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What's in a Text?: Answers from Frame Analysis and Rhetoric for Measuring Meaning Systems and Argumentative Structures

Abstract: Starting in the 1970s, frame analysis became a popular technique of textual analysis in different disciplines (communication, mass media, sociology). There is no agreed-upon definition of frame analysis or of ways of measuring its key concepts. This paper explores the relationship between frame analysis and rhetoric. The paper reviews all main concepts developed in frame analysis. Concept after concept, it maps the correspondence between frame analysis and rhetorical concepts. It shows how frame analysis stopped short of developing what was really required to measure frames: tropes and figures. The analysis of a specific text confirms the power of rhetorical analysis for teasing out meaning systems and argumentative structures.

Keywords: frame analysis, media frames, collective action frames, rhetoric, tropes and figures, argumentation

FRAME ANALYSIS: A SOCIAL SCIENCE APPROACH TO TEXT

When in 1972 Bateson included a rather obscure paper he had first written in 1954 in his collection *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, he probably would not have predicted

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that “A Theory of Play and Fantasy” would become central across different social science disciplines for the development of “frame analysis.” We owe to Bateson the first conception of frame as a way to understand linguistic and metalinguistic messages (“signals”) – a frame as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion of parts of a message that both helps and shapes the understanding of that message. Goffman, following Bateson, interpreted frames as “schemata of interpretation”¹ not just of texts but also of any communicative act or events in social reality. Frame analysis aims to investigate processes of signification by looking at the way meanings become functional to organize social experience. From these early beginnings, different disciplines, from psychology to artificial intelligence, communication and media studies, linguistics, political science, anthropology, and sociology, have produced different frame approaches.²

In this paper, we focus on frame analysis in the two fields that have made the most significant contributions to the development of the framing conceptual apparatus: communication and media studies and sociology (social movement research, in particular). We trace both theoretical and methodological developments. We detail frame analysts’ longer and longer list of what there is in a text as they grapple with the operationalization of frames. We then show how 2,500 years of rhetoric would have provided frame analysts with a ready-made and more comprehensive list. With knowledge of rhetoric lost by the 20th century, frame analysts simply reinvented the wheel (as it often happens in the production of knowledge). But the frame analysts’ wheel was missing the crucial parts found in rhetoric that would have allowed them to measure frames exactly: rhetorical tropes and figures. The paper is not an exercise in epideictic rhetoric, of praising rhetoricians and blaming frame analysts. Rather, it is an exercise in a Foucauldian archeology of knowledge (tracing overtime, however

¹Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1974), p. 21.

²Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 26 (2000): 611–639; Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, “Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse,” *Political Communication* 10 (1993): 55–75; David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Master Frames and Cycles of Protest,” in Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 133–156; Deborah Tannen, *Framing in Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 15; Psychology and artificial intelligence scholars also devised kindred concepts (e.g., scheme and script) see Tannen, *Framing in Discourse* 15–21.

briefly, the development of frame analysis) and of Latourian translation (mapping the knowledge produced in one field – frame analysis – into that of another field – rhetoric).

Media Frames

The idea that media provide audiences constructed versions of reality has been central to communication, media, and cultural studies. In Tuchman's *Making News*, one of the most cited books in the field, we find an early use of the word "frame:" "News is a window on the world. Through its *frame*, Americans learn of themselves and others. . ."; "the media set the *frame* in which citizens discuss public events"; "news . . . imposes a *frame* for defining and constructing social reality."³ The notion of frame was to become central with Gitlin's *The Whole World is Watching*, another extremely popular book: "What makes the world beyond direct experience look natural is a media *frame*," these "structures of cognition and interpretation," the "taken-for-granted conventional wisdom, the hegemonic definitions of how things are."⁴ "To frame," Entman would later write, in a definition that was to stick, "is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described."⁵ Frames, then, define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest solutions.

It is one thing to provide concepts and definitions and another to operationalize them. Tuchman and Gitlin take a qualitative approach to measuring frames. Tuchman notes some of the linguistic characteristics of news⁶ – short paragraphs and sentences, insistence upon facts, news as stories (built around "the who, what, when, where, why, and how"⁷), story line in the past tense and headline in the present, but Tuchman is mostly interested in framing as the result of media as organizations (e.g., soft and hard news, location of news bureaus,

³Gaye Tuchman, *Making News. A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978), 106–180 (p. 180). Emphasis added.

⁴Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching. Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

⁵Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43.4 (1993): 51–58 (p. 52).

⁶Tuchman, *Making News*, cited in n. 3 above, p. 106.

⁷Tuchman, *Making News*, cited in n. 3 above, p. 134.

journalists' professionalization). Gitlin similarly applies a "qualitative, literary approach" to news media with the aim of teasing out "those determining but hidden assumptions which in their unique ordering remain opaque to quantitative content analysis."⁸ But contrary to Tuchman, Gitlin focuses on media content, rather than media organizations, detailing the "framing devices" used by the *New York Times* and *CBS News* to describe the SDS movement of the 1960s. These devices range from early trivialization, polarization, emphasis on internal dissention, marginalization, disparagement by numbers and by movement's effectiveness to later "reliance on statements by government officials and other authorities; emphasis on the presence of Communists; emphasis on the carrying of 'Viet Cong' flags; emphasis on violence in demonstrations; delegitimizing use of quotation marks . . . considerable attention to right-wing opposition to the movement"⁹

Entman notes: "Despite its omnipresence across the social sciences and humanities, nowhere is there a general statement of framing theory that shows *exactly* how frames become embedded within and make themselves manifest in a text."¹⁰ Yet, nothing in Entman's article shows *exactly* how to measure frames, beyond generic remarks ("The text contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain *keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.*" Furthermore, "content analysis informed by a theory of framing" can help frame analysts "identify and describe frames" quantitatively as manifested in texts¹¹). By the time of Entman's remarks on content analysis, Gamson had been toying for over a decade with content analysis as a way to measure frames *quantitatively*.¹²

Tankard *et al.* similarly "attempt to bridge the gap between a quantitative approach and a qualitative approach to the study of

⁸Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, cited in n. 4 above, p. 303.

⁹Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, cited in n. 4 above, p. 27–28.

¹⁰Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, p. 51. Emphasis added.

¹¹Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, pp. 52, 57. Emphasis added.

¹²William A. Gamson and Kathryn Lasch, "The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy," in Shimon E. Spiro and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, eds., *Evaluating the Welfare State: Social and Political Perspectives* (New York: Academic, 1983), 397–415, p. 402; William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, "The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action," in Richard G. Braungart and Margaret M. Braungart, eds., *Research in Political Sociology, Volume 3* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1987), 137–77; William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power," *American Journal of Sociology* 95 (1989): 1–37.

news."¹³ They bring to the issue of measurement standard principles of content analysis: random sampling of articles, coding scheme made up of mutually exclusive categories created inductively, coders' training and instructions, inter-coder reliability, quantification by counting occurrences of categories. They provide a list of "framing mechanisms" based on 11 items – headlines and kickers, subheads, photographs, photo captions, leads, selection of sources/affiliations, selection of quotes, pull quotes, logos, statistics/charts and graphs, and concluding statements – and list a set of "indicators" based on "specific language and arguments [that] serve as indicators for each frame."¹⁴ Tankard *et al.* tell us that these indicators are constructed ad hoc ("inductively") for specific news domains but, unfortunately, do not tell us how they should be constructed.

Building on Gamson's work, Pan and Kosicki classified news frame in four structures: syntactical, script, thematic, and rhetorical.¹⁵ Syntactical structures refer to the arrangement of words and phrases into sentences; scripts to the narrative elements of a text, "the familiar five Ws and one H in news writing: who, what, when, where, why, and how," a structure also known as story grammar.¹⁶ Thematic structures define how an issue, a theme, rather than actors and actions (a story), is discussed through hypothesis-testing elements (e.g., quotations, journalists' reports).¹⁷ Finally, "[r]hetorical structures . . . describe the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects."¹⁸

Subsequent framing research has relied on Gamson's and Pan and Kosicki's work for operationalization and measurement.¹⁹ Tankard's "list of frames" include headlines and kickers, subheads,

¹³James W. Tankard *et al.*, "Media Frames: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement," Unpublished paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Boston, MA. 1991.

¹⁴Tankard *et al.*, "Media Frames," cited in n. 13 above, p. 7

¹⁵Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above, p. 60.

¹⁶Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above, p. 60.

¹⁷Thematic structures discussed in Pan and Kosicki's "Framing Analysis" share elements with Gamson and Lasch's reasoning devices in "The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy."

¹⁸Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above, p. 61.

¹⁹Thomas E. Nelson *et al.*, "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance," *American Political Science Review* 91.3 (1997): 567–583; Baldwin Van Gorp, "Where is the Frame? Victims and Intruders in the Belgian Press Coverage of the Asylum Issue," *European Journal of Communication* 20 (2005): 485–508; Baldwin Van Gorp, "The Constructionist Approach to Framing: Bringing Culture Back In," *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 60–78.

photographs, photo captions, leads, selection of sources or affiliations, selection of quotes, pull quotes, logos, statistics, charts, and graphs, and concluding sections.²⁰

Collective Action Frames

Gamson's work on media and social movements was seminal in the development of both media and collective action frames. But it was Benford and Snow who provided the main theorization of collective action frames²¹, understood as "action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization."²² The complex taxonomy of collective action frames starts at the top with characteristic and variable features.²³ In turn, *characteristic features* comprise three core framing tasks²⁴ – diagnosis, prognosis, motivation – and discursive processes; *variable features* concern those aspects of social movement frames that vary from movement to movement, from frame to frame, and comprise: problem identification and direction/locus of attribution (also, issues of interest),²⁵ flexibility and rigidity, inclusivity and

²⁰Tankard *et al.*, "Media Frames," cited in n. 13 above, p. 101.

²¹David A. Snow *et al.*, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 464–481; David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization," *International Social Movements Research*, 1 (1988): 197–218; Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above, p. 136–41.

²²Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, p. 614.

²³Snow *et al.*, "Frame Alignment Processes," cited in n. 21 above, p. 467–76; Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above, p. 136–41; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, pp. 614–22, 622–27.

²⁴Core framing tasks provide social movements "a shared understanding of some problematic condition or situation they define as in need of change, make attributions regarding who or what is to blame [diagnosis], articulate an alternative set of arrangements [prognosis] and urge others to act in concert to affect change [motivation]." See Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, p. 615. Gamson's core elements overlap with those of Snow and Benford. He distinguishes among three frame components: injustice (moral connotation of the frame), agency (possibility to alter problematic conditions), identity (self-awareness any social movement raises for both internal and external purposes). See William A. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Snow and Benford, "Ideology, frame resonance, and participant mobilization," *International Social Movements Research* 1 (1988): 197–218.

²⁵"Problem identification" in Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, p. 618.

exclusivity,²⁶ interpretive scope and influence,²⁷ and resonance²⁸ (in turn, made up of credibility²⁹ and salience³⁰).

Three overlapping processes contribute to collective action frames: discursive, strategic, and contested.³¹ *Discursive processes*, part of frame characteristic features – “the talk and conversations . . . and written communications of movement members”³² – consist of frame articulation and frame amplification.³³ *Frame articulation* “involves the connection and alignment of events and experiences so that they hang together in a relatively unified and compelling fashion.”³⁴ *Frame amplification* (or punctuation³⁵) refers to the foregrounding and backgrounding of specific issues, events, and beliefs.³⁶ *Strategic or alignment processes* whereby “frames are developed to achieve specific purposes—to recruit new members, to mobilize adherents, to acquire resources”³⁷ and involve four strategic efforts: *frame bridging* (“linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames”), *frame amplification* (“idealization, embellishment, clarification, or invigoration of existing values or beliefs”), *frame extension* (beyond a frame’s primary interests to include issues and concerns deemed dear to its target audience), and *frame transformation* (changing old meanings and/or

²⁶Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 618.

²⁷“Master frames,” the degree to which frames are broad. Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 618.

²⁸Snow and Benford, “Ideology,” cited in n. 21 above, p. 198. The degree to which frames resonate with values of mobilizing groups. See Snow and Benford, “Master Frames,” cited n. 2 above, p. 140.

²⁹Credibility depends upon a frame’s consistency (no contradictions between beliefs and actions, words and deeds), empirical credibility (no contradiction between claims and reality), and the credibility of frame articulators (proponents’ credibility in the eyes of their target audience in terms of their status and knowledge). See Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 620.

³⁰Frames’ salience to mobilization targets depend on centrality (are beliefs and values represented in a frame crucial to target audiences’ lives?), experiential commensurability (are frame consistent with the targets’ personal, everyday experiences?), and narrative fidelity (do frames resonate with the targets’ broad cultural narrations?) See Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 621–2.

³¹Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 623.

³²Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 623.

³³Using focus groups, Gamson shows how frame articulation and amplification provide the first steps in people’s formulation/framing of political ideas. See Gamson, *Talking Politics*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

³⁴Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 623.

³⁵Snow and Benford, “Master Frames,” cited in n. 2 above, pp. 133–156.

³⁶Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 623.

³⁷Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 623.

creating new ones).³⁸ *Contested process* deals with the contested nature of any construction of reality³⁹ and consists of *counterframing* (alternative definitions and representations of reality⁴⁰), *frame disputes/contests* (the conflict between frames and counterframes, between a movement's definitions of reality and that of its opponents⁴¹), and the *dialectic between frames and events* (the complex interaction between events and frames/ideology). Figure 1 provides a convenient visual representation of this complex taxonomy.⁴²

By the early 1990s, this rich theoretical development on collective action frames was slowing down. Calls for more empirical work and applications of the concepts started multiplying.⁴³ An empirical approach to frames raised two questions: 1) In which loci do social movements concretely express frames? 2) How can scholars recognize frames and their various features in these loci? The first question led to texts: speeches, pamphlets, radio and TV talks, media news, interviews. And once in the realm of texts, in dealing with the second question, frame analysts found themselves back to Gitlin's and Gamson's symbolic devices. But they also proposed new things, such as "argumentative structures," thematic components,⁴⁴ "micro-discourse analysis" – the social role of actors producing the text, non-verbal cues of oral texts, interactional elements emerging in dialogical communication exchanges, and cross-references within the text – and story grammars.⁴⁵ Qualitative scholars have measured frames via snippets of

³⁸Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, p. 624; Snow *et al.*, "Frame Alignment Processes," cited in n. 19 above.

³⁹Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, pp. 625–7.

⁴⁰Jiping Zuo and Robert D. Benford, "Mobilization Processes and the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement," *The Sociological Quarterly* 36 (1995): 131–156 (p. 139).

⁴¹Robert D. Benford, "Frame Disputes within the Nuclear Disarmament Movement," *Social Forces* 71 (1993): 677–701.

⁴²We follow Benford and Snow's (2000) classification scheme. Over time, Benford and Snow grouped differently some of their categories, albeit keeping definitions largely consistent.

⁴³For example, see Jürgen Gerhards and Dieter Rucht, "Mesomobilization: Organizing and Framing in Two Protest Campaigns in West Germany," *American Journal of Sociology* 98.3 (1992): 555–95 (p. 563); Robert D. Benford, "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective," *Sociological Inquiry* 67.4 (1997): 409–430 (p. 411); David A. Snow, "Framing processes, ideology, and discursive fields," in David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kriesi, eds., *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 380–412 (p. 386).

⁴⁴Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization," cited in n. 44 above, p. 574.

⁴⁵Hank Johnston, "Verification and Proof in Frame and Discourse Analysis," in Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, eds., *Methods of Social Movement Research* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 62–91 (p. 82). Hank Johnston,

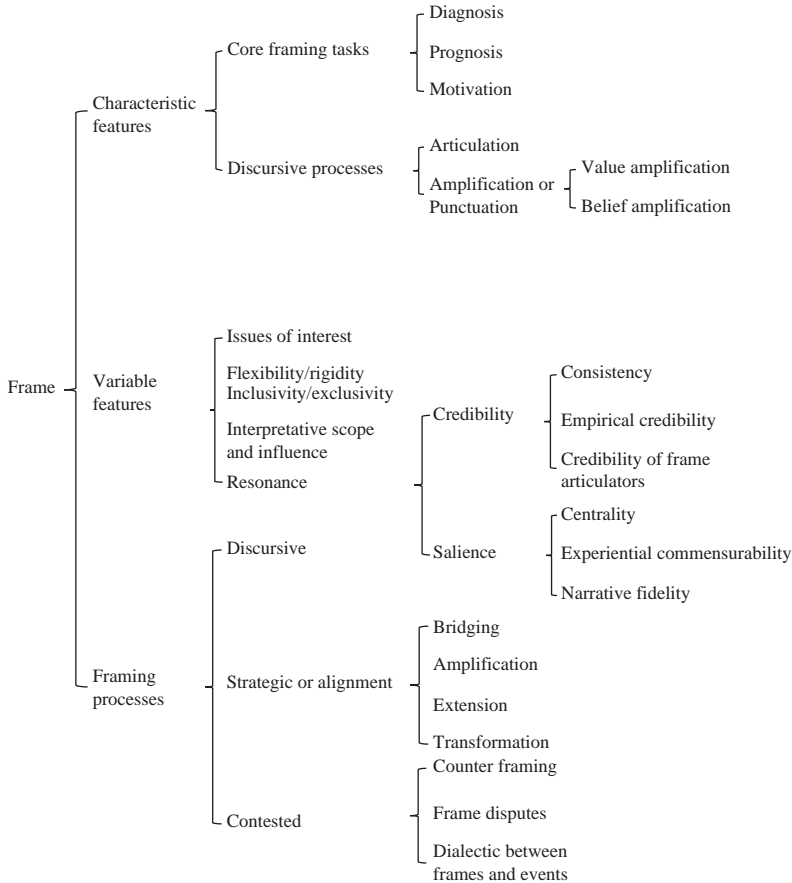


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Frame Concepts According to the Social Movement Literature

texts, exemplary of specific frames. That is true even in cutting-edge empirical studies where frames occupy a central role in a paper’s explanatory model.⁴⁶ It is also true in sophisticated quantitative papers that rely on content analysis to quantify features of texts

“A Methodology for Frame Analysis: From Discourse to Cognitive Schemata,” in Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans, eds., *Social Movements and Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 217–246 (pp. 219, 235–6).

⁴⁶For example, see Sarah Babb, “A True American System of Finance: Frame Resonance in the U.S. Labor Movement, 1866–1886,” *American Sociological Review* 61.6 (1996): 1033–1052; Mario Diani, “Linking Mobilization Frames and Political Opportunities: Insights from Regional Populism in Italy,” *American Sociological Review* 61 (1996): 1053–1069.

while providing snippets as frame exemplars.⁴⁷ Unfortunately, when content analysis is used in papers that pay attention to methodological issues,⁴⁸ the coding scheme is never published, so we do not know what was measured exactly.⁴⁹

FRAME ANALYSIS, PERSUASION, AND RHETORIC

Much of what frame analysts do with texts has to do with persuasion:⁵⁰ whether to provide audiences with ready-made filters of reality or to win over public opinion and militants to a social movement's cause. For twenty-five hundred years the study of persuasion has been the realm of rhetoric, rhetoric as the "*ars bene dicendi*" the art of effective speaking.⁵¹ And the purpose of effective speaking is persuasion, as Socrates tells Gorgias: "rhetoric is a producer of

⁴⁷For example, see Daniel M. Cress and David A. Snow, "The Outcomes of Homeless Mobilization: The Influence of Organization, Disruption, Political Mediation, and Framing," *American Journal of Sociology* 105 (2000): 1063–1104; Holly J. McCammon *et al.*, "NO WEAPON SAVE ARGUMENT': Strategic Frame Amplification in the U.S. Woman Suffrage Movement," *The Sociological Quarterly* 45.3 (2004): 529–556.

⁴⁸From sampling of documents to inter-coder reliability, methods used to assess the role of frames.

⁴⁹For example, see McCammon *et al.*, "NO WEAPON SAVE ARGUMENT," cited in n. 46 above; Holly J. McCammon *et al.*, "Movement Framing and Discursive Opportunity Structures: The Political Successes of the U.S. Women's Jury Movements," *American Sociological Review* 72 (2007): 725–750; David A. Snow *et al.*, "Framing the French riots: a comparative study of frame variation," *Social Forces* 86 (2007): 385–415.

⁵⁰Bateson and Goffman do not deal with persuasion. But subsequent framing literature is about persuasion: how social movements mobilize/persuade audiences for change. For more details, see Snow *et al.*, "Frame Alignment Processes," cited in n. 19 above, pp. 464, 476; Snow and Benford, "Ideology," cited in n. 21 above, p. 198; Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above, p. 140; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above, p. 612; How media persuade audiences for "the reproduction of the status quo" see, Tuchman, *Making News*, cited in n. 3 above, pp. 177, 179, 196, 209; Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988), pp. 32, 34, 306; Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, cited in n. 4 above, pp. 2, 10, 303; Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, p. 55.

⁵¹Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*. 2.17.37. Also "*bene dicendi scientia*" in Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 2.14.5. Grammar, on the other hand, is the "*recte loquendi scientia*," the art (or science) of correct speaking/writing. See Quintilian *Inst. Or.* 1.4.2. See Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation or Literary Study* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), pp. 11, 17.

persuasion," (Plato, *Gorgias*, 453a) a refrain to become a commonplace. Would frame analysts have found anything useful in rhetoric?

On Rhetoric

Through the centuries, rhetoric has focused on different aspects of the art of persuasion: from the means of persuasive appeals, to the five canons of rhetoric, the functional parts of a text (orations, senatorial or judicial, in classical times, and church sermons and letters in medieval times), and the stylistic embellishments of rhetoric (tropes and figures or schemes⁵²). Let us briefly review next these rhetorical categories.

Means of Persuasion

Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, divided the rhetorical means of persuasion (persuasive appeals) into three kinds (1357a): *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*, respectively appealing to reason, through the use of logical arguments, emotions, and the orator's good character.⁵³

Anything Useful Here to Frame Analysts?

Classical rhetorical means of persuasion would provide the broad framework for understanding key features of frame analysis. The core task of motivation, the rationale for engaging in ameliorative collective action, would find the basis for a call to action in any of Aristotle's three means of persuasion. Frame analysts' reasoning devices⁵⁴ can be thought of as appeals to *logos*. After all,

The aim of argumentation is not to deduce consequences from given premises; it is rather to increase adherence of the members of an audience to theses that are presented for their consent. . . . [Yet]

⁵²Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, pp. 552–598, 600–910; *On Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*, ed. Roberto Franzosi (New York: Routledge, 2017).

⁵³George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p. 85; for summaries of classical writing, see James J. Murphy and Richard A. Katula, *A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric. Third Edition* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003).

⁵⁴In their different forms of thematic devices or argumentative structures. See Gamson and Lasch, "The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy," in Shimon E. Spiro and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar, eds., *Evaluating the Welfare State: Social and Political Perspectives* (New York: Academic, 1983), 397–415; Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse"; Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization"; Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis".

argumentation does not aim solely at gaining a purely intellectual adherence. Argumentation very often aims at inciting action, or at least, at creating a disposition to act.⁵⁵

Nothing could be more true for collective action frames whose primary goal is a call to action. Ethos would similarly allow us to understand the frame variable feature of frame articulators' credibility.

The Five Canons of Rhetoric

The rhetorical tradition has handed down a five-fold classification of rhetoric, known as the five canons of rhetoric⁵⁶: invention (finding what to say), arrangement (the functional parts of discourse and their sequential order), style or elocution (*elocutio*), how something is said, as opposed to what to say, the realm of invention, memory and delivery (how to remember speeches and deliver them in public through voice and gestures). Let's review the canons of invention, arrangement, and style.⁵⁷

Invention: The Topics

"Invention – Cicero writes in his *De inventione* (I.VII.9) – is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's cause plausible." And that discovery relies on topics (Greek *topoi*, Latin *loci*, literally "places"; Cicero *Topica* I.II.7–8). Topics⁵⁸ were classified into

⁵⁵Chaïm Perelman, *The Realm of Rhetoric* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1982), pp. 9, 12.

⁵⁶The classification was canonized in the first century BC in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (I.3) and in Cicero's *De Inventione* (I.VI.9-VII) and *De Oratore* (I.XXXI.142). For more detail see, James A. Herrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), p. 96. Later rhetoricians also adopted this division (e.g., Cicero, Quintilian). Cicero and Quintilian, however, also introduced different classifications of topics (e.g., topics associated with the person and with the act as part of the theory of circumstances, Michael C. Leff, "The Topics of Argumentative Invention in Latin Rhetorical Theory from Cicero to Boethius," *Rhetorica* 1.1 (1983): 23–44 (p. 24). On Aristotle's classification, see James J. Murphy, "Topos and Figura: Historical Cause and Effect?" in Geoffrey L. Bursill-Hall, Sten Ebbesen, and Konrad Koerner, eds., *De Ortu Grammaticae. Studies in Medieval Grammar and Linguistic Theory in Memory of Janpinborg* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1990), 239–254 (p. 242). See Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, p. 374; Daniel E. Mortensen, "The Loci of Cicero," *Rhetorica* 26.1 (2008): 31–56 (pp. 37, 53).

⁵⁷Memory and delivery were often excluded from the realm of rhetoric in post-classical treatises of rhetoric.

⁵⁸On the history of topics and their changing numbers. See Sister Miriam Joseph, *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947),

common topics, consisting of those arguments that apply equally well to all three branches of rhetoric⁵⁹ (judicial or forensic⁶⁰, deliberative or political/legislative⁶¹, and epideictic or ceremonial⁶²) and *special topics* for the specific branches.⁶³

Anything Useful Here to Frame Analysts?

In the topics of invention frame analysts would have found many helpful concepts. Nearly all main frame concepts have equivalents in this part of rhetoric. Certainly, the special topics would provide the foundations of the framing tasks of diagnosis and prognosis. Diagnosis is similar to judicial (or forensic) oratory insofar as it expresses moral indignation by highlighting unjust conditions; and prognosis to deliberative oratory, with its future outlook and paired topics of good/unworthy and advantageous/harmful. Epideictic rhetoric could explain the attributional function of frames as this function attributes blame to culpable agents (diagnosis) and moral responsibility for engagement in future collective action (prognosis).

Among the common topics, definition and its subspecies, to the extent that they draw attention to how something is defined (e.g., an issue, an action), could help frame analysts understand diagnosis and the punctuating function of the frame characteristic features since this function highlights specific societal elements. The common topic of relationship (particularly, cause/effect) can explain some frame characteristic features: diagnosis, to the extent that this involves the attribution of causality⁶⁴ and, together with its subtopics of cause/effect, antecedent/consequence, contraries, and contradictions, articulation (discursive processes), the connection and alignment of events

pp. 22–31; Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 167–8. For a lengthy discussion of these topics and subtopics, adapted for the modern reader, see Edward P. J. Corbett and Robert J. Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999)

⁵⁹Aristotle (1358b-1359a, 1359b-1377b).

⁶⁰With two main topics: just and unjust (or right and wrong).

⁶¹With four topics, grouped in pairs: good/unworthy and advantageous/harmful (or pleasant/unpleasant).

⁶²With two topics: virtue and vice (honorable/dishonorable).

⁶³Aristotle discusses common topics in *Rhetoric* (1397a-1403a). Cicero, in *Topica*, lists 17 topics classified into: definition, comparison, relationship, circumstance, and testimony. See Corbett and Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, cited in n. 60 above, pp. 112–120.

⁶⁴Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above, p. 138; see also Snow and Benford, "Ideology," cited in n. 21 above, p. 200.

and experiences, and bridging (strategic alignment process). It can also explain such frame variable features as issues of interest and their attributions, since this function assigns effects to internal and external causes. Counterframing and frame disputes fundamentally involve the use of such subtopics of relationship as contraries (the relation between opposite elements) and contradictions.

Topics are not mutually exclusive. Definition may involve relationship and comparison, and relationship and comparison often go together (particularly, similarity/difference and degree). That is certainly the case in amplification, a central rhetorical category and covering both *res*/issues (via comparisons, similarities, dissimilarities, opposites) and *verba*/words (via synonyms, heterosis or enallage, metaphor, variation in word form, equivalence).⁶⁵ Amplification is behind such framing concepts as mobilizing potency, amplification (or elaboration), extension, and interpretive scope and influence.

To the extent that amplification and its contrary, attenuation, involve simple operations of addition and subtraction, rhetorical amplification can help explain frame transformation. More generally, rhetoric proposes four categories of change⁶⁶ addition, subtraction, transposition, and substitution. These are rhetorical strategies for the manipulation and variation of discourse at various levels – word forms, sentences, paragraphs, entire texts – and across different levels of rhetoric from invention to style.

Finally, the topic of testimony, with its various subtopics, would help frame analysts understand some aspects of resonance, one of the frame variable features, notably, the credibility of frame articulators and empirical credibility. Narrative fidelity can also be increased through such external sources as testimony.

Arrangement

The idea that texts are characterized by distinct functional parts laid out in specific order goes back to the early days of rhetoric (Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1414b). A six-part division in introduction (*exordium*), narration (*narratio*), partition (the plan of the speech), *partitio*, confirmation (or proof, *confirmatio*), refutation (*reprehensio*), and

⁶⁵Desiderius Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus. Literary and Educational Writings 2. De Copia / De ratione studii Vol. XXIII*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), p. 301.

⁶⁶Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, cited in n. 53 above, p. 462; Quintilian's *quadrupartita ratio*, *Inst. Or.* 1.5.38

peroration (or conclusion, *conclusio*) was to become standard.⁶⁷ Narration/statement of facts, proof, and refutation are of particular interest for frame analysis.⁶⁸

One of Aphthonius's rhetorical exercises (*progymnasmata*⁶⁹) is on narration (*tale*) and its "six considerations: the personal agent, the thing done, at what time, in what place, in what manner, and for what cause."⁷⁰ A narration "should be brief, clear, and plausible."⁷¹ A narration is plausible when "it seems to embody characteristics which are accustomed to appear in real life."⁷² "[N]arrative credibility [also] depends upon narrator's authority" (*Inst. Or.* IV.2.125). The purpose of narration is not simply a statement of facts but persuasion (*Inst. Or.* IV.2.21, 31). As a result, silence and emphasis, Entman's selection and salience,⁷³ must govern the choice of narrative facts (*Inst. Or.* IV.2.77, 83).

"Confirmation or proof is the part of the oration which by marshaling arguments lends credit, authority, and support to our case." And those arguments pertain to both "attributes of persons⁷⁴ and of actions."⁷⁵ "The refutation is that part of an oration in which arguments are used to impair, disprove, or weaken the confirmation or proof in our opponents' speech."⁷⁶ As Cicero tells his reader, refutation relies on the same forms of invention of confirmation "because any proposition can be attacked by the same methods of reasoning by which it can be supported."⁷⁷

⁶⁷Cicero, *De Inventione* I.XIV.19.

⁶⁸"Narration is an exposition of events that have occurred or are supposed to have occurred." See Cicero *De Inv.* I.XIX.27; Quintilian *Inst. Or.* IV.2.1–132.

⁶⁹Donald Lemen Clark, "The Rise and Fall of Progymnasmata in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Grammar Schools," *Communication Monographs* 19.4 (1952): 259–63.

⁷⁰Ray Nadeau, "The Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation," *Communication Monographs* 19.4 (1952): 264–85 (p. 265).

⁷¹Cicero, *De Inventione* I.XX.28.

⁷²Cicero, *De Inventione* I.XXI.29; *Inst. Or.* IV.2.52 and *Ad Herennium* I.14, I.16

⁷³Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, p. 52.

⁷⁴E.g., name, sex, race, place of birth, family, age, but also height, appearance, intelligence.

⁷⁵E.g., time, space, reason, manner, or outcome. D. W. Robertson Jr., "A Note on the Classical Origin of 'Circumstances' in the Medieval Confessional," *Studies in Philology* 43.1 (1946): 6–14; Cicero *De Inv.* I.XXIV.34; Quintilian *Inst. Or.* 4.2.52; Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus* cited in n. 67 above, p. 591.

⁷⁶Cicero, *De Inventione* I.XLII.78.

⁷⁷Aphthonius's *progymnasmata* include confirmation and refutation, two exercises that encompass within themselves "all the power of the art." See Nadeau, "The Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in Translation," cited in n. 71 above, pp. 268, 270; Cicero, *De Inventione* I.XLII.78.

Anything Useful Here to Frame Analysts?

In arrangement, frame analysts would have found more ammunition for their conceptual armory. The theory of circumstances, in narration and confirmation, would have given Pan and Kosicki's⁷⁸ and Johnston's⁷⁹ a solid foundation for their recommendation of using "story grammars" to uncover frames' "structural elements": the 7 loci of *peristasis*, as laid out in Aphthonius's *progymnasmata*, are nothing but the five Ws and H of story grammars: Who, What, When, Where, How, and Why.⁸⁰ Narration would similarly help frame analysts with the variable feature of resonance. Both aspects of resonance – credibility and salience – depend upon characteristics of narration (it must be plausible or credible). In particular, empirical credibility depends upon the circumstances of the issue. Some of Quintilian's remarks on narration shed further light on other aspects of frame analysis and their link to narration. Quintilian's "narrator's authority" is nothing but frame articulators' credibility. Similarly, Cicero's and Quintilian's recommendation for narrative silence and emphasis finds a parallel in social movement frames, in the highlighting of issues in both diagnosis and strategic processes (or alignment), where both amplification and transformation require backgrounding and foregrounding of issues.

Confirmation and refutation would help shed light on aspects of contested framing process: counterframing and frame disputes. And refutation can depend upon different forms of appeal: logical, emotional, ethical, or by the use of wit or eloquence.⁸¹

Style: Rhetorical Figures

Style, or elocution, is "the most important part of this art [rhetoric] to the extent that eloquence has taken its very name from it."⁸²

⁷⁸Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above, p. 60.

⁷⁹Johnston, "A Methodology for Frame Analysis," cited in n. 47 above, p. 235–6; See also Johnston, "Verification and Proof," cited in n. 46 above, p. 82.

⁸⁰Roberto Franzosi, "On Quantitative Narrative Analysis," in James A. Holstein and Jaber F. Gubrium, eds., *Varieties of Narrative Analysis* (California: Sage, 2012): 75–98.

⁸¹Corbett and Connors, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, cited in n. 60 above, pp. 278–9.

⁸²Giambattista Vico, *The Art of Rhetoric (Institutiones oratoriae, 1711–1741)*, trans. Giorgio A. Pinton and Arthur W. Shippee (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 1996), 107.

Not surprisingly, half of Vico's *Institutiones oratoriae* (1711–1741) deals with style, particularly tropes and figures⁸³ Tropes change the meaning of words or sentences, while figures (or schemates or the Latin *figura*) only change the order of letters in a word, or words in a sentence, leaving meaning unaltered. The number of figures grew to well over two hundred at the height of the Renaissance from the handful of original “Gorgian figures,” only to shrink back in the twentieth century to the four master tropes⁸⁴ and further down to metaphor only.⁸⁵ For medieval and Renaissance rhetoricians, figures were not simply embellishments, linked to style only (*lexis* or *elocutio*). Figures were linked to all parts of rhetoric, from invention (through topics) to arrangement (different figures are more suitable for different parts of speech), from species of rhetoric (deliberative, judiciary, epideictic) to means of persuasion (pathos, logos, ethos).⁸⁶

Anything Useful Here to Frame Analysts?

It is at the lowest level of rhetoric, in figures and their function in relation to broader rhetorical categories, that frame analysts would have found in rhetoric a range of useful tools of analysis – tools useful not only for the development of frame analysis conceptual apparatus but also for the concrete measurement of frames with a variety of specific devices well beyond metaphors and generic catch phrases.

Unfortunately, frame analysts stopped their conceptual development at the higher levels of rhetoric without delving into the detail of tropes and figures. The *motivational framing* task, for instance, would not just find an equivalent in abstract rhetorical means of persuasion (or motivational call) but in specific figures (e.g., *enthymeme*, *sorites*, or *sylogismus* for logos; *adhortatio*, *adynaton*, or *cataplexis* for pathos; *anamnesis*, *litotes*, or *paronomasia* for ethos). Amplification is not the result of the use of abstract common topics (in particular, comparison and relationship), but of these topics expressed in

⁸³Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, cited in n. 53 above, pp. 552–598, 600–910; *On Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*, ed. Roberto Franzosi (New York: Routledge, 2017).

⁸⁴Kenneth Burke, “Four Master Tropes,” *The Kenyon Review* 3.4 (1941): 421–438.

⁸⁵Gerard Genette, “Rhetoric Restrained,” *Figures of Literary Discourse*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 103–126 (p. 114); *On Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*, ed. Roberto Franzosi (New York: Routledge, 2017).

⁸⁶*On Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*, ed. Roberto Franzosi (New York: Routledge, 2017).

specific figures.⁸⁷ *The point is: there is more in texts than Gamson's metaphors and generic catch phrases.*

Johnston's view of the "text as a holistic construct"⁸⁸ would have found a sympathetic ear among rhetoricians with their organic view of rhetoric as an integrated whole.⁸⁹ His reference to "discursive cues . . . the nonverbal channels of information . . . inflection, tone, pitch, cadence, melodic contours of speech" would find in the rhetorical canon of delivery a rich tradition.⁹⁰ Cicero dedicates nearly half of his *Orator* to the discussion of those figures that contribute to "the two things that please the ear: sound and rhythm." (*Orator* 44–236; quote 163) The "micro-discourse analysis" Johnston proposes, the attention he advocates for the micro aspects of text and their relationship to macro structures, finds parallels in rhetoric, in the complex relationship of tropes and figures with topics and species of rhetoric. An understanding of the categories of elocution/style would have also given greater concreteness to Pan and Kosicki's generic reference to syntactical structures.⁹¹ Although syntax more appropriately belongs to grammar rather than rhetoric, several rhetorical figures deal with syntactical structures or, more generally, with linguistic elements of style.⁹²

The "translation" of concepts between frame analysis and rhetoric of Table 1 tells us at least two things: 1) Nearly all main concepts of frame analysis find an equivalent in rhetoric. 2) At the level of style, where rhetoric displays an impressive array of tropes and figures organized in complex interrelations with all other parts of rhetoric (namely, species of rhetoric and topics), frame analysis is rather vague; at this level, frame analysts would have found a solution to Entman's quest for measurement exactitude ("*exactly* how frames . . . make themselves manifest in a text"⁹³). But for all the table says, it is silent about Entman's remark that "frames have at least four locations in the

⁸⁷Melanchthon's third-order figures (*Institutiones Rhetorices* 1523 b6r-b7v; c8v-d1r); Susenbrotus (*Epitome* 1540 2.2.3); Peacham (*The Garden of Eloquence* 1593:119); Hoskins (*Directions for Speech and Style* circa 1600).

⁸⁸Johnston, "A Methodology for Frame Analysis," cited in n. 47 above, p. 221.

⁸⁹Brian Vickers, *Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry* (London: MacMillan, 1970).

⁹⁰Johnston, "A Methodology for Frame Analysis," cited in n. 47 above, p. 228.

⁹¹Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above, p. 69.

⁹²Melanchthon's, Susenbrotus's, and Peacham's first-order figures are grammatical figures, further classified according to their function: repetition (e.g., *epanaphora*, *ploce*, *paroemion*), omission (e.g., *zeugma*, *asyndeton*), conjunction (e.g., *polysyndeton*, *homeoteleuton*), and separation (e.g., *paranomasia*, *membrum*, *taxis*).

⁹³Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, p. 51. Emphasis added.

Table 1. Frame Analysis and Rhetoric: Main Concepts Side-by-Side⁹⁴

Frame Analysis	Rhetoric
The text (Symbolic devices and more)	
Symbolic devices/rhetorical structures ⁹⁵	Rhetorical canon of style
Reasoning devices/thematic devices/argumentative structures ⁹⁶	Logos (persuasive appeal)
Syntactical structures ⁹⁷	Grammar/Syntax
Script /Semantic structures ⁹⁸	Rhetorical canon of arrangement
Linguistic elements ⁹⁹	Rhetorical canon of style, persuasive appeals
The broader picture	
Frame characteristic features ¹⁰⁰	
Core framing tasks	
Diagnosis	Judicial, or forensic, oratory, epideictic rhetoric, common topics of definition and relationship
Prognosis	Deliberative oratory
Motivation	Persuasive appeals, canon of invention

(continued)

⁹⁴Several academic works deal with the categorization of rhetorical figures. For example, see George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, N. J: Princeton University Press, 1994); Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation or Literary Study* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998). For definitions of the rhetorical figures in the table, see Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation or Literary Study* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), pp. 600–910; Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁹⁵Gamson and Lasch, "The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy," cited in n. 12 above; Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," cited in n. 12 above; Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above.

⁹⁶Gamson and Lasch, "The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy," cited in n. 12 above; Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," cited in n. 12 above; Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization," cited in n. 44 above; Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above.

⁹⁷Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis," cited in n. 2 above.

⁹⁸Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis,"; Johnston, "Verification and Proof," cited in n. 46 above.

⁹⁹Johnston, "A Methodology for Frame Analysis," cited in n. 47 above.

¹⁰⁰Snow and Benford, "Ideology," cited in n. 21 above; Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above; Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above.

Table 1. (Continued)

Frame Analysis	Rhetoric
Discursive Processes	
Articulation	Common topic of relationship
Amplification (or punctuation)	Common topics of definition, comparison and relationship, Four categories of change
Value amplification	
Belief amplification	
Frame variable features ¹⁰¹	
Problem Identification and Direction/Locus of Attribution; Issues of interest	Common topic of relationship and its subtopics cause/effect, antecedent/consequence, contraries, and contradictions, articulation
Flexibility/rigidity, Inclusivity/exclusivity	Narration
Interpretive scope and influence	Amplification
Resonance	Common topic of testimony, narration
Credibility	Common topic of testimony
Consistency	Common topic of testimony
Empirical credibility	Common topic of testimony
Credibility of frame articulators	Common topic of testimony
Salience	Narration
Centrality	Narration
Experiential commensurability	Narration
Narrative fidelity	Common topic of testimony, Narration
Framing Processes ¹⁰²	
Discursive Processes	Common topic of relationship and its subtopics cause/effect, antecedent/consequence, contraries, and contradictions, articulation

¹⁰¹Snow and Benford, "Master Frames," cited in n. 2 above; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above.

¹⁰²Snow *et al.*, "Frame Alignment Processes," cited in n. 21 above; Sidney Tarrow, "Mentalities, Political Cultures, and Collective Action Frames," in Aldon D.

Table 1. (Continued)

Frame Analysis	Rhetoric
Strategic (or alignment) processes	Common topic of relationship and its subtopics cause/effect, antecedent/consequence, contraries, and contradictions, articulation
Bridging	Common topic of comparison
Amplification	Common topics of comparison and relationship, Four categories of change
Extension	Common topics of division, definition, comparison
Transformation	Four categories of change
Contested Processes	
Counterframing	Subtopics of relationship as contraries and contradictions, confirmation and refutation
Frame disputes	Subtopics of relationship as confirmation and refutation
Dialectic between frames and events	Not pertinent

communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture."¹⁰³ And modern texts contain both words and images. In recent decades, "visual rhetoric" has brought images into the realm of rhetoric. Second, rhetoric has little to say about the receiver ("framing effects"). Classical rhetoricians were certainly aware of the effect of words on the audience – after all, that was the point of rhetoric, with its different forms of appeal based on logos, ethos, or pathos. But rhetoric does not go much beyond insightful observations about the psychology of an audience (e.g., "nothing dries faster than tears," repeated like a refrain¹⁰⁴). Finally, rhetoric has nothing to say about one of the components of contested framing process: the dialectic between frames and events, and more specifically how media frames may affect events – a modern problem linked to the study of media effects.

Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller, eds., *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 174–202; Benford and Snow, "Framing Processes," cited in n. 2 above.

¹⁰³Entman, "Framing," cited in n. 5 above, p. 52.

¹⁰⁴See Cicero *De inv.* I.109, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* II.50, Quintilian *Inst. Or.* 6.1.27

FRAME ANALYSIS AND RHETORIC CONFRONTING A TEXT

Most frame analysis publications are either theoretical or rely for their empirical analyses on large samples of documents for which we know neither sources nor coding schemes. Gerhards and Rucht uniquely analyze two leaflets reported in their article.¹⁰⁵ While mostly interested in understanding the production side of the leaflets and the socio-historical context of the network of mobilizing groups represented by the leaflets, under the section "Framing the Issue" Gerhards and Rucht also analyze each leaflet for "*the system of meaning* represented by these texts" and "the argumentative structure of the master frames."¹⁰⁶ Unfortunately, in the pursuit of these objectives, Gerhards and Rucht make little use of linguistic and rhetorical categories, relying instead on Axelrod's method of analysis of decision-making processes. And more interested in hypotheses than on textual characteristics, they identify the diagnostic, prognostic, motivational frames on the basis of a generic analysis of what the leaflets say.

What about rhetoric? What would rhetorical analysis find in these leaflets? To answer that question, let's focus on one of the leaflets published by Gerhards and Rucht.¹⁰⁷ Let's break up the text in its rhetorical parts, organized left to right from general to specific: means of persuasion, species of rhetoric, parts of speech, topics of invention, rhetorical figures (Table 2).

Dealing with war and the "just," the text belongs to deliberative rhetoric. There are also strong accusatory notes typical of an orator's defense or prosecution of an accused on trial, the accused being United States President Ronald Reagan, with a long list of accusations (figure of *accusatio*) – Reagan standing for broader US government imperialistic policies via the rhetorical figure of personification (*personificatio/prosopopoeia*). The main accusation is laid out right at the start: Reagan wants "to make the USA the undisputed world and military power." That is what frame analysts would call the leaflet master frame. Epideictic rhetoric of blame (Reagan, Kohl, German Senate, RDF, IMF) and praise (Gorbachev, German people) is also present. Hence, the text is a rhetorical hybrid between different types of discourse.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization," cited in n. 44 above.

¹⁰⁶Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization," pp. 573, 574. Original emphasis.

¹⁰⁷Gerhards and Rucht, "Mesomobilization," pp. 590–1.

¹⁰⁸Jamieson Kathleen Hall and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Rhetorical Hybrids: Fusions of Generic Elements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1982): 146–157.

Table 2. Rhetorical Analysis of a Leaflet Analyzed by Gerhards and Rucht (1992)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
We say no to Reagan's politics		Deliberative oratory	<i>refutatio</i>		<i>personificatio</i> / <i>prosopopoeia</i> <i>anaphora</i> <i>apodiotxis (rejectio)</i>
President Reagan is coming to Berlin (West) for its 750 th anniversary			<i>exordium</i>		
He represents interests in the USA which will stop at nothing in their efforts to make the USA the undisputed world and military power.		deliberative/ epideictic (unworthy/blame Reagan)			<i>horismus</i> (definition)
[1] Billions of dollars are being spent for continually new arms programs.				Topic of definition common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts	<i>sorites</i> (chain of claims, concatenated enthymemes) <i>Accusatio</i> <i>Amplificatio/Climax</i> <i>Enumeratio</i> <i>Commeratio</i> Tale
[2] New strategies for waging war are constantly being developed in the USA and in the NATO.	Logos				

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
[3] Finally the Reagan administration in threatening all of humanity with its SDI plans.					
Reagan is trying to bury the Soviet Union in the arms race	Logos				metaphor <i>Accusatio</i> <i>Anacephalaeosis</i> or <i>accumulatio</i> / <i>epiphonema</i>
despite the fact that Gorbachev has made far-reaching disarmament proposals.		deliberative/ epideictic (good/ praise Gorbachev)		common topic of relationship → subtopic of contraries	<i>Antitheton</i> / <i>enantiosis</i> ¹⁰⁹ <i>Paradox</i>
Kohl and Reagan have shown in the past that they want to jointly continue the disastrous "crusade against the East"		deliberative/ epideictic (unworthy/blame Kohl & Reagan)		common topic of comparison → subtopic of similarity/ difference	Metaphor

¹⁰⁹ *Antitheton* provides proof based on contraries; *enantiosis* is a related figure when contraries lead to paradox.

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
<p>We demand that [1] the federal government takes seriously the demand that a war should never be started from Germany territory and [2] finally introduce concrete steps toward disarmament.</p> <p>Arms do not only kill in war.</p> <p>The worldwide consequences stemming from the lunacy of the arms race can no longer be ignored.</p> <p>[1] Poverty, [2] reduction of social services, [3] mass unemployment</p>				<p>common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts</p>	<p>Anaphora <i>enumeratio</i></p>
					<p><i>Anacephalaeosis</i> / <i>epiphonema</i></p>
	<p>logos & pathos</p>			<p>common topic of relationship → subtopic of cause/ effect</p>	<p>Metaphors <i>actiologia</i> (causes)</p>
				<p>common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts</p>	<p><i>Accusatio</i> <i>Amplificatio/climax</i> <i>enumeratio</i> causes and</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
[4] and impoverishment characterize the social climate					consequences <i>asyndeton</i> <i>enargia</i>
Women, more than half of humanity, are especially affected.	Logos & pathos			common topic of comparison → subtopic of degree	Emphasis <i>Commiseratio</i>
Complete equality for women – for all people – cannot be achieved under these conditions.	Logos			common topic of relationship → subtopic of cause/ effect	
We say no to this type of politics and its consequences.			<i>refutatio</i>		anaphora <i>apodioxix (rejectio)</i> <i>indignatio</i>
We demand [1] disarmament in West and East!					
[2] An immediate sweeping atomic test ban treaty!	pathos		<i>peroratio</i>	common topic of division → subtopic of whole/ parts	Anaphora <i>enumeratio</i> <i>exclamatio/</i> <i>epiphonesis</i>
[3] The immediate removal of all medium range missiles in					

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
Europe!					
[4] No militarization of outer space!					
The Reagan Administration declared the entire third world to be its sphere of interest and plays "world policeman"					Metaphor <i>Accusatio</i> <i>Anacephalaeosis</i> / <i>Epiphonema</i>
For example:					
[1] It bombed Libya using the bombing of the Berlin discothèque "La Belle" as an excuse.					
[2] It shot up Beirut,					
[3] got rid of the government in Grenada	logos	deliberative/ epideictic (unworthy/blame Reagan)	<i>accusatio</i>	common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts	<i>Accusatio</i> <i>Amplificatio/climax</i> <i>enumeratio</i> <i>enargia</i> <i>zeugma</i> <i>asyndeton</i> tale
[4] and mined the harbors in Nicaragua,					
[5] openly supported the Contras,					
[6] and supported the racist white government					

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
in South Africa for strategic reasons.					
[1] The countries of the "third world" are exploited	logos			common topic of relationship → subtopic of antecedents/ consequences	<i>accusatio</i> <i>Enumeratio</i>
[2] and forced into submission					
with the help of the					
[1] International Monetary Fund (IMF) and		deliberative/ epideictic (unworthy/blame RDF & IMF)			<i>enumeratio</i> causes
[2] rapid deployment forces.					
This forces millions of people to leave their homelands.					Consequence
We say no to this policy!			<i>refutatio</i>		<i>Anaphora</i> <i>exclamatio</i> <i>indignatio</i> <i>apodioxix (rejectio)</i>
	pathos		<i>peroratio</i>		

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
We demand:					
[1] Hands off Nicaragua, stop the US aggression in Central America!					
[2] No support for the Apartheid regime!					
[3] No weapons deliveries in the war on the Persian Gulf!					<i>anaphora</i> <i>accusatio</i> <i>enumeratio</i> <i>exclamatio</i>
[4] The cancellation of support agreements (WHINS) for intervention in the third world!					
A 75 th anniversary celebration without Reagan is inconceivable for the Senate		deliberative/ epideictic (unworthy/blame German Senate)		common topic of relationship → subtopic of contraries	<i>Antitheton/ enantiosis paradox</i> rejection
and this is in spite of the fact that they could see	logos	deliberative/ epideictic (good/			

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
the extent to which his political position was rejected by the people of Berlin in 1982		praise German people)			
[1] The social and political conflicts in this city			Silence (pushed aside) and emphasis (big celebration)	common topic of relationship → subtopic of contraries	<i>Accusatio</i> <i>Enumeratio</i> Irony
[2] but also the political scandal of Reagan's Iran-Contra affair, are to be pushed aside in the course of the big celebration.					
[1] The struggle for the 35-hour workweek,					
[2] the mobilization against the removal of rent controls,				common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts	<i>Accusatio</i> <i>Enumeratio</i>
[3] the discussion over the national census					
[4] and the reduction of democratic rights are on the agenda for 1987.					

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
We want to make this clear in the next few days					Anaphora <i>Anacephalacosis</i> / <i>Epiptonema</i>
[1] We don't want this city to be used as a base for the "struggle against evil",					
[1] We don't want "cold war" slogans with nationalistic undertones to be broadcast from this city.			<i>refutatio</i>		<i>Accusatio</i> Metaphor anaphora <i>apodioxis (rejectio)</i>
Berlin (West) cannot fall back into the role of a "thorn in the flesh"					<i>Anacephalacosis</i> / <i>Epiptonema</i> Metaphor
We want Berlin (West) to be:					Anaphora <i>Amplificatio</i>
[1] A city of peace and reduced tensions!	logos & pathos		<i>peroratio</i>	common topic of division → subtopic of whole/parts	<i>enumeratio</i> <i>exclamatio</i> <i>petitio</i>
[2] A center of					

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Original leaflet text	Means of persuasion	Species of rhetoric	Parts of speech/ <i>Dispositio</i>	Topics of invention	Rhetorical figures
understanding and balance!					
[3] An open city for the victims of war, exploitation and repression!					
We want Berlin (West) to finally enter the worldwide city partnership with Hiroshima and Nagasaki to do away with all atomic weapons.			<i>peroratio</i>	common topic of comparison → subtopic of similarity/difference	<i>Anaphora</i> <i>Petitio</i>

The leaflet displays short sentences (*brevitas*)¹¹⁰ that, together with the use of such figures as *asyndeton* (lack of conjunctions) and *zeugma* (one word governing a set of other words (especially *diazeugma*, the same subject for different verbs), hurry the reader along to the final destination: the demonstration of Thursday June 11 and the Peace and Action Day of Friday June 12 in the city centre. To persuade the reader to join in, the leaflet uses a combination of logos and pathos, reason also being couched in emotional tones. Logos relies on a set of topics of invention used recurrently: topic of relationship, with sub-topics of contraries, of causes/consequences, and of antecedents/consequences; topic of comparison, with subtopics of degree and of similarity/difference; topic of division, with the subtopic of whole/parts. Twice, the leaflet also recurs to paradoxical reasoning (via the figure of *enantiosis*, e.g., “despite the fact,” “in spite of the fact”).

The column of Table 2 on parts of speech shows that the leaflet opens with refutation (“We say no to Reagan’s politics”). It then moves to a statement of fact (Reagan’s visit to Berlin), followed by a non-contiguous sequence of refutation/peroration, of what the organizers want and do not want. The brief leaflet does not contain a separate narrative part (*narratio*), although several sentences comply to the narrative form of someone doing something pro/against someone else.¹¹¹ That sequence is made all the more forceful via the extensive use of several figures: *anaphora* (repetition of the same set of words at the beginning of different sentences) applied to both refutations and perorations, rejections and demands; *amplificatio*, the heaping of accusations, rejections, and demands, expressed almost in the form of *enumeratio* (we numbered the items in each enumeration to highlight the use of this figure).

Anaphora plays a key role in the text. But the sequences of repeated words alternate non-contiguously to produce a very strong effect: “we say no. . . we demand . . . we say no. . . we demand . . . we say no. . . we demand . . . we want . . . we don’t want. . . we want . . . we want.” The consistent repetition of some key pleas (stop militarization, war, oppression, exploitation) gives anaphora the characteristics of *epimone*, a figure of pathos based on repetition of pleas. *Epimone* combines with several other figures of pathos used throughout the text to give the leaflet an intense emotional appeal: *exclamatio/ecphonesis*, i.e., the

¹¹⁰On sentence length and sentence construction, see Corbett and Connors *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, cited in n. 60 above, pp. 361–7.

¹¹¹For brevity, following Aphthonius, in Table 2, we have marked these sentences as “tale”, although the 7 loci of peristasis would have also been acceptable. We have put the label in the column of figures, although the tale is properly not a figure.

exclamation marks used in some of the enumerations, *indignatio*, i.e., the arousal of the reader's scorn and indignation, *enargia*, the use of vivid language, *amplificatio* (amplification or expansion) by *climax* (amplification by degrees) leading to *cohortatio* (amplification intended to arouse the reader's indignation), and, finally, *anacephalaeosis* or *accumulatio*, the summaries provided after enumerations throughout the text, especially *epiphonema*, the striking summaries in epigrammatic form (e.g., "arms do not only kill in war").

It is through this deep structural, non-contiguous, sequential pattern of figures, based on a mixture of rational and emotional appeals to the reader, played out at various levels of rhetoric, that the leaflet builds its argument in a simple but powerful way where points are repeatedly hammered away, as perhaps appropriate for a leaflet meant to mobilize people into action ("we are calling for a demonstration").

When viewed in light of the broad gamut of rhetorical categories, Gamson's reliance on metaphors and catch phrases for the analysis of texts appears quite limited. Metaphors and catch phrases, while present in the leaflet, play only a minor role in the text. No less limited is Gerhards and Rucht's analysis of the leaflet's master frame and diagnosis, prognosis, motivation framing strategies. Rhetorical analysis was far more effective than Axelrod's method in bringing out the argumentative structure of the leaflet, in identifying the range of rhetorical categories used. The same is true for the core framing tasks of diagnosis, prognosis, motivation. Blame and causality – the defining features of diagnostic framing – clearly stand out in Table 2. The repeated petitions¹¹² ("we want," "we demand," along with the rejections, "we don't want") make clear the organizers' vision for the future of Berlin and Germany (and of the entire humanity) and what needs to be done: prognostic framing. Rhetorical analyses also show that motivational framing relies on a mixture of pathos and ethos for its call to action. Finally, epideictic rhetoric and the figures of *commiseratio* (expression of sympathy) and *accusatio* (accusations) provide the tools for understanding frame bridging, of friends and foes.

Content and form would allow us to understand the real power of rhetorical analysis. Contrary to Gerhards and Rucht, who work

¹¹²The *petitio* (petition) is not part of classical oratory. It was an essential part of Medieval letter writing or *Ars dictaminis* – *salutatio*, *captatio benevolentiae*, *narratio*, *petitio*, and *conclusio* – *petitio* sometimes providing the purpose of the letter. See James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages. A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 223–248.

directly with text content, rhetorical analysis abstracts *content* (column 1 of Table 2) into *formal* categories of varying levels of abstraction (columns 2–6). Yet, filling out the table cells is not an easy task. Texts do not come conveniently tagged for their underlying rhetorical categories (or frame categories, for that matter). On one side, you have texts. On the other, a daunting list of some 200 figures with names that are hardly illuminating.¹¹³ As Brandt puts it: “Am I supposed to learn this quantity of barbarous [rhetorical] terms and the definitions – often very imprecise ones – that go with them, and then apply a grid of that amplitude in an analysis of texts?”¹¹⁴ And if Brandt, himself a rhetorician, would have troubles fitting text into barbarous and imprecise rhetorical terms, what are the chances that the undergraduate college student typically involved in frame analysis projects could do better?¹¹⁵

FRAME ANALYSIS AND RHETORIC: A MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR A FRUITFUL ENCOUNTER?

Dealing with persuasion and texts, surely, frame analysts should have come across rhetoric. But anyone looking for rhetoric in the large body of scholarly work produced by frame analysts will be disappointed. Rhetoric only makes fleeting appearances. In a rare glimpse on the relation between frame analysis and rhetoric, Gamson and Lasch suggest that “tropes or figures of speech” provide an alternative terminology for framing devices.¹¹⁶ Similarly, Pan and Kosicki write: “Rhetorical structures of news discourse describe the stylistic choices made by journalists in relation to their intended effects.”¹¹⁷ But beyond these cursory references to rhetoric,

¹¹³On *Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*, ed. Roberto Franzosi (New York: Routledge, 2017); a good general site for rhetorical terms is Burton’s *Silva Rhetoricae* at <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>.

¹¹⁴William J. Brandt, “Book review of Lee A. Sonnino, *A Handbook to Sixteenth Century Rhetoric*,” *Foundations of Language* 9.1 (1972): 123–25 (p. 125).

¹¹⁵This problem is known as *reliability*, where quantity and imprecision of concepts to be measured is likely to produce unreliable data, i.e., data that under repeated measurements produce different results. Better work with vaguer concepts, such as metaphors and catch phrases, that albeit less *valid* would produce more reliable data.

¹¹⁶Gamson and Lasch, “The Political Culture of Social Welfare Policy,” cited in n. 12 above, p. 399.

¹¹⁷Pan and Kosicki, “Framing Analysis,” cited in n. 2 above, p. 6.

frame analysts have ignored rhetoric. Gerhards and Rucht, in a study that deals with “argumentative persuasion”¹¹⁸ never use the word “rhetoric” and never mention Perelman’s or Toulmin’s work on argumentation, two of the most important twentieth-century developments in rhetoric.¹¹⁹ Gerhards and Rucht are hardly alone in their neglect of rhetoric. As Table 3 shows, references to rhetoric are rare in the frame analysis literature, and in any case with no more than a handful of lines at best. Instead, gropingly looking for answers to their quest, frame analysts introduced new concepts and new terminology (but with an impoverished content) for very old ideas.

This is hardly surprising. After all, a process of “suppression of rhetoric” that had started in the nineteenth century,¹²⁰ by “the beginning of the twentieth century” had ended in the “great shipwreck of rhetoric.”¹²¹ In 1936, Richards would tell his Bryn Mawr audience: “So low has Rhetoric sunk that we would do better just to dismiss it to Limbo than to trouble ourselves with it.”¹²² And in 1970, Barthes felt “obliged” to publish rudimentary notes on rhetoric, a field of knowledge that had disappeared and was “poorly known.”¹²³ So, twentieth-century social scientists working on frames were in good company in largely ignoring rhetoric or in narrowly and generically focusing on metaphors as a means to study frames. Ironic perhaps that Google Ngram Viewer data would show the steep, rising popularity of rhetoric *and* metaphor starting in the 1980s, and for a couple of decades thereafter, confirming Genette’s view of a shrinking down of rhetoric to metaphor.¹²⁴ Notwithstanding, frame analysts ended up reinventing the wheel; but stopping short of developing what was really required to measure “*exactly* how frames . . . make themselves manifest in a text,”¹²⁵ the vast array of rhetorical tropes and figures. Perhaps a missed opportunity. As for rhetoricians, they may feel both relieved

¹¹⁸Gerhards and Rucht, “Mesomobilization,” cited in n. 44 above, p. 586.

¹¹⁹Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric. A Treatise on Argumentation* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969).

¹²⁰Hayden White, “The Suppression of Rhetoric in the Nineteenth Century,” in Brenda Deen Schildgen, ed., *The Rhetoric Canon* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1997), 21–31.

¹²¹Genette, “Rhetoric Restrained,” cited in n. 88 above, p. 114.

¹²²L.A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 3.

¹²³Roland Barthes, “L’ancienne rhétorique,” *Communications* 16 (1970): 172–223. Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (San Francisco: Chandler Pub. Co., 1972), 172.

¹²⁴Genette, “Rhetoric Restrained,” cited in n. 88 above, p. 114; Also see Franzosi’s cover jacked in *On Tropes and Figures. Landmark Essay*.

¹²⁵Entman, “Framing,” cited in n. 5 above, p. 51. Emphasis added.

Table 3. Rhetorical Concepts/Terms Mentioned in Framing Literature¹²⁶

Year	Scholar	Rhetorical concept/term	N. Sentences	N. Paragraphs	Page
1983	Gamson and Lasch	Tropes or figures of speech	1		399
		Metaphor	1		399
1989	Gamson and Modigliani	Metaphor	3		2, 3, 13
1992	Gerhards and Rucht	Persuasive communication Argumentative persuasion	1	1	574, 586
1993	Pan and Kosicki	Syntactical structure		1	60
			5		63
		Story grammar	1		60
		Rhetorical structure		1	61
			3		63
		Metaphor Lexical choices	1 3	1	61 62 64
2001	Tankard	Metaphor	1		99
2002	Johnston		1		62
		Story grammar		1	78

that their discipline survived “the great shipwreck” and vindicated that frame analysts would discover, unknowingly, a taxonomic system quite similar to, yet not as sophisticated as, the one they had been writing about for hundreds of years; the very unchanging nature of rhetoric the best “proof that the system worked to everyone’s satisfaction.”¹²⁷

¹²⁶The word rhetoric appears in the framing literature as a generic adjective rather than as a tool of analysis. For example, see Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*.

¹²⁷Brian Vickers, “Rhetorical and Anti-Rhetorical Tropes: On Writing the History of Elocution,” in E.S. Shaffer, ed., *Comparative Criticism: A Yearbook* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 105–132 (p. 108).