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Applying Kenneth Burke's dramatistic pentad for revision strategies for inexperienced writers

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APPLYING KENNETH BURKE'S DRAMATISTIC PENTAD FOR REVISION STRATEGIES FOR INEXPERIENCED WRITERS

A Thesis

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by

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ABSTRACT

One of the most difficult challenges for writers--especially for novice writers--is looking at their own ideas and work from a new perspective. Instead, most writers tend to approach their writing rigidly. According to research, "professional writers spend 25 percent of their time revising manuscripts, yet secondary school students devote less than 1 percent to editing and revising" (Christiansen 70). Once their ideas are formed, novice writers don't look beyond their conceptions.

Yet revision is a cornerstone in writing. Elbow and Belanoff pose that the most important type of revision is "reseeing/rethinking: changing *what* a piece says or its 'bones'" (Elbow and Belanoff 167). Yet seeing one's own work from a new perspective is one of the most difficult tasks in the composing process. For composition instructors, offering strategies for revision on the text level is necessary to help novice writers begin to rethink their own ideas, structure, and context. George Hillocks calls these strategies self-regulatory. He explains, "These are strategies for managing one's own cognitive behavior during writing" (Hillocks 249).

For writers, using flexible revision strategies "means entering into a conversation with their previous thoughts" (Elbow and Belanoff 166). In this study, I propose a rhetorical strategy to help novice writers view their work as a flexible process and therefore develop new realities. The strategy is applying rhetorician Kenneth Burke's pentadic ratios theory. Some pedagogical strategies have been advanced using Burke's theories. A few authors, such as Joseph J. Comprone and James S. Mullican, give Burkean strategies for analyzing literature in the classroom. Others, Phillip M. Keith and Charles Kneupper, for example, suggest using Burke's theories for inventional heuristics. Irene L. Clark and Virginia Allen delineate ways of using the pentad to explore human motivation. I will show that Burke's pentad theory can be just as effective, if not even more effective, in teaching students how to revise their compositions.

Burke uses the metaphor of drama to describe all symbolic interaction, which he calls dramatism--an actor acting. He introduces five rhetorical tools that give dramatism its structure: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. The act names what took place; the scene is the environment in which the act takes place; the agent is the

person who acts; the instrument she uses is the agency; and the reason for acting is the purpose. The persuasive intent in the interactive use of the pentad results in motive or intent. Kneupper writes:

> The dramatistic pentad and pentadic ratios can serve such a heuristic function for suasory discourse. Basically, the pentad provides a system of perspectives from which reality may be viewed (Kneupper 133).

Discovering a new reality--what Burke calls the use of a new terministic screen--can enable writers to expand their writing flexibility and enhance the use of motive in their composing process.

To show the effectiveness of Burke's pentadic ratios in bringing out motive, three text samples will be used. Dorothy Parker's short story, "The Big Blonde," uses Hazel's physique (the big blond) as the scene on which the action is played. She is stereotyped by society (the agent). Society forces Hazel to act in typical ways (the act). This example shows the effective use of the scene:agency ratio. Ronald Reagan's speech on Lebanon and Grenada is an example of the independent use of scene (prominent in the events in Lebanon) and act (prominent in

the events in Grenada) which come together at the end of the speech to bring about a scene:act ratio. This speech shows the reasons for emphasizing one of the pentadic ratio while diminishing another. Third, Robert Frost's poem "Mending Wall" illustrates the use of nature as an agent to produce an act (agent:act ratio). Frost sets up his ratio in the first few lines of the poem which he carries out to obtain his motive during the rest of the lines.

The question then becomes: How can the pentad theory help an inexperienced writer develop revision strategies in her own writing? The pentad serves as a tool to aid students in reseeing and rethinking the motive of their writing, and from there achieve textual revision. The goal of the strategies is not to necessarily change the ratios already present but to "see" the writing from a new terministic screen to help the writer better understand the best strategy for her motive.

The strategy for using Burke's theory in revision will begin with identifying the pentad members in the composition and putting them into ratios. The writer can manipulate the main ratio to see how that affects the composition. Cognitive questions that complement the strategy can also help the writer resee or rethink the

focus of the composition. For example, one question could be: Since the main ratio in my piece is act:scene, how would my motive change if I changed the ratio to scene:act?

Chapter 1 investigates the problem of rigidity within the writing process during the revising stage by using texts from Elbow and Belanoff, George Hillocks, Jr., Mike Rose, Mark Christiansen, and others. Chapter 2 defines Kenneth Burke's dramatistic pentad and explains its use as flexible ratios during the revision process by using texts from Kenneth Burke; Hugh Agee; Michael Hassett; and others. Chapter 3 provides examples in the writings of Dorothy Parker, Ronald Reagan, and Robert Frost to show unusual and effective use of pentadic ratios. The final chapter shows how Burke's theory can help the novice writer develop textual revision rather than just grammatical revision and to aid that writer in reseeing her work. Student examples will illustrate the effectiveness of the pentad theory in the classroom.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE INEXPERIENCED WRITER AND REVISION

Imagine a student writing an argumentative paper. She has discovered a current-events topic that sends her delving deeply into a subject in which she has a vital interest. She constructs her thesis sentence and an outline and begins to write. By the time she is finished writing, she feels proud of her paper. She submits her paper to her instructor, hoping he finds it stimulating and thoughtful.

When the professor returns her paper, the student eagerly thumbs through the pages to see what the professor has written. She reads many good comments. "Your topic caused me to think in a new way about this subject." "Your paper includes many strong points."

But one directive causes her heart to sink. "Perhaps one or two of your arguments would work better if you approached your topic in a more direct way. Please revise and turn in a new draft."

REVISE. That's the dreaded word that causes many writers to clench their pencils and turn pale: the business writer who must revise to reflect more directly company

policies; the script writer who must make substantive changes to fit a drama into a tighter time period; a speech writer who is told to change certain portions of the speech to reflect the speaker's new emphasis.

The Importance of Revision

Revision is the heart of the writing process--the innermost beat of the writer's ability to communicate. Revision is so essential to the mature composing process that Donald M. Murray, in his article, "Internal Revision: A Process of Discovery," says:

> Writing is rewriting.[. . .] Rewriting is the difference between the dilettante and the artist, the amateur and the professional, the published and the unpublished (Murray 85).

Murray defines revision this way:

> This is what the writer does after a draft is completed to understand and communicate what has begun to appear on the page. The writer reads to see what has been suggested, then confirms, alters, or develops it, usually through many drafts. Eventually a meaning is developed which can be communicated to a reader (Murray 87).

One of the functions of revision is to develop the thought, to mold the idea, to wrap the meaning so intricately through the words that the composition becomes a whole. This involves discovery and deletion that re-forms the work. Yet deep revision is one of the most difficult skills to learn--and sometimes thwarts even experienced writers.

Most composition students feel they have accomplished their assignment when they turn in what is essentially a first draft. If they are asked to do peer editing, they merely note minor problems in the text that usually do not transcend the arena of grammatical function. If asked to revise their own work, they follow the instructor's suggestions to the letter and consider their efforts heroic. Unless the instructor gives explicit directions in what and how to revise, the new draft comes back with only cosmetic changes.

Why do students fail to revise deeply? Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff describe the difference in view between the inexperienced and experienced writer when trying to revise:

> Many students equate revision with "correcting mechanics" or copyediting; experienced writers never confuse the two. For them, revision means entering

into a conversation with their previous thoughts. They match what they have already written against what they *now* wish to say and create out of the two a new piece which suits their present purpose (Elbow and Belanoff 166).

Revision serves an even more vital role for student writers than for professional writers. Mark Christiansen writes:

> By revising papers, students learn self-criticism and self-appraisal, ways to improve their composition, and the relationship between achievement and self-respect. They also learn how to become better writers (Christiansen 72).

So the dilemma is that revision is necessary to communicate effectively through composition, yet revising is a task for which novice writers have few skills. Revision is key to helping writers learn their craft and to building their confidence as writers with something to say. Yet tragically, the problem is that novice writers are often blocked from performing revision.

The Dilemma of Revising

Think of young writers as crusaders on a quest for the Holy Grail of clear communication. They pack what they need for their arduous journey. Their mentors, who have made the journey before them, give advice on what to take and how to begin. In other words, prewriting strategies flourish within the classroom.

Young writers strut off with a sense of mission and direction. Just follow the pathway of the sun across the landscape. Although they expect difficulties along the way, their optimism is contagious. While writing the first draft, they encounter hazards and detours--sometimes even rabbit trails--but the pathway is still clear enough for them to correct their course. Yet maybe, just maybe, the path isn't as straightforward as the crusaders imagine. How will they know if they are still heading in the right direction? After all, there are no signposts.

Then an obstacle looms for a lonely traveler--the enchanted forest. Dark branches crisscross, obliterating the movement of the sun. Even the ground has become soft under the crusaders' feet from thousands of years of dropping pine needles and rotting branches. There is no

pathway. Only silence. This forest, of course, is the dreaded maze of revision.

This is where many young writers end their quest. Although they may have the tools--a machete and a flashlight, perhaps--they have no sense of direction, no guide or map, no paved road. Somehow, they know that they haven't finished the quest, but in their confusion and fear, they decide that this is the place to stop. No one can navigate through the Revision Forest, they think. A few hardy crusaders chop their way a few feet into the underbrush, but when they feel as if they are going to lose their way back, they return, discouraged. They give up just when they are about to enter the most rewarding part of their journey.

What is there about novice writers that blocks them from revising their work? How is their writing process different from professional writers? How can the composition instructor give them signposts that will help them find a way through their own maze of words and ideas?

Susan Tchudi, in "Unsettling Drafts: Helping Students See New Possibilities in Their Writing," explains the problem this way:

Novice writers have trouble revising. Perhaps they struggle because they have so little experience with rewriting; or, perhaps they have been misled by teachers who sometimes focus on neatness or correctness of writing at the expense of more global issues [. . .] In addition, they don't see revision as re-vision or as a reseeing of their work, but simply as making minor, more local changes [. . .] Often they commit themselves to a particular plan or approach and seem unwilling or unable to veer from the rigid scheme (Tschudi 27).

How, then, can these inexperienced writers see what they have written with new eyes? How can they be sure that the approach they have taken with their writing is the best one, the one they would choose over all others?

To correct grammar problems, a writer can turn to a "rules for writers" handbook or other reference source. But there isn't such a simple answer to reading or studying about revising. Without a strategy for revision, a writer might have to ask a more expert writer to give concrete suggestions about changing the essay. This help may easily go beyond the scope of professional advice into influencing the writer's voice or motive. How can a writer revise the

very personal part of her work--the focus, the structure, the content--without giving over part of the writer's prerogative--the germ of the idea, the flow of what is said, the way the subject is handled--to someone else? What happens in the case where a writer cannot handle a revision and relies too heavily on another's advice so that her writing takes on the expert's ideas and voice? Or perhaps the writer has no one to ask about difficult revision problems. Where does she go then? How can we as composition instructors give writers a method for revising their own work that allows them to retain control of their project yet function effectively as revisers?

The goal of an instructor or mentor is to guide the student writer into recognizing her own voice and abilities. Murray writes:

> In teaching writing, I often feel that the most significant step is made when a student enters into the writing process and experiences the discovery of meaning through writing (Murray 87).

How can a writer expand that process of discovery so that she is able to play with words, manipulate the text until it fits her intended purpose, or discover new

meanings through changing the structure, the wording, or focus?

In addition, often the expert writer also finds herself stymied by the revision process. Perhaps she has gone over her paper so many times that the words are too familiar. Maybe she struggles with part of the writing process for which she can find no solutions. How can she revise when these dilemmas block her from taking control of her writing and arranging her text in the most appropriate way?

I propose that Kenneth Burke's pentad theory is an excellent pedagogical tool that can address student problems in revision. To explain my application of the pentad theory, I will first define the parameters of the revision process.

The Parameters of Revision

Revision is a specific activity within the writing process; however, since writing is so recursive, revision may appear in many areas of that process. Revision may also contain greater and lesser degrees of rewriting or reseeing.

Many composition theorists divide the writing process into three steps. Donald Murray calls these stages prevision, vision, and revision.

> *Prevision.* This term encompasses everything that preceded the first draft. [. . .]
>
> *Vision.* In the second stage of the writing process, the first draft--what I call a discovery draft--is completed. [. . .]
>
> *Revision.* This is what the writer does after a draft is completed to understand and communicate what has begun to appear on the page. The writer reads to see what has been suggested, then confirms, alters, or develops it, usually through many drafts. Eventually a meaning is developed which can be communicated to a reader (Murray 85-7).

For this thesis, I will concentrate on the third stage as defined by Murray. Elbow and Belanoff call this stage of students' writing, "entering into a conversation with their previous thoughts."

Elbow and Belanoff divide this area of revision into three categories.

1. Reseeing/rethinking: changing *what* a piece says or its "bones."

2. Reworking, reshaping, changing *how* a piece says it or changing its "muscles."

3. Copyediting or proofreading for mechanics and usage; checking for deviations from standard conventions or changing the writing's skin (Elbow and Belanoff 167).

In *Research on the Composing Process,* George Hillocks, Jr., cites studies on the writing process that show that weaker writers become preoccupied with mechanics (Elbow and Belanoff's "skin") rather than with content and organization ("muscles" and "bones").

> These studies found that more skilled writers pay greater attention to matters of content and organization, while weaker writers have a tendency to be preoccupied with mechanics, particularly spelling (Bechtel 1979, Metzger 1977, Pianko 1979, Sawkins 1971, Stiles 1977) (Hillocks 28).

Many of these revision problems stem from poor planning strategies.

> Perhaps the most universal finding across these studies is that weaker writers spend very little time in planning while skilled writers divide more time both to planning--during rewriting periods and in

pauses during the writing--and to examining what they have written [as noted in Atwell 1981, M.E. Henderson 1980, Metzger 1977, Perl 1979, Pianko 1979, Sawkins 1971, Stallard 1974, Warters 1979] (Hillocks 28).

Writing strategies develop slowly. The first writing strategy that children exhibit is the "what's next" strategy. In other words, they write as a storyteller would relate a linear tale, beginning with the first incident that happened and following through to the last incident. This strategy takes little organizational thought.

The "what's next" strategy limits what a fiction writer can produce. Restricted to "what's next," a storyteller cannot tell a mystery tale, use a flashback, or relate parallel story plots from more than one character. In a similar way, a non-fiction writer using the "what's next" strategy for presenting facts, concepts, or arguments cannot do a good job in a compare/contrast essay for example. Therefore, relying on immature writing processes, such as the "what's next" strategy, restrict what a writer can do in crafting her essay.

Let's apply this one-strategy limitation to the revision process. If a writer only uses the "what's next" strategy in an essay, that writer doesn't have the skills

to resee the structure of her work. She doesn't know how to change the form to make her essay more effective. The "bones" have calcified. This is why many novice writers commonly resort to addition as a strategy where they merely change the "skin" of the writing. Additions to an essay can be just another form of the "what's next" strategy.

Another problem that plagues immature writers is premature editing. Lil Brannon explains:

> Basic writers often prematurely edit their work. Their fear of failure, their lack of experience in sustaining written expression, their focus on rules and formats for writing, all tend to inhibit their ability to compose and to grow as writer (Brannon 14).

Premature editing stems from an unclear understanding of the process of revision. Once again, the novice writer is consumed by mechanical issues ("skin") and overlooks the deeper concepts in her writing. Many studies conclude that grammar and style do not add to a writer's composing skill (Hillocks 5; Brannon 22-3). Grammar and style are surface issues that rarely get beyond the most trivial meaning making.

Writer's block is another problem that afflicts basic writers' ability to revise to a greater degree than

experienced writers. Writer's block is an inability to begin or continue writing. Mike Rose explains:

> Certainly, the basic writer [. . .] has difficulty getting words on paper. But, though sociolinguistic and affective forces interfere, a major reason for these students' scant productions is simply a lack of fundamental writing skills. The first clarifying boundary that must be established is that blocking presupposes basic writing skills that, for some reason, cannot be exercised (Rose 3).

If a writer doesn't have the basic skills to know how to revise, textual revision becomes an impossible task. When the writer sees her product, she cannot imagine how it could be different, or if she has a glimpse of what should be changed, she may not know how to go about making that change. She cannot delve below the skin level to see the muscles and bones of her composition. This inflexibility stymies all but grammar and stylistic revisions.

Mature Revision Strategies

What is it, then, that experienced writers possess that help them revise more effectively?

Many studies have concluded that mature writers spend much more time planning than novice writers (Atwell 1981, M.E. Henderson 1980, Metzger, 1977, Perl 1979, Pianko, 1979, Sawkins 1971, Stallard 1974, Warters 1979) (Hillock 28). This planning occurs before the first word is written and throughout the writing process. When mature writers pause while writing, they resort to planning. Immature writers do not. This means that skilled writers pay more attention to content and organization, which are products of better planning strategies.

More planning may also explain why experienced writers rely less heavily on the "what's next" strategy in their writing. Lil Brannon writes:

> After having professional writers not only compose a text but also revise one written by someone else, [the researchers] discovered that experienced adults revised by substituting new material for old, rearranging material, and changing words or phrases; and, more important, they were able through revision to bring a text closer to the rhetorical demands of a particular situation (Brannon 11).

In short, experienced writers made more revisions than novice writers. According to Brannon, in Stallard's study

the statistics concluded that "good writers made an average of slightly over twelve revisions per paper, while his randomly selected writers made an average of only a bit over four per composition, a difference significant at $p <$ .01" (Hillocks 21).

Most of the revisions made by the novice writers did not rise to the text level but were mainly at the copyediting level. More experienced writers were able to locate nonuseful items during the writing process and eliminate them. Novice writers tended to include relevant and nonrelevant material.

Another problem for novice writers is a lack of criteria with which to evaluate what they have written. And even if these writers sense a problem in their product, they may not have the skills necessary to correct the problem. Experienced writers, on the other hand, are able to evaluate what they have written to find areas that are weak or need a new focus. When they isolate a problem, they know how to correct the problem to improve the text. For example, experienced writers are more likely to develop a focus for their writing and then locate areas of their text that don't fit the focus. This type of revision is on the

deeper, textual level and can result in a re-vision of the content.

Dealing With the Problem

The problem for the composition teacher is to move the student from the inexperienced to the experienced level in revision. To make the student become a critic of her own work, the teacher must convince the student to approach her writing with the eye of someone who can evaluate.

The research on composition highlights the insufficiency of composition students but does not give clear steps on how to bring the students to a higher level. The goal is to help them achieve meta-knowledge when revising, to go beyond the what's next strategy to thinking about what they know about writing and applying that knowledge to their writing problems, i.e. to become a critic. These students need to step above their writing and use a bird's eye view to evaluate the content, flow, structure, and other text-level revision.

This is where a rhetorical tool such as Burke's pentad theory can help the novice writer assimilate revision skills to improve the composition.

L.S. Vygotsky calls the area between two levels of learning the zone of proximal development. He names the first level the actual development level, or in this case, the place where the student is currently at in her composition skills. The student is traveling toward a potential level of development.

Vygotsky writes:

> [The zone of proximal development] is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers [. . .] The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process or maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in the embryonic state (Vygotsky 86).

In other words, the students already have some composition skills at their command. They are also able to perform other skills under the guidance of an instructor. The composition teacher, then, is responsible for directing the classroom in such a way that students can transverse

the zone of proximal development and step up to the next level of skill in their composing process.

Vygotsky says:

> We propose that an essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement (Vygotsky 90).

Vygotsky's theory puts a great part of the responsibility for student learning in the hands of the teacher. The student is able to accomplish some tasks, but until the instructor helps her advance in her development, she will have a hard time making headway in her composition skills. But what is the role that the instructor takes? He cannot nor should not give so much help that the student becomes dependent on him rather than developing independent strategies for writing.

Judith Langer and Arthur Applebee describe what they call instructional scaffolding. They write:

> The role of instructional scaffolding is to provide students with appropriate models and strategies for addressing new problems; these are in turn internalized by the students, providing them with the resources to eventually undertake similar tasks on their own (Langer and Applebee 176).

Langer and Applebee are not advocating traditional forms of structure such as the five-paragraph essay as end-all strategies for composition instruction. The strategy in these cases becomes a writing form rather than a tool to help the students manipulate their texts. The student may become dependent on the form. Just imagine if a construction firm built an elaborate scaffold to repair the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, then left the scaffolding in place permanently. The scaffolding would mar the beauty of the work. That's what may happen if the composition strategy is so overpowering that the student becomes trapped in the zone of proximal development and never advances to the next level of independent writing fluency.

Instead, the authors emphasize:

> Good scaffolds, erected to support students' efforts, must be dissolved when they are no longer needed. Once the pattern has been internalized, our

"help" may simply be an intrusion (Langer and Applebee 177).

The scaffolding must work well enough to help the student step beyond her current level of development yet evident enough to discard when the next level in writing maturity is reached.

These scaffolds must encourage students to make their writing process a conscious activity, be clear enough so that the student can regulate them herself, and lend itself to internalization. The conscious processing aids the student by extending planning time, allowing for greater cognitive behavior, and facilitating the discovery aspects of the revision process.

This, then, is a tall order for a scaffold. Since revision is such a recursive process, it defies labeling or explaining. Trying to teach revision strategies to students can seem as mysterious and awkward as giving directions to a swimmer thrashing in murky water. Not only does the swimmer need a sense of direction but also a landmark by which she can apply the direction.

One rhetorician proposes a theory that can give direction to the student struggling with revision. Kenneth Burke's theory of the pentadic ratios is so flexible and

insightful that it can aid the composition teacher in helping students traverse the zone of proximal development to higher-level revision strategies. This revision scaffold can not only help students view their work in new ways--as a re-vision--but also aid them in the actual revision of their composition.

Burke's theory is central to a scaffold that can enable students to transverse the revision plane. In chapter 2, I will explain what Kenneth Burke's pentad theory is and how it works when applied to a written composition. A specific strategy using the pentad theory will be outlined for use in revision.

In chapter 3, the strategy will be applied to three forms of writing—a short story, a speech, and a poem. Although the expert authors highlighted in the chapter were not consciously using the pentad as a writing tool when they composed, applying the pentad can show the expertise in each writer's work. This critique can develop a clearer understanding of how valuable the pentad theory can be at revealing ambiguities and motives in the texts.

After laying this foundation, chapter 4 goes on to show how valuable Burke's theory can be when used in the classroom as an instructional scaffold. Examples will be

given of revision by students that prove how effective their work with the theory was and how its use changed their re-vision of their own work.

CHAPTER TWO

KENNETH BURKE'S PENTAD AND REVISION

To understand Kenneth Burke's use of the pentad ratios, we must go back to his explanation of rhetoric. He gives this definition of rhetoric's function: "The use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents" (Burke, *Rhetoric* 24). He goes on to explain, "A most characteristic concern of rhetoric: the manipulation of men's belief for political ends" (Burke, *Rhetoric* 24).

His description, of course, is of persuasion. He didn't limit persuasion in the rhetorical sense to verbal communication, which was his main emphasis. Burke suggests that persuasion is a part of every human action, a part of routine life. The grocery clerk persuades at the checkout counter. The traffic police officer persuades on the street corner. The new mother persuades when she sings a lullaby.

Virginia Holland says of Burke:

> Because man lives his life, or acts it out in terms of his special preferences or purposes, Burke

declares that the basic unit of action in the human body is purposive motion (Holland 28).

Persuasion, then, is choosing to move in a certain direction and bringing someone along with you.

Humans use language to persuade others to adopt their viewpoint. Says John C. Briggs, "It is worth recalling that for Burke rhetoric is hortatory action. It is suasion with a potential for inducing action in human beings" (Briggs 369). In doing so, the communicator identifies herself with the person she wishes to persuade. This becomes a marriage of cooperation and competition. In the case of a writer, she finds areas of similarity with her reader so that she can persuade in areas of competition.

Identification

The act of linking writer with reader Burke calls "identification." Burke writes, "The thing's *identity* would here be its uniqueness as an entity in itself and by itself, a demarcated unit having its own particular structure (Bizzell and Herzberg 1020).

The concept of identification is based on the assumption that the beliefs and judgments of a person are in many ways similar to those of other fellow humans. Burke

says that we can find patterns of experience which are universal, permanent, and recurrent. These elements can be used as the basis for linking writer with reader, bringing them to what Burke calls "consubstantiality." This is a feeling of oneness, a tie between two humans. Defined, consubstantiality is when one thing is shown to be identified with another thing, therefore both having the same substance.

Persuasion is most effective when it uses identification, which then makes consubstantiation its starting point. According to Burke, the communicator (writer) establishes a "whatness." It is finding a level of abstraction that reconciles opposing views, which eventually leads to consubstantiality. Holland writes:

> The principle is this: in order for one's interests, concepts, or properties to be proclaimed identical with those of another, it is necessary to show that the concepts, interests, or the properties of both have, or share, the same "whatness" or the same "substance." When this is done, in language and the immediate end of the artistic product is persuasion or identification (in the sense of "end" or

a "state of being"), rhetoric is characteristically at work (Holland 30-1).

Holland goes on later to further explain Burke's use of the term identification:

> It is characteristically the role of the critic (speaker or writer) to persuade men to act together and achieve identification. To do this he must persuade men to act as he wants them to act, or to adopt the attitudes (incipient acts) he wants them to adopt. Thus, he must identify himself with them (show that he and they share the same oneness or unity). He must persuade them that he and they are "consubstantial." He does this by persuading men through his speeches or literary documents that his attitudes (which he wants them to accept) and their attitudes are "substantially" the same, because both he and they have the same essence or substance (Holland 34-5).

The way a communicator achieves consubstantiality is by locating a thing, not simply by what it is or from where it comes, but in where it is going. This directional substance establishes the motive or cause.

Naming

To understand this concept, Burke stresses the importance of human ability to use symbols. Humans do this through language by naming things. Naming allows one human to achieve consubstantiality with another. When a person says, "Cat," her listener gets a picture of a four-legged creature that meows. A link is established between speaker and listener through the symbol of the sounds c-a-t, which conjure up the similar picture. Naming, then, is the foundation for using symbols to communicate. Whatness or substance then means what lies under (sub) the place (stance) or the context of the symbol. In the example given earlier, the "sub" is the animal and the symbol is the sound "c-a-t."

Rather than viewing communication as fixed meanings transferred, Burke sees it as having direction. As Holland writes:

> From this reasoning, [Burke] leaps to the assertion that to tell what a thing is, you place it, or locate it, in terms of a something else which it is (paradoxically) not (Holland 31).

Therefore, the arrangement of symbols takes center stage. How can you transmit the depths of the color black?

By locating it within a white background. In a similar way, in rhetoric, the arrangement of arguments propels the reader to persuasion or dissuasion.

Many rhetorical theories act like a photograph by freezing the action of communication into a single frame. Burke's theory, however, more closely resembles a video. Burke's theory of consubstantiality is dynamic because it has movement.

Dramatism

Burke proposes a framework for his theory, which he calls "dramatism." This framework allows for unlimited movement. Burke says that the best way to understand human communication is to use the metaphor of an actor on stage. Virginia Holland explains:

> It is because Burke conceives of man as communicating, cooperating, participation, acting, that he considers human beings and human behavior more realistically expressible in "dramatistic terms." That is, man is an actor and human conduct is the act or action he performs in the great drama of living, in order to achieve the end or objective of the "good life" (Holland 4).

Communication, then, is symbolic interaction between two "actors" using symbols (naming) on a "stage" or location. Burke explains:

> For rhetoric as such is not rooted in any past condition of human society. It is rooted in an essential function of language itself, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols (Bizzell and Herzberg 1032).

The importance of this interaction is not in getting clear definition of the names used. Instead, the essence of communication lies in the areas of ambiguity in meaning between the terms. Burkes writes, "What we want is not terms that avoid ambiguity, but terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities arise" (Burke, *Grammar* 95).

Burke explains how placement produces scope and complexity:

> Our work must be synoptic in a different sense: in the sense that it offers a system of placement, and should enable us, by the systematic manipulation of the terms, to "generate," or "anticipate" the various

> classes of motivational theory. And a treatment in these terms, we hope to show, reduces the subject synoptically while still permitting us to appreciate the scope and complexity (Bizzell and Herzberg 996).

In other words, if your definition of God is exactly the same as mine, then I have no need to persuade you of anything concerning God's person. But it is where your definition and mine differ and where concepts are not as clear to you as to me that I can hope to persuade you.

Because "man is an actor," he can assume any number of roles to persuade. Therefore, Burke's metaphor of a drama serves to unleash rhetoric from the narrow confines of definition to the infinite scope of the stage. Not only can an actor take on an unlimited number of roles, he can also change his role at any time. Unlike other philosophies, such as Freud's assertion that man is a sexual animal or Marx's that he is a biological organism, dramatism can embrace all these concepts and also any others necessary to explain human actions.

Just as an actor is aware of his actions on stage, a writer should be consciously aware of what language is doing. When the writer is naming, he locates, grounds, and charts the substance of his persuasion. The concern becomes

how the writer uses the naming process to identify, leading to consubstantiation. The method of persuasion is studying or clarifying ambiguities. Burke writes:

> It is in the areas of ambiguity that transformations take place; in fact, without such areas, transformation would be impossible. Distinctions, we might say, arise out of a great central moltenness, where all is merged. They have been thrown from a liquid center to the surface, where they have congealed. Let one of these crusted distinctions return to its source and in this alchemic center it may be remade, again becoming molten liquid, and may enter into new combinations, whereat it may be again thrown forth as a new crust, a different distinction. So that A may become non-A. But not merely by a leap from one state to the other. Rather, we must take A back to into the ground of its existence, the logical substance that is its causal ancestor, and on to a point where it is consubstantial with non-A; then we may return, this time emerging with non-A instead (Gusfield 143).

The result of this transformation is an attributing of motives. Burke defines motives as "shorthand terms for

situations" or "rough shorthand descriptions for certain typical patterns of discrepant and conflicting stimuli" (Burke, *Permanence* 29,30). These motives are the underlying reasons why the writer explains herself as she does. The transformation happens when the writer's motives become consubstantial with the reader's.

Motivation

Motivation is situated within the writer's orientation to reality. Motivation makes a judgment about how things were, are, or may be. For example, if the writer argues that abortion is murder, she describes a certain act that her reader may consider a right of choice. Both writer and reader are looking at the same act, but each has her own interpretation and motivation. The writer wishes to cast abortion in a negative light, whereas the pro-choice reader believes abortion is a necessary freedom. The writer then emphasizes her point of view by defining the ambiguities in the situation. Both writer and reader will agree that the death of the unborn is involved in abortion. Whereas the pro-life persuader defines the product as a baby, the pro-choice reader defines the product as a fetus. It is at this ambiguity that the writer will try to persuade. The

transformation occurs when the reader is persuaded to embrace the motivation of the writer.

Charles Kneupper explains:

> The view of language as motive links language to action and attitude (incipient action). This link is vital to any rhetorical theory, which attempts to explain human behavior, which occurs as a consequence of linguistic communication (Kneupper 132).

Thus, symbolism takes on new meaning when it is applied to motive. As Burke explains of human actions and attitudes as they relate to language:

> Once words are added [. . .] the purely biological nature of pleasure, pain, love, hate, fear is quite transcended, since all are perceived through the coloration that the inveterate human involvement with words imparts to them. And the same is true of all sheer bodily sensations, which are likewise affected by the new order of motivation made possible (and inevitable!) once this extra odd dimension is added to man's natural animosity. From this point on, no matter what man's motives might be in their nature as sheerly animal, they take on a wholly new aspect,

as defined by the resources and embarrassments of symbolism (Kneupper 131-2).

To complicate matters, each of us is driven by what Burke calls goads or "aspects of our language that prod us, inspire us, drive us to perform particular linguistic behaviors" (Hassett 471). These goads make us select certain terminology to express ourselves. The type of terminology we use to construct our reality Burke calls terministic screens.

> We *must* use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms; for whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to the one field rather than the other (Bizzell and Herzberg 1038).

For example, the person who argues pro-life causes will use the word "baby," whereas the person who argues for pro-choice causes will use the word "fetus." "Baby" belongs to the terministic screen for the pro-life cause, whereas "fetus" belongs to the terministic screen for the pro-choice cause. The grid of such terminology within one goad creates the terministic screen. The terminology therefore functions to reflect and deflect reality within the

terministic screen. "Baby" reflects the view that the unborn child is a complete person with all rights and deflects the view that the unborn child is just tissue. "Fetus" deflects the idea that the unborn being is a living child and reflects the view that because the unborn is not a full child, it does not have rights of a person.

Pentad Ratios

How then can we apply Burke's complicated theories of dramatism, identification, and consubstantiation to the classroom writing experience? To unravel the complex relationships that humans use in dramatism to create persuasion, Burke introduces a set of ratios. These ratios are related to Burke's analogy of man as an actor. The five elements of what he calls the pentad are act, scene, agency, agent, and purpose. He writes:

> For there to be an *act,* there must be an *agent.* Similarly, there must be a *scene* in which the agent acts. To act in a scene, the agent must employ some means, or *agency.* And it can be called an act in the full sense of the term only if it involves a *purpose* (that is, if a support happens to give way and one falls, such motion on the agent's part is not an act,

but an accident.) These five terms (act, scene, agent, agency, purpose) have been labeled the dramatistic pentad; the aim of calling attention to them in this way is to show how the functions which they designate operate in the imputing of motives (Burke, *Grammar* 10).

Burke explains further:

> We shall use the five terms as a generating principle of our investigation. They are: Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose. In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the *act* (names what took place, in thought or deed), and another that names the *scene* (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred); also, you must indicate what person of kind of person *(agent)* performed the act, what means or instruments he used *(agency)*, and the *purpose*. Men may violently disagree about the purposes behind a given act, or about the character of the person who did it, or how he did it, or in what kind of situation he acted; or they may even insist upon totally different words to name the act itself. But be that as it may, any complete statement about motives will offer *some kind* of

answers to these five questions: what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency), and why (purpose) (Bizzell and Herzberg 992).

Therefore, definitions of the five pentad members are as follows:

Act--names what takes place

Scene--the background of the act

Agent--person who performed the act

Agency--the instruments the agent used

Purpose--why the act was done

Burke describes the interrelation of the pentad members like "the five fingers. Each is distinct, yet all merge in the hand" (Burke, "Study" 13-4). David S. Birdsell explains Burke's analogy through referring to Bernard Brock's article, "Rhetorical Criticism: A Burkean Approach" in *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth Century Perspective** and by extending Brock's analysis with thoughts of his own:

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*To read more, see Bernard Brock, "Rhetorical Criticism: A Burkean Approach," in *Methods of Rhetorical Criticism: A Twentieth Century Perspective,* ed. Robert L. Scott and Bernard L. Brock (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) and Bernard Brock, "Politically Speaking: A Berkeian Approach,"

Bernard Brock's references to this analogy emphasize the principle of movement from finger to finger (whether leaping from digit to digit or moving through the palm) and the critical unity of charting the travel. Another aspect of the analogy deserves equal emphasis: In any given text the terms might be located close to the fingertips, but just as easily might be at some intermediate, liminal point between finger and palm. Determining the precise point at which a distinct motive principle emerges is a judgment not always susceptible to the same application. In other words, deciding where the purview of one term ends and another begins is a critical question that cannot be answered from within the pentad itself, but must be determined by an exterior sensibility balancing the ratios between the terms (Birdsell 277).

To better understand the interrelation of the pentad members, we can place them in a narrative. For example, a Conestoga wagon is traveling across the prairie when a

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in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke,* ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 444-55.

storm hits. The following is one way to ascribe the pentad members:

Act--wagon traveling across the prairie

Scene--prairie where a storm is beginning to rage

Agent--pioneers

Agency--wagon

Purpose--to move to California

The pentad members interact with each other to create ratios. For example, act:scene; scene:agent, agent:agency, and so forth. The more important element in the ratio is listed first. In this case, we may say that the primary pentad member is act. We see the wagon traveling. Secondary to the act is scene. The scene is an ominous backdrop to the act. The motive of the writer may be to show the hardiness of the pioneers who traveled to California in the 1800s.

David S. Birdsell explains the importance of the main ratio:

> The notion of a single term or ratio can provide a basis for a consistent interpretation of pentadic ambiguity within a single text and establish a grammar that the critic can use to guide the analysis of that text. A great deal of the pentad's explanatory power

> rests upon the assumption that the terms in fact are ambiguous, that there is no consistent rule for applying the terms across situations, and that there is not necessarily a single "correct" rule for applying the terms in any particular situation. [. . .] [T]he pentad itself does not reveal substance so much as it provides a schema for directing the critic's attention to the points of transformation in the narrative. The critic then is responsible for the fresh interpretation of the text (Birdsell 273).

In our story of the Conestoga wagon, we have set out an ordinary plot. But Burke's theory is formulated to give maximum flexibility to the system. Notice what happens if we change the order of the elements we have just set up. If we ascribe scene to the wagon and act to the storm we change our motive. The scene becomes the fragile wagon in which the pioneers huddle. The act becomes the storm raging against the scene. How does this new ratio change our story? The storm now takes center stage. This changes all the pentad elements. Perhaps the writer's motive now is to show the dangers of prairie storms during the pioneer era.

Ratios and Motives

The pentad members reveal the answer to: What is the motive? Therefore, the pentad terms can be used as a generating principle. They can pare away the fluff and reveal the core of the motive and the interplay of elements in the persuasion. How the pentad members interact with each other is just as important as what they stand for. How the pentad members are placed within the argument goes to the effect of its persuasion.

To further explain the relationship between the pentad members, the ratio may be explained as the container/contained. For example, in our story of the Conestoga wagon traveling across the prairie, the scene contains the act. Therefore, the act must be consistent with the scene. To give a ludicrous example, if the wagon had pontoon floats rather than wheels, it would not fit into the scene. In this way, defining the use of the pentad members within a work can help reveal discrepancies between them. In applying the pentad, the writer can determine the "whatness" of her motive to achieve identification and consubstantiation. The pentad, then, becomes a device the writer can use to uncover the substance or the correct naming of her point. The pentad serves as a map that leads

the way to the motive. An accurate naming of the pentad elements and their interaction will ultimately bring out the motive--whether it is the one the writer planned for or not. Just as the scene, act, agent, agency, and purpose work together on stage to create an effective drama, the pentad members will cooperate to create an effective piece of writing. This is what Burke means by dramatism.

Joseph J. Comprone and James S. Mullican suggest using Burke's theories to analyze literature. Comprone applies the pentad as a pedagogical approach to interpreting Robert Frost's poem, "Mending Wall." Using a reader-response criticism, he develops questions a student can apply to any literary work. He writes:

> The strategy will help students participate in a work's dramatic context, will help them discover meaning as they read, and will assure that their critical essays are based on an appreciation of the internal structure of a literary work (Comprone 5).

Mullican, on the other hand, applies Burke's "terminology for discussing the vision and a technique of 'indexing,' whereby elements of a literary work may be delineated and help up for a clear view, revealing ideas and attitudes along with their patterns and emphases" (Mullican 42).

Irene L. Clark and Charles W. Kneupper advocate using Burke's theories as a pedagogical method for student composition in which they give strategies for the prewriting stage. Clark suggests using the five members of the pentad as questions to explore a topic. She provides questions for each pentad member (Clark 66). Knuepper's method is "to isolate components of the [pentad] theory which may serve as a generative inventional heuristic" (Kneupper 130).

Phillip M. Keith and Virginia Allen go beyond invention to using Burke's theory as a way to examine motive in student writing. Keith writes:

> The pentad evolved as a dialectical device for "rounding" one's perspective, for preventing one from limiting himself to the partialness of a single perspective (Keith 137).

Although he discusses the promise of employing the pentad in the classroom, he doesn't provide specific strategies. Allen, on the other hand, gives a little more detail on her methodology. She explains:

> Those writers of composition texts who ignore the ratios, and use only the term of the pentad as an inventional strategy, do not recognize that the

purpose of the pentad is to explore human motivation (Allen 19).

Although she suggests using the pentad for rewriting, she doesn't give more than a scant methodology for applying Burke's theory in the classroom.

It is true that the pentad as a device can help analyze a piece of literature. When using the pentadic ratios, the critic will be able to better see the bias and prejudice in the writing. The pentad grounds the writing in the motive by showing how all the components relate to each other. Rather than isolate just the motive as other rhetorical theories tend to do, the pentad ratios bring out what already exists in the composition and show the flaws and strength contained in the writing.

Burke's pentad theory can also function effectively as a scaffolding device for the rewriting process. Keith writes:

> Burke is offering a system, and not just one system but many systems, for controlling and developing the strategies of stance and reference that are the ground of rhetoric. [. . .] Burke gives us a way of seeing the rewriting process as a kind of dialectic in which the writer is not merely polishing

what he has said, but exploring more fully what he can say (Keith 137).

Charles Kneupper further explains:

> If one seeks to apply Dramatistic theory to provide guidance for discourse production, then a central concern will be to isolate components of the theory (Kneupper 130).

Burke's pentad theory is an excellent tool for going beyond literature analysis to actually applying it as a strategy for revising. The method I propose steps over the parameters of Keith's and Allen's suggestions to being a specific tool that students can learn in a step-by-step examination of motive and their texts.

To apply the pentad theory to rewriting, the writer first must identify the pentad components as used in the piece of writing. What are the aspects of act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose? This strategy can be applied to any type of writing: play, poem, essay, letter, or to almost any expression such as a song, architectural plans, or even running a household. Once the members have been identified, then the writer can look at how one or more of the members dominate the others. How do the lesser members relate to the more important ones? Out of the twenty

possible ratios, which one best explains what is going on in the writing?

The next chapter will illustrate how this theory works in a short story, a written speech, and a poem. The examples will show how the pentad ratios become a dialectical device that may enable students to become more aware of the motives when they become critics of their own first drafts and consequently allows them to make deeper changes in their second drafts.

Because the purpose of Burke's theory is to "explore human motivation" (Allen 10), the pentad is more than an invention strategy, but a way to see the bones and muscles of the writing. The pentad theory, as I applied it in the classroom, helps inexperienced writers re-examine their motives, and even more, to resee their text through how the ratio functions throughout their first draft.

Thus, ratios are critical in analyzing motive. They provide a platform from which to examine what is written and then to determine how to change what has been written. If the ratio seems wrong, then the motive is not being communicated. For example, if a writer argues that nature determines what humans will do, then humans cannot supersede nature in the ratio. The dominance of humans may

result in act serving as the dominant pentad member, i.e. an act:scene ratio, where act is human's ability to change his environment. This would be an inaccurate relationship since the act of man cannot supersede his environment or nature. The inappropriate ratio in the writing gives man a higher role and greater preeminence than nature has. Therefore, the motive will not be identified correctly by the reader. Once the writer sees this mis-focus through applying the ratio, she then must revise to make scene the greatest ratio factor.

The ratio, when appropriately used, gives the writer's view of reality, leading to persuasion and identification. On the other hand, an inappropriate ratio brings out how the writing stymies the intent of the writer and causes the writing to be superfluous. Michael Hassett writes:

> As writers for postmodern readers, we might benefit from attempting to mortify, to slay and sacrifice, those goads which would provoke us to close down rather than extend the conversations in which we become engaged. As teachers of writing in a postmodern world, we must attempt to find methodologies that will help our students understand the importance of and methods for mortifying their language (Hassett 472).

As teachers, we must help our students fold back the skin to expose the muscles and bones in their writing. We must prod them to examine the relationships of components to see if what they have said really reflects their motive.

To best show how flexible the pentad members are, the theory will be applied to expert pieces of writing that highlight both the simplicity and complexity of the pentad members and ratios. In the next chapter, Burke's theory of pentad ratios will be applied to three different pieces of writing: first, Dorothy Parker's short story, "The Big Blonde," second, to Robert Frost's poem, "Mending Wall"; and third, to former President Ronald Reagan's speech, "From Lebanon to Granada."

CHAPTER THREE

THREE EXAMPLES OF THE RATIO THEORY

What experienced writers do so expertly is to help their readers identify with their motive, persuading the reader to take up the "cause." In achieving this identification, experienced writers unconsciously use the pentad ratio in a way that emphasizes their motive to the reader and enables the reader to connect or concur with their motive.

Therefore, we can look at some well-crafted compositions of various kinds to highlight the expert use of Burke's pentad ratio theory. Dorothy Parker, Robert Frost, and the speechwriters for Ronald Reagan can all be classified as experienced writers. One way of determining this fact is by showing how intricately and well they use the pentad members to persuade—even though they may never have heard of Burke's theories.

In professional-level writing, many times a reader can find more than one level of meaning and therefore more than one pentad ratio in a work. As with many professional compositions--whether fiction or nonfiction--different

readers will identify with different motives. Birdsell explains:

> Different pentadic formulations may be possible within a single text, each contributing to the ultimate interpretation of the text in a different but equally valuable way. This means that the critic who would make fullest use of the pentad must experiment with the ratios between the terms in order to find the most consistent or the most illuminating explanation for a given text or event. Usually, this process will isolate one term, or one ratio, as the synecdochic key to persuasion in the whole of the item under study. Merely identifying the term does not complete an act of criticism, but knowing what the term is will help the critic to make consistent conclusions, perhaps based on other factors (Birdsell 277-8).

The following pentad ratio theories are not presented as "final" because many professional pieces support more than one level of meaning. This is especially true in complex writing such as poetry. Therefore, the pentad ratio theory, as applied to the following short story, poem, and speech, could be altered depending on the reader's or critic's response. For the purposes of this exercise,

however, I will give my interpretations, while realizing that different readings of a composition may provide different ratios.

In this study, the intent regarding each of the pieces--short story, poem, and speech--is not to do a thorough literary criticism or an in-depth explanation of each, but to illustrate the use of the pentad theory. Therefore, each of the different applications of the theory will be explained only to the extent that a foundation for using the theory in the classroom can be shown.

To show how the pentad ratio theory works within these expert pieces of work, I will use three steps. The first is to determine one of the motives in the writing. The second step is to isolate the members of the pentad according to how they relate to the motive. Third, the two main pentad members will then be put into a ratio that fits the motive. The ratio will consequently highlight the pentad member that receives the most emphasis.

"The Big Blonde"

In Dorothy Parker's short story, we can see an unusual set of pentad ratios that bring out her motive. "The Big Blonde" takes place in the early 20th century when women's

liberation had yet to make a serious impact on the American social scene. The story shows the tragic effects of social pressure on women who have the misfortune to exist in a certain physical body type--that of a big blonde. These women are only valued for their physique, and as a result, they are forced to conform to society's stereotype of them.

To follow through on Burke's pentad theory for "The Big Blonde," we can set up the three steps in the following:

1. Determine Motive:

   Women of a certain physique are regarded as mere objects, and therefore suffer under social conditions in which they are only given a limited role to play, and that role is demeaning and devalued and under the control of men.

2. Isolate the pentad members:

   Scene--the body of Hazel Morse

   Act--the constant social pressures on Hazel to conform to society's view of her

   Agency--the social views confining Hazel to her role as the big blonde and encouraging her to drink to excess to dull her desire for change

Agent--Herbie and the other men who "take care" of Hazel; the wider social group around Hazel

Purpose--to keep Hazel confined in her position as the big blonde who satisfies others' desires

3. Find the Main Ratio:

Scene:act

This story highlights a fascinating use of scene. Rather than emphasizing a physical scene to which we are accustomed, such as a landscape or cityscape, Parker sets all the action against the backdrop or scene of Hazel's body. The first paragraph of the story sets up this emphasis:

> Hazel Morse was a large, fair woman of the type that incites some men when they use the word "blonde" to click their tongues and wag their heads roguishly. She prided herself upon her small feet and suffered for her vanity, boxing them in snub-toed, high-heeled slippers of the shortest bearable size. The curious things about her were her hands, strange terminations to the flabby white arms splattered with pale tan spots--long, quivering hands with deep convex nails. She should not have disfigured them with little jewels (Parker 362).

Other early references to her physique also show how important her body is to her function as a social being:

> She had been employed as a model in a wholesale dress establishment--it was still the day of the big woman, and she was then prettily colored and erect and high-breasted [. . .] Her ideas, or better, her acceptances, ran right along with those of the other substantially built blondes in whom she found her friends (Parker 362-3).

Additional references to the importance of her physical being are spattered throughout the story. For example, Herbie has Hazel's photo on his dresser. When he leaves, Hazel gives the photo to the next man who supports her. Also, as her physical appearance deteriorates, so does her life.

> She was nearing thirty now, and she did not take the years well. She spread and softened, and her darkening hair turned her to inexpert dabblings with peroxide. There were times when she had little flashes of fear about her job. And she had had a couple of thousand evenings of being a good sport among her male acquaintances. She had come to be more conscientious than spontaneous about it (Parker 363).

Many indignities were perpetrated against Hazel's body. She was abused physically by her husband. She was encouraged to drink so she could be happy all the time and not make social waves. She ages early, mostly because of the hard life she led.

Parker writes of the social plight of all the women who are built like Hazel:

> The women at Jimmy's looked remarkably alike, and this was curious, for through feuds, removals, and opportunities of more profitable contacts, the personnel changed constantly. They were all big women and stout, broad of shoulder and abundantly breasted, with faces thickly clothed in soft, high-colored flesh. They laughed loud and often, showing opaque and lusterless teeth like squares of crockery. There was about them the health of the big, yet a slight unwholesome suggestion of stubborn preservation. They might have been thirty-six or forty-five or anywhere between (Parker 374).

As Hazel's situation and her physical body further deteriorate, Parker symbolizes her plight by comparing her to the broken-down nags pulling the city vehicles:

She was tired so much of the time. Tired and blue. Almost everything could give her the blues. Those old horses she saw on Sixth Avenue--struggling and slipping along the car-tracks, or standing at the curb, their heads dropped level with their worn knees. The tightly stored tears would squeeze from her eyes as she teetered past on her aching feet in the stubby, champagne-colored slippers (Parker 377).

Finally, Hazel became so despondent with her lot in life that she plans a suicide attempt. Part of her melancholy once again was echoed in the scene she saw on the street:

As she slowly crossed Sixth Avenue, consciously dragging one foot past the other, a big, scarred horse pulling a rickety express-wagon crashed to his knees before her. The driver swore and screamed and lashed the beast insanely, bringing the whip back over his shoulder for every blow, while the horse struggled to get a footing on the slippery asphalt. A group gathered and watched with interest (Parker 380).

In this scene, we see the results of the social injustice committed against Hazel and how her body is reflected in the body of this broken-down, abused horse.

The man is whipping the horse while the interested crowd looks on. This is exactly the point being made about Hazel. Her "man friends" have driven her, taken her health and her happiness, and left her a broken-down shell of a woman who has little more than a beast of burden while the social crowd looks on without a bit of compassion.

In the end, Hazel attempts suicide, her own last act against her own body. She has now come to the point to where she has joined the crowd in devaluing her physical appearance, and therefore devaluing her entire existence.

She looks at herself in the mirror as she takes the pills. Again, her body is the main image.

Her last act is futile. She can't even kill herself. But her physical deterioration goes on. In the end, she is even more despondent:

> She saw a long parade of weary horses and shivering beggars and all beaten, driven, stumbling things. Her feet throbbed as if she had crammed them into the stubby champagne-colored slippers. Her heart seemed to swell and harden (Parker 386).

With another drink, she says to her maid, "Here's mud in your eye," a final epithet to the value she has in society.

Throughout the entire story, Hazel's body is acted upon. The men in her life use her as their companion, then desert her when she no longer suits them. They give her no intimacy or commitment--only financial rewards as long as she pleases them. She is just a body to them.

In a similar way, her circle of friends--both male and female--expect her to be happy and never shed a tear in their presence. She only has one role to play--that of the big blonde who satisfies their social fun. If she doesn't fulfill her role, they either shame her into fulfilling it or shun her. No one has compassion when she has given all her body has to give and needs someone to help her in return.

Parker achieves her motive by playing all the acts of the story against the scene of Hazel's body. None of the other more traditional scenery plays an important role. Each place is merely transitional, easily abandoned. The entire story revolves around the state of Hazel's body.

The act then becomes secondary in the story. The scene is constantly bombarded by society's expectations and use of Hazel's physical existence. Scene:act ratio then serves to highlight Dorothy Parker's motive in declaiming the use of women as mere physical objects.

"Mending Wall"

Robert Frost's poem, "Mending Wall," presents an entirely different dramatic stage on which to enact persuasion. In fact, like many well-written poems, "Mending Wall" can support several different levels of meaning, thereby offering several different ways of ascribing the pentad members.

Most inexperienced writers do not have the ability to create multiple levels of meaning in a composition. Experienced writers, however, particularly poets, thrive on weaving many related themes into their work. They had developed skills that allow them to do so.

"Mending Wall" is an illustration of how Burke's pentad theory can work within such complexity. As discussed earlier, Comprone describes a method of helping students analyze literature by using the pentad ratios. While doing this, he highlights the many possible meanings that a reader can take from the poem:

> On the first level, for example, "Mending Wall" is a poem told by a New England farmer, addressed by implication to the reader who assumes interest in the life represented by the poem (the rituals and functions of farming in New England), and concerning

the particular activity of wall-mending. The interaction of dramatic components of speaker, subject, and audience are indeed complex on this level, but the reader of the poem can at least focus directly on dialogue, image, and action without worrying about ambiguities and ironies that evolve when focus is switched to the implied author's intent.

The second level of rhetorical interpretation is brought in once we consider what Robert Frost--pastoral and regional poet, master of dramatic irony--means to tell us through his rendering of the drama in this poem. Do we suppose an author who aligns himself with narrator, an enlightened spokesperson for progressive sharing of private property? Or do we search out a covert respect for the old stone savage, armed with fences against the "advances," the more communal thinking of the narrator? Does the assumed author find nature benign, neutral, or malevolent? Questions such as these could be asked of implied subject and readers as well (Comprone 6,7).

Although Frost's poem may have other possibilities for motive and dramatic action, three are given here. In each,

the motive is what determines the pentad member ascriptions.

When each of these dramatic motives are compared, the changes seen are a result of a different persuasive intent. The ratios change from one pentad member to another to reflect the changes in motive.

First Dramatic Motive

1. Motive:

   Man must struggle against nature to be able to exist within order.

2. Pentad members:

   Scene: chaotic world

   Act: mending the wall

   Agents: narrator and neighbor

   Agency: stones

   Purpose: to rebuild the gaps in the wall and re-establish order

3. Main ratio:

   Agents:purpose

If the motive is to successfully struggle against nature, as in the first dramatic motive, then the agents (narrator and neighbor) must be preeminent. They are the ones who must struggle. The secondary member, purpose, is

what the agents set out to do--repair a wall and re-establish human order.

In the first lines, Frost sets up the purpose, the struggle:

> Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
> That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
> And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
> And make gaps even two can pass abreast (Frost 1085).

Nature is tearing down the wall. But the neighbor is at work building up what nature has torn down.

> I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
> And on a day we meet to walk the line
> And set the wall between us once again (Frost 1085).

So on they work, building up the wall that nature has torn down.

> [. . .] I see him there
> Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
> In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed (Frost 1086).

Second Dramatic Motive

1. Motive:

   No matter how hard humans work against it, nature will always tear down human order to re-establish natural order.

2. Pentad members

   Scene: chaotic world

   Act: tearing down walls

   Agent: nature

   Agency: freezing ground swells, hunters, natural forces

   Purpose: to set nature back to its original order

3. Main ratio:

   Agent:act

The second dramatic meaning has an even richer depth of imagery in the poem. The motive changes the emphasis of the poem from the one portrayed in the first dramatic meaning: No matter how hard humans work against it, nature will always tear down human order to re-establish natural order. The ratio is agent:act (nature:tearing down the wall).

Frost writes about how hard it is for humans to keep a "civilized" act (opposite a natural phenomenon) in place, in this case setting stones to complete the wall.

We have to use a spell to make them balance:

"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"

We wear our fingers rough with handling them.

Oh, just another kind of outdoor game.

One on a side. It comes to little more: (Frost 1085).

In another section of the poem, Frost repeats:

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,

That wants it down (Frost 1085).

That "something" of course is nature. And that agent is constantly tearing down the wall, whether the humans are watching or not.

Third Dramatic Motive

1. Motive:

   Walls erected between people may actually bring them together.

2. Pentad members:

   Scene: pastoral surroundings

   Act: mending a wall together

   Agents: narrator and neighbor

   Agent: stones

Purpose: setting boundaries between orchards to bring neighbors together

3. Main ratio:

Act:purpose

A third possible motive is that walls erected between people may actually bring them together. The ratio is act:purpose (mending a wall:brings neighbors together). The narrator's neighbor keeps repeating the old phrase, "Good fences make good neighbors." But the narrator doesn't seem to agree with that proverb.

> There where it is we do not need the wall:
> He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
> My apple trees will never get across
> And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him (Frost 1085-6).

And although they "keep the wall between us as we go," they didn't have any contact before the wall began falling and they needed to repair it. Repairing the wall is what brings them together.

> I let my neighbor know beyond the hill:
> And on a day we meet to walk the line (Frost 1085).

The narrator's desire is to tear down the wall between the two neighbors even while building it up, not the physical wall, but the wall that prevents communication and camaraderie.

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense" (Frost 1085).

Comprone suggests employing a set of directions, responses-questions, and writing exercises using the pentad ratios to help students analyze and write about Frost's poem. He believes this will help them see the poem in a new way. In a similar way, students can use the pentad ratio theory to view their own writing, even their own poetry, to help them analyze what they are doing in their poetry and whether it works to accomplish their motive.

"Lebanon and Granada: The Use of U.S. Ground Forces"

Another interesting application for the pentad theory is in the speech former President Ronald Reagan made on

October 27, 1983. The speech was a response to two events that happened on the world stage: 1.) the bombing of the American Marine compound in Beirut, Lebanon, on October 23, which killed more than two hundred American soldiers, and 2) the attack on Grenada only hours later when American troops invaded the Caribbean island and captured it from Cuban infiltrators.

Reagan's speech was a nationally televised foreign policy address in which he made a statement on both these events. The way he frames each event and then ties them together helps the listener identify with his motive and identify with his purpose.

Rather than giving the three steps of the pentad theory in the same way they were presented in "The Big Blonde" and "Mending Wall," the theory must be split into two separate parts within the speech, then united in the conclusion. The pentad ratios may be isolated as follows:

Motive for the entire speech

Freedom must be preserved against its enemies.

Main ratio:

Act:agent

Act: defending freedom

Agent: America and its military

Lebanon section of the speech:

Pentad members:

Act: defending freedom

Scene: the bombing site in Lebanon

Agent: hostile forces

Agency: bombs and nefarious actions

Purpose: America (and multinational forces) must defend freedom from those who desire to destroy it

Main ratio:

Scene:act

Grenada section of the speech

Pentad members:

Act: defending freedom

Scene: the island of Grenada

Agents: American military

Agency: America's rescue efforts on Grenada

Purpose: Americans must defend the island from communist domination

Main ratio:

Agent:act

To understand how deftly Reagan's speechwriters wield the pentad members, the speech must first be examined in its parts. Then the coordination between the pentad members strengthen the overall pentad ratio and help achieve consubstantiation.

Reagan opens the speech by giving a detailed description of the scene in Lebanon:

> In Lebanon we have some 1,600 marines, part of a multinational force that's trying to help the people of Lebanon restore order and stability to that troubled land. Our marines are assigned to the south of the city of Beirut near the only airport operating in Lebanon. Just a mile or so to the north is the Italian contingent and not far from them the French and a company of British soldiers (Reagan 66).

In this way, Reagan sets up scene as the main pentad member. He avoids putting too much emphasis on any person or group who perpetrated the act. This is because Reagan wanted to de-emphasize the fact that a small group or perhaps even one or two people could wreak that much havoc on a powerful nation such as the United States. If Reagan had concentrated his focus on the bombers, the United

States may have looked as if it were incapable of dealing with splinter groups or terrorists.

Birdsell describes why Reagan selected scene as such an important element:

> While American troops and their enemies are assigned clear positions to locate them in their physical environment, neither group's specific activities, routine procedures, or personal traits are as important as the simple fact of their bodily presence in the scene. The situation itself exerts principal control over the people encompassed in it (Birdsell 267).

In making scene so important, Reagan can then use the scene to explain the reasons for the American presence in Lebanon. He lists maintaining peace in the Middle East, assuring the welfare of the Israeli nation, and stabilizing Lebanon. The presence of U.S. troops in Lebanon (on the scene) ensures that America can pursue these goals. Reagan says of the bombing,

> The obvious purpose behind the sniping and now this attack was to weaken American will and force the withdrawal of U.S. and French forces from Lebanon (Reagan 67).

With this, Reagan has now broadened his argument from the local problem of a terrorist attack to the strategy of the actions of America's worldwide enemies in trying to force the troops to leave the scene. This little spot of land is what is keeping the whole world at peace! As Reagan says:

> Beyond our progress in Lebanon let us remember that our main goal and purpose is to achieve a broader peace in all of the Middle East. The factions and bitterness that we see in Lebanon are just a microcosm of the difficulties that are spread across much of that region (Reagan 68).

Not one Marine is named nor are the terrorists described. These details would limit Reagan's ability to argue his purpose: American forces must defend freedom from those who are trying to destroy it.

Reagan has another reason for locating his argument in scene. If he had located it in the agent, i.e., the terrorists, he wouldn't be able to pull into his speech the nefarious actions of a greater agent, communism. He is fighting a cold war against Russia, yet there is no clear evidence that the terrorists were sent to Lebanon by Russian communists. By arguing that the scene is vital to

maintaining the fight for freedom, Reagan can expand the agent from a single terrorist group to all who would oppose freedom as America sees it. He draws the conclusion that American is acting to defend freedom from communism by occupying this little piece of land in Lebanon. The scene is central to the success of the act.

By emphasizing multinational forces rather than just American troops, Reagan is able to expand the stage for the battle to the whole world, rather than restrict it to one tragic incident with American soldiers. Reagan treats these troops as part of the scene, not as an agent in themselves. They do not act, but are acted upon. Therefore, because they are not actively engaged in fighting, they do not really suffer defeat.

Then Reagan goes on in his speech to address the attack on Grenada. At this point, he shifts his emphasis on scene to focusing on agent. Why does he do this?

Whereas in Lebanon, Reagan could describe the scene by showing how the defenseless Marines (a part of the scene) were attacked by communists (the agents), in Grenada he cannot emphasize scene because the island is so small. Grenada is just "twice the size of the District of Columbia with a total population of about 110,000 people" (Reagan

68). If Reagan had emphasized the scene at this point, he would have shown the huge giant, America, invading a tiny island, Grenada. Wouldn't America's invasion seem like the act of a bully? Instead, Reagan focuses on the agent--communism.

> Grenada, we are told, was a friendly island paradise for tourism. But it wasn't. It was a Soviet-Cuban colony being readied as a major military bastion to export terror and undermine democracy. We got there just in time (Reagan 69).

Reagan explains his actions:

> Last weekend I was awakened in the early morning hours and told that six members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States joined by Jamaica and Barbados had sent an urgent request that we join them in a military operation to restore order and democracy to Grenada.
>
> They were proposing this action under the terms of a treaty, a mutual assistance pact that existed among them. These small and peaceful nations needed our help. Three of them don't have armies at all and the others have very limited forces.

> The legitimacy of their request, plus my own concern for our citizens, dictated my decision. I believe our Government has a responsibility to go to the aid of its citizens if their right to life and liberty is threatened. The nightmare of our hostages in Iran must never be repeated (Reagan 69).

So once again, America is defending freedom against the evils of communism across the globe. How could the world afford another Soviet-Cuban colony, especially this close to American shores? Birdsell says:

> So the behemoth giant of the American Armed forces descended on an island of 110,000 people and won the battle. "Grenada becomes the target of invasion not because of what it has or has not done, but because of what it is [. . .] As Grenada is condemned for its chosen association with communists, so it is redeemed by the imposed American action. In other words, the agent successfully co-opts the scene" (Birdsell 271).

Reagan's purpose in shifting the speech's ratio from scene:act to agent:act is so he can avoid the pitfall of showing how lopsided the sides of the conflict really are

and emphasize a more global enemy, Soviet and Cuban communism.

The common theme throughout the speech is the importance of the act. Reagan emphasizes near the end of the speech:

> Sam Rayburn once said that freedom is not something a nation can work for once and win forever. He said it's like an insurance policy; its premiums must be kept up to date. In order to keep it we have to keep working for it and sacrificing for it just as long as we live. If we do not, our children may not know the pleasure of working to keep it for it may not be theirs to keep (Reagan 69).

In the last few paragraphs of the speech, Reagan brings together the act in Lebanon and the attack in Grenada by focusing on the soldiers who sacrificed their all in both places:

> That marine, and all those others like him living and dead, have been faithful to their ideals. They've given willingly of themselves so that a nearly defenseless people in a region of great strategic importance to the free world will have a chance someday to live lives free of murder and mayhem and

terrorism. I think that young marine and all of his comrades have given every one of us something to live up to.

They were not afraid to stand up for their country or no matter how difficult and slow the journey might be, to give to others that last best hope of a better future.

We cannot and will not dishonor them now and the sacrifices they made by failing to remain as faithful to the cause of freedom and the pursuit of peace as they have been (Reagan 69).

In other words, the fight against those who would take our freedom away--the communists--will prevail as America acts to defend freedom.

With these words, Reagan welds his act in the Lebanon portion of the speech with the Grenada act to make both part of a global act to keep freedom alive. And how is America to defend freedom? By defeating its enemy--communism. Birdsell explains:

By constructing a global context for anti-Americanism, evident in scene and rooted in a malign agent/agency, the speech provides the broadest possible set of terms against which to consider

American action. Situation by situation, such action may appear unbalanced; taken as a whole, however, U.S. action is appropriate and necessary. Without it, there would be no America at all (Birdsell 273).

Essentially, Reagan contrasts what the Soviet Union is (an enemy of freedom) with what America does (defends freedom). The scene in Lebanon is America's stand for freedom. The act in Grenada is America's fight for freedom. The terrorism in Lebanon is communism's state of denying life to the free and the danger in Grenada is communism's animosity toward the free people of the island.

But just noting the importance of scene and act in the first part of the speech and the agent and the act in the second part of the speech is not enough. As Burke says, it's the ambiguity of the terms and the pentad members that create the motive in the scene. In other words, it's the ratio, or the movement of emphasis that brings the reader to a conclusion that corresponds to the writer's motive. Without consciously or unconsciously putting the elements into a ratio, the writer (and the reader in some senses) cannot build consubstantiation. But Reagan achieves this very well in this speech. He moves from scene to agent to prove that the act is vital to American interests. The

ratio then provides a method of directing the reader's focus on the transformation occurring within the composition.

It is highlighting this transformation of pentad members on points of ambiguity that can help writers resee their own writing. Establishing the ratio helps them find the movement within the writing. The ratio also helps the writer determine if the writing is located within the motive or if it strays from the central idea.

In the next chapter, the three-pronged method of the pentad theory highlighted in the three selections in this chapter will be applied to classroom situations. Will students be able to isolate the pentad members in their own essays, determine a ratio, and apply the ratio to their motives? Once again, we will see that Burke's theory has the rhetorical ability to bring a solution to a problem—giving students the needed skills to revise their own texts.

CHAPTER FOUR

CLASSROOM STRATEGY AND THE RATIO THEORY

Burke's theory of the five pentad members working in a ratio to determine the motive in a composition can aid students who have few revision skills. In "Rhetoric and Composition," Andrea Lundsford explains the theory's value:

> Kenneth Burke offers perhaps the most highly complex, elegant theory of language persuasion and motivation, based on his concepts of absence, negativity, identification, and consubstantiality (Lundsford, *Rhetoric* 81).

The pentad's complexity and flexibility allows writers to use Burke's theory in any writing situation and can help students gain insights into their own composing processes.

By using Burke's theories, the composition instructor can challenge students to examine their own writing processes through using a method that is teachable and transferable to the student's own writing process. Kate Ronald and Jon Volkmer, in their study of the student's writing process in Kate Ronald's classroom, write:

> Part of Kate's pedagogy is based on self-consciousness, the idea that if one knows what one is doing, one is bound to do it better, to have more control over the process. Throughout the semester, Kate followed Ann Bertoff's theory that "we teach our students *how* to form by showing them *that* they form" (Ronald and Volkmer 84).

Just as these two authors realized that meta-knowledge is essential to give students an understanding of how they write, the pentad theory enables students to view their own writing process.

Pentad Ratios and Revision

Burke's pentad ratios can help writers find their voice through learning to resee their work. Murray explains:

> I think voice, the way in which writers hear what they have to say, hear their point of view towards the subject, their authority, their distance from the subject, is an extremely significant form of internal revision (Murray 94).

The pentad theory works in several ways. As students search their own work to find each of the pentad members,

they begin to discover their own relationship to their writing. The ratios can help them see their point of view more accurately and their own relationship to the subject. This discovery process can inspire them to use their words more effectively to achieve persuasion and identification with the reader.

The pentad ratios can accomplish much to move these students from immature revision strategies to more mature ones. First, by helping students focus on content relationships, Burke's theory will help students break the cycle of the "what's next" strategy. As students grasp the structural flaws of their own work during revision, they will feel more confident about leaving revision to a later stage in the writing process on the next composition and will therefore avoid premature editing.

Students will also have a tool they can apply when they find themselves in the grip of writer's block. They will be able to go back into their work at that point and examine the "bones" and "muscles" issues that will help them remove themselves from the immediate problem that is causing the block. They then can work forward until they can approach the block from a different angle and possibly

free themselves from whatever is keeping them from moving onward in their composition.

By finding a ratio in their work, students will be better able to persuade, to see where their composition is going, the movement it is making to identify with the reader. This movement will highlight the areas of ambiguity within the composition. If the pentad members, as understood by the student, and the ratio that is consequently determined, do not match up with the thesis statement, errors in the areas of ambiguity may be present. For example, if the student is writing about nature as a most-powerful force, but the ratio only pinpoints areas of man's activity within nature, the composition has missed its main area of ambiguity--the tension between nature and man and how nature is the dominant factor. Instead, the composition may have gone down a well-worn path of man's fight against nature rather than nature's victory over man's attempts to overcome. By using the pentad ratios to uncover flaws in the writing, the student then will be able to return to the area of ambiguity outlined in the thesis statement. The motivation will be established for the reader.

Pentad Ratios and Mature Revision Strategies

Burke's theory can also help immature writers practice mature revision strategies. By using the pentad elements and ratios during revision, students will be expanding the time they spend on planning. They will also be spending more time on revising content rather than just grammar. As they work through revision, they will have some criteria by which they can evaluate the effectiveness of their writing. Because these writers are able not only to break some of their immature writing strategies and embrace some mature writing strategies, they will be moving further along the zone of proximal development from the actual development level and onto the potential development level (Vygotsky 86).

This then brings us to Burke's theory as an instructional scaffold. Langer and Applebee explain:

> To be instructional, tasks must be appropriate to the skills the students bring to them; they should help students learn to use skills or strategies they cannot yet manage, but are almost ready to undertake on their own--tasks that are within what Vygotsky

(1962, 1978) has called the students' "zone of proximal development" (Langer and Applebee 179).

To evaluate the strategy, Langer and Applebee ask the following questions for the scaffolding employed for student composition:

1. Does the task permit students to develop their own meanings rather than simply following the dictates of the teacher or text? Do they have room to take ownership for what they are doing?
2. Is the task sufficiently difficult to permit new learnings to occur, but not so difficult as to preclude new learnings?
3. Is the instructional support structured in a manner that models appropriate approaches to the task and leads to a natural sequence of thought and language?
4. Is the teacher's role collaborative rather than evaluative?
5. Is the external scaffolding removed as the student internalizes the patterns and approaches needed? (Langer and Applebee 181-2).

The answers to their questions are as follows:

1. Burke's theory specifically helps students examine what they are saying, aids them in cutting to the heart of the meaning they have composed, not as they intended but perhaps missed the mark. The pentad ratio allows students to manipulate their

own text in response to what they find out and therefore to take ownership in what they write.

2. Burke's theory challenges writers at all levels of skill to examine the content of their own writing, therefore allowing writers to work at their own levels. At the same time, the pentad ratio theory can inspire writers to make new meaning with their text as they revise their work to fit motive and ratio into one cohesive whole.
3. The ratios are so flexible that they work with the students' tasks rather than forcing the students into a format that limits or changes the sequence of thought and language. Because the ratios arise from the text rather than the text being fit into the structure, the ratios do not superimpose themselves onto the text but rather reflect what is in the text. In this reflection, the ratios become a part of the natural sequence of re-seeing a work rather than an unnatural appendage that constricts the writing process.
4. Because the student uses the ratios to examine her own work, the teacher performs the role of a collaborator who looks over the shoulder of the

student rather than as an evaluator who suggests changes. The teacher helps the student apply the strategy and the student has the joy of discovering her own ability to change her own text.

5. The Burkean pentad theory is easy to remove as a scaffold as the student is better able to revise. As she begins to plan better, understand the function of "bones" and "muscles" in a composition, she will be able to internalize Burke's insights without necessarily going back to methodically outline each pentad element and ratio. The writer will be able to put her motives and pentad elements "on dramatic stage" with ease. Yet if she runs into a revision problem that she cannot manage, she can still go back and use the theory in a more methodical manner.

Applying the Theory in the Classroom

The goal in the Burke assignment given to the students was to help them raise their self-consciousness about what they actually did during their writing process (forming) and what they are planning to change (re-forming). The "how" was by assigning pentad definitions and a ratio, and

the "that" was to give them confidence that they could do more than surface revision.

As the students examined their first drafts, looked at their thesis statements, and applied the pentad theory, they became more aware of the motivation they created and compared it to the identification they desired. Sometimes the motive they discovered in their own work was what they intended, and sometimes it was not. Other times, they realized that parts of their papers strayed from or misemphasized their thesis.

The act of naming their pentad elements helped the students look at their thesis statements with new eyes. They started to analyze the interplay of thoughts and arguments within their writing. They were better able to recognize paragraphs that went off topic or weren't related to their ratio.

Theoretically, the pentad theory helped students find three different reasons to revise.

1. Sometimes the ratio in the thesis statement worked as the student desired. If the student came to the conclusion that her thesis statement reflected the desired ratio, the student then could go on to examine her composition to see how it fit in with

the ratio. This examination allowed for deeper revision in the body of the paper.

2. If the student realized that the thesis did not contain the appropriate ratio, then she could rework the thesis until it fit the desired ratio.

   At that point, the student had one of two pathways to take. If the rest of the composition adequately reflected the new thesis, the student could make light revisions. (This may sometimes occur when a student writes a weak thesis statement but has enough control of her topic to write the rest of the composition as she intended in the first draft. In these cases, the introduction of the paper misleads the reader about the real purpose of the composition and has to be revised to fit the real motive.)

3. If, however, the composition reflected the old thesis, the student then could rework the composition to fit the new thesis statement. The new ratio served as a guideline for this revision.

How, then, does an instructor practically use the pentad ratio strategy in the classroom? In doing so, she

can utilize the same three steps given in the previous chapter.

1. Determine motive.

2. Assign meanings to pentad members.

3. Find the main pentad ratio.

I will show how I applied the pentad theory in classrooms of English 1A (freshman composition) and Basic English on the Fort Irwin campus of Barstow Community College in California. These students, military personnel or their spouses, came all over the country, from foreign nations, and had varied backgrounds. Some students were using English as a second language. One class was assigned a compare/contrast essay and the other a persuasive essay.*

The Classroom Strategy

Since the pentad ratio strategy involves revision, not creation or invention, the students were first assigned an

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*One note about Step 1: Determine the motive. One of the most crucial elements of a freshman English course is to teach writers how to develop a thesis statement in the course of writing an essay. For an essay, the thesis statement functions as the motive. So Step 1 fits neatly into the course objective of helping students learn how to formulate a concise and focused thesis statement.

essay and asked to bring in a first draft. This is the paper they were instructed to revise.

Once the first draft was complete, I briefly introduced who Kenneth Burke was, explained his pentad ratio theory, defined the five members of the pentad, and talked about focus (motive) as related to the thesis statement. As part of this discussion, I introduced the idea of a writing scaffold. I explained that a scaffold's purpose is to be used during a learning stage of the writing process and taken down after its usefulness has ended. I emphasized that this is exactly the purpose of the pentad ratio strategy. It is not a framework to slavishly use each time a writer revises an essay, but it is a strategy applied to learn to write more effectively, then to keep in mind for times when a writer struggles with revisions. (This follows Vygotsky's zone of proximal development theory.) Once a writer becomes more comfortable and skilled in writing, the scaffold is no longer needed and can be ignored.

In the course of this explanation, I described Elbow and Belanoff's theory of the "bones," "muscles," and "skin"

in writing.* As a class, we discussed the importance of revising more than the grammatical elements of a composition and how hard it is to "resee" our own work. We also discussed how the grammatical revision of a paper should be the last part of the process, after the other two kinds of revision have been accomplished.

I gave some statistics on the differences between experienced and inexperienced writers and how thorough revision is one of the differences that puts an experienced writer in control of her own writing process. I explained that planning is one way to bring a less experienced writer to a higher skill level and that using a theory like Burke's for revising a composition necessarily involves more planning.

Classroom Discussion

Once the class understood the pentad theory and its application in writing, the students began examining their own work to see how the pentad ratios could be applied in their compositions. To show how this examination works, the class participated in using the first two steps listed

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*See Elbow and Belanoff, *A Community of Writers: A Workshop Course in Writing* (New York: Random House, 1989).

above. (Determine the motive and assign the pentad members.) To do so, a volunteer came up and wrote her thesis statement on the white board. She then explained her purpose for writing the paper. The oral explanation helped her and the class understand where she wanted her writing to take the reader, and the identification she wanted to accomplish.

For this first example, the class members all helped the volunteer (the first one was male) determine how the five pentad members should be defined to fit the way he described his topic. Because he had already explained his purpose for writing the essay to the class, these pentad members came from his explanations as well as from his thesis statement. (Not all the pentad members will necessarily be evident in a thesis statement.)

After assigning definitions to each of the pentad members, the writer began to put his ratio in focus. First, as a class, we all discussed which one of the pentad members seemed to be prominent. If the writer concurred with the class's comments, then he selected a second pentad member and gave the ratio as he saw it. At each step of the discussion, the class gave insights, but the writer had final say and sole authority over his work.

As more students came up and went through their already-written thesis statements, at times a writer would find that her thesis statement did not reflect the pentad ratio she had decided upon. At this point, the class helped the writer refine her thesis statement to reflect the intended ratio.

If the student's thesis clearly communicated what she was trying to persuade, the process of defining the pentad members and selecting the ratio helped the student see the relationship of ideas in her work. Therefore, the class discussion accomplished three purposes for the students: 1) helped them understand the theory more practically, 2) suggested possible revision changes where necessary, and 3) helped the writer resee her work.

This process of examination helped the students see beyond the words written on the board. They began to pick out what was important in the thesis statements and judge whether or not this fit the way the writer wanted to approach her topic. Many times, the writer "saw" a conflict between her intended motive and the motive evident in the writing. At that point, the student was better able to adjust the thesis statement to more correctly reflect what

she wanted to say. Other times, insights from the class helped the student revise the thesis statement.

The following are some examples of the thesis statements, the first and second pentad members, along with the ratio given in student papers.

Example 1*

English 50 Thesis: After comparing and contrasting these two stories ["A Rose for Emily" and "The Yellow Wallpaper"], I discovered, Control, solitude, and the relationships of the main Character in the two short stories lead to mental instability. (In the examples I am providing in the rest of this chapter, student errors are quoted exactly as they are written in the essays.)

Essay Ratio--Act:scene

Essay Act--The situations of their lives were controlled by others

Essay Scene--The environment they were placed in by their loved ones.

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*The following thesis statements are not necessarily the ones used as examples during the class discussion.

Example 2

English 50 thesis: The character in the stories A Rosie for Emily and The yellow Wall paper have an emotional escape from reality, through lack of control, imagination and seclusion.

Essay Ratio--Purpose:act

Essay Purpose--To show how everyone was acting toward the main character in the stories

Essay Act--The way in which the main character submitted to the purpose

Example 3

English 1A thesis: The decision to end one's own life should be available for that person, the one who is experiencing a life with immeasurable misery.

Esaay Ratio--Purpose:act

Essay Purpose--to end suffering

Essay Act--decision to end life

Example 4

English 1A thesis: I believe that Affirmative Action should not be overturned, because of the number of cases of discrimination within the workforce.

Essay Ratio--Purpose:agent

Essay Purpose--to continue with equal opportunity

Essay Agent--Affirmative Action

Example 5

English 1A thesis: Gay individuals are still American Citizens under the same political system as all of us and by denying them the right of same-sex marriage their constitutional rights are been denied.

Essay Ratio--Purpose:act

Essay Purpose--To inform how the constitution treats gay Americans as equals

Essay Act--To recognize same-sex marriages

Once a few volunteers wrote their thesis statements on the board and the class discussed the focus for all these elements, the assignment was given to the class to revise their essays. Students were instructed to change the "bones" and the "muscles" of their work. They were encouraged to do more than grammatical changes. Their grade would reflect how they were able to manipulate the "bones" and "muscles" or to explain how the essay fit the ratio they gave. It was explained to the students that the point of the assignment was to help them critically examine their own work, not to turn in a perfect grammatical draft.

The students were instructed to staple the first draft of their composition behind the revised draft when they turned in their assignment. Part of the grading process would be to look at the kinds of revisions made between drafts and the reasons for these changes.

Results of the Assignment

For this thesis, I examined 28 student papers. Six of these papers came from English 50 students and the rest from English 1A students.

Surprisingly, among the English 50 papers, only one student did not make any "muscles and bones" revisions. The other five attempted at least one or two changes that went beyond the grammatical. Of these five papers, two had significant changes to the thesis statement.

The 22 English 1A papers exhibited a variety of results. Two students did not complete the assignment as given because they missed the class period(s) in which the pentad theory was explained and the revision assigned. Three students fulfilled the ratio and pentad definition portion of the assignment but failed to attach the rough draft. (The assumption is made that the students did not complete the rough draft before the class period in which

the thesis statements were examined; therefore the students did not have a rough draft to turn in.) A lower grade was assigned because these students did not fulfill the requirement of revising their papers.

In four papers, students did not make any thesis changes or "muscles and bones" revisions. Their rough drafts were essentially the same as their revised drafts, except for grammatical changes.

Thirteen of the students made one or more substantive revisions.

Eight of the papers had no changes to the thesis statement from the rough draft to the revised draft. (This does not automatically signal a deficiency in the paper since a number of the students had written adequate thesis statements in their rough drafts.) Nine students revised their thesis statements to some degree.

Examples of Changes to Theses Statements

When students made changes to their thesis statements, usually the revisions were positive ones. For example, one student refocused his thesis after he examined the pentad elements. He began with this thesis statement:

I believe that Affirmative Action should not be overturned, the nation is not ready to do away with affirmative action.

He changed his thesis to:

I believe that Affirmative Action should not be overturned, because of the number of cases of discrimination within the workforce.

Therefore, his focus had changed from a vague description of the way the nation felt to an emphasis on discrimination in the workforce. This strengthened his thesis considerably. Since his paper gives numerous examples of discrimination against African Americans and women, his revised thesis more accurately foreshadowed his position. In his revised draft, he even added a new example of discrimination in Alabama where a federal court stopped the state from unfair practices in hiring state troopers. He also added a 1987 case of a federal court decision against the San Francisco Fire Department. These additions strengthened his paper and added to his focus on discrimination. However, he did not cover any material on how the nation is not ready to do away with affirmative action.

Another student sharpened his thesis statement. In an essay arguing against the Democratic Party's attempt to change the election through court battles in Florida, the student's first attempt at a thesis was: "This appears to be an unfair attempt to gain additional votes." In his second draft, he changed the thesis to read: "This is an unfair attempt by the Democrats to gain votes and must stop." The reason he changed his thesis statement was because he determined that his pentad ratio was agent:act. He had failed to mention the act (stopping the vote counting) in his first thesis statement, which is an integral part of his essay.

Another student completely changed her thesis. In her first draft, she wrote: "I believe the atrocity known as abortion should be outlawed except in special circumstances." Consequently, the writer determined that her ratio was act:purpose. She defined act as "getting an abortion." Purpose was "to outlaw abortions." Therefore, she changed her thesis to say: "My position on abortion is that it should not be allowed because it kills an innocent unborn child." She eliminated the "special circumstances" part of her thesis, which was an excellent revision since she didn't explain that concept in her paper. Her motive

was not to describe special circumstances but to convince the reader that abortions should be outlawed.

Another student was able to more clearly focus the concepts in his thesis statement. In the first draft, he wrote:

> Zero tolerance laws are necessary to reduce lives lost on, decrease public costs of, and give a greater peace of mind to the other drivers on our highways.

He amended his statement to read:

> Zero tolerance laws are necessary to reduce the loss of life, money, and security that are the results of DUI on our nation's highways.

Although his paper does reflect the structure of his thesis statement as he amended it, the essay structure is quite unbalanced. He spends one page describing loss of life and finances because of drunk drivers but then goes on for two more pages to discuss the ways to enforce zero tolerance laws. Under the guise of talking about "security," he intertwines arguments opponents make against zero tolerance laws, but his arguments don't relate directly to security. Therefore, his paper has some major structural flaws. But he did change the last phrase in this

thesis from "peace of mind" to "security" which better reflected what he wrote in his composition.

In a compare/contrast essay where an ESL student analyzed the stories "The Yellow Wallpaper" and "A Rose for Emily," she begins with this thesis statement: "The characters in both stories seemed to be confined, and mysterious." This statement was included as the first sentence in the second paragraph, out of place for a thesis statement in a short essay. In her revision, she moved her thesis to the end of the first paragraph and rewrote it this way: "Anti-social, mysterious, and mentally controlled sum up these two women to act insane, disconnected, and petrified of the people who controlled them." Her paper was deeply revised and followed the structure of her new thesis statement. Hers was one of the most improved papers. Although the student's paper still suffered from many ESL issues, the content was vastly improved as a result of her examination of her thesis statement, moving it, and revising it.

In one case, a student revised her thesis statement in a way that weakened it. In her first draft, she wrote: "Homosexual Americans have the right to have same-sex

marriage recognized according to our Constitution." This was a one-sentence paragraph at the beginning of her paper.

She revised her thesis statement by putting it at the end of the paragraph that followed the thesis statement in the first draft. This is her revised thesis statement: "Gay individuals are still American Citizens under the same political system as all of us and by denying them the right of same-sex marriage their constitutional right are been denied." She therefore muddied her focus, bringing in one of her arguments for giving gays the right of marriage into her thesis statement.

Her ratio, however, showed how she wanted to treat her thesis and her paper. She named purpose:act with purpose as "the Constitution treats gay Americans as equals" and act as "to recognize same-sex marriages." She was on the right track in strengthening her focus, but as what sometimes happens with inexperienced writers, her revision attempt was awkward. But her revision does show promise. She obviously realized that she hadn't given enough emphasis to the purpose in her original thesis statement so she tried to do just that. Her efforts in revision do show that she was examining her writing in a new way and recognizing some problems within her essay.

In her case, the thesis statement in the revised draft was weaker than the one in the rough draft, however, this was considered a good change because the student had attempted to revise. As inexperienced writers, successful revisions are not always accomplished easily or with each attempt. But the goal is to get students to revise, and as they work at revision, their skills will advance and far more often they will be able to improve as they revise.

However, this student's essay was not changed much. In the first draft as well as in the second, the main focus in her writing is on how the Constitution guarantees gays as many rights as other American citizens. Therefore, her attempt to change her thesis statement was a move in the right direction and reflected her original purpose to write about gay rights and marriage rather than on the intent of the U.S. Constitution regarding gay marriage.

One student who made a good change from the thesis statement in draft one to the revised draft was able to shorten what he was trying to say. He started out with this thesis:

> Although we consider eighteen year olds mature enough to register to vote, go away to college, and they must register with selective service and be

available for a possible draft, the government should keep the legal drinking age at eighteen.

This thesis contains many arguments stated in a rambling manner. This is the revision of his thesis statement: "The legal age to drink should remain at 21, because teenagers are not responsible enough to drink."

Along with his revision, he did delete some sentences at the end of his paper that did not relate to his topic. (This is considered a muscles and bones change.) He also added a few sentences on peer pressure. Otherwise, his paper remained pretty much the same. Essentially what he did was to change his thesis statement to reflect what was in his paper.

His was a common process. I found that when many of the students examined their thesis statement, they realized that they had stated their arguments in the body of their paper as they had planned to give them but that their opening paragraph, especially the thesis statement, missed the mark of what was being argued or discussed. Picking out the main pentad members helped them see that they needed to refocus their thesis statement and introductory paragraph to give the reader a better map of where the argument or discussion was heading.

One student had buried her thesis sentence on page two of her first draft. On the second draft, she moved the statement to the first sentence. Her first draft begins this way: "Yesterday a comment was made by an individual stating, 'In the Army my job is to kill, so I'm not going against the commandments, that's my job.' This comment really disturbed me."

Her revised draft begins, "A soldier's duty when in the battlefield is to try to make peace rather than war. If your offer of peace is ignored, then in defense, kill." This set up her paper much more clearly.

In most of the cases where the student refined her thesis statement and then revised the body of the paper to reflect that revision, the paper improved substantially. Even smaller revisions such as adding a sentence or two usually reflected a greater understanding of what should be in the paper.

Clearly, many of the students were able to change their thesis statement or relate it more closely to the topic as they intended to present it. This was a result of the pentad theory's ability to help students see the mix of ideas in their texts.

Revision and the Students' Pentad Members

The students were also assigned to write the two most important pentad members at the top of their essay on page one, what meaning they assigned these two members, and the main ratio.

The student with the substantially improved paper gave her ratio as agency:act. She names her agency as "the anti-social, mysterious, and mentally controlling instruments" that molded the women's actions. The act is "the molding that disconnected them from their environments."

In her revision, she added an entire section on the anti-social aspects in "The Yellow Wallpaper." She compares John's wife ("she keeps herself entrapped in a dark room") with Emily ("her father before dying kept her away from the men around their neighborhood") and gives reasons for the women's anti-social behavior.

In her first draft, anti-social behavior is scattered throughout the paper. Her second draft was much improved when she gathered all these concepts together into one paragraph.

However, this writer does add new, less-related thoughts to her three main points during her summation. This "what's next" strategy weakened her conclusion.

Another student, who didn't change her thesis statement from the first draft to the revised draft, found two acts in it. Her thesis was:

> Parents have a right to know the results of AIDS test for their teens, because they are responsible for their kids and can help those whose results are positive to prevent the spreading of disease to others.

Her ratio was purpose:act and she gave these definitions: purpose--parents have the right to know; acts -- 1.) Parents must be responsible for their own kids. 2.) Their right to know prevents the spread of disease. This "double act" showed that she understood the pentad theory and was able to adapt it to the motive in her paper.

One interesting revision in a compare/contrast essay shows how the examination by using Burke's theory strengthened the paper. The thesis didn't change from one draft to the other. It was: "The character in the stories A Rose for Emily and The Yellow Wall Paper have an emotional escape from reality, through lack of control, imagination

and seclusion." The ratio he gave was purpose:act. He defined the purpose as: "to show how everyone was acting toward the main character in the stories." Act was defined as "the way in which the main character submitted to the purpose."

The writer begins his essay by describing how the status of the male character associated with the main character [Emily or the woman in "The Yellow Wallpaper"] made him act a certain way toward the main character. The rest of the essay shows the results of that relationship, in effect causing the women to escape from reality, have a lack of control over their lives, and retire into their own imagination and seclusion.

In his first draft, he writes this paragraph as the second to last one.

> Both Emily and Creepy [the name the writer gives the main character in "The Yellow Wallpaper"] decide to seclude them-self behind lock doors. Emily did it behind her whole house, while Creepy only did it behind an upstairs room. They both have different way of taking care of there environment. Emily let her house get filthy and smelly. While Creepy had to live in a disarray and smelly room, not of her choice. They

both had the opportunity to walk out, but didn't because something was holding them back. Emily had her love of her life and had no reason to get out, while Creepy had to safe the women behind the wall paper.

The same paragraph in the revised version reads:

Both Emily and Creepy were pushed into seclusion. Emily as a child was forced to live in her father's shadow. When he died all he left her was a great void in her life. All she could do to feel safe was to hid behind locked doors in her house. While Creepy was not pushed into seclusion, she did it out of her own free will. In her mind the only way to escape her nervous depression was to help the women that were caged behind the yellow wall paper upstairs. They both had different ways of dealing with their environments. Emily let her house get filthy and smelly, while Creepy had to live in a disarray and smelly room not of her choice. Both women built a safe place in there imagination where they to escaped the reality of being alone. The inability for any one to help Emily and Creepy was what drove them to the point of murder in A Rose for Emily and paranoia of being caged in The Yellow Wall Paper.

The most interesting change is in the topic sentences. The first draft had the women deciding to seclude themselves. The second states that they were pushed into seclusion. The second topic sentence more clearly states the purpose and act and the ratio. The choice was taken out of the women's hands by those who were closest to them. Although the definitions of the purpose and act are a little vague, still, isolating the ratio helped this writer change his conclusion to reflect what he decides his ratio is. A further step would have been to revise his thesis to conform more closely to what he was explaining. But the process did help him to make revisions that reflect the bones and muscles rather than just the skin.

In the few cases where students missed the classroom explanation of the Burke theory and the importance of deep revision because of absences, their papers came back substantially unchanged. They basically attempted skin-level revisions.

In addition, several other students were content to leave their paper mostly unchanged, even after examining their thesis statement and naming their pentad ratios.

As every instructor knows, some students will not transverse the zone of proximal development in writing

skill because of inattention, lack of motivation, or other causes. One of these was one of the best writers in the class. His opinion was that he was able to accomplish good writing without any help from this strategy.

But the students who did examine their thesis, determine their ratio, and change their paper accomplished revision beyond the scope of what most Basic English and Freshman Composition students attempt.

In conclusion, Burke's pentad theory really did help students look at their papers in new ways. Although not everyone benefited, the majority came away more aware of what they were doing through their writing process. Understanding the relationships between scene, act, agent, agency, and purpose was the key to bringing a self-conscious revision process. Students no longer stared at the paper wondering what to do. They had a strategy that, as Burke so eloquently describes, helps define the motive and move it toward consubstantiation.

For me, the most satisfying part was when a student would write her thesis statement on the board and then look hard at it to determine what the two main ratios were. She would begin to analyze what was good and not so good about her focus. Burke's theory gave her the skills to do this,

and once the class begin to discuss it with her, other students came up with insightful comments.

Sometimes the definitions the students came up with for their pentad members were not always so accurate, but the process did make them delve into their writing in a new way. Even the students who didn't do much revision in the second draft still benefited from seeing how the theses were changed and analyzed. The discussion around defining the pentad members was always good. For the first time, students were reseeing their work.

There was another indirect advantage in the students' act of describing what their papers were about. This helped students sharpen their focus on what they had written. For many of these students, orally giving their argument is much easier than writing it. By explaining to the class what was in their papers, the students were better able to see how they had missed the mark in the thesis statement and in the body of the paper. This effect would also be true when the students examined their papers on their own by using Burke's theory. It was as if the theory had given them a plumb line to measure the structures of their arguments.

I think, however, that the pentad theory process would have better results if the assignment had been given more than once. It was a heavy dose for the students to understand the theory, apply it to the thesis statement, and then apply it to their revision. The students probably would have a better grasp of how to work with the theory if they had revised two assignments rather than one.

But the theory did challenge most students to resee their work. They were able to apply a method that they could use outside the classroom discussion. The pentad theory gave them a pathway to manage their way through the Revision Forest. The ratio became their machetes and flashlights as they moved their way through the underbrush of revising. Even if they don't use the pentad theory again in their composing process, they were given a glimpse into how important it is to examine the "muscles" and "bones" of their work.

If students were not always successful at arriving at the place (motive and identification) that they wanted to go, at least most of them were attempting to find their way by using a new kind of map--Burke's pentad theory. A map that they can pull out for any type of writing.

As Andrea Lundsford so deftly writes:

> Thus just as rhetorical and literary theory has radically destabilized the concepts of *author* and *reader,* so rhetoric and composition studies destabilize the concept of *text,* opening it up and hence bringing into view many kinds of discourse formally excluded from examination (Lundsford, *Rhetoric* 87).

So Burke has given us a way to open up the students to their own texts, helping them resee and re-form--revise in a way impossible for them before. And that is the ultimate goal of revision in the classroom.

Burke's pentad theory is versatile, reveals ambiguities in writing, shows how a text works rhetorically, and helps set up the argument. This tool can help students tell what is good or misses the mark in a composition--leading to more thorough revision. As a strategy in the classroom, it can become the ladder that enables students to climb to a higher plane in their development. Taking the time to explain Burke's theory can yield the greatest results--moving students to make meaning through revision and gaining an ability to achieve meta-knowledge on their own process of writing.

APPENDIX

LESSON PLAN FOR USING BURKEIAN PENTAD THEORY IN A COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

Number of class sessions: 3 to 6

Prerequisite classroom teaching:

- Instruction on how to write a thesis statement
- Instruction on how to write the type of essay assigned, i.e., compare/contrast, persuasive
- Assigning the basics of the essay, i.e. length, topic

Format of the lesson content

1. Explain that your grading criteria for this revision stage of the composition is on how the students revise, not on the completeness of the final draft.
2. Explain the different levels of revision—"skin," "muscles," "bones"—and how each is to be used in the process of writing. Emphasize that this assignment will not be graded for grammar-level revision.
3. Explain the concepts of the pentad members and the ratios.
4. Work on the thesis statements.
   a. Have a student write her thesis statement on the chalkboard.
   b. Have her tell the class what her motive was for writing the paper.
   c. Have her determine, with class help, what her pentad members are and which two are the most important.
   d. Have the student write down the ratio she intended to use in her writing.
   e. Then as a class discuss the ratio in the thesis statement.
   f. Compare the intended ratio with the one outlined in the thesis statement.
   g. Discuss whether she is using the correct pentad members and whether the two most important pentad members are used in her thesis statement.
      - If the ratios are different, have the student describe how she could change either her

thesis statement to reflect her intended ratio or her intended ratio to reflect her thesis statement. Emphasize that her intent should be paramount, not that she change her intent to match her writing.

- If the ratios match, discuss how the writing should reflect the order of elements in the ratio. Have the student describe how her paper reflects the motive and ratio in the thesis statement.

h. Repeat the process with other volunteers.

5. Work in peer-editing pairs. Assign pairs to examine each other's compositions and determine whether the ratio is reflected throughout the work or if minor pentad elements are given too much emphasis. Have pairs initial each other's papers so you can check them.
6. Assign a revision of the first draft. The revision should include:
   a. A list of the pentad elements at the top
   b. The ratio at the top
   c. The first draft of the paper stapled to the back of the revision.
   d. "Muscles and bones" revision areas in the paper underlined by the student.
7. When papers are turned in, grade according to the skill of revision, not on the final product.
8. Assign one more draft of the paper, this time for grammar-level revision.

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