is not bound to systems of meaning, but is rather a generative force that creates the conditions for meaning's emergence along with other aesthetic—sensed—features of our shared environments. Rhetorical force continuously changes our relationship to time and space through its many manifestations, creating opportunities for negation and invention. Modern humanist models of rhetoric that emphasize individual autonomy, human superiority, and privilege mind over body have contributed to ecological harm and in some versions encouraged the defense of Truth at the expense of ongoing education. These consequences continue to shape our practical existence. A

posthumanist rhetoric, premised on an ethics for the other, respect for environments that constitute us, and the replacement of truth with art can only aid us as we continue to make choices about how we shall live together. Returning to the opening question: what is it that makes the human species unique? Our particular aesthetic capacities within the environments that we live, as is the case with all living creatures.

In the next chapter I continue to challenge the dominance of the sign in rhetorical studies, specifically in rhetorical criticism. Within the past three decades "text" has become the primary term used by critics when describing what they study. Even as scholars study such phenomena as physical materiality, aesthetics, and affect, they tend to fall back on the entrained disciplinary vocabulary of "text." In a posthumanist tradition critics do not study mere language, they study relationships between bodies and their environments. I conduct a geneology of the emergence of the term text in the field and how posthumanist scholars interested in rhetoric's materiality are attempting to alter the textual dominance. I then offer my own contribution to the conversation, milieu, which allows for the study of bodily becomings in space and time.

Chapter 2

Rhetorical Milieus: The *What* of Rhetoric's Study

Our assumptions about who we are as humans shape our approaches to research. In the humanist tradition scholars have maintained a human-centered approach to the rhetorical process. Part of the anthropocentric bias in rhetorical studies derives from the investment in language centered analyses. Recently rhetorical theorists have conceptualized rhetoric as an emergent movement from our sensuous world into a second articulable expression. In order to prevent the hauntings of humanism in contemporary rhetorical theory we must engage our inherited disciplinary vocabulary. This chapter continues this project through troubling the term text and its primary position in rhetorical criticism.

What, as an interrogative pronoun, adverb, and sometimes adjective or noun, seeks the specification of information, character, origin, or identity of its paired companion. *What*, as an ontolinguistic device, seeks to arrest movements through abstractions. However, rather than stabilizing the motion and revealing some phenomena's essence, *what* is the inducement of symbolic repetition or invention. *What*'s harvest is a retroactivity, an attempt to capture the perpetually present's passing (Deleuze, 1968/1994). Although *what* could potentially be seen as problematic due to its stabilizing quest (as is the problem with all language in a motion filled world), if it is understood performatively (existing through the performative act) and pragmatically (useful in the production of social interaction) these concerns are tempered. *What* questions are particularly important in the service of vocabulary, as we survey our intellectual terms for adequate descriptions of the rhetorical process. So I proceed with a poorly answered question.

What do rhetorical critics study? Simply put, "rhetorical texts." Of course, the answer is more complicated than this, as rhetorical critics study the questions they ask. Questions of the humanist tradition, however, have tended to lead critics towards texts. The traditional history of rhetoric since post-Enlightenment humanism repetitively reminds us that rhetoric is concerned with discourse and signifying systems, so much that we are taught to be weary of claims that phenomena can be studied or accounted for beyond the text. The rhetorical process has rarely been theorized as occurring in a more-than-textual sense. However, in the posthumanist tradition of contemporary rhetorical studies, the human and language-centered focus is troubled and replaced with notions of transference, energy, relationality, affectivity, aesthetics, and physical materiality (Bost & Greene, 2011; Prelli, Anderson, & Althouse, 2011; Davis, 2008, 2010, 2011; Hawhee, 2009; Rice, 2008; Stormer, 2004; Condit, 1997; Whitson & Poulakos, 1993; Kennedy, 1992). Additionally, contemporary rhetorical criticism has begun analyzing phenomena that resists textualization and pushes against the reduction of agency to human-discourse structured relationships (Ott & Keeling, 2011; Conley & Dickinson, 2010; Ott, 2010; Gunn & Hall, 2008; Rickert, 2007; Edbauer, 2005). This move contributes to the dissolution of rhetoric's humanistic past by rejoining that which was separated: mind/body/environment. However, our current intellectual vocabulary concerning rhetorical criticism leads us back towards humanist assumptions of rhetoric, for example the term "text."

In this chapter I will be working at the meta-level of rhetorical vocabulary, interrogating a commonplace term that has come to trump alternatives. I'm arguing against the uncritical acceptance and use of "text," whether whole or fragmented, as the *what* of rhetoric's study. In a posthumanist tradition "text" becomes an inadequate label. I will present a history of how the term gained dominance in criticism and how other terms that have worked in partnership (i.e.,

"object of study" and "artifact") assume distinct boundaries and/or are designated to the domain of culture. Contemporary scholars have begun to move towards other terms that help them describe the rhetorical process, words such as articulation, apparatus, ecology, texture, and genotext. I highlight benefits and potential drawbacks of these terms as they concern a posthumanist conception of rhetoric.

This essay has three motivating purposes. The first is to engage issues of vocabulary as it concerns methodological practices within the field. In order to be considered a discipline we must have a common vocabulary with which to work from in the description of the rhetorical process (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). In exploring the range of words scholars have commissioned to portray this process, I utilize the term *what* rather than "object of study." As I will argue below and in chapter four, "object" is problematic for its static portrayal of what is actually an immanent and active materiality, whereas *what*, in my use, is already self-reflexive and metacritical about its stabilizing qualities. Below, I offer a topology of rhetoric's *whatness.*

The second purpose is to explicate how engrained language has become in the contemporary study of rhetoric. A posthumanist approach to rhetoric is critical of language being the privileged domain of rhetoric and seeks to develop a vocabulary that is not human-centered, language centered, or stabilized. In my topology, I explain how alternative terms of rhetoric's *whatness* have in many ways only reified the text, most recently through a cultural studies influenced articulation theory. If rhetoric occurs prior to language and rationality and is dependent upon the relationality between bodies and their environments, we need a term that can account for this complexity. I propose the Deleuzian-inspired milieu—at once, surroundings, medium, and middle—as an appropriate alternative. Milieus highlight the ecological movements and fields of deterritorialization and reterritorialization where bodies and environments act as

counterparts. The goal is not to "replace" text, but to dismantle it from its privileged position that presumes rhetoric resides within the realm of meaning.

The third purpose is to reflect on materialist approaches to the study of rhetoric. The study of rhetoric's materiality has been taken up in a variety of ways and given a diverse set of meanings. I propose that we update the three materialist stances that Carole Blair (2001) suggests have been pursued throughout the 1980s and 1990s: "a traditionalist one that insists upon considering the material conditions of discourse, another that focuses upon the lived-in body as a condition and consequence of rhetoric, and still another that understands rhetoric as itself material" (p. 288). Due to the tensions that have emerged over human-centered and nonhuman-centered approaches to rhetoric, I suggest we understand the study of rhetoric's materiality in the following three ways: (1) the study of human-centered material productions, (2) the study of relational affects and rhythms, and (3) the study of nonhuman actants. The posthumanist approach that I advance in this dissertation attempts to account for all three.

Rhetoric is a force that moves in manifold ways that language is not able to completely capture. Thus, there should not be one word that dominates others as the *what* of rhetoric's study. Steven Mailloux (1991) reminds us of Richard Rorty's argument that "there is no transcendental ground with a common vocabulary from which to carry out a comparison between theories of ontological conditions of possibility." He continues, "we should be thinking of vocabularies as tools to accomplish rhetorical purposes instead of searching for the ultimate vocabulary beyond all others" (p. 236). Thus, this is an effort to work through termanistic screens, as Burke (1966) would have it, to assist scholars in the posthumanist tradition as they attempt to account for the rhetorical process in criticism. Below, I discuss the emergence of the word "text" in the study of rhetoric and its different meanings. I then review more recent pursuits to replace text as the

primary *what* of rhetoric's study. I conclude by offering rhetorical milieus as another alternative and as an appropriate *what* in my approach to rhetorical criticism for the remainder of the dissertation.

A Textual History in Contemporary Rhetorical Criticism

Since its inception, the contemporary study of rhetoric has facilitated lively conversations about disciplinary boundaries concerning the *what* of rhetoric's study, commonly referred to, in generalizing terms, as the "object of study" (Jasinkski, 2001; Goankar, 1990). Object, however, implies its own set of boundaries on the rhetorical process due to its typical play of meanings: as opposite subject, as an objectivist entity or subjectivist perspective, but of most concern here, as a property with distinct boundaries. As I will discuss, the history of the phrase "object of study" within contemporary rhetoric has been intimately linked with the postmodern sense of the term "text," and in some cases acts as its synonym, but has since served as a generalizing term to regulate the boundaries of rhetoric's study. "Artifact," another popular *what*, assumes that rhetoric cannot escape the cultural cage. As Goankar (1990) notes, the *what* of rhetoric's study, what he calls the object of criticism, has an intimately shared history with rhetorical methods, its "dialectical counterpart" (p. 292). Drawing from his insights, while pushing back on his preference for object, I proceed by discussing how each of the terms of rhetoric's study effectuated their status within the writings of rhetorical criticism, beginning with the traditional sense of the term (speech) text.

In 1890, a group of US scholars who variously studied "elocution" gathered to inaugurate a fellowship for the formal study of rhetoric, dubbing themselves the National Speech Arts Association (NSAA). After a number of years and modifications to both the name and what it stood for, this organization was formed into the National Communication Association.

Launching the contemporary study of rhetoric, scholars drew from Ancient Greek and Roman writings as a rationale for rhetoric's future directions. Initially fixated on speech pedagogy, the field championed methods to assess orality. Noteworthy was Herbert Wichelns' (1925/1993) landmark essay that argued for a return to the Greco-Roman classical canons of rhetoric to examine oratory's social and historical influence. His configuration of rhetorical criticism emphasized the analysis of strategic functions and effects of discourse. Scholars were to study and criticize purposeful acts of rhetoric that were conducted in the public sphere. Announcing the *what* of rhetoric's study—oratory, speech, face to face persuasion—was a necessity for Wichelns to distinguish the differences of rhetoric from English and literary studies. However, the ephemeral quality of speech posed a problem for the analysis of rhetoric: how would the written form of public discourse be studied differently than literature? Through maintaining the speech text as "bound up with the things of the moment," occasion and audience, rather than evaluated through the timeless qualities of beauty, wisdom, and truth (p. 2).

Two decades later Ernest Wrage (1947) argued for an alternative method of studying rhetoric: society's influence on oral discourse. "Man's conscious declarations of thought are embodied in a mosaic of documents," Wrage wrote, "in constitutions and laws, literature and song, scientific treatises and folklore, in lectures, sermons, and speeches" (p. 452). Wrage configured rhetoric as embedded within a system of meaning, beliefs, norms, and practices. As a result, he called on critics to examine the history of ideas through diverse texts, broadening the *what* of rhetoric's study beyond traditional public address manuscripts. However, public address criticism remained dominant until the 1960s, rarely demonstrating methodological diversity. Many praise Edwin Black (1965/1978) as playing a key role in awakening the field to new critical possibilities and for calling attention to the Neo-Aristotelian restricted view of context. In

the period that followed the publication of Black's book on rhetorical criticism, methodological approaches flourished through the study of movements, genres, drama, and ideology, and set in motion a deferral of the (speech) text (Goankar, 1989). *How* critics studied was *what* they studied (McGee, 1990). Certainly, Kenneth Burke contributed to these developments. Although Burke was writing throughout the 1930s, 40s and 50s, his theories of symbolic action, dramatism, form, equipment for living, and termanistic screens became most influential just as rhetorical criticism was receiving a methodological makeover. Burke theorized rhetoric as an everyday activity, advancing the idea that symbolic action constitutes human reality and motivation.

In addition to the sociocultural theories coming from within the US and abroad, the study of rhetoric was being influenced by the linguistic turn "in contemporary humanities and social science scholarship" (Jasinski, 2001, p. 192). Literary theorists began critiquing notions of texts as artistic wholes with ultimate interpretations. Textual meaning was no longer the property of the author (Barthes, 1977). At least by the late 1960s, the notion that texts had multiple meanings was gradually seeping into rhetorical studies. As Rosenfield (1968) was working through the different ways critics could attend to rhetorical messages, he argued that one such way was through combining message, environment, and critic. In this combination the speaker's influence on the message need not matter; only the different ways the audience interprets the message at the event of its reception. He cited French symbolist Paul Valery as claiming "*There is no true meaning to a text*—no author's authority" (p. 63). The link between message and text, as something more than speech, was implicitly made.

Due to developments in highly industrialized societies, message reception transcended face to face communication environments, transmitting through multiple mediated forms. Becker

(1971) argued that influence occurs through the varieties of people and media that are available and in the modern era these varieties become increasingly diverse. He described the abundance of information that is received as a complex web of information: "bits of information on an immense number of topics. …scattered over time and space and modes of communication" (p. 33). Instead of one speaker, one speech, the rhetorical environment forms a mosaic composed of fragments, "contextual cues and elements of randomness" that should be evaluated differently than face to face communication (p. 34). As exemplified by Burke (1966, 1935, 1931), Rosenfield (1968) and Becker (1971) the *what* of rhetoric's study—the key term(s) used by scholars to label the phenomena they studied—shifted from oral discourse to symbolic messages, and with messages came an interest in meanings.

As a result of the major changes that occurred during the mid-20th century, philosophers in the humanities shifted their view of language as descriptive of reality to language as structuring agent (Jasinski, 2001). In particular, the field of rhetoric became increasingly interested in claims to knowledge, as manifested in Robert Scott's (1967) declaration of rhetoric's epistemic quality. In his seminal piece, Scott repositions rhetoric as a way of knowing, rather than a vehicle for transmitting knowledge. He argues that, at best, rhetoric generates contingent truths that are agreed upon. Barry Brummett (1976) applied Scott's insight to scientific refutations of objective reality. Brummett proposed a postmodern rhetoric where intersubjective realities and contradictory truths are possible. Rhetoric was decisively detached from oral discourse and linked to "meanings and the way in which meanings are created, shared, and changed" (pp. 40-41). Shared systems of meaning and corresponding views of reality led to an investigation of rhetoric's material consequences.

Although rhetorical materialism was implicit in earlier works, Michael Calvin McGee's (1982/2009) essay "Materialist's Conception of Rhetoric" was the first "formal statement" on the matter (Biesecker & Lucaites, 2009, p. 2). In homage to the late Douglas Ehninger, McGee (1982/2009) recasts rhetoric as a social and political medium of consciousness grounded in the effects of discourse that cannot be ignored. He claims that rhetorical experiences can occur in multiple ways: concretely through a presence with specific people and occasions (microrhetorical); through the roles played in social rituals for the alteration of social circumstances (sociorhetorical); and through the institutions that persuade and act in human roles, such as government and labor corporations (macrorhetorical). These differences are marked by their degree of abstraction, "from the barely-social to the wholly-social" (p. 29). The social process creates tangible things, "material artifact[s] of human interaction" (p. 38). Rhetoric becomes a phenomenon greater than discourse, messages, and meanings because its discursive effects are materially experienced, "our inability safely to ignore it at the moment of its impact" (p. 24). As a result, McGee asks us to "think of rhetoric as an object, as material and as omnipresent as air and water. …a theory can be legitimate only when measured, directly and explicitly, against the objects it purportedly describes and explains" (p. 19). Rhetoric constitutes "a wide range of objects—beliefs, attitudes, actions, events, texts, selves, and even communities" (Goankar, 1990, p. 290) that become the objects of study "grounded in objective data rather than in the practice and opinions of cloistered academics" (McGee, 1982/2009, p. 31). McGee uses the terms "material artifacts" and "objects" interchangeably as the *what* of rhetoric's study. Since this assertion, scholars have worked to traverse "the fantasy of the sign" through the study of its traces and constitutive material effects (Biesecker & Lucaites, 2009, p. 4).

As the field was moving towards the study of unstable signs, fragmented messages, and materialisms, traditional approaches to criticism cultivated a resurgence. The discreditation of cookie-cutter Neo-Aristotelian criticism negatively affected the prominence of public address scholarship (Lucas, 1988). As ideological criticism gained traction, traditional approaches continued to be attacked for their pursuit of objectivity and a conservative bias (Campbell, 1972; Hill, 1972). However, in the mid-1970s public address criticism was reinvigorated by a new approach to oral discourse. Notably, Michael Leff and Gerald Mohrmann's (1974) perspective became a pillar for the close textual movement. Speaking into conversations surrounding political genres, Leff and Mohrmann (1974) asserted that close attention to a speech text can reveal insightful rhetorical movements that might otherwise go unnoticed. As an example, they demonstrated how Abraham Lincoln's Cooper Union address was a nomination speech that came prior to his admitting presidential aspirations. Lincoln was not conciliatory but rather "nurtured exclusion" (p. 358), they argued. In a follow-up article, Mohrmann and Leff (1974) offered a formal rationale for the return to "neo-classical criticism," responding to critiques set-out by Black nine years prior (p. 459). Rather than attend to the effects of the speech, perceived as a major failure of earlier public address scholarship, the authors argued critics should understand persuasive purposes through the particulars of the discrete speech text. The call led to a renaissance of public address criticism (Ehrenhaus, 2001; Lucas, 1990, 1988; Gaonkar, 1989; Zarefsky, 1989; Medhurst, 1994, 1989; Leff, 1988, 1986) and with it a defense of the speech text as a common object of study. The text was asserted as a rhetorical field of action where aesthetic form and representational content intersected and unfolded through internal and external temporality (Leff, 1986). It also offered a grounded form of studying rhetoric: "The newer

paradigms take us more deeply into the symbolic process, but they deflect attention from the particular texts which ground its manifestations" (Leff & Sachs, 1990, p. 255).

Amid this portrait of the "autotelic. …coherent. … stable" nature of the speech text (Jaskinski, 2001, p. 570) as a *what* of rhetoric's study, rhetorical scholars continued to struggle over their preferred terms through conversations around contextualism. Alternative definitions of text began to emerge. Robert Branham and W. Barnett Pearce (1985), for example, emphasized the reciprocal relationship between potentially unconventional texts and unstable contexts. While texts derive their meanings from contexts, contexts are, in turn, shaped by texts. Here texts are defined as "every communicative act," something that changes with each audience at each moment rather than something that holds inherent, timeless meanings (p. 19). Distinctions between text and context dissolve. Branham and Pearce suggest there are three primitive relationships between texts and contexts: "*charmed loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually entailing; *subversive loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually invalidating; and *strange loops*, in which texts and contexts are mutually transformative" (p. 23). Conflicts between texts and contexts lead to the choice of conformity, non-participation, desecration, and contextual reconstruction. However, even while Branham and Pearce attempt to resist objectivity, their models presume an *a priori* stability where the text and context exist before change occurs between them. Alternatively, change is a pervasive feature not only of texts/contexts, but also of our contemporary moment.

Continuing the efforts of Wrage's (1947) rhetorical mosaics and Becker's (1971) complex web of information, McGee (1990) redefines the meaning of text through the "fundamental interconnectedness of all discourse" (p. 281). He deconstructs the traditional rhetorical text arguing that communicative events do not stand on their own as discrete objects of

study. Instead, they depend upon cultural *doxa* that is pervasive through the everydayness of our lives. Rhetoric, here, is dispersed throughout a textual landscape of constantly evolving information that collapse text into context. Rather than discovering texts with inherent persuasive purposes, the critic is to invent texts that are suitable for the purposes of their project and which "manifest a relatively clear persuasive intention and/or objective" (Jasinski, 2001, p. 569). As was encouraged by Brummett (1976), the critic's attention shifts from product to process. McGee (1990) suggests scholars attend to the consequences of *doxa* that are spread in manifold ways, advancing the critical enterprise in the field of rhetoric (Owen & Ehrenhaus, 1993; McKerrow, 1989). Essays like McGee's Ideograph (1980), McKerrow's Critical Rhetoric (1989), and Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci on the Vietnam War Monument (1991) assisted in the naming of smashed up cultural artifacts as texts. This rearticulation of text radiated across the discipline and impacted the pedagogy of rhetorical criticism as exemplified through its textbooks (i.e., Brummett, 2011; Sillars & Gronbeck, 2001).

The tension between the contrasting meanings of rhetorical text—whole and fragmented—and the continued conversations that surrounded them throughout the 1990s supplanted "text" as a dominant *what* of rhetoric's study, that is, although there were two versions of text being debated, the issue of language as a dominant feature of what rhetoric studies was not. However, scholars in the textbook industry have also emphasized an earlier word that McGee (1982/2009) employed. "Artifact," a term that derives from anthropology, ethnology, and sociology to stand for a physical or social phenomena created by humans, has also gained prominent traction. In rhetorical studies, artifact draws our attention to culture, "the circulation of meanings and pleasures that provides the materials out of which identity and knowledge can be (temporarily) fixed" (Sloop & Olson, 1999, p. 252). Prior to McGee's (1990)

argument for the postmodern text, Foss (1989) asserted that critics study artifacts, which she defined as "the communicative act, event, or product" (p. 11). Brock, Scott, and Chesboro (1990) stated that artifacts, or "rhetorical materials," serve as "evidence for reconstructing the lives and ways of the people who produced the materials" (p. 17). Hart and Daughton (2005) advanced rhetorical artifacts as a term that designates how scholars "isolate a phenomenon for special study (e.g., the rhetoric of U.S. space exploration)" (p. 25). And yet again, Kuypers (2009) labeled artifacts: "instances of rhetoric" (p. 13). This collaborative move by textbook writers is indicative of the way scholars have allowed for broader conceptions of the *what* of rhetoric's study, beyond the manuscripted speech or purposeful discourse. However, artifact, in contrast to McGee's text, maintains a sense of wholeness through its tangibility. Alternatively, Brummett (2011) collapsed artifact under the domain of texts. For him, rhetorical texts combine signs and artifacts as "the building blocks of culture" (p. 33). Whether in whole pieces or intertextual parts, there is little dispute over the symbolic and cultural-centeredness in the *what* of rhetoric's study when framed as text or artifact.

"Object of study" or "object of criticism" could be read as an attempt to move beyond the text and its cultural companions. However, the history of the term does not always suggest this. McGee's (1982/2009) deployment of object is synonymous with material artifacts that are decidedly cultural. Goankar, however, (1990) uses "object" to speak of the *what* of rhetoric's study in abstract terms. He highlights the relationship between objects and methods throughout the history of contemporary rhetorical criticism. Jasinski (2001) uses object in a similarly broad sense when he claims, "criticism can proceed only after it has identified the object as a particular type of thing" (p. 126). Objects, however, do not speak of the ephemeral or highlight rhetorical movements. Object frames the *what* of rhetoric's study as a bounded, motionless entity.

Nonetheless, McGee (1982/2009) at least provokes continued conversation surrounding rhetoric and materialism. His materialism, though, is not the same as a rhetorical materiality, as he makes clear: "To say that we study rhetoric in a material way is not to claim that rhetoric is material because it is a sensible discourse I may handle and manipulate like a rock." He continues, "Rather, discourse is *part* of a material phenomenon particularly useful because it is residual and persistent" (p. 32). In the spirit of this perspective, scholars interested in the rhetoric of physical structures, especially museums and memorials, analyzed them for their discursive rhetorical qualities.

Hattenhaur (1984) was one of the first to read material places as texts, turning surfaces into semiotics. Since then, scholars have become increasingly intrigued by how a structure's physicality may contribute to its rhetorical affect (i.e., Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991; Armada, 1998; Blair, 2001; Dickinson, Ott, & Aoki, 2005). Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci (1991), for example, momentarily suggest an environmental consideration when they state, "the critic must take account of a structure's relation to the physical environment, cultural situation, and use, for all of these are as much a part of the 'text' as the building itself" (p. 611). Their analysis, however, ultimately folds back into a symbolic interpretation. Later, however, Carole Blair (2001) draws attention to her body in the act of criticism as a way to highlight the "text's" physicality. She offers five personal narratives of how her body has influenced her scholarship. After exploring the somatic relationship between her body and the public spaces she analyzes, she concludes by asking questions about how this relationship might transform rhetorical criticism, leaving the answers to the reader.

The use of the term text within the study of rhetorical criticism is little more than two decades old, and yet it feels longer because the vocabulary has become so entrenched in our

publications, textbooks and because the popular alternatives such as artifacts and objects can be easily textualized. Should a scholar explore the extra-textual dimensions of rhetoric, there is a concern that the scholarship may be read as a naive pursuit of objectivity. However, what I would like to propose is that the tension between objectivity and subjectivity can be avoided by stepping out of human-centered approaches to rhetoric. I will elaborate on this more directly in chapters three and four, but for now I will continue to discuss how McGee's (1982/2009) call for the study of textual fragments has impacted the field's material turn.

More than a Text

Since, and in some cases prior to, McGee's (1982/2009) statements on a discursive producing materialism, scholars have invented new ways to approach rhetoric's material qualities. As stated in the introduction, Blair (2001) summarizes three materialist stances that have been pursued throughout the 1980s and 1990s: "a traditionalist one that insists upon considering the material conditions of discourse, another that focuses upon the lived-in body as a condition and consequence of rhetoric, and still another that understands rhetoric as itself material" (p. 288). These stances, however, no longer reflect the breadth of materialist approaches to rhetoric that have developed out of the "spatial turn" of the last decade (Conley & Dickinson, 2011, p. 2). I suggest that an updated version of these three stances that account for the increased attention to posthumanism: (1) the study of human-centered material productions, (2) the study of relational affects and rhythms, and (3) the study of nonhuman materiality. Rather than considering these "stances," as Blair (2001) proposes, I understand these as categories that can overlap. Those who study the first category, human-centered material productions, have contributed the terms articulation and apparatus as possible *whats* of rhetoric's study. However, Stormer's (2004) critical science approach to articulation for the historiography of rhetoric also

combines the third category, nonhuman materiality, demonstrating an overlap of the first and third categories. Scholars interested in affects and rhythms have, to varying degrees, understood these phenomena through human productions and nonhuman things, in some cases overlapping all three categories. They have used such terms as ecology, texture, and genotext to describe the *what* of rhetoric's study. I will discuss the productiveness of these terms and some shortcomings, restrictions and/or problems they pose for my approach to the posthumanist study of rhetoric.

Through cultural studies' immersion in the field of rhetoric, poststructuralist principles posed problems for scholars invested in hermeneutics. The meanings of messages, these principles suggest, were neither essential nor stable in time or space. As a result, scholars of rhetorical hermeneutics shifted their attention from "general theories about the interpretive process to rhetorical histories of specific interpretive acts" (Mailloux, 1990, p. 238). Meanings were considered to have emerged through complex histories of inconsistent cultural practices, rituals and institutions. On the grounds that critics could not guarantee their interpretations of messages, attention turned away from the study of textual meanings towards the study of how a text came to produce its contingent meanings. This had important implications for those interested in rhetorical agency. If language constituted consciousness, knowledge, and reality, as those who studied the epistemic and ideological quality of rhetoric suggested, then the rhetorical subject, too, was a cultural production. The metaphor of text, with its implied activity of reading and interpretation, did not convey the appropriate path of action for rhetorical critics who wanted to demonstrate processes of cultural production.

Articulation has been proposed as an attractive alternative for those who wish to account for the emergence of cultural productions. Generally speaking, to articulate is to temporarily link or connect cultural elements together in a network of relations, elements such as symbols,

concepts, and practices. One of the earliest advocates for articulation theory is Barbara Biesecker

(1989) who became interested in the positioning of subjects in symbolic orders in response to the

rhetorical situation. Articulation occurs through a "shifting and unstable" field that "produces

and reproduces the identities of subjects and constructs and reconstructs linkages between them"

(p. 126). She uses articulation theory, inspired by the Derridean *differance*, to replace the logic of

influence inherent in traditional representative models of rhetoric. Nonetheless, Biesecker's

articulation theory is still used in service of meaning and by extension the text.

　　While Biesecker's model examines the way practices are linked to concepts to constitute

meanings, Ron Greene (2009) builds on this presumption and argues that articulation works at

two levels, as envisioned by Stuart Hall. The first level is demonstrated through Biesecker's

(1989) work and the second level is where the discursive field both encourages or places

limitations on the movements of the first level. The second level can be understood as an

apparatus: a governing technology of ideology that has a history of prescribed rituals and

practices, "temporal and spatial disjunctures and conjunctures," which produce particular kinds

of subjects and sustained modes of power (p. 55). This double articulation assembles the range of

possibilities for first level connections between the "means of communication…social

dimensions of communication…technologies of public persuasion…types of knowledge…and

the kinds of subjectivity made possible by communication" (pp. 59-60). Critics are asked to pay

close attention to institutional histories and governing apparatuses that generate the material

conditions of rhetoric and place limits on the production of subjectivity.

　　Biesecker (1989) and Greene (2009) employ articulation theory from cultural studies

scholars who emphasize human-centeredness and, especially in the case of Greene, are interested

in political, cultural, and economic modes of production. Nathan Stormer (2004), on the other

hand, takes his version of articulation theory from the critical sciences, as influenced by Donna Haraway and Bruno Latour. Although Stormer states his version of articulation theory is meant as a "comparative framework for a particular kind of rhetorical historiography," it is still useful to think through how a critical science approach to articulation might be advantageous in the study of rhetoric (p. 258).

In agreement with Biesecker and Greene, Stormer (2004) argues that there has been an overly rigid distinction between discourse and materiality; however, Stormer's version of materiality includes more than the human productions of politics, culture, and economics. Materiality is comprised of both the human and nonhuman. Quoting Latour, he explains that "the world of meaning and the world of being are one in the same world, that of translation, substitution, delegation, passing" (p. 261). As a historiographer of rhetoric, Stormer is interested in how the order of discourse articulates with the order of things in diverse ways given varying material circumstances. Stormer proposes that both human and nonhuman actors exist in a network of relations that are constantly becoming. It is the performative connections between discourses and thingness—the articulation of elements—that creates rhetorical force. Rhetorical invention and agency are not only constrained by a human materialism, but also a nonhuman materiality.

I agree with Biesecker (1989) and Greene's (2009) desire to understand processes of cultural production, and with Stormer (2004) that rhetorical materiality includes human and nonhuman phenomena. Moving forward, I wish to maintain a sense of technology that is proffered by Greene (2009) but one that is more malleable and combining of materialities that are only partially human-generated. As discussed, Greene (2009) recognizes that subjects are produced through "different techniques and technologies" of second order articulations (p. 44).

Drawing from the work of Foucault, Greene notes that "rhetorical techniques and technologies manufacture" subjects (p. 51). The governing technology, or cultural apparatus, guides rhetorical subjects in their choices. However, Greene does not discuss how the subject is affected by nonhuman materialities or how the apparatus itself changes with the human actor. An apparatus assumes that the rhetorical technology mediates a change in the human subject, but it does not construct this relationship as reciprocal. In other words, there is no concern over how body and environment affect each other. Greene's apparatus appears to be a one-way mediating force. Technologies, however, can be reciprocal, defined as "that which ensures and continually refines the ongoing negotiations between bodies and things, the deepening investment of the one, the body, in the other, the thing" (Grosz, 2001, p. 182). This version of technology emphasizes the morphology or entrenchment of subjects rather than just their links in a network or inventional constraints. The human and nonhuman, living and nonliving are not just connected, they are interpenetrated and interdependent on one another creating new "processes, possibilities, and energies" (Slack & Wise, 2005, p. 97).

Rhetorical ecologies feature the movement of energies. Jenny Edbauer (2005) suggests that ecologies contribute an affective dimension to the study of rhetoric. Affects circulate through distributed social networks, "an amalgamation of processes and encounters" (p. 8). Preexisting channels of circulation are not only discursive; they are also affective—an intensity emerging prior to signification. Affects can develop through the relationality between bodies or between bodies and material spaces, whether cultural or environmental. Ecologies also add an element of chance to encounters that contribute unpredictable turbulences, which might otherwise be unaccounted. "Effects, enactments, and events" occur through an ongoing social flux (p. 9). The constant flows of movement from ecologies challenge positionality discourse

that develops out of articulation theory. The processional flow of rhetoric does not stop in space/time; it continuously passes through its encounters, always in-between relationships: "rhetorics are held together trans-situationally" (p. 20). Edbauer proposes a living theory of rhetoric that understands rhetoric as constant movement rather than theorized stoppage. Although affective circulation is central to Edbauer's rhetorical ecology, affective emergence is less theorized.

One way to understand affective emergence, as Edbauer (2005) herself notes, is through studying the relationship between bodily sensations and the surrounding spaces the body moves through. Playing on the field's preference for the term text, Donovan Conley and Greg Dickinson (2010) suggest critics should pay more attention to rhetorical textures: "shapes, sizes, weights, volumes, and velocities" as they "come to matter and take on significance through specific configurations of space, time, and energy" (p. 2). Spatio-material textures shape our everyday existence, but they are always mediated by our cultural entrenchment. Texts and textures infringe upon each other so that space is neither "blunt materiality [n]or hyper-simulation;" it is always in between (p. 4). Conley and Dickinson's hope is that critics can "produce subtler interventions into [democracy's] ever-shifting terrains" (p. 5).

Rhetorical textures, as material qualities, deploy rhetorical force through a distinctive type of modality. One way to understand this movement is through the writings of Julia Kristeva. Brian Ott and I (2011) draw upon Kristeva to explain the two modalities of signifying processes. The first modality is labeled the symbolic, what rhetorical scholars are traditionally used to studying. It is concerned with syntax and semantics. The second modality is called the semiotic, but does not refer to Saussurean semiology. Rather the semiotic is a transverbal underpinning of the symbolic, correlated with the constant discharge of rhythms and tones from the body's drives

that do not represent or signify themselves. Semiotic movements are choric, from the Platonic *chora*, a fluctuating generation of place that exists outside of language's grasp. The semiotic could be described as a type of affect, existing prior to language's emergence. In order for symbols to signify the semiotic must be present; the two modes always work in tandem. All social spaces provide symbolic and semiotic features. Kristeva contends that the semiotic, although resistant to discursive enunciation, is still textualized. Whereas symbols belong to the *phenotext*, the semiotic is associated with the *genotext*: "Engaging the genotext entails examining the transfers of drive energy (sensations and *affects*) elicited by a text's aesthetic elements" (p. 366). We admit, however, that the continued use of text through genotext privileges "interpretive processes ('reading') over sensory experiences ('perception'), potentially constraining a full understanding of rhetoric's materiality" (p. 379). We support conversations that will carry forward investigations of rhetoric's radically material nature.

Carrying forward, of course, always entails a past. So my intention here is to gather qualities of the *what* of rhetoric's study that would best serve a posthumanist project. Such a project, I argue, is accountable to all three material qualities of rhetoric: its cultural production (Greene, 2009; Biesecker, 1989), its affective movements and rhythms (Ott & Keeling, 2011; Edbauer, 2005), and its nonhuman actants (Conley & Dickinson, 2010; Stormer, 2004). This is indeed ambitious and produces a potential area of tension. Scholars disagree about whether it is possible to discuss a nonhuman-centered materiality. The argument against such an approach has been that we are always and everywhere cultural subjects, unable to get outside of our subjective experience to understand "the real." The argument from scholars who study non-human centered materiality, however, is that they do not wish or purport to get outside of cultural envelopments. The rhetorical force of nonhuman materiality will always be mediated by the body's senses and

cultural processing; nonhuman materiality, nevertheless, place restrictions on and encourages rhetorical invention, just as human created modes of productions constrain performances. The difference between human-centered and nonhuman-centered materialities has more to do with patterns of emergence than it does subjective/objective perspectives.

Brian Massumi (2002) explains that there are two distinct orders of movement that happen near simultaneously. The appearance of simultaneity has contributed to its concealment. The first order is the unmediated indeterminate potential of noncorporeal movement, often associated with nature (nonhuman materiality). The second order is representative processes, typically associated with culture (human made materiality). This second order is a post-projective structuring onto the first order's indeterminate potential. For example, the body, as a physiological and sensuous entity, ages through time and is affecting and becoming with the material world. Discourses, on the other hand, shape what is knowable about the body and its experiences as it transforms, influencing what is possible to think about the body's actions. Constructs such as gender, race, and sexual orientation "emerge and back-form their reality" onto the unmediated body (p. 8). The first and second orders of movements happen near simultaneously, making it impossible to separate nature (nonhuman materiality) and culture (human made materiality); they are in a state of becoming together. Nothing in the world is a fixed or stable entity, since all organisms, materials, and cultural constructions are moving. Culture, rather, attempts to create a sense of stability through encouraging the reiteration of labels attributed to phenomena always already qualitatively different.

My posthumanist rhetorical project will attempt to account for these two levels of movement as they influence the three materialist stances: (1) the study of human-centered material productions, (2) the study of relational affects and rhythms, and (3) the study of

nonhuman materiality. There has not yet been a term, the *what* of rhetoric's study, that has been able to encompass these three materialist categories. Thomas Rickert's (2004) notion of rhetorical ambiance, however, gives us some direction. He argues that we need metaphors that go beyond mere connections as provided by network logic, metaphors such as "environment, place, surroundings, and…of meshing, osmosis, blending" (p. 903). The ambient does just that. It is "immersive in that it is post-conscious and auratic, being keyed to various levels of attention that are nevertheless always in play at a given moment; and it is blended in that no element can be singled out as decisive, for they are all integral to its singular emergence" (p. 904). In the spirit of Rickert's (2004) rhetorical ambiance, I propose rhetorical milieus as a *what* of rhetoric's posthumanist study. Milieus are able to demonstrate the processes of the socially mediated, relationally affective, and nonhuman materiality by underscoring the two levels of movement between human and nonhuman phenomena. Through milieus, rhetorical selves fold into smooth and striated spaces, offering ways to perform and reconstruct intelligibility.

Rhetorical Emergence, Rhetorical Milieus

My notion of rhetorical milieus is derived primarily from the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1980/1987). Their use combines the terms "surroundings," "medium" (from chemistry), and "middle" (p. xvii). In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari introduce the term while talking about the rhizome, a motion filled metamorphosis of traits that "are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature…neither beginning nor end, but always a middle (*milieu*) from which it grows and overspills" (p. 21). The rhizome creates connections between diverse phenomena—cultural qualities, affective forces, and physical materiality—and transcends their mere link by morphing into or becoming-with difference and repetition.

Milieus are ecological habitats open to complexity, where species might visually appear independent, but are actually interdependent on "a sort of chaos, or, at best, extrinsic harmonies of an ecological order, temporary equilibriums between populations" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987, p. 48). Rhythms emerge through the milieu as a way to organize the chaos, generating order through the repetition of materials. Repetitious materials create organisms that coevolve with the milieu. Milieus are "the counterpoint of bodily organs and processes. …the rhythmic alliance of a limited milieu and a restricted range of bodies and body movements" (Grosz, 2008, p. 47). It is through the milieu that the body and universe are "entwined in mutual convacity/convexity, floating/falling, folding/unfolding" that creates "sensation from their coming together" (Grosz, 2008, p. 16). The milieu is the inversion of all species, providing the nutrients, materialities, energies for survival.

Our milieus appear invisible because we are so entwined in them, as a fish is to water. The inversion of the milieu is well illustrated by biologist Uexkull's (1934/1957) description of the tick and its *Umwelt*. *Umwelt*'s, of which Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) found inspiration for their milieus, are "as manifold as the animals themselves" (Uexkull, 1934/1957, p. 6). A tick's world is completely fitted to their body. From what we know of ticks, they are blind, deaf, unable to taste, and only possess one sensory pit that allows them to sense odor, heat, and humidity. Their world is shaped by these, what seem limited, sense perceptions. Uexkull (1934/1957) describes the reproductive practice of female ticks in her *Umwelt*. Once a female tick has mated she climbs to a high point where she can drop onto a passing mammal. Uexkull elaborates:

The eyeless tick is directed to this watchtower by a general photo-sensitivity of her skin. The approaching prey is revealed to the blind and deaf highway woman by her sense of

smell. The odor of butyric acid, that emanates from the skin glands of all mammals, acts

on the tick as a signal to leave her watchtower and hurl herself downwards. If, in so

doing, she lands on something warm—a fine sense of temperature betrays this to her—

she has reached her prey, the warm-blooded creature. It only remains for her to find a

hairless spot. There she burrows deep into the skin of her prey, and slowly pumps herself

full of warm blood. (p. 7).

What becomes important to our understanding of the milieu is that "out of the hundreds of

stimuli radiating from the qualities of the mammal's body, only three become the bearers of

receptor cues for the tick" (p. 11). The milieu depends on a double relationship: the ability to

perceive and the ability to be perceived.

From these perceptions a creature's milieu provides artistic expressions for

territorializing. Milieus produce self-constructing multiplicities, variations, speeds, lines of

flight, drifts, flows, and intensities. Together these qualities constitute fields of

deterritorialization and reterritorialization, but never a stable territory. It is through these

territories that bodies enfold, for milieus can be interior, exterior, intermediary and associated or

annexed:

Every milieu is vibratory, in other words, a block of space-time constituted by the

periodic repetition of the component. Thus the living thing has an exterior milieu of

materials, an interior milieu of composing elements and composed substances, an

intermediary milieu of membranes and limits, and an annexed milieu of energy sources

and actions-perceptions. …The notion of the milieu is not unitary: not only does the

living thing continually pass from one milieu to another, but the milieus pass into one

another; they are essentially communicating. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987, p. 313)

Given the dimensionality of milieus, they can be studied from a range of perspectives, from macro to micro. A macro approach would look at larger ecological movements, while a micro approach would focus on smaller technologies—the ways bodies (human or nonhuman) blend or enfold with other bodies to produce a repetitious organizing function. Milieu is an abstract *what* of rhetoric's study that relies upon difference and repetition. By starting at such an abstract level, rhetorical scholars can theorize bodies as organized by both natural and cultural flows. Materiality is celebrated in all its diversity.

The concept of milieu may cause worry for scholars concerned about claims to truth concerning reality outside of conscious thought. During the linguistic turn and cultural studies movement scholars were critical of implicit assumptions of objectivity in conceptions of space and place (Vatz, 1973; Biesecker, 1989). While I will further elaborate on this conversation in chapter four, it may be useful here to compare this articulation of milieu to the ontological conception of space that is so often critiqued for purposes of clarity. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* was one of the first statements on realism. The ontological assumptions embedded in the *Metaphysics* continue to impact the scientific community today. Additionally, Aristotle's philosophy presupposes and impacts his theories of rhetoric.

Aristotle believed that the world existed independently of our mind and that to philosophize about it we had to break it up into different categories: genus, species, and individuals. These can be thought of as hierarchical, as with animal (genus), dog (species), and Lassie (an individual dog). The former terms are general for the latter particular terms, so that individuals are particulars relative to species and species are particulars relative to genus. Aristotle was primarily concerned with species and genus. Individuals, he believed, were random and accidental; individuals die, but species subsist as an eternal category, or so he believed. He

was not exposed to evolutionary theories where species could evolve and become extinct. This has been part of the critique against Aristotle's ontology. He forwarded the belief that there exist a priori truths, knowledge that needs no evidence. Further, he believed logic provided a way to think purely about ontological truths. Aristotle assumed a relatively fixed world with eternal categories. However, species cannot exist as a pure category because, like individuals, they are historical—they have a birth and death.

Deleuze (1968/1994) rewrites Aristotle's realist ontology based on modern science and mathematics. De Landa (2011) provides a clear interpretation. He explains that Deleuze replaces Aristotle's general and particular with what he calls the universal singular and the individual singular. Individual singulars, similar to Aristotle's individual, are random and unique—complete difference. Included in this category are Aristotle's individual and species, which have collapsed. Deleuze suggests that most entities in the universe are individual singularities, even atoms which have a history emerging from star dust. Atoms are manufactured historically through differing chemical evolutions.

The second category, the universal singularity, is similar to Aristotle's general, but with an important distinction. Rather than relying on logic and language as the basis for this category, the universal singularity is derived from mathematics and geometry in particular. Universal singularities relate to spaces of possibilities, rates of change, and attractors for geometric shapes and cardiac beats. The universal singularities are not frozen eternal entities, but refer to how a form can emerge and what is possible.

An important distinction between Deleuze and Aristotle's realism is that Aristotle separates rhetoric from science and the physical world, while Deleuze demonstrates these

"realms" are inseparable. Rhetoric emerges from our physical world and our tools for assessment should be able to account for this process.

This chapter has set out to explore the *what* of rhetoric's study and has revealed a complex history of ideas that has engaged the relationship between culture and materiality. I have argued that "text" is a restrictive term in the posthumanist study of rhetoric because it implies we can understand rhetoric solely through symbolic constructions or functions. Artifact and object of study, which tend to work in partnership with text, pose their own set of constraints by implying boundaries. Additionally, I argued that the recent study of rhetoric's materiality has warranted an update to the materialist "stances," now understood as categories: (1) the study of human-centered material productions, (2) the study of relational affects and rhythms, and (3) the study of nonhuman active materiality. Scholars have attempted to study varying degrees of this materiality by employing a variety of terms: articulation, apparatus, ecology, texture, and genotext.

Ultimately, I suggest, the posthumanist study of rhetoric should assess all three categories of materiality, a term that will account for rhetoric's ambient quality. Rhetorical milieus present this possibility through emphasizing the middle space of invention, as I will argue in chapter three, which is the consubstantiality of the physical, cultural, and simulated. There has been a lack of good rhetorical criticism attempting to study this materiality. In chapter five I will put these theories into critical practice. Before, however, I will discuss how rhetorical subjectivity and rhetorical selves should be understood in relationship to rhetorical milieus. In chapter three I argue for a conception of the rhetorical self that folds into and out of the striated and smooth spaces of rhetorical milieus and in chapter four I trouble the notion of subject/object distinctions, arguing instead for abject bodies.

I conclude my exploration of the *what* of rhetoric's study by leaving *what* in its queried place. No word can ever capture the manifold movements of rhetoric. Indeed, *what* questions have been attacked as unhelpful when thinking through issues of process because they attempt to stabilize movements. Questions of *how* tend to be more productive when considering processes. However, as I have argued here, *what* questions are necessary when thinking through issues of vocabulary as scholars type words on the page to describe such processes. Until we accept different ways of presenting rhetorical scholarship, we are beholden to the words that we utter. Continued conversations around disciplinary vocabulary help sustain rhetorical studies as a field of study in the modern day academy.

The next chapter will demonstrate how a milieu can be utilized in rhetorical criticism that assesses identity formation. Posthumanist theory has been celebrated for its charge against the autonomous human agent. This coming chapter will engage theories of agency prevalent in contemporary rhetorical theory and forward that such conceptions always begin discussion with a subject already in process. If agency concerns the extra-social then we must conceptualize an animal self before the emergence of a subject. I explain how the folding of selves into milieus provides an alternative way to understand agency and identity construction.

Chapter 3

Becoming a Rhetorical Self: The Intra-Active Foldings of Rhetorical Agency

Posthumanism promotes an orientation to rhetoric that is more-than human. It concerns bodies and their environments as ecological counterparts. Rhetoric emerges from these relationships, from spaces of possibility, creating the opportunity for artistic expression. To advance this notion of rhetoric I have engaged issues of disciplinary vocabulary that relied too heavily on symbolism and signification, preventing the rigorous engagement with rhetoric's material force. I offered the concept of milieu as a way to avoid textual regression. In this chapter I continue to explore the possibilities of milieus in rhetoric for identity development. A posthumanist approach to rhetoric is interested in how creatures come to be entrained by particular knowledges, acquire habits, use technologies, and perform themselves generally. I begin by reviewing disciplinary conversations around agency, of which issues of identity are intimately entwined.

The past century has been marked by global interdependence causing us to reconsider how we understand ourselves amidst constant change. Fast-paced capitalist driven economies and the proliferation of bio and information technologies have contributed to the postmodern condition, causing "a permanent anxiety over the meaning and potential of rhetorical agency," states Ronald Greene (2004, p. 188). Gerard Hauser (2004) predicts that "agency will continue to be among this century's most central concerns" cutting across all "traditions of scholarship in rhetoric studies" (p. 183). Even within these traditions, there is no agreement over what agency is, who, when, and how we can possess it, if it is even something to be possessed. The infusion of cultural, spatial, and aesthetic theories into rhetoric have sparked ongoing debates over the

degree to which structures, of varying forms, both constrain and facilitate choice and opportunities for action.

There are multiple perspectives on rhetorical agency, each with differing relationships between bodies, discourses, and materialities. Many perspectives are in response to the classical humanist one that dominated the field in early contemporary rhetorical studies, though it still has its champions today. This perspective more or less understands agency as the basic ability of speaking-subjects to move others towards action in a material world (i.e., Leff, 2003; Geisler, 2005). Subjects are constrained by the demands of real audiences and their exigential contexts. Modifying this approach through theories of discourse is a constructivist perspective that assumes subjects are formed through meaning systems, but have choices over which discourses they use to construct their materiality (i.e., Foss, Walters, & Armada, 2007). Subjects are constrained by the way histories have shaped the available discourses.

Most recently, however, the classical humanist and constructivist perspectives, both which understand agency as something that can be possessed, have come under scrutiny for their assumed autonomy of the speaking-subject in our postmodern global society. These criticisms, Joshua Gunn and Dana Cloud (2010) suggest, have been driven by a posthumanist turn in rhetorical studies. They describe posthumanism as "simply shorthand for the critique of the self-transparent, autonomous subject that is sometimes said to begin with Heidegger's critique of humanism" (p. 53). Heidegger (1947/1993) argued that Sartre's grounding of subjectivity in the Cartesian *cogito* created a split in the fundamental relationship between subjects and objects. The result of this split is that subjects are assumed to orient themselves to objects as items to control and manipulate, including people who may be viewed as objects of domination. Although many scholars have attempted to move past such assumptions, claiming humanism to be "dead," Gunn

(2006) contends that notions of the humanist subject still haunt rhetorical theories. It is particularly apparent, Gunn attests, when these scholars grapple with issues of ethical responsibility, as seen in Kenneth Burke's (1966) symbolic action, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's (1970) symbolic approach to rhetorical theory, and in Robert Scott's (1967) epistemic rhetoric. These conceptions of rhetoric recenter the human as the primary object of inquiry and impose a "tremendous responsibility" over the assumed self-transparent choices they make (Gunn, 2006, p. 80). Gunn and Cloud (2010) document two alternative approaches to agency that explicitly critique these humanist hauntings.

The first is a posthumanist perspective on agency that has come by way of psychoanalysis or technology studies. This perspective affirms "a decentering of the all-powerful, choice driven, radically free subject and an attention to the larger structural, material, or discursive objects that limit and/or constitute the subject" (Gunn & Cloud, 2010, p. 54). A psychoanalytic approach, for example, demonstrates how agential choice is never fully conscious (i.e., Gunn & Treat, 2006; Lundberg & Gunn, 2005). Rational explanations are back-formed to disguise unconscious desires and cover over ineffable causes of action. Another posthumanist perspective focuses on how technologies direct and constrain human choice (Miller, 2007; Anderson, 2004). It assumes that various nonhuman actants, such as technical tools, come to shape human possibility through habituated practices and/or kinetic energy.

Posthumanist perspectives, however, are not without their critics who worry that a posthumanism via poststructuralist theory can, if gone too far, "deny not only the efficacy but also the ontological autonomy and even the existence of intentionality" (Alcoff, 1988, p. 416). Cultural-materialists want to ensure that agency can account for political change and the disruption of privilege even while historically-laden discursive and material structures call

subjects into existence (i.e. Cloud, 2006; Campbell, 2005). This perspective understands agency as a dialectic, "*somewhere* between subject and structure" (Gunn & Cloud, 2010, p. 55; emphasis mine). Dialectics is an attempt to avoid dualistic and monistic thinking by situating agency in the "*meeting place* of interiors and exteriors" (Gunn & Cloud, 2010, p. 55; emphasis mine). The exterior is understood as that which places constraints on the subject, whereas the interior is the realm of motives.

Ensuring that agency explains social and material becomings is of utmost importance to a discipline founded on the politics of living together. However, while a dialectical approach argues that subjects can have motives and intensions of their own, it does so by keeping notions of the interior and exterior relatively autonomous (Cloud, Macek, & Aune, 2006; Cloud, 2006); the so-called "meeting place" of interiority and exteriority is not well theorized. Perhaps this is because subjects and structures do not "meet" at any one particular "place." That is, interiors do not just meet exteriors *somewhere*, they meet everywhere, similar to a Mobius strip. This relationship is constituted through the constant folding of spaces into themselves, what Karen Barad (2003) describes as intra-activity: the performative process through which matter acquires meaning. As Gilles Deleuze (1986/1988) informs us via his reflections on Foucault, the interior is always a fold of an exterior. Insides are not "other than the outside, but precisely the inside *of* the outside" (p. 97). In this sense, "exteriors" are not only about rhetorical constraints, as Cloud (2006) suggests, they are also about the production of rhetorical possibilities, the would be "interior." What comes to be a performative possibility and what we come to desire in our practices and performances of living together are derived from the mattering of our bodies within our surrounding milieu.

A Deleuzian-inspired posthumanist approach to agency can address the concerns raised by cultural-materialists—allowing the possibility that motives and intensions can exist in rhetorical performances—and still be inclusive of psychoanalytic and technological qualities of agency. Posthumanism is not only useful in rhetoric as a critique of humanism; it is also a philosophical perspective that suggests rhetoric is an intra-activity that continuously shapes our becomings in time and space through its many manifestations and provides the material resources for what is possible. To understand this posthumanist conception of rhetorical agency—a radical material production of meaning—we cannot begin with subjects who are already indoctrinated into cultural systems of production; instead, we must start with a primary conception of the body that moves through and enfolds with spaces of physical, cultural, and simulated striations, who gain entry into social realities by spatial performances that are inclusive of, rather than limited to, human-made discursive and material structures. In this way, rhetoric maintains its tradition of being a fully corporeal performative art as was the case in the Archaic and Classical periods of Greece (Hawhee, 2004). Social performances may depend on cultural codes of intelligibility but they are made possible and given substance by the material becomings of bodies through their intra-active environments. Bradford Vivian (2000) elaborates on this condition in his discussion of the evolving self. From a posthumanist perspective, "The self is a rhetorical form," explains Vivian (2000), "that exists only in its continual aesthetic creation, an indefinite becoming" (p. 304). Vivian's rhetorical self makes use of the Foucauldian/Deleuzian fold to explain how subjectivity comes into existence by folding into repetition and difference. Foldings are ongoing intra-activities with physical, cultural, and simulated spaces that blur the boundaries between things and selves.

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. First, I elaborate on Vivian's notion of the rhetorical self to demonstrate how we are in a constant process of becoming with our surrounding rhetorical milieus, which was offered in chapter two as the *what* of rhetoric's study, an alternative to text. This explanation will demonstrate how a rhetorical conception of posthumanist agency is made possible. I make use of Karen Barad's (2003) concept of intra-activity to describe this type of rhetorical agency. Second, I demonstrate that this sense of the rhetorical self and its agential qualities can also be understood through antiquated notions of rhetoric, as seen in Homeric writings, the Athenian transference of *arête* through *eros*, and the ecstatic experience of the sublime. Third, I elaborate on my use of the terms physical, cultural, and simulated in describing rhetorical milieus. These terms each imply different movements, but are experienced simultaneously, or, as I will argue, consubstantially. I proceed in this order, picking up where Vivian (2000) left off in his characterization of the evolving self by discussing how foldings with smooth and striated spaces account for human and nonhuman-made material qualities of agency.

The Evolving Self Folding into Spaces

The assertion that language is performative has recently guided rhetorical scholars in their exploration of agency. The statement suggests that discourse depends upon unstable systems of meaning that gain a sense of durability and authority through repetitive iterations. Recall Judith Butler's (1993) statement that performativity is the "reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains" (p. 2). It is in the passing moment prior to repetitious reproductions that there exists an opportunity for agency. As Butler (1997) explains, "agency is derived from limitations in language, and that limitation is not fully negative in its implication" (p. 41). Agency is made possible through a force that exists outside of

discourse, she admits, and yet Butler (1993) and many other scholars interested in rhetorical agency tend to begin its theorization through the realm of language and of a subject already in process, not giving materiality the due Butler claims it deserves. "Butler's theory ultimately reinscribes matter as a passive product of discursive practices," Barad (2003) argues, "rather than as an active agent participating in the very process of materialization" (p. 821, footnote). If the condition of agency's possibility is beyond discursive repetition, in the variable mattering of spatial arrangements from which renewed iterations can be resisted, then we must engage the body of the self as something more than its mere subjectivization: a self enveloped by its local milieu which produces ongoing movements of material repetition and difference. Beginning with this primary notion of self allows us to see how performances can be habitually reinscribed as intelligible or how intelligibility can be contested through the material becomings of body/environment intra-activity.

At a primary level we are enmeshed in organic processes and bio-environments that sustain us through our continual movement. Our metabolisms are rhythmically interdependent on the surrounding spatiality with which we are intertwined. Our cognition is made possible insofar as our bodies are able to contract qualitative impressions and synthesize them with our ongoing production of self. "Every organism, in its receptive and perceptual elements, but also in its viscera, is a sum of contractions" explains Deleuze (1968/1994, p. 73). The synthesizing of contractions retains impressions and trains expectations. Contractions and syntheses occur through our foldings with different spaces. The fold is the space where "one comes to know one's self" and "persuades one's self"; "the fold is the self," explains Vivian (2000, p. 311). Folding into spaces is how the aesthetically constituted self becomes recognized in a process of

subjectifization. Deleuze (1986/1988) clarifies four folds of subjectivization derived from the work of Foucault:

> The first concerns the material part of ourselves which is to be surrounded and enfolded. …The second…is the fold of the relation between forces…a relation to oneself. …The third is the fold of knowledge, or the fold of truth in so far as it constitutes the relation of truth to our being, and of our being to truth. …The fourth is the fold of the outside itself, the ultimate fold. (p. 104)

Restated, the four folds are: 1) the body folding into the physical world as it continuously moves and senses; 2) the invention of subjectivity through the folding of force back onto the self, contracting and creating the ability for a self to think of oneself as a self; 3) the folding of knowledge that subjectifies the self to truth, encouraging but not determining self-regulation; and 4) the folding of the body with difference that is unpredictable and outside current knowledge.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) the process of becoming, the ongoing transformation of self, happens through the mixture of two types of spaces, the smooth and the striated. Generally speaking, smooth spaces are associated with open potential and free movement, while striated spaces are associated with bounded possibilities and limited motion. In smooth spaces forces, flows, and intensities pass through and circulate in unpredictable ways. Smooth spaces are nonsubjective and lack structures. As an example, Deleuze and Guattari describe the body as a smooth space, an active amalgamation of fragments. Summarized by Grosz (1994), Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the body is "a discontinuous, nontotalizable series of processes, organs, flows, energies, corporeal substances, and incorporeal events, speeds and durations" (p. 164). Far be it from inclination, the body is not a singularly bound, unified

entity. It is impressionable and constituted by its surrounding milieu. As such, it is amenable to striated spaces.

Striated spaces have defined boundaries, closed intervals, and relatively predictable patterns. They subordinate the smooth. Smooth spaces can become occupied by striated spaces through organization, structure, and order. They regulate the free flowing into binding grids and mapped territory—measures, positions, and properties. Nomadic motion becomes striated through the arrangement of space—the more regulatory and repetitive the intersections, the tighter the striation. Striation, however, is not necessarily bad. Some striation needs to exist in social intercourse so that subjectification does not fall apart completely. There is a productive tension that exists between smooth and striated spaces. "Perhaps we must say that all progress is made by and in striated space," explain Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987), "but all becoming occurs in smooth space" (p. 486). In order to act in a social reality the self must fold into some striated spaces. The striation is a "subjection of free action" (p. 491) but also a becoming intelligible. However, it is important that bodies do not become too ordered or too disciplined by striated spaces so that any new intensities and flows get blocked or assimilated to the same striation. It is a delicate balance.

The self is a mixture of both smooth and striated spaces where some folds are suppler and others more rigid. How the body plays and is disciplined is integral to the process of becoming self. As an example, it is widely accepted that gender becomes stabilized through the reproduction of cultural norms (Butler, 2004). Bodies are intelligible through the striations that shape both their physical display and behavioral performances, but should also be allowed to perform gender different from cultural expectations. If they are not, it is a sign that the gendered striated space has become too rigidly folded and habitual. Gender does not become striated

through the body itself, through sex (a problematic term on its own), but through other striated spaces such as those related to work, religion, and sports, the latter to be demonstrated in chapter five.

The self is not who we are but what we are becoming, what spaces—forces, knowledges, and potentials—we enfold with that are available in our surrounding milieus (Deleuze, 1990/1995). Neither is the self an autonomous subject, but an amalgamation of subjectivities ever-fleeting, morphing, folding into difference and repetition. Selves move through spaces that are produced in locally specific ways out of the physical forces, cultural beliefs and values, and technological possibilities made available in a rhetorical process, "an art of living" (Vivian, 2000, p. 317). As bodies in motion, the spaces that we move through—physical, cultural, and simulated—offer different opportunities to perform self, "improvisation within a scene of constraint" (Butler, 2004, p. 1).

Rhetoric's roots are in decision-making practices. No definition of rhetoric is more famous than Aristotle's who taught that rhetoric is a technique of finding all the possible arguments that can be used and selecting the best for each particular occasion. A posthumanist approach to rhetorical agency shifts our foremost attention from the selection of arguments or language, to the selection of performances available within our local milieus with which our bodies are entwined. This selection occurs through a continual process of persuasion, with the body always in motion, where some "styles and forms of being…appear more attractive, more efficacious" than others in each particular case (Vivian, 2000, p. 312). These spaces provide possible modes of performing self. Through our selections we fold into and out of spaces. We are the fold—constantly moving, doing, becoming. Rather than envisioning the subject as

constituted through a meeting place of motives and structures, a posthumanist view recognizes that the body is always and everywhere a folding of interiority and exteriority.

By activating a conception of agency at the level of becoming self rather than subject in process we can be inclusive of physicalities, cultures, and simulations as mediators of performative change. This impression of the body as constantly more-than itself allows rhetorical agency to exist in the intra-activity of movement and motivation, the conscious and unconscious, *nomos* and *physis*, the human and nonhuman. Intra-activity, as opposed to interactivity, highlights the becoming of the self within the self because there is no boundary between self and milieu. This is why the term "local" is key to a conception of the rhetorical self because the local mattering constitutes performative possibilities for agency. Performative actions within milieus create indeterminate rippling effects and affects.

One of the reasons this approach to the construction of self is important has to do with the ways bodily abilities shape performances. Different abilities provide the self with different milieus for artistic expression. The body is prone both genetically and developmentally to change throughout its growth. Our physical evolution provides constraints and opportunities for agency. Systems theorist Peter Taylor (1998) tells the story of a goat who was born without front legs. The goat eventually developed the ability to hop around on its own. When it died the goat was dissected and it was revealed that the goat's spine had evolved into an S-shape, similar to other creatures that walk upright. Taylor explains:

> the goat demonstrated a potentiality of the mammalian muscular-skeletal system to develop during an individual's lifetime so as to balance gravitational and other forces. Moreover, this developmental potentiality pre-existed the condition (an environmental chemical or a mutation) that revealed that potentiality. (p. 25).

Our bodies are born with capacities that may never be used throughout our life-cycle. It takes an experience of difference to draw this out as an agentic potential. The self then folds into its milieu in ways that activate the possibility for unique social expression.

Utilizing a Deleuzian-lens, I will demonstrate how this version of the rhetorical self can be understood through prehumanist antiquated notions of rhetoric. Contemporary scholars of rhetoric have interpreted ancient writings with similar sentiments of agency beyond intended autonomous conscious human control: Homer's epic poems document communication as the sharing of the body with other bodies; Mentor/mentee relationships in Ancient pedagogical practices understand the transference of *arête* through an erotic relationship; and Longinus' philosophical treatise on the sublime constructs rhetoric as a mode of displacing the self through ecstatic excitations. The study of ancient rhetoric within the past century has most often been interpreted through a humanist lens. The interpretations that I offer below will in some cases challenge these long held readings that appeared "correct." My presentation of these concepts through a posthumanist lens is not meant to solidify a true and final understanding of the field's history. All interpretations of history are debatable and fallible. However, they are a new way to understand the tradition of rhetoric and have been researched with integrity.

Prehumanist Conceptions of Posthumanist Agency

The earliest pieces of Western literature are typically attributed to Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. These epic poems are thought to have been committed to writing by 600 BCE, formerly preserved in oral recitation. Rob Wiseman (2007) suggests that these are the "oldest texts in the Western tradition large enough for detailed analysis" of communication processes (p. 7). Through a study of the *Illiad* and *Odyssey*, Wiseman argues that we are able to gather a sense of how communication was likely conceived, a model that appeared to be in "widespread use" in

not only Greek culture, but "other cultures of the same period" (p. 16). Wiseman calls these

processes of communication "an aspect of a larger, integrated set of beliefs about the make-up of

the human body, the way it functions, and the life-substances supposed to animate it" (p. 16).

Wiseman (2007) focuses on two words concerning communication that appear most

frequently in the texts: *phrenes* and *thumos*. The words are not easily translatable. *Phrenes* were

likely to have been situated in the chest and were the location where words were trapped.

Thumos is described as a "substance frequently 'poured' into the *phrenes*" (p. 8). Although

thumos seems to have been associated with breath, it also had similar features to blood, was an

instigator of action, a source of solutions, and frequently served as a metaphor for life generally.

Wiseman discerns that the Greeks believed communication took "place when one person breaths

[*thumos*] their words into the *phrenes* of another. …the passage of words physically—bodily—

from one person to another" (p. 15). These ancient notions of communication were heavily

reliant on corporeal experiences. The body was understood as a vessel through which words

(more than linguistic) were physically passed on to other bodies. The body was not perceived as

a totality, but as "an aggregate of organs and limbs" which seemed to possess autonomy and

even in some cases an agency of their own (Wiseman, 2007, p. 9). Early Greeks did not have

psychological categories for mental capacities as we do today. Descriptions of what we might

call emotions were physiological descriptions of sensations occurring in different organs of the

body.

What we gather from one of the earliest documented understandings of communication is

the intimate relationship between the body and expression. Communication was not meaning

oriented or discursively separate from the body as a structure existing outside of any one person

who might employ it, as some constructivist theories of discourse propose. It was understood as a physiological transference among bodies within local milieus—a communion of selves.

It has also been speculated that ancient Sophists and Orators believed *arete* could be transferred from one person to another through an erotic relationship. Virtuosity "was thought to be transmitted from *erastes* [man or senior partner] to *eromenos* [boy] by way of semen" (Hawhee, 2004, p. 107). Similar to Homer's *thumos*, the corporeal transference of bodily fluids was believed to contain an agential quality in the folding of bodies. Gyms, where students were simultaneously trained in rhetoric and athletics, facilitated a space of seduction. Exercises were regularly practiced by well-oiled naked bodies. The relationship between mentor and mentee was one of generous friendship, painful discipline and hierarchized *eros* (Hawhee, 2004). This corporeal style of pedagogy transformed bodies by forging alliances with other bodies, becoming more than their mere combination: a *phusiopoietic* emergence of flesh.

Seduction not only played a role in pedagogical techniques but also in a sublime conception of rhetoric that emerged sometime between first and third century CE. The writing on the sublime is typically attributed to Cassius Longinus, although the author is unknown. It is perhaps fitting that the composer of this conception of rhetoric remain anonymous, given that the sublime decenters the human's sense of self and challenges our impulse to attribute rhetorical theories to autonomous agents of invention. *Peri Hypsous*, which is "literally translated *On Height*, but more commonly *On the Sublime*" portrays rhetoric as an ecstatic phenomenon, something that cannot be proven or reasoned but is rather a desired experience that we are unable to resist (O'Gorman, 2004, p. 71). *Ekstasis*, an etymological parent of ecstasy, is typically translated as displacement and implies that the audience is moved beyond logos via "rhetorical height (*hypsos*), nature (*physis*), and desire" (O'Gorman, 2004, p. 72).

Rhetoric as sublime transcendental logos contrasts other versions of rhetoric that are grounded in argumentation and intension. O'Gorman (2004) writes that "Longinus's invocation of the notion of *ekstasis*…exposes his treatise as something more than an articulation of the humanist tradition" (p. 74). In experiencing this ecstatic movement, language, reason, and a sense of autonomy are lost and given over to "a capability and force which, unable to be fought, take a position high over every member of the audience" (Longinus, 1.4). Here, rhetoric is understood in a spatial scheme as a *techne* achieved through the audience's elevation outside their sense of self. In true sublimity, Longinus writes, "our soul is somehow both lifted up and—taking on a kind of exultant resemblance—filled with delight and great glory" (7.2). There are no rules to govern or judge this experience and so *techne* becomes detached from accuracy, practicality, and the human. Instead, rhetoric presents its own end and essence as a desired experience that the body cannot resist—a space that produces a compulsory fold that cannot be reasonably explained. The sublime experience transcends a sense of subjectivity through a breaking up of striation. This type of rhetoric conceives of the body as a physiological and malleable form that desires particular aesthetic foldings over others.

As exemplified by a Homeric model of communication, the transference of *arête* through *eros*, and the sublime displacement of the subject, early notions of rhetoric conceived of the human as more than its subjective reasonable experiences and of agency as outside human intension. The materiality of bodies is portrayed as giving shape to and even constituting the rhetorical encounter. In these examples I've highlighted the agential force derived from our physical embeddedness with our environments as a reminder that agency is always made possible and constrained by a physical grounds. However, cultural and simulated constituents of our milieu cannot be overlooked, especially in our particular historical moment. I now turn to a

discussion of how physical, cultural, and simulated movements consubstantiate our rhetorical milieus.

The Consubstantiality of Our Physical, Cultural, Simulated Milieu

In chapter two I discussed Massumi's (2002) two order of movements that happen near simultaneously: 1) unmediated, indeterminate potential (smooth spaces) and 2) the post-projective structuring onto the first order's indeterminate potential (striated spaces). There are similar affinities to these categories and what I've been calling the physical and cultural qualities of our milieu, respectively. However, the comparisons are not precise since physical and cultural processes cannot be separated. Additionally, there is another type of movement that exists in our local milieu as derived from the predominant media indicative of our historical moment. I call these "simulated" movements, which have to do with the logics taught through third wave media. Just as culture has no existence without a physical grounding, so too is the circumstance of simulations. Of the physical, cultural, and simulated, the latter two concepts rely upon the former as a condition of their emergence. However, in folding with our milieus we experience these movements consubstantially. I clarify these three movements to distinguish this sense of milieu from the merely cultural sense of milieu. Below I discuss the movements of the physical, cultural, and simulated and elaborate on my use of consubstantiality.

Physical Materiality

The physical includes all things sensual, haptic, rhythmic, and affective experienced by the body through its surrounding environment. It draws our attention to movement's relationship to intensity. Working from the writings of Benedict De Spinoza, Gilles Deleuze (1992/2005) suggests that the body should be understood in terms of its relationship to movement and rest, "by the affects of which it is capable" (p. 59). Just as language is fluid and changing, so too is the

body. It grows, adapts, and becomes with the different phenomena with which it intra-acts. Bodies are affective, which for Massumi (2002) is defined as an event of relational intensity. Affect is incipient; that is, an undetermined opportunity to be captured by expression and action.

Affects are shaped in part by our body's participation in the rhythms of their surroundings, in standardized routines and their potential disruptions. The bodily rhythms of breathing, heartbeats, and sleeping fold into smooth performances of time, such as seasonal changes and larger astronomical processes, and striated cultural performances of time such as the mechanical clock, cyclical economic patterns, and schedules related to work, religion, and health, among others. Rogers (1994) uses a neurological perspective to describe how these rhythms affect the body: "rhythms become encoded in the pathways of the brain and nervous system. Neural pathways provide the biological basis for consciousness; the harnessing and repression (canalization) of the body's drives constitutes the subject" (Rogers, 1994, p. 234). No rhythm exists of its own accord: "our individual rhythms, and rhythms in general, clash with, merge with, and influence others, sometimes reinforcing, sometimes diminishing, sometimes augmenting, sometimes fragmenting, and sometimes destroying other rhythms" (Dawes, 2005, p. 58). These rhythmical habits and practices shape the contours of our affective experiences, a rhetorical feature of our everyday lives.

Cultural Performativity

Physical rhythmic processes make material cultural performances. The domain of culture is most familiar and most comfortable for rhetorical scholars for its relationship with discourse. By discourse I mean the performative function of language and bodies. A performative conception of discourse is compatible with Massumi's (2002) second order of movement, a back-forming process that attempts to capture affective phenomena and put them to use in

cultural organizing practices. Performative discourse is typically linked to the writings of Michele Foucault (1970), who demonstrates how discursive knowledge is contained in systems of meaning that regulate our behavior. Discourses both constitute and regulate the individuals that use them through a process of subjectivization, described above as the processes of folding in and out of striated spaces. This subjectivization implements particular technologies of the self, which are regulatory patterns of behavior. Our access to different types of striations gives us options and opportunities to perform self, but when striations become too rigid they prevent the smooth transitioning between performative styles.

Judith Butler (1993, 1997, 2004), extends the work of Foucault by drawing on J. L. Austin's speech act theory. Butler argues that discursive structures become materialized through performativity, the process by which discourses materialize the effects that they name. What Butler fails to mention is that physical matter makes discourse possible, as Barad (2003) has argued. Butler's conception of performativity is useful in understanding how striated spaces repetitively reproduce or rematerialize themselves. As Butler (1993) states, "bodies never quite comply with the norms by which their materialization is impelled" (p. 2). As rhetorical selves we exist in a social paradox of subjectivization, constituted as social participants through a discourse that regulates our bodies to make us intelligible. Performativity materializes bodily habits, which are "acquired automatic self-regulation" residing "in the flesh" (Massumi, 2002, p. 11). However, through our material becomings we have the potential to fold into different striations or even create new ones to alter behavioral performances and their larger structures.

Technological Simulations

Media are encoded with particular logics or sets of characteristics and patterns that encourage varying structurations of behaviors, interactions, and subjectivities. Joshua Meyrowitz

(1994) labels this phenomena medium theory, as derived from the work of Harold Innis and

Marshal McLuhan. As a collection, media types form cultures, three in our known history: oral,

print, and electronic. Oral culture, exemplified by antiquity, required one's physical presence in

personal communication, involving all the senses. With little to no techniques for documenting

thoughts or events, everything had to be remembered. Mnemonic devices were of utmost

importance, including the use of poetic rhythms and rhymes, repetition, and mythic narrative.

Knowledge was rarely different from person to person because new ideas were difficult to recall,

causing slow cultural change. Eventually, print culture, typified by the Renaissance, enabled the

externalization of memory, contributing to the emergence of individualism and intellectual

authorship. It allowed personal communication to be carried over large distances, making

pluralism possible. The visual senses were heightened as a result of reading and visualizing

messages. Through the written word came the preservation of more complex thought and, with

the printing press, its mass distribution (Meyrowitz, 1994).

Currently, the majority of the West is living in an electronic culture—the third wave of

media. Electronic media can take various forms, such as televisions, phones, and computers.

Similar to orality, these media are able to engage all of the senses, not through presence but

through simulation (Baudrillard, 1981/1994). Neither space nor time exists as a constraint in the

distribution of information. Messages can be sent over distances instantaneously, archived

indeterminately, and redistributed as quickly as they were dispersed. As Meyrowitz (1994)

shares, "While written and printed words emphasize ideas, most electronic media emphasize

feeling, appearance, [and] mood. There is a decline in the salience of the straight line—in

thinking, in literary narrative, in human-made spaces and organizations" (p. 58). Electronic

cultures tend to develop associative and spatial thinking patterns, provisional perspectives and

adaptability, consumptive logics and reinventive productive capacities, and the ability to make quick decisions (Ott & Mack, 2010). To be sure, these new contractions of media phenomena striate the way we teach, learn, and remember new information (Meyrowitz, 1996).

Simulations transmit, reproduce, and/or invent an elsewhen and elsewhere for here and now creating communication opportunities and simulated experiences that would otherwise be inaccessible. Third-wave media is becoming increasingly digitized and referred to as new media. Lev Manovich (2003) defines new media as "the cultural objects which use digital computer technology for distribution and circulation" (p. 7). The category is "ever-expanding" as its newness is perpetual (Ott and Mack, 2010, p. 7). The varying forms of electronic technologies allow for different simulated experiences. New media are mechanistic-tools that provide automatic features and functions for us and instill instinctual behavior, or habits, that become nonconsciously performed by our bodies. Summarized by Hansen (2000) "technology permeates presubjectified agency as an immediately sensuous force independently of and prior to the subjectifications that are generated as structural effects of the semiotic system(s) constitutive of late capitalism" (p. 237). Expanding on Bourdieu's practical mimesis—"a process of acquisition rooted in direct and immediate bodily adaptation to sensory conditions" (p. 51)—Hansen (2000) suggests we turn our attention to the tactile unconscious that results from our engagement with such technologies. In sum, simulations shape the pace and aesthetic sensibilities of how culture is experienced.

Consubstantiation

From a posthumanist perspective, it is problematic to think of the physical, cultural, and simulated as distinct categories of analysis. The overlap is present in my elaboration of each. Nonetheless, it is useful to think through the different movements that milieus contain because it

attunes us to the different ways that matter comes to matter. Each of these movements intra-act with one another and create something different than the sum of its parts, what Grosz (1999) describes as vitalism. The features are never experienced separately, because they are always enveloped by or intra-acting with one another, with themselves.

This can be likened to Burke's (1969) concept of consubstantiality used in his description of rhetorical identification. Burke argues we are born in a state of natural division from each other. This separation creates a longing for us to be identified with each other, for us to be consubstantial. Consubstantiality can be defined as the sharing of the same substance or the ongoing synthesis of component parts. Burke explains:

> A doctrine of *consubstantiality*, either explicit or implicit, may be necessary to any way
>
> of life. For substance, in the old philosophies, was an *act*; and a way of life is an *acting-*
>
> *together;* and in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas,
>
> attitudes that make them *consubstantial*. (p. 21)

Symbolic action allows us to become consubstantial with one other since we are not already identified. Davis (2008), however, is critical of the assumption that we are not already identified, arguing that rhetoric has already given us a primary identification for which we would otherwise not be able to communicate. New research in the neurological sciences challenges the purported sharp distinctions that are believed to exist between self and other, in particular with mirror neurons as discussed in chapter one (Davis 2008). Although consubstantiality can be achieved through symbols, Burke (1969) is at least reflective on the sharing of substance *materially*. He references the consubstantial relationship between parents and child: "consubstantial with its parents, with the 'firsts' from which it is derived, the offspring is nonetheless apart from them. In this sense, there is nothing abstruse in the statement that the offspring both is and is not one with

its parentage" (p. 21). There are similarities here in the etymology of the word, which derives from Christian theology of God being composed of three divine persons in the holy trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

What is important to note in my usage of consubstantiality is that in each other's presence, the physical, cultural, and simulated are not experienced separately. They are one experience: three rhetorical modes that occur simultaneously, that become something different from their component parts. Rhetoric emerges through their consubstantiality, not through any individual mode of movement. I am suggesting that we understand milieus as a vibrant consubstantiation of physical, cultural, and simulated environments. This formulation advances a rhetoric that is derived from the becomings of bodies with space, sutured within techniques, technologies, and practices of culture. This complex configuration encompasses more dynamic features of the rhetorical process than those previously modeled by humanistic paradigms.

I have set out to argue that the rhetorical self is always more than a cultural subjectivity and that when we conceive of a posthumanist rhetorical agency we must begin theorizing its possibilities beyond the exclusive realm of culture. We must begin with the very substance that makes culture possible: our physicality. To conclude, agency is a type of self-reflexivity, a moment when matter (the self) comes to think of itself as matter (the contractions from folding into spaces). But this agency is never "our own" because it is derived from our becomings with space, the mattering that creates possibilities for performative action. Agency is a material enactment and as material beings we intra-act with the consubstantial spaces of our local milieu. As Barad (2003) argues, "The world is an ongoing open process of mattering through which 'mattering' itself acquires meaning and form in the realization of different agential possibilities" (p. 187). From the transmission of *thumos* in communication, to the transference of *arête* through

eros, to being outside oneself in the ecstatic moment, a posthumanist understand of rhetoric forwards the human as something more than itself or a self, for it is always dependent on an evolving milieu that it enfolds with, its counterpart. Through our milieus and our foldings with striated spaces, we can actively reflect on our foldings with our local milieus and attend to our performative acts of intelligibility.

In the next chapter I engage questions about contemporary rhetoric's ontological assumptions that utilize subject/object distinctions. Consistent with my position that rhetorical selves fold into smooth and striated spaces, I suggest that subject/object distinctions prevent us from conceiving of ourselves as becoming with our surrounding milieus. Instead, I suggest we think of ourselves as abject bodies. This ontological investigation into rhetorical understandings of our relationship to place will also trouble traditional understanding of rhetorical invention.

Chapter 4

Choric Invention: Abject Becomings of Time

In previous chapters I've addressed how discourse and culture have undergirded the contemporary study of rhetoric in an overly dominant fashion, retaining problematic humanist sentiments. I've put posthumanist-inspired rhetorical theorists in conversation with each other, provided a genealogy of the rhetorical text and its alternatives, and argued that we develop a sense of identity through the foldings of our body's local physical, cultural and simulated spaces. If matter is an active agent in social performances, this mattering provides an inventive generation different from the traditional rhetorical topoi. In this chapter I discuss invention as a bodily becoming through *chora*. This type of invention facilitates an opportunity for social change based on ecological emergence.

Traditionally, scholars have configured the rhetorical canon of invention as a discursive art. *Topoi* are typically thought of as symbolic categories or commonplaces derived by human actors. Invention develops through the available discursive resources. For students of rhetoric, a *topos* is a place to find something, "seats for arguments" in the mind of the rhetor (Cintron, 2010, p. 100). The literal Greek translation of *topos* is spot, location, position, or a place (Mortensen, 2008; Rubinelli, 2006). What we invent gets remembered for future utterance, similar to how an object could be placed in a designated location for its later retrieval. The mind develops common constellations of themes, taxonomies, images, and arguments to be deployed in a rhetorical exchange in hopes that it is embraced as a wise execution of common sense. Summarizing its different permutations, Rickert (2007) states that *topoi* can be seen as:

a nonbiological construct: the mind utilizes an external symbolic resource to generate and

organize rhetorical discourse. For instance, topic invention sees various ideas, either

abstract (division, cause and effect) or culturally particular (taxes are bad, maximize

efficiency), as providing a discursive *place* where thoughts begin and grow. (p. 251)

Further, commonplaces are understood as "devices of both invention and memory" (McKeon,

1973, p. 199). Topical memory, as McKeon (1973) describes it, typically derives from a linear

model of space-time referencing. Whether a rhetor is remembering something previously

unknown or creating new arguments to be stored in the *topoi* or common places, this version of

invention relies on a linear model of time where the memory is able to capture phenomena, ideas,

arguments as they exist and reference them for a later purpose.

Time is often imagined as chronological, a linear movement forward towards an

unending horizon. Conceived this way, the self either remembers or forgets the actions, events,

happenings that pass in every present moment. For the humanist subject, the future is open to

infinite possibilities while the past is a scrap-book of individual memories left behind. However,

this standard image of temporality is a misleading one (Bergson, 1908/1991). Linear time

produces two falsehoods: "On the one hand, we believe that the past as such is only constituted

after having been present," explains Deleuze (1966/1991), "on the other hand, that it is in some

way reconstituted by the new present whose past it now is" (p. 58). Time is more complex than a

memory of what has just past or a "real" experience of the present.

To think of time differently it should be thought of as a subject—a folding of force—and

as such it becomes a subjectification process that produces memory. The continuous unfolding

and enfolding with spaces regenerates past perceptions as something that accounts for the present

intensities and flows that are being folded into and passing. Memory does not account for the

capturing of events in the embodied present but for a constantly reinvented past that folds into present perceptions, creating a presently passing subjectivity. We forget that we forget and so memory becomes "the necessity of renewel" and a production of subjectivity (Deleuze, 1966/1988, p. 108). As a result, we do not have "real" experiences of the present; we have virtual experiences of the passing present (Bergson, 1908/1991). The virtual image, as explained by Al-Saji (2004), is "the echo or afterimage that comes to overlie present perception" (p. 212). The virtual is prescriptive, an expectation for what is to be done.

This model of time calls into question notions of invention that require stable locations in the mind of the rhetor used for memory. Experiences of the present are never fully self-present or experienced through pure consciousness (Grosz, 1999). The present is always a performative mattering of physical, cultural, and simulated intra-activity experienced by the rhetor. A posthumanist notion of invention must account for this complexity. How invention occurs is an ontological question that concerns our relationship to the material world. As John Ackerman (2010) argues, contemporary rhetoricians have been primarily concerned with rhetoric's epistemology, but less so with its ontology: the conditions of rhetoric's emergence. The most predominant models of rhetoric's emergence favor either Aristotelian realism or constructivism. In contrast, Thomas Rickert (2007) urges us to see rhetoric's inventiveness as generated from a receptacle of "complex ecologies of systems and information" (p. 253). He proposes *chora*, an ancient concept of spatial becoming developed in Plato's *Timaeus* and theorized by contemporary rhetorical scholars as an alternative to *topos*. *Chora* was also a common term used to refer to placeness in Ancient Greece. Consistent with Rickert, I argue that there is a "movement to invention," emerging "in and through space" (Rickert, 2007, p. 270). *Chora* shifts

our attention from a mental, language-centered theory of invention to a mind/body/environment

paradigm in which invention emerges (Rickert, 2007).

      Chora has received renewed attention because of its inventional capacities that traverse

the realm of language and which, as I will argue, result from the intra-activity of our physical,

cultural, and simulated milieus. Though less theorized in rhetoric's history, *chora* draws our

attention to the womb-like character of inventive becomings that emerge and retreat in the

production of self; it highlights the fully immersive bodily dimension of the inventive processes.

Understandings of invention outside of discourse and the mind were present in antiquity. The

sophistic *kairos* locates agency in environmental ambiance rather than the thinking-subject;

Athenian rhetorical and athletic pedagogical routines conjure disposition and *arête* through

rhythm and repetition; and the practice of walking at Aristotle's school was used to induce

knowledge generation, a practice that has been carried forward in the modern day figure of the

flaneur.

      Ontological understandings of place and how they inform rhetorical invention vary

widely in contemporary rhetorical theory. Perhaps the last explicit survey of the field's

ontological perspectives was conducted by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (1970) who distinguished the

differences between a traditional, behavioristic and symbolic approach to understand why

humans are rhetorical creatures. Typical of the sociological, language-centric movement of the

time (Ehninger, 1968; Scott, 1967), Campbell's (1970) thesis concluded that humans are

persuadable because they are "symbol-using or signifying animal[s]" (p. 97). She continues, "all

rhetorical theories make the ontological assumption that [hu]man is, by nature, subject to and

capable of persuasion" (p. 97). The conclusion that humans are rhetorical creatures because of

their persuadability through symbols has remained implicit in most rhetorical criticism of the

past 40 years. A posthumanist approach to rhetoric, however, argues that humans are not unique in this regard and are not rhetorical solely because they are symbolic creatures. Instead, humans are persuadable because of their emplacement in bio-techno-cultures that physically, technologically, and culturally influence their capacity to perform.

Conversations surrounding the rhetorical situation contemplate issues of place and ontology (Bitzer, 1968; Vatz, 1973; Biesecker, 1989; Edbauer, 2005). In this chapter I will outline conceptions of invention offered in the disciplinary conversation surrounding the rhetorical situation. I will discuss the ontological assumptions of each model by underscoring how relationships between subjects and objects are configured and suggest that we embrace an ecological understanding of place, which supports a choric model of invention. The implication of embracing a choric understanding of invention, however, is that we reconsider object/subject distinctions that are common in contemporary rhetorical theory and which reinstate culture as the central domain of analysis. I conclude by proposing Julia Kristeva's (1980) theory of abjection as an alternative understanding of our relationship between each "other" within our shared milieus. First, however, I will elaborate on the history of the term *chora* and Kristeva's particular employment of the term.

Chora

Topos is typically translated as a noun, as place; *chora*, however, is a verb. It means to give space, to admit, to receive, to be in motion or in flux. We find this term curiously used in Plato's dialogue *Timaeus*. Many contemporary scholars of Plato's work see the *Timaeus* as a follow-up to topics initiated in the *Republic*. It is a discourse in which Socrates desires to see his ideal theories of state and citizenship put into motion. What comes to be revealed, however, is that the ideal city is just that—it never attains actuality because it is a city only in thought. It

exists as a mental form that aspires to materiality but lacks *eros* and becoming in a generative sense. The dialogue goes on to imply that our ideas will never actualize exactly as we intend because they have not yet been put in motion with the material world already in process.

One of the key themes found in the *Timaeus* has to do with memory and beginnings. The dialogue suggests that these two topics are intimately correlated. To begin is also to recall, as Socrates does in the opening of the *Timaeus*. He recalls his speech on the ideal city and raises a query about how this city might come to life and have motion. However, the dialogue is less about the ideal city and primarily about the topic of generation: the generation of souls, bodies, heavens, cosmos. Where does this generation come from? Beginnings, it is implied, never come from complete abstraction; they always have some history. Statements on beginnings develop throughout the dialogue: "begin at the natural beginning," "begin anew," "return to the beginning," but they always imply a circularity or a regeneration from a previous conversation or place.

Philosophers of the Timaeus agree that this is one of Plato's most curious dialogues. As John Sallis (1999) puts it, it is "a dialogue of strangeness" in both the narrative direction and texture—a poorly told story with interruptions, regressions, discontinuities, new beginnings, repetition, and indecisiveness—themes that are relevant to our understanding of *chora* (p. 3). Indeed *chora* is not only explicitly referenced in the Timaeus, but is "complexly interwoven" throughout "the dramatic action and discussion of the dialogue itself" (Rickert, 2007, p. 256).

Any attempt to define *chora* is always a mistranslation because the term is grasping at that which exists quite literally outside of meaning. Words that have been used to describe χωρα (*chora*) include: nurse, maternal, receptacle, matrix or mother of all becoming. As Rickert (2007) has argued, we can only approach this otherness through a "bastard discourse" (p. 158).

According to the character Timaeus, who Socrates uncharacteristically agrees with, *chora* is one of the three kinds put into the cosmos that existed before the heavens. The first kind is the idea: that which is ungenerated, always the same, the original, indestructible archetype. We typically refer to these as "the forms." The second kind is that which is generated from the first kind. It is the imitation of the paradigm, the visible, the copy. This is materiality. Finally, we have the third kind, which is *chora*. Timaeus warns that the third kind is difficult, troublesome, and obscure. It is challenging to understand, because it is that which is unrepresentable and constantly disrupting representation itself. In one of the more extended commentaries on *chora*, Timeaus states:

> That which is to receive perpetually and through its whole extent the resemblances of all eternal beings ought to be devoid of any particular form. Wherefore the mother and receptacle of all created and visible and in any way sensible things is not to be termed earth or air or fire or water, or any of their compounds, or any of the elements from which these are derived, but is an invisible and formless being which receives all things and in some mysterious way partakes of the intelligible, and is most incomprehensible." (51a)

In an abstract sense, *chora* is that which generates. It is invisible, formless, beyond sense and being. Sallis (1999) suggests, it is "origin and abyss, both at the same time" (p. 123). It is not matter itself, but the generation of matter where material becoming or change perpetuates. *Chora* makes possible and capable rhetorical becomings through receiving impressions and allowing for their alteration. It is that which is blended from, between, and with the first and second kind— idea and materiality.

Chora has been useful for contemporary theorists interested in understanding spatial generational processes, such as Jacques Derrida (1995) and Gregory Ulmer (1994). However, most useful here is Julia Kristeva's (1974/1984,) conceptualization for its connection to the body

and communication. As discussed in chapter two, Kristeva is critical of conceptions of communication that prioritize the symbolic order over and at the expense of the rhythmic material energies embedded in all communication processes, what she calls the semiotic *chora*. The signifying process for Kristeva is constituted by two modalities: the symbolic and the semiotic. No act of communication "can be either 'exclusively' semiotic or 'exclusively' symbolic, and is instead necessarily marked by an indebtedness to both" (Kristeva, 1974/1984, p. 24). Kristeva rarely talks about the semiotic without pairing it with *chora*, which for her highlights its process driven modality. Kristeva (1974/1984) describes *chora* as a pulsating "rhythmic but nonexpressive totality" (p. 40). The semiotic *chora* is a combination of our bodily drives, our experience of being enveloped by our environment, and polyvocity. The symbolic realm, on the other hand, is one of unity and order. There are affinities here to Deleuze's (1980/1987) smooth and striated spaces. Straited spaces are orderly, predictable, and habitual similar to the symbolic, whereas smooth spaces circulate flows, intensities, and nonsubjective movements. Kristeva explains that in all symbolic acts there exists the possibility to disrupt its ordering. This condition, and the very condition of any communicative act, is made possible by the always persistent presence of the semiotic *chora*.

Similar to how a physical grounding must be present in order for culture to function, Kristeva (1974/1984) states that the semiotic *chora* "precedes the establishment of the symbolic and its subject" (p. 41). It is a state experienced in the preverbal realm of infants that generates subjective possibilities. We experience this "semiotic" in our intimate connection in the womb of the mother, where melodic voices and rhythms of the body are experienced. Here, we learn rhythmic intonations of language before we learn syntax. Kristeva uses the example of babies babbling before they can talk. Babies are familiar with the rhythmic conditions of expression and

through this learn to structure intelligible performances of self. Our tendency is to think of ourselves as unified through discursive structures. However, in the process of subjectivization the semiotic *chora* never leaves us. It is always moving through us disrupting symbolic unification with bodily ruptures. Kristeva explains that *chora* is also the modality of signifiance (note: there is no "c"), the destructuring and restructuring process of the symbolic order. Kristeva understands genuine invention as the opportunity to break out of and reconstitute symbolic order or striated spaces. *Chora* provides "extra-linguistic processes" for reordering the symbolic, allowing for the "defetishization" of the masculine logos, a posthumanist endeavor (Rickert, 2007, p. 261).

Choric invention derives from what Massumi (2002) describes as the first order of movement: unmediated, indeterminate potential. When the body is in motion, folding into smooth and striated spaces, it is in "an immediate, unfolding relation to its own nonpresent potential to vary" (p. 4). It is through potential's variation that invention emerges: the potential of smooth spaces (semiotic *chora*) to disrupt striations (symbolic order) and the potential for smooth spaces to help reproduce more ethical striations. Through the consubstantiation of our local milieus, immanent potential can be captured for qualitative regulation (striation) to create a new performative possibility. Choric invention is the emergence of the possible from immanent potential. It is an ontogenetic occurrence: "equal to emergence" (p. 8). Invention is that which is possible to "capture" from indeterminate potential to be used for subjectivization, a making intelligible of that which was not intelligible prior to social intra-activity.

As an example of choric invention I turn to graduate students of architecture who discuss their inventive processes similar to the generative *chora*. John Ackerman collected empirical data in an *in situ* two year study conducted during the mid-1990's in the Graduate School of

Architecture at major state university. He attended to processes of enculturation as students moved from interested citizens to (en)trained professionals. Using the interviews and field notes he collected, we (2010) attended to the ways graduate students of architecture came to understand space, eventually arguing that the act of design is an embodied pursuit of the aesthetic.

Similar to the movement of *chora*, most architecture students struggled to locate starting place in their design process. For those who did, they referred to a matrix of ideas that were not clearly locatable. One student explained, "I started somewhere, I always write a million things all over the place and eventually they come together." Once students started with ideas that were already in process from a memory of surrounding environs, their design ideas began to take a material form through inventive play. Another interviewee stated:

> What you create physically is never the same as what you thought it would look like. That's why the process is: think of it, build it and then derive ideas from what you've built and then make it again, it is an ongoing process. …. In your mind it might work, because your mind can think of anything, but in terms of gravity or whatever, physical laws, that changes everything.

The student here is struggling with the same issues that Plato addresses in his *Timaeus*. The *Republic* was a good idea that could not be activated because it lacked becoming in a generative sense. Finally, interview participants discussed their inventive processes as coming from an embodied knowing. A graduate student elaborated, "the more I think about the actual process, at least for me, I think it becomes sort of a judgment of, I think it feels good is your first step maybe. It is your first sort of instinct of where to place something." As a result, students found the communicative aspect of their design tasks to be one of the more challenging requirements.

We concluded that the data explicates the public imaginary of the *chora* as it is realized in spatial design and conjured by those entering the designs with a gaze toward the production of social space. We recommend that scholars who want to study the rhetorical capacities of space and place should be informed by how spatial processes of invention are different from traditionally conceived rhetorical topoi. To highlight the ways choric invention has been implicitly demonstrated in rhetoric's intellectual history I turn to recent interpretations of the sophistic *kairos*, Athenian pedagogical practices, and the peripatetic tradition of philosophers.

Kairotic Encounters, Pedagogical Practices, and the Peripatetic Tradition

Kairos is a rhetorical concept attributed to the sophists from around fourth century BC. It highlighted the importance of adapting to the contingent circumstances during performative events. Explanations of *kairos* within rhetoric typically focus on the term's connection to discursive creativity in opportune moments: timing. But Debra Hawhee (2004) explains that *kairos* also has important spatial qualities that implicate movements, rhythms, and bodies. The earliest documented use of *kairos* come from physical references, such as an overloaded wagon's "weight, density, and porousness," (p. 66) "a critical, fatal spot on the body" pursued by the archer's arrow (p. 66), and in weaving "the place where threads attach to the loom…a woman who weaves. …[and] that which is tightly woven" (p. 67). These physiological descriptions of *kairos* "as opening, as weaving, as timing, and…as critical, delimited places on the body" highlight rhetoric as a somatic blending that becomes possible in constantly shifting conditions. Indeed, in ancient and modern uses, *kairos* also means weather. Stated by Thomas Rickert (2004), "time, situation, and environment are all co-adaptively enmeshed" in the antiquated notion of *kairos* (p. 904). In this sense, *kairos* becomes "an experience or encounter" (p. 12). The environment is not a determining force, but it does contribute to rhetorical possibilities: "one

invents and is invented, one writes and is written, constitutes and is constituted" (Hawhee, 2002, p. 18). In Deleuzian terms, the rhetor becomes attentive to the smooth and striated spaces of his or her local milieus and relies on kairotic encounters to draw upon these shared rhetorical energies to strategically act.

Hawhee (2004) points to the human sculpture of *Kairos* made by Lypsippos to illuminate the theory's connection to motion. Lypsippos was most well-known for his artistic impressions of athletes, so it is significant that such a sculpter would also be concerned with *kairos*. *Kairos* was an important concept for both rhetors and athletes alike. Indeed, the training of rhetoric and athletics was often done simultaneously in gymnasiums. The statue *Kairos* is sculpted to reflect this combined form:

> depicted as a well-muscled winged figure perched on a stick, balancing a set of scales on a razor blade. The muscles are tense, the gaze forward, wings spread, back foot raised slightly, ready to change direction. His three sets of spread wings suggest he may already be in motion. (p. 72)

This figure integrates movement, instinct, and thought-in-motion. Rhetors and athletes were to be responsive to their changing conditions and performed through their surrounding spaces to achieve their intended goals. Invention was generative of the situation's contingencies, or what we might call the local milieu's varying possibilities. The skills necessary to navigate these conditions were practiced by male Athenian youth through their educational training.

Many contemporary histories of rhetoric have perpetuated the myth of the mind as the primary locus of learning. However, in ancient pedagogical practices the transference of *arête*, virtuosity, and *metis*, cunning intelligence, from educator to student was achieved by imitation and habit, in addition to *eros* which was discussed in chapter three (Hawhee, 2004). It is well

documented that in Archaic and Classical periods the development of citizens who participated

in the agora was deeply entwined with athletic practices. "Pedagogically," Hawhee (2004)

reports, "they shared modes of knowledge production, an attention to timing, and an emphasis on

habituation, imitation, and response" (p. 6). Knowledge creation was cultivated at an embodied

level. Strict understandings of the mind as separate from the body did not come until later.

Thought was not a mode of the mind, but something that happened through the body's motion. A

moving body is a body that thinks. Practically speaking, the body of a rhetorician had to be

strong and in good health in order to "deliver powerful, effective speeches at venues such as the

Pnyx" (p. 153) and had to perform *euexia*, pleasing bodily display, in order to be considered

virtuous. In *Antidosis*, Isocrates argues that physical training and philosophy were

"corresponding and united" and should be "coordinated together" pedagogically (180-183). Such

was the case in ancient gymnasiums, the site of citizenship production.

Greek gymnasiums were important indicators of a *polis*, even while typically located

outside city walls. The architecture of these buildings allowed for diverse activities of bodily

training, which were all performed in close range of each other, often in eye-sight. Gyms were

built with large open spaces, allowing for the smooth transition between sport and philosophy. It

was not until "the end of the Classical period and into the Hellenistic age" that "athletics became

more specialized, and, as a result, gymnastics became cordoned off—spatially and practically—

from the overall curriculum" (Hawhee, 2004, p. 131). Rhetorical and philosophical pedagogy

was deeply involved with athletic training, sharing "parallel rhythms, attention to detail, and

broad application" (Hawhee, 2004, p. 6).

Music was a key pedagogical tool in the gymnasium where the repeated patterns shaped

the body through regulated speeds and intervals of motion, folding into what Deleuze and

Guattari (1980/1987) would call striated spaces. As the rhythms fold into the body, the body imitates the music's rhythms through muscular tension and release, constituting bodily disposition and its resulting *arête*. Even Plato believed that rhythms and harmonies could penetrate the body's innermost regions and invade the depths of one's character (*Republic* 401d). The habitual practice of exercises enabled "a forgetting of directives" so that the knowledge became bodily rather than conscious (Hawhee, 2004, p. 142). The "mutually constitutive struggle among bodies and surrounding forces" were thought to create a corporeal intelligence: *metis*. The goddess Metis was the first wife of Zeus, wiser and more cunning than any mortal. Fearing that her future child would overpower him, Zeus swallowed Metis, integrating her intelligence into his very being. From Greek mythology we learn that *metis* is a becoming-other, an emergent cunning craft through the body's encounter with its immediate surroundings, the blurring of boundaries and bodies.

Gymnasiums were constructed for the shared purposes of a well-rounded education and so the space needed to provide for a variety of activities. The width of the colonnades allowed for both the practices of gymnastics and the instruction of philosophy and rhetoric. Philosophers and rhetoricians often walked around the periphery of the building during their lectures, so as not to "collide with runners or javelin throwers practicing their form" (Hawhee, 2004, p. 122). The history of walking is well documented in the Greek philosophical tradition. Indeed, this activity is how Aristotle's Peripatetic School received its name.

Peripatetic means the habitual practice of walking, sometimes extensively. It is said that Aristotle gave his lectures walking up and down the colonnade of his school and that this practice is how his successors came to be labeled the Peripatetic Philosophers (Solnit, 2000). The sophists, too, were well known for their mobility, not only in philosophizing through walking but

in traveling from town to town to acquire work. Their loyalty to ideas is what drove their traversal of space. Philosophy was an attachment that required their detachment. They were detached from one place and attached to movement through space. Their fluid exposure to different spaces allowed them different ways of thinking, a motion that generated their intelligence. The more spaces the sophistic body was exposed to, the more it could think differently. Solnit (2000) argues it is more difficult to think and do nothing than it is to think and seemingly do nothing. This appearance of nothingness is most intimately aligned with walking: "Walking itself is the intentional act closest to the unwilled rhythms of the body, to breathing and the beating of the heart. …It is a bodily labor that produces nothing but thoughts, experiences, arrivals" (p. 5). Walking offers constant arrivals and constant foldings from movement through space. The ancient practice of walking demonstrated the importance of the thinking-body in motion. The body's capacity for invention was not internally derived; it was a folding.

The link between philosophy and walking continued to be an invaluable practice for later philosophers: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Friedrick Nietzsce, Soren Kierkegaard, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Hobbes, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Some even had locations named after their frequent visits, as with "Philosphenweg in Heidelberg where Hegel is said to have walked, the Philosphen-damm in Konigsberg that Kant passed on his daily stroll (now replaced by a railway station), and the Philosopher's Way Kierkegaard mentions in Copenhagen" (Solnit, 2000, p. 16). Walter Benjamin must also receive mention, whose writings on the *flaneur* have inspired contemporary scholars to reflect on this figure in the rhetoric of everyday life. Although Benjamin never gave a

concrete definition of the *flaneur*, "one thing remains consistent: the image of an observant and solitary man strolling about Paris" (Solnit, 2000, p. 198).

This historical figure lends insight into the fully immersive dimensions of our aesthetic milieu. Benjamin (1999) explores this subject in his *Passagen-Werk,* an originally unpublished collection of documentations from over thirteen years of research gathered in montage form. In the *Arcades Project*—as it is more commonly known in the US—Benjamin describes his observations of flanerie by taking up the role of a *flaneur*, sharing the situation of the commodity, and commenting on the relationship between space, aesthetics and consumption in 19th century Paris. The *flanerie* emerged synchronously with the consumer spaces of modernism. Spectacle became a common entrancement making shock into the norm, replacing "reflection as the dominant mode of experience" (Hansen, 2000, p. 250). These strollers moved through arcades, passages, and crowds, and occupied a privileged gaze through their immersion into the life world of the less advantaged (Walkowitz, 1992). Benjamin learned through participating in the rhythms and tactility of the city, contrasting the one-point perspective of logical rationality (Toffoletti, 2007).

Although choric invention can be understood through *kairotic* encounters, Ancient pedagogical practices, and the peripatetic tradition, a majority of contemporary rhetorical theory is skeptical of a move towards invention that derives from materiality. This is particularly poignant in conversations that have developed out of the publication of Lloyd Bitzer's (1968) theory of the rhetorical situation. Below I rehearse the arguments and configurations of the rhetorical process that have resulted from this ongoing debate in order to address ontological discrepancies and understandings of place that would embrace choric invention.

Rhetorical Places

The following ontological exercise investigates rhetorical premises embedded in conversations surrounding the rhetorical situation. The three widely known articulations of rhetoric's emergence assume a realist, epistemological, and poststructuralist ontology. Each assumes the presence of "subjects" and "objects" and configures different relationships between them. These positions also implicate relationships between physicality and culture. Before proceeding, it would be useful to clarify the terms of the debate.

In these accounts of rhetoric, a subject is generally understood as a conscious person who is constituted through communicative practices. An object is a material form that is perceived through a subject's consciousness of it. Physicality is defined as indeterminate organic movement of raw materials in a biological world, while culture is the shared meanings, habits, and structures among a community of human actors. Below, I overview how each model configures subject, object, physicality and culture, highlighting the benefits and consequences of each perspective for posthumanism. Afterwards, I discuss an ecological model that speaks to rhetoric's ongoing movement in a field of human-nonhuman relations.

I begin with the rhetorical situation proposed by Bitzer (1968) who used the term situation as a way to conceive of the circumstances that surround a speaker when discursively responding to an exigence—an occasion marked by urgency. Situations include the people, events, objects, and relations of an exigence that require discursive responses. In Bitzer's view, a rhetor perceives an occasion marked by urgency, "located in reality," and uses discourse to address an audience capable of making a difference in the exigency's resolution (p. 390). "A situation is rhetorical," he states, "insofar as it needs and invites discourse capable of participating with situation and thereby altering its reality" (p. 5-7). Bitzer attributes rhetoric's

emergence to the symbolic realm of a reasonably-minded actor. Discourses are invented from the subject's experience of reality and respond to a "real" material world of physicality that can be known outside of any subjective relationship to it—a physicality undisturbed by cultural impressions of it. As has been declared ad infinitum, Bitzer's model upholds a realist ontology where happenings exist in a world untempered by individual perspectives or interpretations.

Shortly after, Bitzer's model was critiqued by proponents of an epistemological view of rhetoric who disagreed with the existence of a uniform reality or autonomous exigencies that are "publicly observable historical facts" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 390). Rather, it was argued by Richard Vatz (1973), exigencies are not discovered, but are invented by discourses, as are the ways we respond to them. A situation, he argues, cannot be exhausted of its context because history "never runs out" (p. 156). In this view, a physical experience is only meaningful through its linguistic depiction; that is, physical forms have no rhetorical force outside their semiotic function in a system of meaning. Rhetoric's substance is the discourse that invents both the situational exigencies and rhetorical responses. Ultimately, Vatz denies the force of the physical in the rhetorical process, giving culture predominance over physicality, and constructing physicality as passive and culturally mediated.

In a more extensive cultural critique, Barbara Biesecker (1989) argues for the constitutive invention of situations, speakers, and audiences through discourse in a poststructuralist model of rhetoric. Biesecker draws from the insight of Jacques Derrida's *differance* to demonstrate the instability of language and by extension the instability of the subject. The speaker does not exist logically or temporally prior to the situation or discourse, but in the moment of the discourse's utterance. With discourse, there is no origin or beginning in either physicality or meaning to which signifiers refer. There is always a lack—an absence of an essential link between words

and physicality—that is covered over by symbols in the performative act. Since the subject is constituted through language and language constitutes an appearance of reality, the subject is "continuously open to change" (p. 125). Neither exigence, audience, nor rhetor can escape the constitutions or deferrals of language. The substance of rhetoric becomes the radical potential of discourse (culture) to shape all social life.

Biesecker's (1989) reconception of the rhetorical situation argues for "radical possibility" in the becoming of context (p. 127). However, she later (2010) admits that the "lack at the origin" cannot stand alone as the condition for inventive possibility (p. 19). She advances an evental rhetoric, which is "that occurrence of discourse which is…more than situational, even in the deconstructed sense of the term" (p. 19). This is not "the inscription of the Event into language or into speech, but saying *as* the Event, saying as eventful and not as an eventuality" (p. 19). Drawing on the Lacanian full speech, Biesecker emphasizes that some speech performs anew rather than just defers into the symbolic order. Full speech "refuses the closure of representation that induces the referential illusion or the mistaken belief that something obtains in itself on the other side of the empire of signs" (p. 22). Full speech communicates (represents) nothing, but constitutes in the event: "failure of representation…is full speech's and eventual rhetoric's positive condition" (p. 27). Objects, in other words, are constituted through culture in the performative act of the event. The subject is "nothing more than a position adopted with respect to the Other as language or law" (p. 20). The term "position," here, stabilizes rather than induces an appearance of motion, even though Biesecker is committed to an understanding of subjects in process. Biesecker attributes invention to the performative event, but continues to rely on the cultural constitution of physicality and does not reflect on how those discourses come to be or come to be different. In theorizing a poststructural theory of communication, Biesecker

ignores that bodies are present in communicative acts—affects, corporeality, and relational becomings which induce what Vico calls *ingenium* and what I am arguing is choric invention.

Each of these three models configure rhetoric's ontological emergence differently. Bitzer's (1968) realist ontology discounts the power of culture to shape our experience of the physical, but unlike the other scholars he does attribute a force to physicality. Vatz's (1973) epistemological ontology corrects Bitzer's negation of culture, but overcompensates and denies the influence of physicality in meaning-making. Biesecker (1989) extends Vatz's work by demonstrating the instability of cultural systems and subject formation, but again denies the physical as rhetorically inventive. She does, however, criticizes humanist philosophy where a prefixed "I" is presumed, but in doing so she dismisses "the presence of a body" as having agency in the performative event (p.123). Her critique of origins and static cultural systems is important for a posthumanist model of rhetoric; however, she ultimately supports a weak brand of humanism for denying a material force. Humanism assumes "that 'the human' is achieved by escaping or repressing not just its animal origins in nature, the biological, and the evolutionary, but more generally by transcending the bonds of materiality and embodiment altogether" (Wolfe, 2009, p. xv). Biesecker's poststructuralism gives priority to discourse in shaping reality and ultimately keeps separate mind, body, and environment in her attempt to deconstruct the subject.

In Bitzer's model culture is neglected, while in Vatz's and Biesecker's models physicality is portrayed as passive. This is problematic for Edbauer (2005), who wishes to move past humanism and retain sensorial features of the subject. Edbauer proposes that we examine ecologies as opposed to situations. Instead of polarizing exigencies as either discovered or constituted, she argues that through an ecological model "the exigence does not exist per se, but is instead an amalgamation of processes and encounters" (p. 8). Exigence is not one element, but

rather a series of events in an "ongoing social flux" (p. 9). Consistent with Biesecker (1989,

2010), Edbauer (2005) agrees that individuals should not be conceptualized as "already-formed,

already-discrete" before performative acts (p. 7), but she does suggest that the rhetorical self is

already enmeshed in particular performative patterns, or "a wider sphere of active, historical, and

lived processes" related to the body's striations leading up to any performance (p. 8). This

affective model attends to the distributed network of circulatory movements of rhetoric. Edbauer

wants to decouple place from "the notion of *situs*, or fixed (series of) locations" and link it

instead "to the in-between en/action of events and encounters. Place becomes a space of contacts,

which are always changing and never discrete" (p. 10). Stated differently, place is a milieu of

choric emergence. This is an emergence of order and of serendipitous and unpredictable

encounters that are affective.

If rhetoric emerges from our enfolded milieus and creates the distribution and circulation

of striations and the potential for their disruption, then subject/object distinctions need to be

reconsidered. The body is a physical, cultural, and simulated osmosis that requires the blurring of

subjects and objects. Kristeva offers an alternative through her theory of abjection.

Abject Bodies

A brief overview of psychoanalysis is needed to fully appreciate Kristeva's theory of

abjection. For psychoanalysts such as Freud and Lacan, human babies are born prematurely. Not

only do they lack motor control and the ability to care for themselves, but they also (and more

fundamentally) lack a sense of Self (the "I"), for they have no sense of Other (a symbolic "not-

me"). At birth, then, infants exist in a state of unsubjectivized becoming with the world. Over

time, babies slowly develop a sense of how to act socially through abjection or the casting out of

the symbolic (m)Other. For Kristeva, the process of abjection, of unfolding from the maternal, is

well underway before the acquisition of cultural order. To illuminate the pre-symbolic realm (womb, receptacle, enclosed space) experienced prior to and distinct from the symbolic realm, she invokes the notion of the *chora*.

The pregnant body illuminates the generative features of the self in process, always in transition, in flux, transforming. In pregnancy we see the literal foldings of one body into another. This intra-activity produces a self within a self that will eventually be a self becoming outside of the womb, what will have been its former milieu, to a new environment or milieu on which it depends. Kristeva (1976/1987) states that motherhood is a "fold that changes culture into nature, speaking into biology. …the heterogeneity that cannot be subsumed in the signifier nevertheless explodes violently with pregnancy (the threshold of culture and nature) and the child's arrival" (p. 259). Over time the symbolic order or striated spaces cause us to forget that we are abject bodies. We are most poignantly reminded about our abjective state when confronted with defilement, pollution, and taboo. A specific example is bodily fluids that were once a part of the self but are no longer: excrement, vomit, blood, etc. We experience these as a threat to our subjective becomings. Kristeva (1980) shares that abjection:

is an extremely strong feeling which is at once somatic and symbolic, and which is above all a revolt of the person against an external menace from which one wants to keep oneself at a distance, but of which one has the impression that it is not only an external menace but that it may menace us from inside. So it is a desire for separation, for becoming autonomous and also the feeling of an impossibility of doing so. (pp. 135-136)

The abject contests borders, insides and outsides, and disrupts stable assumptions of identity. By disrupting the binary of subjects and objects, abject bodies demonstrate the fluid movement of rhetorical selves in, out, and through the foldings of our local milieus. In these foldings, smooth

spaces offer opportunities for choric invention, for the disruption of striation and subjectivity itself.

      This chapter has argued for a choric understanding of invention, an ecological conception of place, and the disruption of subject/object distinctions through abject bodies. The shared rhetorical energies of *kairotic* encounters, the training of the body through rhythm, imitation, and habit, and the emergence of generative ideas while walking each construct rhetorical invention as spatially derived. The next chapter will put the posthumanist perspective of rhetoric developed thus far in the dissertation into practice through criticism. I examine the striated spaces of football and technology as the striated spaces of my analysis and assess the circulation of transhumanist rhetorics as they construct performances of masculinity.

Chapter 5

The *His*tory of (Future) Progress: Hyper-Masculine Transhumanist Virtuality

Movies demonstrating human anxieties about technological futures are recurrent box-office features. These movies traditionally inscribe human ("man") versus machine plotlines and frequently become international smash hits: *The Matrix* and *Terminator* trilogies, *Star Wars*, *Bladerunner*, *WarGames*, *Rocky IV*, and *Tron*. Rhetorical scholars Rushing and Frentz (1989) have analyzed a number of these films' themes as humanity's negotiation with technology and the eventual denial of it through a return to nature. Amid such anxieties, North Americans continue to move towards an increased dependence on technology as evidenced by the wide-spread adoption of the internet and continuous development of social media, mobile electronic devices, and prosthetics. Additionally, movie studios are producing friendlier man/machine plotlines that celebrate cyborgs as heroes—*Robocop, Terminator 2, Ironman*—and invent robots who desire to become fully human—*A.I. Artificial Intelligence, Bicentennial Man*.

The study of these trends, both the display of human/machine relationships and the lived techno-practices, has led to an intellectual reconsideration of humanist philosophy. As discussed, modern or post-Enlightenment humanism generally distinguishes the human from other animal species as autonomous and special, possessing universally shared qualities of rationality through the separation of mind from the body (Balibar, 1991; Foucault, 1966/1970). The assessment of these tenets against the backdrop of our increasingly interdependent technological world has produced two responses of note here, both which reject the autonomy of the individual and acknowledge our technological interdependence.

The first is an intensification of humanism labeled *transhumanism*, which is an effort towards using technology, science, and rationality to transcend the limitations of the vulnerable fleshy body, to perfect the capabilities of our intellect and emotions, and to eliminate disease and extend our life span in the name of progress (Young, 2006; Garreau, 2005). Transhumanism is "arguably the best-known inheritor of the 'cyborg'" prompted by Haraway (Wolfe, 2010, p. xiii). However, Haraway (1991) is critical of cyborgs understood "in terms of master control principles, articulated within a rationalist paradigm of language and embodiment" (p. 213). The central cyborg characters in the films analyzed by Rushing and Frentz (1989)—the cause of technological anxiety—were decidedly transhuman: *The Terminator*, *Bladerunner* (replicants), and *Rocky IV* (Ivan Drago).

A second response in an opposing direction is *posthumanism*, which is resistant to humanist philosophy as exemplified by the work of Gilles Deleuze (1986/1988; 1968/1994; 1966/1991), Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1980/1987) and Donna Haraway (1991; 1992; 2003). As discussed in chapter one, these scholars combine poststructuralism, bodily materialism, and ecological philosophy to continue the humanist inspired project of asking 'how ought we to live together,' while recognizing that the human is not distinct from or superior to animal or machine. Their writings typify the imaginative lens necessary for thinking beyond traditional notions of the human. Together they share distrust in the tautological fiction, or in Lyotard's (1974/1984) terms metanarrative, that has come to surround contemporary understandings of "human nature" and "progress."

From a posthumanist perspective, transhumanism raises a number of concerns. First, the pursuit of perfection by transhumanist scholars begs the question, whose perfection? Humanist principles were initially developed at a time when women were denied access to public and

political life. To achieve equality they had to assimilate to masculine ideals and argue for their right to be considered full citizens and fully human. The subscription to critical reasoning through scientific methods comes at the expense of other ways of knowing that have been systematically repressed (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Vivian 2000). Second, transhumanists pursue objective truth while ignoring the benefits of subjective knowledge. Our sense perceptions are particular to our species so that we may never fully grasp how other creatures experience life. Additionally, there is no universal human body to which all experiences can be attributed. Searching for something that is objective and value-free constructs regimes of truth that attempt to hide cultural biases and which become exclusionary (Fausto-Sterling, 2000; Grosz, 1994). Third, advanced technologies enhance our ability to preserve and create as well as destroy. By regarding the human as superior to other living organisms in our ecosystem we not only risk the possibility of their extinction but also the destruction of our own environment and ultimately ourselves.

In sum, transhumanist cyborgs are troubling for their portrayal of ideal bodies and superiority over other living organisms and they can be deployed in counter-productive ways to promote anthropocentrism and androcentrism. A more ethical figure is the posthumanist cyborg, understood "in terms of complex, structurally embedded semiosis with many 'generators of diversity' within a counter-rationalist (*not* irrationalist) or hermeneutic/situationist/constructivist discourse" (Haraway, 1991, p. 213). From a posthumanist perspective, we are to be cautious of how our ever-evolving bodies become disciplined by transhumanist striations.

Returning to the opening illustration of the human-technology tension in popular films, my project is to similarly attend to man/machine relationships using a posthumanist perspective to assess the way transhumanist striations navigate us towards spaces that are wrought with

political and ethical consequences. Rather than film, I turn my sights towards another important

medium of mass distribution—television. Television's impact on late modernism has been

widely discussed (Hartley, 2008; Ott, 2007; Fiske, 1987). However, the televised presentation of

football is of particular interest for its ability to draw large audiences, especially Super Bowls

which are consistently ranked as the most watched television broadcasts each year (Steinberg,

2011). As MacCamridge (2004) argues, professional football is our society's "last genuinely

mass entertainment" (p. 458). Thus, the televised production of this sport, specifically the Super

Bowl, is a ripe performance to probe for its physical, cultural, and simulated intra-activities.

Sports broadcasting networks have begun using high-technologies to produce their

shows, with a marked emphasis on mechanistic animations. These motion graphics are prevalent

throughout most major networks that transmit sporting events, including, but not limited to,

ESPN, ABC, CBS, and TNT. Of particular interest, during the 2005-2006 season FOX debuted

their football mascot Cleatus, a robotic graphic dressed in metallic football paraphernalia.

Cleatus's body is sculpted like a hyper-masculine athlete: his skin is composed of metal with

multiple layers of muscle, his face is hidden behind a protective helmet that emits a glowing blue

light, and his broad shoulders are covered by exaggerated metallic pads. Accompanying Cleatus

are mechanistic graphics used as sweeps, transitions, and billboards throughout the game that

comprise the stage for his performances.

FOX's motion graphics present an interesting relationship between football, man, and

technology. As an exemplar of FOX's graphic use, I attend to their presentation of Super Bowl

XLII, Cleatus' first appearance on the Super Bowl stage, while simultaneously making

connections to ongoing performances of FOX, the National Football League, and the sports

lifestyle industry. Thematically, the graphics portray a conquest over nature through

technological advancements and the mass production of bodies as hyper-masculine transhumanist cyborgs. I argue there is a rhetorical alliance between football-man-technology whereby the striated spaces of violent sports and technology are folding into the smooth spaces of the body. This reproduces two performances that are particularly problematic in combination: 1) a hyper-masculine one of aggression, strength, and dominance and 2) a transhumanist one where the human pursues perfection through science and technology. Together, the football-man-technology foldings creates a war-machine supported by inattentive habit. The inability to ever achieve the hyper-masculine transhumanist ideal maintains its pursuit through the virtual regeneration of memory that can be operationalized for purposes of war.

I proceed by aligning the posthumanist cyborg with a Deleuzian framework of folding into smooth (open) and striated (closed) spaces. I then discuss how the body, as a smooth space, becomes striated by the foldings of football and technology. Over time these foldings can become habitually resistant to difference. I explain how this occurs through the operationalization of inattention. I then demonstrate how the graphics used to present Super Bowl XLII and corresponding life-style practices advance a hyper-masculine transhumanist rhetoric—rhetoric as a performative mattering that continuously changes our relationship to time and space.

Folding into Spaces

As discussed in chapter three, Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) understand the process of becoming, the ongoing transformation of self, as happening through the folding of two types of spaces: the smooth and the striated. Generally speaking, smooth spaces are associated with open potential and free movement, while striated spaces are associated with bounded possibilities and limited motion. Smooth spaces are nonsubjective and lack structures, whereas

striated spaces subjectify through defined positions and boundaries, closed intervals, and relatively predictable pattern, subordinating the smooth. Bodies become intelligible through the structures that shape their physical display and behavioral performances. However, when alternative performances are made to assimilate it is an indication that the striated space has becoming too rigidly folded and habitual, as is sometimes the case with gender. To understand how gender is shaped we do not turn to the body's "sex," but to the body's foldings with striated spaces such as sports.

Sports

The space of sports is a space of rules and strategies, of positions and boundaries, of beginnings and ends. Sports are striations that fold into the smooth spaces of bodies. The organizational force of sport is often left unquestioned. Sporting practices are perceived as wholesome competition that "whilst the details may change…are otherwise timeless, ahistoric, and apolitical pursuits" (Thomson, 2008, p. 128). This view, of course, disguises the power relations embedded in sporting practices. Organized sports provide the training grounds for adulthood framed as competition (Goffman, 1977). Rowe, McKay, and Miller (2000) maintain that "sport has been one of the most significant means by which gender boundaries have been marked" (p. 249).). Similarly, Aitchison (2007) argues that sports offers both sites of repression and transgressive resistance and exemplify processes of power relations in gender construction.

Violent sports, such as football, help to construct a hegemonic—rigid and dominantly folded—masculinity (Messner, 2007, p. 92). For instance, Sabo and Panepinto (1990) argue that "football's historical prominence in sport media and folk culture has sustained a hegemonic model of masculinity that prioritises competitiveness, asceticism, success (winning), aggression, violence, superiority to women, and respect for and compliance with male authority" (p. 115). It

began in Ivy League colleges as a combination of rugby and soccer in the 1880s. Uniforms were drastically different than they are today: helmets were not mandatory, outfits were composed of very little padding, and bodies went largely unprotected (Peterson, 1997). Despite players' small size in football's seminal years, men were "highly aggressive and not above a sneak punch or kick" when the umpires were not looking (Peterson, 1997, p. 17). In 1905, a typical season, there were "18 fatalities and more than 150 serious injuries" (Peterson, 1997, p. 45). As a result, reforms were made by the football commission to "bring the violence to a level acceptable to the American public" (Fields, 2005, p. 36).

Comparisons have been made between football's violence and war by attending to their shared discourse (Trujillo, 1995; McKay, 1991). These foldings are also displayed as patriotic performances by the NFL and military. As part of their pregame program during Super Bowls XXXVI, XXXIX, XLII and XLV, FOX broadcasted a segment where former and current professional football players variously stood with members of the armed forces, youth football teams and symphonies, high school and college students, farmers and factory workers and recited the Declaration of Independence. Each time the event concluded by dedicating the Super Bowl broadcast to members of the armed services. Through such foldings, it is no surprise that the championship game is practically perceived as "an unofficial national holiday" (Zeiger, 2008, ¶ 4). This doubling over of war onto football creates a more rigid fold where the regulated space becomes more tightly bound to the masculine body and its civic duties. Assisting this striation are tools of mass-distribution and social media.

Technology

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, professional football came to be seen as "the natural result of a faster, more technological society, attracted to the action and violence

delivered by television's all-seeing eye" (MacCambridge, 2004, p. xix). The NFL is now the nation's most successful and flourishing sports brand. Sports journalist Saunders (2009) suggests that "the biggest sports story of the 2000s was the marriage of technology and information—iPhones, iPods, the Internet, Twitter, high-definition television and high-tech stadium experiences changed the sports landscape for fans and athletes alike" (p. C.9). This is perhaps best exemplified through the popularity of fantasy sports. The Fantasy Sports Trade Association (2011) estimates that 27 million adults participate in fantasy sports through their services. Saunders (2009) surmises that Fantasy Football revenues range from $800 million to $1 billion per year. The market has become so large that televised broadcasts of football now integrate fantasy statistics in their presentations. Fantasy team owners can receive instant updates on player injuries and statistics on their smart phones or any internet connection, incorporating new habits of team maintenance into their daily lives. The active participation in fantasy sports has been shown to increase the number of games watched on television extending the range of striations (Nesbit & King, 2010).

In our construction and use of new technologies, technologies, in turn, construct and use us (McLuhan, 1964). We depend on advanced technologies to increase our efficiency and fold them into our homes, offices, public spaces, and bodies. As technologies continue to be folded into our everyday environments seeping into our very embodiment, new habits influence and shape our subjectivities. McQuire (2008) remarks that "in an era in which media have become mobile, ubiquitous and personalized, technology and person have merged, and this merging is fast becoming taken for granted" (p. 7). So while the striations change as quickly as new technologies are invented, a gradual and consistent replacement of what has come before, the integration of these tools into our daily lives has evolved into an expected social practice.

The technological spaces with which we fold construct our subjectivity and offer ways to talk about self. At the same time, technologies are tied-up in a rhetoric of progress that promises a better world without critical reflection of how it comes to be. This is exemplified through performances expected of the male body. Bordo (1999) argues that men deal with an anxiety and fear about their manhood, unparalleled to that experienced by women with womanhood and femininity. For example, the male body, especially the penis, is talked about in mechanistically violent metaphors: "Big rig. Blowtorch. Bolt. Cockpit. Crank. Crowbar. Destroyer. Dipstick. Drill. Engine. Hammer. Hand tool. Hardware. Hose. Power tool. Rod. Torpedo. Rocket. Spear" (p. 49). Bordo explains that thinking of the penis in terms of various sorts of metal or steel armor serves as a form of protection from its soft nature. The machine metaphors characterize the penis as "a kind of [transhumanist] cyborg…suggesting that when the penis is without such armor— that is, when 'soft'—it is naked, exposed, without protection" (p. 48). The violent penile metaphors additionally indicate what is to be done to an Other, softer, smoother body.

To illustrate the technological folds occurring in the performance of manhood, Bordo (1999) analyzes Viagra advertisements (see also Thomson, 2008; McLaren, 2007; Baglia, 2005; Loe, 2004). In typical advertisements, Viagra is pitched as fixing the male hydraulic pump, likening the male penis to a machine expected to perform at any moment's notice. The ads mention nothing about an increase in pleasure "either psychological or physical—beyond overwhelming relief, perhaps renewed pride. It's harder. It's firmer. It can go all night" (Bordo, 1999, p. 42). Men must perform the hard penis, Bordo argues, even while the genitalia is not exposed, simultaneously producing an anxiety of malfunction. This performance is accomplished through the presentation of strong/hard bodies and armored emotions, a striation that allows one to downplay or forget one's fleshy vulnerability. This is exemplified through the NFL draft,

where bare bodies of men are displayed and commodified "as objects of an erotic gaze" (Oates, 2007, p. 75). Bodies are watched, mimicked, desired, and purchased by NFL, Fantasy, and video game owners. Accordingly, the pressure to perform hardness gets translated in other ways, transforming the body into a site of control (Foucault, 1975/1995). The emphasis on hard performances produces an anxiety of malfunction, where the body is viewed "as an aggregation of parts that break down and require repair" (Sault, 1994, p. 10). This transhumanist rhetoric constrains the male body's free action through ascribing mechanistic becomings.

Although technologies appear to be leading us into our future, they are "by nature an embodiment of the past" (Waltz, 2003, p. 377). Technology does not create new possibilities but assists in a more efficient maintenance of the status quo. Bodies are nonetheless continuing to enfold with technologies highlighting our cyborgian quality.

Virtual

When working at the intersection of techne and bios we are not dealing with a traditional rhetoric or even a strictly cultural studies rhetoric; we are dealing with a Third-Sophistic rhetoric "embodied in the postmodern, posthuman, post-Aristotelian figure of the cyborg" (Ballif, 1998, p. 52). Michelle Ballif (1998) has linked this figure of the cyborg with contemporary understandings of sophistry. Her "Third-Sophistic cyborg" embodies posthumanist sensibilities aligned with Gorgian sophistry and employs *metis* as way to negotiate the change indicative of our contemporary moment. Tools and machines are not just external in nature but are rather "extra organs growing into existence" with the human body, problematizing "the distinction between subject (organism) and objects (environment)" (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 78). As posthumanist cyborgs, we are enmeshed in ambient environments, interdependent on the foldings that produce us as we produce them, troubling traditional rhetorical configurations of

time, place, and purpose, advancing what Michelle Ballif (1998) calls a posthumanist transrhetoric—a rhetoric to come: "the embodiment of our future anterior…an [in]tense rhetoric that is already, yet not yet" (p. 186). Our experience of time is intimately tied-up in our becomings in space.

As discussed in chapter four, time is a subjectification process that produces memory. The continuous unfolding and enfolding with new spaces regenerates past perceptions as something that accounts for the present intensities and flows that are being folded into and passing. Restated by Al-Saji (2004), "the future is anticipated according to the image of the past which is itself molded from the present, while the past, as a collection of antiquated presents, determines the action present" (p. 205). Memory does not account for the capturing of events in the embodied present but for a constantly reinvented past that folds into present perceptions, creating a presently passing subjectivity.

The virtual is prescriptive, an expectation for what is to be done. When we inattentively fold into the same types of striated spaces such as football and technology, the prescriptive habits can be "captured and put to use" for other purposes such as the domination of our environments or war (Massumi, 2010, ¶ 2). Massumi (2010) clarifies that we do not have habits, habits instead have us and self-decide without self-reflection, carrying the past forward. To prevent this autopoiesis, self-reflection is key. Otherwise, choices of what spaces to enfold with become decided for the body through its aesthetic striations. In the next section I take a closer look at the striations of FOX's televised production of Super Bowl XLII, ongoing rhetorics of FOX sports, the National Football League, and the sports lifestyle industry to show how the striated spaces of football encourage a hyper-masculine body achieved through transhumanism.

The *His*tory of (Future) Progress

Football broadcasts have gradually become more technological both in *how* images are displayed and *what* images are displayed. The graphics used to present Super Bowl XLII encompass two major performances: a conquest over nature through technological advancement and the mass production of bodies as hyper-masculine transhumanist cyborgs. Taken together, FOX graphics virtually reproduce a *his*tory of (future) progress where perceived memories of football's past are continuously regenerated in the present to encourage future visions of an ideal aggressive cyborgian male body as master of our environment, impacting our present practices.

A Conquest over Nature through Technological Advancements

FOX technologies and graphics reinforce an overarching performance implied throughout the graphics: humanity's violent conquest over nature. The trend is communicated by the transformation of nature through graphic animations. This theme was most explicitly exhibited in the graphic employed to introduce the halftime show which displayed the raw materials of a desert transforming into a superdome. A crest-shaped NFL banner floated alone above a barren desert surrounded by a cloudy blue sky. The shot circled the red, grey, and blue banner as it became enclosed in an oval of red fluid splashing through the dirt (Image 1). The oval expanded and formed into a playing field, with the red fluid evocative of blood shed from the sport. The implied violence folded with technological spaces as the "blood" became 24 decibel bars bouncing up and down, similar to a stereo (Image 2). The inclusion of technology into the practices of sport, performed here as the ability to measure crowd noise, assisted in altering the deserted environment into a gridiron playing field. The decibel bars sporadically converted into 24 metallic slates which formed a surrounding dome (Image 3 & 4). This graphic demonstrated
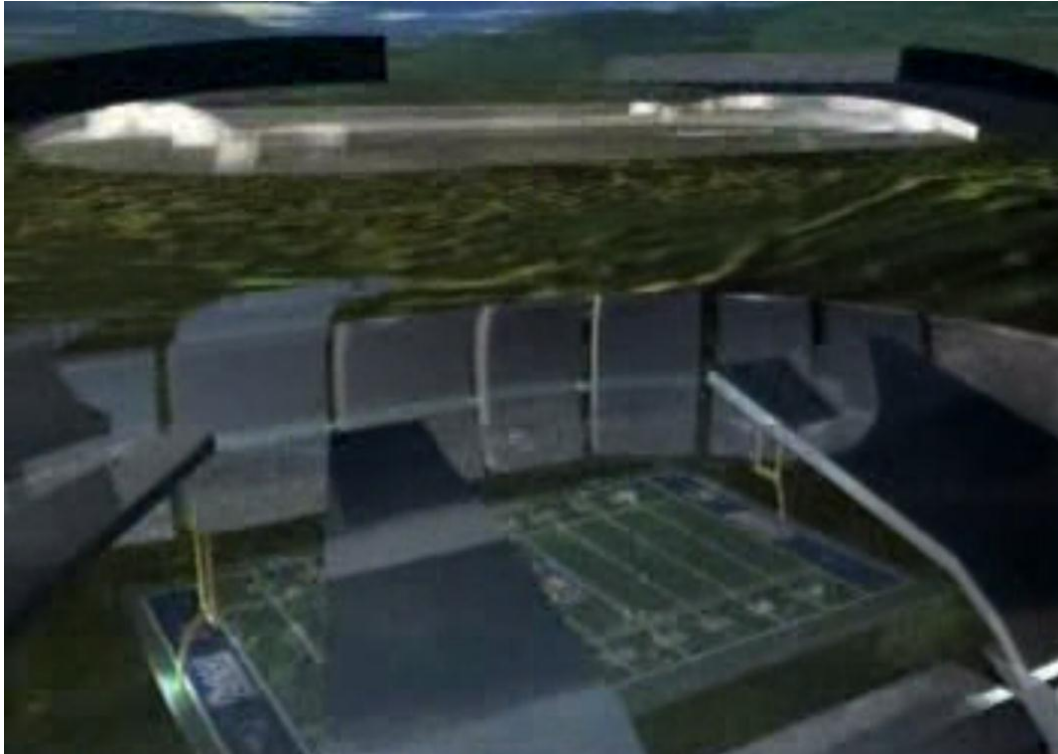
Image 1

Image 2

Image 3

Image 4

the transformation of a serene deserted landscape into a superstadium through the folding of football's violence with the striated spaces of technology. In this graphic, football and technologies become operationalized to encourage a conquest over nature as an anticipated progression of man.

The graphic ended with a simulation of the actual University of Phoenix stadium where Super Bowl XLII was housed. Superstadiums are displays of a city's technological advancement. In 1965, Houston created the first enclosed superstadium, the Astrodome: "the designers of Houston's facility were firmly committed to creating a stadium that reflected the future" (Trumpbour, 2007, p. 23). However, these engineering marvels merely reflect the passing present. Groundskeepers, concessionaires, and ushers wore "silver space suits" during the stadium's debuting months (Trumpbour, 2007, p. 24). Significantly, superstadiums perform progressiveness and the "desire to master and shape nature" (Trumpbour, 2007, p.23). The changing of seasons rarely affect this (transhu)man-made space. Nature is controlled by the replacement of grass with turf, the management of the weather with heat and air-conditioning, and the government of linear time through a game clock displayed on a mega scoreboard. Superstadiums and their graphics share an anthropocentric rhetoric of domination and control.

Elaborating on this conquest of nature is a technology that regenerates past movements in the present and objectifies the material world through a type of time travel: the instant replay. Every year the network that airs the Super Bowl attempts to introduce a new piece of high-tech broadcasting equipment in order to "create some buzz" around their show (Raissman, 2008, p. 80). During Super Bowl XLII, FOX debuted the "Fox Jumper, a high-resolution camera, which, applied with virtual graphics, isolates on particular shots, such as a reception of a forward pass" (Houston, 2008a, ¶ 9). This freezing of time is an attempt to perfect the memory of the past, but

is actually a regenerated perception for the present. Instant replays were used throughout the game to feature interesting plays, such as highlights from previous Super Bowls, injuries, and the emotions of players, coaches, and audience members. For example, a collage was created to show the frequency of the Patriot's quarterback, Tom Brady, getting tackled. The referees used the replays to make more accurate decisions about the validity of play calls, a process which emphasizes the ability to perfect judgment through technology. The present continuously regenerated the past so that future foldings of bodies with technology could anticipate this perfection.

To signify that time travel was about to occur, the screen flashed with a series of large metallic arrows that swept from right to left. This motion spun a red and blue Super Bowl logo, which disbanded as the arrows swooshed by. When a play was highlighted it was often presented from multiple angles to illustrate different player points of view—an "objective" perspective. The replays were shown in standard motion, slow motion, and/or super slow motion, and each replay warranted new commentary from the announcers. As the telecast moved back to real time, the same graphic repeated in the opposing direction to signal the end of time travel. Although the movement through time appears to objectively reexamine moments on a linear time-line, this movement is a regeneration of a new past for the passing present.

As a collection, the graphics performed a transformation of nature through technological advancements and the ability to control time, weather, and playing conditions. The virtual regeneration of football memories promotes the perfection of our future through the present domination of our environment. These graphics set the stage for a more prominent transhumanist relationship between machine and man.

The Mass Production of Transhumanist Hyper-Masculine Cyborgs

The folding of football, man, and technology materializes football sports talk that constitutes and is derived from the intra-activity of the physical, cultural, and simulatied. In light of Bordo's (1999) account of manliness, it is not surprising that football players and their game are similarly portrayed through mechanistic depictions. Football teams are formed by a large amount of athletes. Most of these athletes are seen as "1,200 faceless cogs in 32 impersonal machines" (Matthews, 2008, ¶ 14). Sports journalist Rosenberg (2008) refers to "teams as machines and players as parts" (¶ 5). For both players and coaches there is an emphasis on performance. Brett Favre, all-star quarterback, was considered a "touchdown-throwing machine" (Silverstein, 2008, ¶ 11). Bill Belichick, coach of the New England Patriots, has been described as "robot-like" for his lack of emotion (Houston, 2008b, ¶ 18) and was said to have had his team in "full robot mode" when acquiring their undefeated season (Raissman, 2008, p. 80). The New England Patriots were considered a "merciless winning machine" (Farmer, 2008, ¶ 1). Had the Patriots beat the Giants in Super Bowl XLII they would have been titled the "best football machine ever assembled" (Fidlin, 2008, ¶ 2). These mechanistic depictions are just a few examples from popular media sources during the months surrounding Super Bowl XLII.

The folding of football bodies with violent machines is becoming increasingly habitual. The trend extends to the evaluation of college players as they enter the NFL draft. In 2011, Louisianna State University cornerback Patrick Peterson was praised for being "almost like a robot" (Glauber, 2011, ¶ 7). Missouri defensive end Aldon Smith was an attractive recruit for being a "quarterback terrorizing machine" (Brown, 2011, ¶ 5), similar to Alabama linebacker DeMeco Ryans who was deemed a "tackling machine" (McClain, 2011, ¶ 16). This portrayal encourages the assimilation of players into the striated spaces of football as mechanistically

advanced performance of masculinity. Congruently, the graphics used to present the sport exhibit parallel traits.

As the Giants' offensive line for Super Bowl XLII charged the field, a flash of blue light whipped across the bottom of the screen revealing the words: "STARTING LINEUPS." These words morphed into the Giants' team logo plastered on a metallic sliding door. The door spread open to expose a factory belt reminiscent of the industrial revolution with a series of team logos moving on the factory belt from right to left. As the Giants' logos passed the center of the screen each one morphed into a player's headshot revealing their name, number, and position. These foldings announced players as mass produced cogs in a larger football machine. The same graphic was repeated for the Patriots' starting lineup. Through this graphic, players became manufactured as transhumanist cyborgs. As Dewey (1927/1954) confirms, "mass production is not confined to the factory" (p. 116). To mass produce is to replicate and discipline the same product over and over. By extension, when football players perform as mass produced products their able-bodies are striated for defined purposes or otherwise replaced. The epitome of the mass produced football body is Cleatus.

Cleatus is FOX's robotic football mascot—a transhumanist cyborg (Image 5). His body is pure metal muscle—a glorified version of the male physical form. The overstated physique is hyper-human, an expected ideal for football players which surpasses their fleshy possibilities, "a real without origin" (Baudrillard, 1981/1994, p. 1). Cleatus becomes hyper-masculine through the transhumanist rhetoric of an ideal male form, its dominating force, and protection from physical harm. Cleatus' tough outer appearance and hard body attempt to indicate inner strength and discipline, reinforcing the greater capacity for violence as a way to protect against the anxieties of performance.

Image 5

Image 6

Cleatus received his name through a "Name the Robot" contest announced during a Halftime report on FOX December 16, 2008, an act of humanizing the technological graphic. Rather than a robotic-savvy gladiator name, such as Nitro, Laser, or Turbo, Cleatus mocks football player stereotypes of the dumb jock. The name has come to connote a good ol' Southern boy lacking intelligence through its foldings with such people in the mass media. However, the Greek origin of the name connotes the illustrious (memorable/well-known/famous). Cleatus is a folding of both. The contrast speaks of a choice to juxtapose Cleatus' name with his brilliant body, giving him a more humane persona to which the audience can relate. He exemplifies a "futuristic" artifact of our present evolution. Through his metallic flesh his performances personify aggression, indifference, and arrogance.

Cleatus made his first appearance in Super Bowl XLII during the "Built Ford Tough Pre-Kick Show" where he was surrounded by an infinite series of television sets that formed a coliseum. Coliseums, like football stadiums, are suggestive of the violent Roman Olympic arenas where life was dispensable. After introducing the Pre-Kick show, his role shifted from mascot to advertisement endorser. Returning from commercial breaks, a voiceover would announce the "Built Ford Tough Pre-Kick Show" sponsors. Cleatus stood to the left of the screen as sponsors were presented to the right (Image 6). During these advertisement spots, Cleatus stood to the left of the screen and completed athletic warm-up motions: jumped up and down, shook his legs out, stretched his head back and forth, pointed upwards, then threw his hands up in the air in a "raise-the-roof" movement. He pointed at the advertisement and then the viewer. Cleatus was seen thirteen times throughout Super Bowl XLII in this role, only three times diverting.

The first diversion came before the beginning of the second quarter. Cleatus stood in his usual sponsorship position performing his repetitive antics. The advertisement featured FOX's

new series *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*. While standing in front of a gray backdrop the entire set shook and exploded into debris. Cleatus was thrown to the ground face first, knocking down the FOX Sports logo during his fall. The debris cleared and the viewer saw another robot crash through a hole, a skeletal figure identified as the Terminator. His aesthetic was more robotic than Cleatus with more rigid movements and fewer fleshy metal human features; he was a zombie robot. He marched over to Cleatus, grabbed his face mask, picked him up above his head, and threw Cleatus into the television screen (Image 7). Cleatus fell flat. The Terminator walked forward towards the viewers so that his entire face covered the screen—red eyes, white teeth, metallic skull, and a grimaced look for spectators at home (Image 8). The Terminator's villainous portrayal, with his red eyes and use of unsolicited brutality was cause to sympathize with Cleatus as he lied motionless. Yet, even as he was portrayed weaker than the Terminator he did not show pain. Cleatus' face was hidden behind his football mask, protecting him from emotional display. In these scenes, neither the Terminator nor Cleatus showed emotion or a persona beyond malevolence. This stoicism is shared by football players who are encouraged to compete as fearless soldiers.

The contrast between Cleatus and the Terminator, hero and villain, sets up a plot where the transhumanist ideal of good cyborgs can fend off bad machines gone awry. These brutal interactions between the Terminator and Cleatus continued in two other sequences and concluded with two of Cleatus' robotic "teammates" coming to his aid. Both Cleatus and the Terminator create the impression that manliness is improved by aggression and a lack of emotion. This theme was consistent in other promotional pairings during the regular season: Cleatus versus the "Iron Man" and Cleatus as a "Transformer."

Image 7

Image 8

Referencing the repetitious promotional role Cleatus played leading up to and during Super Bowl XLII, periodicals called Cleatus a "ridiculous warrior-robot" (Coyle, 2008, ¶ 11) and "Fox's dancing robot" (Matthews, 2008, ¶ 15), each agreeing Cleatus was an annoying distraction from the game. Conan O'Brien created a comedy skit on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* where he stated, "Cleatus bugs the crap out of me" (Michaels & Ross, 2009). As a result, there was a modification to Cleatus' role. Although not seen in as many graphics, he served as the graphic opener for Sunday Broadcasts during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 seasons. These showed him running with a football through a barrier of metal slab and transforming (like a Transformer) into an "NFL on FOX" boxed logo. During FOX's presentation of Super Bowl XLV Cleatus was only featured once in a promotional role during the middle of the coverage, as compared to 16 times during XLII. Notably, Cleatus' softer, silly traits, such as "raising the roof," were disciplined out of his performances. Each year Cleatus became tougher, more robotic, and hence more "masculine." A mascot of football is to be hard, strong, aggressive, and emotionless. Cleatus accomplishes this through more rigid striations each season.

The FOX graphics package used by editors in rollouts and promotional pieces during the 2010-2011 football season maintained Cleatus as a central figure around which other graphics became the milieu ("FOX Sports," 2010). These graphics used shades of grey, metallic slabs, light streaks, perforated walls, smoke textures, and a blocked "united" type-face. Some of the graphics used during the 2007-2008 season were kept through 2010-2011, including the factory line graphic that introduced offensive and defensive teams as products of the NFL machine. Additionally, by 2009 Cleatus transcended the television screen and became an action figure that

could be purchased for $26.99 through online distributers, team customizable. The clamor of complaints surrounding Cleatus subsided as FOX learned how to discipline his performances.

In the presentation of Super Bowl XLII, technology was used in a quest to control, master, and sustain a humanist sense of progress, consistent with other studies (Wajcman, 1991; Schwartz Cowan, 1983). Through the repeated foldings of the hyper-masculine and nature dominating mechanistic graphics on FOX, the transhumanist cyborg becomes an encouraged possibility for future selves, impacting present performances. These rhetorics are paired with the techno-practices that have become mainstays in the daily lives of football spectators. We are already becoming-technology through relatively malleable folds, but the striations of hyper-masculine transhumanism are making these folds increasingly rigid. The spaces available for folding into, for the selection of which striations the smooth body should fold with, become increasingly limited and disciplining.

Cleatus entices viewers to envision a future where the masculine male will feel no pain and will be protected by a technologically advanced body. However, Cleatus is a paradox, a figurehead for a sport against "unnatural" alterations to the human form, especially those caused by performance enhancing drugs. As new biotechnologies for the body and performance apparel are developed, it will be worth monitoring how the NFL moderates the relationship between what can be considered natural and what is an unjust competitive advantage.

Conclusion

The climax of Super Bowl XLII came when it was clear the underdog Giants would overthrow the undefeated Patriots. When the game was called celebrations began, confetti fell, and Giants players cried tears of joy. Patriots, on the other hand, walked to their locker room expressionless. After appropriately demonstrating toughness the Giants were allowed to show

emotion, while the Patriots acted as a defeated broken machine needing to go back to the factory. During the game players and coaches were seen managing emotions according to the striations of masculinity through sport and technology. When Patriots coach Bill Belichick was interviewed in the Post-Game show over his loss, he answered questions in short sentences with emotional restraint. Asked what he said to his team after the loss, Belichick responded "Well we're disappointed" in an aloof mumbling voice. Fukuyama (2002) shares that the main quality humans will never share with machines are emotions; machines may come very close to replicating human intelligence, but "it is impossible to see how they will come to acquire human emotion" (p. 168). The reverse, however, is portrayed as both a possibility and ideal.

This study has focused on the body's entanglements with rigid striations. Striated spaces virtually reproduce inattentive habits that can become harmful, such as those pursued in the perfection of the human. The transhumanist perspective suggests that the scientifically and technologically advanced cyborgian body can achieve human's potential for intelligence, emotion, and lifespan. In football, Cleatus exemplifies this potential as he performs hyper-masculine aggression, domination, competition, and control, while his technological body protects him from harm. In contrast, high school, college, and NFL players are required to expose their fleshy bodies in competition. The mandatory "protective" gear does little to prevent serious injury. Nonetheless, resembling Cleatus, football players publicly control pain and repress emotions as best as possible. Should a football player be removed from the game due to injury, another cog replaces the absence and the machine endures.

The old cog, broken sometimes irreparably, suffers both short and long term bodily trauma. On average, 60 percent of NFL players experience at least one concussion with 26 percent experiencing three or more, each time causing the deadening of "receptors linked to

learning and memory" ("Head Injuries," 2010, ¶2). In the pursuit of the ideal the body loses

intellectual abilities, sensitivity to emotion, and accrues a shortened lifespan: "men who play five

or more years in the NFL have a life expectancy of 55, 20 years less than the average" person

("Dynasty," 2008, ¶13). The modern humanist tradition would have us assume that the human is

a superior creature for its capacity to scientifically reason, self-determine, and maintain

individuality. From a humanist perspective, football literally causes a dehumanizing effect as

these abilities diminish when the unprotected body uses violence to attain its goal. From a

posthumanist perspective, however, the loss of abilities does not make a person less-than-human.

If anything, injury calls attention to our interdependence on local milieus, highlighting a

posthumanist cyborgian nature.

In this essay I've highlighted two antithetical versions of the cyborg: one that pursues a

human *telos* and another that negates teleology, both emerging as a response to humanism in

opposing directions. What I hope has been made clear is that transhumanist cyborgs, as

exemplified by Cleatus, are ethically problematic for the ways they take up "progress" in the

pursuit of perfection. Transhumanist cyborgs encourage us "to see Homo sapiens and Robo

sapiens as essentially the same" converging at "the endpoint of human evolution" (Hayles, 2005,

p. 132). The inability to ever achieve human *telos*, however, maintains its pursuit. The

transhumanist rhetorics of FOX Sports, the NFL, and the sports lifestyle industry encourage a

transhumanist cyborgian rhetoric that does not respect the body in all its diversity or adhere to an

environmental ethics.

I instead champion a posthumanist cyborg that allows for the constant folding in and out

of smooth and striated spaces, which celebrate bodily diversity and encourage self-reflection by

maintaining exposure to smooth spaces. Understanding ourselves as posthumanist cyborgs may

be challenging when performances of transhumanism dominate the rhetorical landscape, but our persistence is now more crucial than ever. Without diverse spaces of bodily foldings, rigid performances of today will be reconstituted for tomorrow. The banal habit of watching football and participating with friends in fantasy sports leagues seamlessly folds with spaces that encourage hyper-masculinity and transhumanism. Our inattention to these habitual foldings can affectively be operationalized to wipe out difference. The inability to assimilate or resisting assimilation can lead to other forms of discipline, even to the point of homicide or suicide (Butler, 2004; Ott & Aoki, 2002). Those in or seeking positions of national power can operationalize inattention for purposes of environmental neglect and/or combat: "The US Military knows this" through its defensive preparedness for "future repetition[s] of war" (Massumi, 2010, ¶3). Ergo, we should be cautious of mass produced performances of bodies and continue to interrogate displays of the technological "future."

Throughout the essay I have maintained a posthumanist approach to rhetoric and media criticism that demonstrates how to assess material bodies and selves without stabilizing them into subject positions. This study has also demonstrated how the force of rhetoric emerges from our physical, cultural, and simulated milieus. Rhetoric is not about how texts influence us through mediums of mass communication, but how those technological mediums are habitually employed to create more rhetorical force in the foldings of our bodies.

This essay has also contributed to the growing interest in performances of masculinity as enacted through sports (i.e., Adams, Anderson, & McCormack, 2010; Lavelle, 2010; Enck-Wanzer, S. M., 2009; Hardin, Huehn, Jones, Genovese, & Balaji, 2009; Lindemann & Cherney, 2008; Oates, T., 2007), and specifically the study of sports within rhetoric (Grano, 2007; Fuller, 2006; Hawhee, 2004; Jacobs, 2002; Sparkes, 2002; Oriard, 1991). I have added to this

conversation an attention to the ways technology folds into sports to promote a transhumanist masculinity in *virtually* seamless ways. If mechanistic performances of the male body continue their repetitious enfolding with hyper-masculinity, the opportunity to perform more fluid and diverse displays of gender will become increasingly limited.

What has become foremost important in this study is the issue of self-reflection in the creation of self. What spaces are we folding ourselves into in perhaps unreflexive ways? What habits have come to inhabit us? After asserting that hegemonic masculinity is in crisis through an unfolding with patriarchal capitalism, Ashcraft and Flores (2003) ask us remain attentive to where hegemonic masculinity might be headed. It would be wise to set our gaze on the striated spaces of transhumanism as seen through the becomings of bodies with technology, sport, and war.

Conclusion

Of Futures Yet Unthought

"The rhythm of walking generates a kind of rhythm of thinking, and the passage through a landscape echoes or stimulates the passage through a series of thoughts. This creates an odd consonance between internal and external passage, one that suggests that the mind is also a landscape of sorts and that walking is one way to traverse it." (Solnit, 2000, pp. 5-6)

I sit uncomfortably, constantly shuffling as I try to think with a still body. I want stimulus that my body has become accustomed to, stimulus indicative of our contemporary moment. But I don't want to be overstimulated and I don't want to be still. I imagine walking while writing would be a more enjoyable experience than sitting in this cheap desk chair that strains my lumbar. I love researching online the treadmill desk, a more expensive purchase than these seat cushions for my back and bottom that are wearing. I prop my feet up on what should be my pull-up bar, but instead serves as a raised prop for my legs. I was so proud of the eight pull-ups I achieved this past spring. Now my arms are thin, like my body in a shrinking state indicative of time not made for physical health. Heaven help me, I can still do one pull-up.

My feet move along to find the best location. I still am not still, and I'd rather not have to type in a stationary position. Yet, I must focus, I must type, I must discipline myself. Stay seated. I set my stop watch so that I have no breaks for a one-hour period. Type. Think. Type. And when my alarm goes off, only then do I receive a fifteen minute rest before starting again. I striate, order, attend to my actions with time so that progress may be accomplished on the page over which I labor. I've a grumbly tummy, a thirsty mouth, a filled bladder. The body should have

thought of its needs before the timer started, says the head who thinks a mind resides to authorize the modern modes of work.

When I have money, I'll buy the most comfortable chair, the best treadmill desk, the most fabulous glass office to be placed in the middle of a wooded area where the sounds of a creek will keep my mind flowing along with its ramble, where rain and snow will come, go, cover, and melt over my office made of glass, and from my treadmill desk I will watch trees blossom and turn golden and I will type. I feel a bit like Socrates in the *Timeaus* pondering how this ideal might be actualized, might be generated from a world already in process, from a world that will likely not pay me enough to build an office made of glass, let alone place it in a wooded area by a creek. But I dream rather than think. My thinking-body strains to think when it must still and stare, only to have fingers dance away with taping touches on the keyboard, too little, too habitual to generate the creativity that will propel this body into the written word. But I dream, not of my research, but of a possibility for my thinking-body and its future. So I walk.

I walk around my work room, or circle my apartment, or follow the boundaries of my apartment complex. I gather thoughts as I did with my dear friend Kate when I first learned the benefits of walking for the thinking-body. Sometimes the body need only a little stimulation to get going, to get thinking. I met Kate studying abroad in Wales and for no good reason, amongst other friends whom I was closer, who I'd spent more time with, Kate and I stayed in contact after I returned to the States. She comes to see me and I go to see her, and in our travels together we walk. This first occurred during my visit to her hometown Salisbury, England. After my slumber, I awoke to a proper English breakfast and a shared pot of tea. Upon its competition she had me get ready for our walk. "Where are we walking to?" I asked. "Nowhere," she smiled, "We're just going for a walk. We'll take this longer walk in case the shorter one isn't long enough. Do you

ever feel when you've completed your walk that you just need to walk a bit more?" I laughed at the thought. To walk and feel like walking more? I only walked for "purposeful" reasons, to get to class, to get from my car to my apartment, to get going *somewhere.* "No, I dare say I don't." Walking was not a sport, was not athletic enough for my body to consider it beneficial to my health, was not productive enough to simply do, was not eight pull-ups. But Kate seemed so proud of the walk she'd chosen, and so we walked just to walk.

Walking, I learned, was a movement of thought, not just motion for motion's sake to get from here to there. My epiphany of walking, of its privileges of process, came mid-dissertation when trying to think through my more complex arguments. My legs would rustle, my eyes would wander, my concentration would falter as I did my darndest to still and think and write. But still and think are a poor pairing. "Do you ever feel when you've completed your walk that you just need to walk a bit more?" I laughed again at the thought, but this time at myself for not allowing my body to move when it struggled to still so consistently. So I stood and walked, with a thought to accomplish by walk's end. How does choric invention relate to evolving selves? In retrospect, the conclusions are obvious, but I still feel the fresh-air on my face from the cool Fall dusk, rustling leaves below my feet, the soft sounds of Boulder creek, the delight of seeing a stray kitty meow for my friendship. I still feel the walk that inspired connecting Kristeva's abjection to Deleuze and Guattari's foldings to Kristeva's semiotic *chora*. I walked a little bit quicker back home to my type.

Reflections on this dissertation process are like reflections on my travels. "A new thought often seems like a feature of the landscape that was there all along, as though thinking were traveling rather than making," states Rebecca Solnit (2000, p. 6). Her *Wanderlust* was one of the more delightful books I happened upon while researching the peripatetic tradition of rhetoric. I

found the book shortly after my summer visit to England, but prior to my epiphany that walks would help my thinking-body write a dissertation. After realizing the wonders of the wander I shared with Tommy how *smooth* the process was going. "So you finally take my advice after someone else recommends it? Typical." Oh that's right. I guess he did keep telling me to get out of the apartment and walk around, that it would be good for me. "My" advice. He was perturbed someone else was getting credit for *his* great idea, his *topos*. That's the way *his*tory goes, I suppose. The motivating force to walk accrued in ways I had forgotten or dismissed. The invention of walking for thinking's sake was never mine, was never Tommy's, was never Kate's, was never Solnit's, was never Aristotle's, was never Plato's. It was *Chora*'s. She's so smart. I think I'll name my daughter after her.

My dissertation is now only a motion asked to still, for motion *is* when it *is*n't (Massumi, 2002). This culmination of my doctorate education covers over the struggling body, the failed arguments, the generative walks, the incoherent ramblings, the deleted passages moved to chapter graveyards—not good enough to make the cut, not bad enough to get let go, resting in a document that will likely go untouched that reads "leftovers." Maybe they'll become delicious Thanksgiving leftovers, I hope. For I am always thankful of prompts for future projects, of futures yet unthought.

Is that possible? A truly novel thought in the future not indebted to some generating force from yesterday, passing today, for tomorrow? Ecologically speaking, no. But ironically, "the concept of the new, the absolutely new, lurks everywhere, especially where it is least able to be called by that label" (Grosz, 1999, p. 16). At the same time, visions of the future and in particular of the ideal, rarely unfold as expected and only when expectations are broadly conceived. Emergence is "neither free nor determined," states Grosz (1999), "but both constrained and

undecidable" (p. 19). Throughout the writing of this dissertation, or better yet, throughout the writing of *this* dissertation and during the dissertation I didn't write, plans for six future research projects emerged from a smooth space to a striated form that I will perform for you now.

1.) Most histories of rhetoric fail to account for an emergent trend in the past decade that I have labeled, along with others, posthumanism. Posthumanist performances of scholarship are impacting interpretations of rhetorical histories and contemporary approaches to criticism. I've gathered many of these conversations here to metacritically reflect on how posthumanism is shaping disciplinary conversations around vocabulary, important conversations that sustain the field of rhetoric in the modern day academy. In this process, I've recognized the merits of the humanist tradition, while arguing that the anthropocentric, androcentric, and individualism in contemporary rhetorical scholarship is both harmful to our ecology and constraining of our study of materiality as rhetorical force. I advanced notions of rhetoric as transference, energy, relationality, affect, aesthetics, and physical materiality that highlight rhetoric as an intra-activity continuously shaping our becomings in time and space through its many manifestations. I remain interested in rhetoric's intellectual history and plan to continue collecting posthumanist conceptions of rhetoric for a future book project on both the pre of posthumanism and the emergent posthumanist tradition in contemporary rhetorical studies.

2.) Issues of vocabulary always turn our attention to *what* language is performing. I've argued language is always performing more than textuality. A posthumanist rhetoric cannot be methodologically constrained to textual terms. I advanced rhetorical milieus as physical, cultural, and simulated spaces of enfolding that will allow rhetorical scholars to explore the material productions of rhetoric's force through movement rather than positions. The emphasis on movement and folding spaces will be necessary in completing the dissertation that wasn't

written. This project explores *poleis* of the twenty-first century. I plan to complete my study on

Yelp.com, a user-generated review and rating website for restaurants, businesses and service

providers. The website allows users to map urban environments by becoming experts of their

surroundings, critiquing their consumptive experiences, be they at cafes, dentists, automechanics,

or parks. In the past year Yelp's popularity has continued its steady incline, from being the 103rd

most visited website in the US to the 51st (Quantcast, 2011). Yelp users document their

experiences online, striating the intra-activity of physical, cultural, and simulated experiences of

the urban into consumptive landscapes. I remain interested in Yelp as a community and as a

facilitator of *flaneur electroniques*.

       3.) *Chora* remains a central concept in my renderings of a posthumanist rhetoric. In

particular, *chora* is a central organizing concept in my ongoing project with John Ackerman

where we study the process of becoming architects, designers of our built world. We analyze

data from an *in situ* two year study conducted during the mid-1990's in the Graduate School of

Architecture at a major state university to understand processes of enculturation as students

move from interested citizens to (en)trained professionals. Ackerman and I are specifically

interested in how graduate students of architecture come to understand space, arguing that the act

of design is not a mentally driven practice, but an embodied pursuit of aesthetics. It explicates

the public imaginary of *chora* as it is realized in spatial design and then conjured by those

entering the designs with a gaze towards the production of social space. Architecture students

speak to issues of genesis and generation that emerge from their environments and which are

difficult to translate. Most architecture students struggle to locate starting points of their design

process, and for those who do, they refer to a matrix of ideas that are not clearly locatable. We

plan to demonstrate how *chora* shifts our attention from a mental and language-centered theory

of invention to a mind/body/environment paradigm through how graduate students of architecture experience the process of design.

4.) I'd like to continue following the trends of televised sporting presentations and the performances they make material. More specifically, I am working on a project temporarily titled "We Hold These Footballs to be Self-Evident: The Folding of Bodies with Football, Patriotism, and War," submitted for participation at the fifth Summit on Communication and Sport. I extend my investigation of the harmful relationship between football's violence and war through following the foldings of the smooth body into the striated spaces of football. I plan to strengthen my argument that hyper-masculine transhumanist performances can be affectively operationalized for purposes of war. I demonstrate these foldings through a more thorough look at FOX's pregame "Declaration of Independence" program during Super Bowls XXXVI, XXXIX, XLII and XLV. In these segments FOX displays former and current professional football players variously standing with members of the armed forces, youth football teams and symphonies, high school and college students, farmers and factory workers and recited the Declaration of Independence. Each time the event concludes by dedicating the Super Bowl broadcast to members of the armed services. This doubling over of war and patriotism onto football creates a more rigid fold where hyper-masculine performances of gender become more tightly bound to the body and its civic duties. The mass-distribution of these foldings encourages participation in football as a patriotic activity. In addition to football becoming a recruiting ground for the armed services, I will argue that these relationships contribute to the lack of reforms made in the prevention of traumatic brain injury experienced by youth, high school, college, and professional football players.

5.) I am also looking forward to studying the different materializations of the human that have emerged throughout history. I am drawn to the academic expression of "dehumanization," which I believe emerges from a (trans)humanist concern over protecting the boundaries of the human. It is not possible to dehumanize because we are never less-than-human, never autonomous in the first place. We are always more-than-human through our foldings with smooth and striated spaces. We could say that the body becomes culturally unintelligible if we define the human only through its sociality. Biologically, however, the human is never separated from its local milieu. While I am interested in the ways technologies transform our conception of the self, I am also interested in investigating the blurring of the human at the level of the animal. How do we understand ourselves when removed from human culture? I would like to explore the topic of feral children and what we can learn about ourselves at a creaturely level (Davis, 2011). I'm interested in personal accounts, myths, scientific studies, and governmental intervention of feral children, the ways they are materialized into existence and the ways they disrupt our notions of the human.

6.) Finally, I long for the completion of my ongoing mirror project. I've been interested in how one's bodily aesthetic, or physical appearance, is constantly becoming with the spaces in which the self enfolds, as are evaluations of it. I'm studying the history of how humans have used mirrors as a technology. During the 15th and 16th centuries, the mass distribution of mirrors became possible. By the dawn of the Enlightenment, a period associated with the production of humanist subjectivity and individualization, mirrors became increasingly common. Mirrors offered selves the ability to control the appearance of the body just as one sought to control nature. They assisted in the perception of autonomy and individuation indicative of post-Enlightenment humanism. I intend to argue that our reflections are not only rhetorical via our

symbolic interactions, as Cooley's "Looking-Glass Self" suggests, they are mediated by our technological ecologies. The mirror is not about the production of the subject, as Lacan would argue; there is an abject relationship between mirror and self that I continue to think through.

I've taken the title of this conclusion from Elizabeth Grosz's (1999) first chapter in her edited volume *Becomings*, titled "Thinking the New: Of Futures Yet Unthought," where she explores the "nature" of time, emergence, and vitalism. I conclude by paying homage to Grosz for the ways her writings have guided my intellectual journey here at CU and for introducing me to the work of Deleuze who has become a central figure in my work. I end by embracing "the role that the accidental, chance, or the undetermined plays in the unfolding of time" (p. 18). The most exciting part of my future research is what is yet unthought, for it implies paths I've yet to walk.

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