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Rhetoric as Argument

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❖ INTRODUCTION: RHETORICAL
   FIGURES AND ARGUMENTS

The last chapter explored argument as rhetoric. Now we want to turn
things around and ask whether rhetoric, or at least traditional rhetori-
cal devices like the figures, can serve as argument. Reboul (1989) raises
just this question when he asks: "Can a figure of rhetoric be an argu-
ment? Can it be an element of argumentation?" (169). A recent study
of rhetorical figures in the domain of science by American scholar
Fahnestock (1999) suggests a very deep relationship between figures
and arguments to the point where figures can be seen to play impor-
tant argumentative roles. In this chapter, we will look closely at the
work of Reboul and Fahnestock, as well as that of Perelman and
Olbrechts-Tyteca. In drawing on what these scholars have to say about
the place of figures in a theory of argument, we will look to push their
proposals a little further. Certainly, there are many ways in which
figures contribute to the success of arguments. But we can go further
than Fahnestock and show that figures do not just facilitate arguments;
in some cases they *are* arguments. The issue is then whether they work

as patterns of argument like other traditional types of argument, and whether they have corresponding conditions that can help us evaluate them. In some cases, we will see that they can.

Rhetorical figures are devices that use words to make some striking effects on an audience. We have already encountered some rhetorical figures in this book. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser drew on several figures in their development of rhetorical dimensions within the model of pragma-dialectical argumentation. For example, at each stage of a critical discussion appropriate presentational devices can be exploited by an arguer. Here, rhetorical figures are used to impress moves upon the mind, thus compounding their effect. As a case in point, their study of William the Silent's discourse identifies the figure *praeteritio* being used at the confrontation stage: "I will not repeat the perjuries and deceits of the Duchess [of Parma], nor of the King on behalf of My Lords the Counts of Egmont and Horne . . . nor the baits and allurements which they prepared for me" (1999b, 169–170). Here, the claim that the speaker will not repeat things is followed by the mention of what will not be repeated, effectively doing the very thing that he claims not to do.

Elsewhere, van Eemeren and Houtlosser take the common tack of employing a rhetorical figure themselves when they write "all derailments of strategic maneuvering are fallacious, and all fallacies can be regarded as derailments of strategic maneuvering" (2001, 23). The figure of interest here is the *antimetabole*, which involves the reversal of pairs and can serve, as it does here, to emphasize a point. Here, then, the rhetorical figure seems much more than a mere stylistic procedure (Reboul 1989, 169).

Part of the difficulty in explaining and categorizing rhetorical figures lies in the 2,500 years of accounts that may be as noteworthy for their differences as for their agreements (Fahnestock 1999, 6). Early catalogues, like that of the first century *Rhetorica ad Herennium,* distinguish figures of speech and thought while mixing figures with tropes. It seems to have been Quintilian who made the firm distinction between tropes and figures that has survived down to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's groundbreaking work, *The New Rhetoric* (1969).[1] Here, a "trope" is distinguished as an "artistic alteration of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another" (Quintilian in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 398). On the other hand, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca significantly modify the traditional distinction between figures of speech and thought, which refers to a speaker's

intention, and stress rather the effect on an audience (169). This is because a specific figure, recognized as such by its structure, may not have the same effect in different situations. I will return to this below.

What this discussion does point to is an important feature of any definition of the rhetorical figure: its structure. Reboul explains this in terms of it being codified, "because each figure constitutes a known structure which is transferable to other contents: *the* metaphor, *the* allegory" (1989, 169). In this feature, at least, figures resemble the equally codified and transferable types of argument to be discussed below. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca see the presence of a discernible structure to be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for there to be a figure. A second condition is required, which is "a use that is different from the normal manner of expression and, consequently, attracts attention" (1969, 168). At least one of these requirements characterizes most definitions that have come down through the centuries.

The effect of attracting attention will be important for any argumentative value that figures have. But the sense of a "use" is at this point ambiguous. Reboul refers to "the great tradition going back to Aristotle," which sees the essence of rhetoric as persuasion through discourse. Thus, a figure is rhetorical only "to the extent that it contributes to persuading" (1989, 169). However, as we saw in the last chapter, this image is very much a caricature of rhetoric. Or perhaps we might charitably observe that it is an accurate description of the "great" tradition going back *to* Aristotle. But if we begin from the roots of rhetoric that precede Aristotle, and then trace an understanding and practice that includes him, the use of rhetoric (and in particular rhetorical argument) to persuade is but one use, and a minor one at that. This is something to bear in mind as our discussion continues. It is the case that we see in Gorgias the power of words to evoke emotions, and this has often been seen as the desired effect of rhetorical figures (Herrick 2001, 112), but we will see them doing much more.

In her review of the history of rhetorical figures, Fahnestock observes how Quintilian chooses figures (*figurae*) for the Greek term *schemata*. This term captures, in a way, both senses of rhetorical figures that have interested us:

In the first it is applied to any form in which thought is expressed, just as it is to bodies, which, whatever their composition, must have some shape. In the second and special sense, in which it is called a *schema*, it means a rational change in meaning or language

from ordinary and simple form, that is to say, a change analogous
to that involved by sitting, lying down on something or looking
back. (Quintilian 1921, III:353)

Interestingly, the schema (or schemes) that now most occupy argu-
mentation theorists are the schemes used for arguments. Argument
schemes are understood in different ways in current theory (Garssen
2001; Walton 1996a), but in general they capture the structure of infer-
ence underlying an argument. As Garssen describes their function,
"the link between the argument and the standpoint is adequate if the
acceptability of the premise is 'transferred' to the standpoint by means
of the 'argumentation scheme' that is being used" (2001, 81). Argu-
mentation schemes are, then, also identified by distinct, transferable
structures, but they don't possess the changes of language use that
characterize many rhetorical figures. The scope of argumentation
schemes is extensive, from the appeal to authority to the argument
from analogy. And some would even include the argument patterns of
formal reasoning as schemes.

To see how they are understood to work, consider one of Walton's
schemes that has obvious relevance to our investigations of rhetorical
argument. Ethotic argument, for Walton, involves an appeal to the
arguer's character.[2] He sets out the argumentation scheme, with a gen-
eral first premise (indicated by the x) and a specific second premise
(indicated by the a), as follows:

If x is a person of good moral character, then what x contends
(*A*) should be accepted (as more plausible).
　　a is a person of good moral character.
　　Therefore, what a contends (*A*) should be accepted (as more
plausible). (1996a, 85)

As we see, it is how acceptability is transferred within the pattern
that is at issue.

One clear way in which the identification of argumentation
schemes is useful is with respect to the evaluation of arguments, since
associated with each scheme is a set of critical questions by which to
assess the appropriateness of a particular argument expressing a
scheme. In his presentation of the scheme for ethotic arguments, for
example, Walton offers the following set of critical questions:

1. Is *a* a person of good moral character?

2. Is the question of *a*'s character relevant, in the context of dialogue in the given case?

3. How strong a weight of presumption in favour of *A* is claimed, and is that strength warranted by the case? (1996a, 86)

Such argumentation does not prove a conclusion; rather, in Walton's term, it "enhances" the conclusion, thereby creating a presumption in its favor.

There is a real danger, though, that we will confuse the sense of scheme here with that used by Fahnestock above to describe a change in meaning or language from ordinary and simple form. That is the sense of scheme that came to be called "figure." Clearly, the same meaning is not at stake now with argument schemes. In order to avoid such confusion, I will discuss ways in which some figures might be seen to serve as arguments or even types of argument (given that they have a regular pattern) rather than argument schemes. What matters to us is the specific ways audiences are moved from considering reasons to considering conclusions. Some rhetorical figures, on some occasions, work in this way. Sometimes they will merely facilitate the argument (but even this is significant for a device that many have seen as no more than stylistic), but on other occasions they are the argument.

This brings us back to the unresolved question of what counts as "rhetorical argument." Indeed, what we will see in figures are strategies that arguers may employ, that serve as ways to communicate with an audience in an argumentative situation. In Chapter 1, it was noted that the key to understanding rhetorical argument is to focus on this argumentative situation and its components of arguer, audience, and argument, with the last being determined by the others. An "argument" here is the discourse of interest that centers, and develops in, the argumentative situation. Insofar as rhetorical figures form such discourses, they are devices of argument.

Like rhetorical figures, types of argument have also already made an appearance in this text. The *ad baculum*,[3] or appeal to force, arose in the discussion of Johnson's dialectical model of argument, and types were evident in the reasoning of the Sophists, including the argument from probability. In its basic structure, and ignoring its other features, an argument has a claim or conclusion and some support presented for that claim. The variety of argument types points to the many different

conventional relationships that can exist between the claim and support, or ways in which arguers attempt to encourage an audience to adopt a position or thesis.

❖   REBOUL ON FIGURES AND ARGUMENTS

In the course of his study, Reboul explores the relationship between figures and argument by means of several crucial questions: "in what ways do figures facilitate argumentation? . . . can the figure itself constitute an argument? . . . is not argument itself a figure, more or less?" (1989, 170).

The ways in which rhetorical figures may facilitate argumentation can be seen in the cases of figures of thought like allegory and irony. Here, the figure pertains not to a part of a discourse, but to the discourse itself. Of relevance are the multiple readings that arise from allegorical or ironic discourses, since "double meaning has argumentative value" (173). How Reboul understands this value is perhaps best seen in the case of irony and a related figure of pretense, the *apostrophe.* The latter involves the pretense of addressing an audience other than one's actual audience, or "in imagining a fictitious audience in order to better persuade the real one" (174). Like irony, this reinforces the link between speaker and public. Clearly, from a rhetorical point of view, such reinforcement is important and does have argumentative value. But Reboul is less forthcoming concerning the details of this reinforcement. In the case of irony, however, assuming it is recognized, we can imagine the speaker or writer fostering a commonality with an audience who, seeing the irony, appreciates its power and is more predisposed to receiving the arguer's principal claim (Tindale and Gough 1987). Likewise, with apostrophe, we can imagine particular cases (and much would depend here on the specifics of the case) in which an arguer addresses an absent party, perhaps the ancestors of the real audience, in whom that real audience places some particular value. The strategy is commonly used when a group that has some common specific interest publishes an "open letter" to a government leader or organization. The aim is not to persuade the government leader of anything (at least not directly) so much as to influence the public readership. Likewise, television debates between political candidates are actually intended for the audience, and a lawyer's remarks addressed to a witness are intended really for those interested parties that are listening, like the jury and the media.[4]

When it comes to the question of whether a figure can constitute an argument, the relationship is now internal, as the figure "inserts itself in the web of argumentation" (Reboul 1989, 178). Here, Reboul makes the clearest case through considering metaphor, which is viewed as an argument insofar as it is a condensed analogy. While metaphor is probably the figure that has received the most recent scholarly attention (and thus may least reward further study), Reboul's examples are less than clear. Consider his case of proving that one good piece of news does not guarantee happiness from its similarity to the proverb (courtesy of Aristotle–*EN* I, Ch. 7) "one swallow does not make a summer."[5] The two analogues being compared are identified as *theme* and *phore*, and set out as follows (176):

Theme	*Phore*
A One good piece of news	C One swallow
B does not guarantee happiness (is like)	D does not make a summer

As Reboul explains this, "in our proverb, we prove B given A, C, and D, since the relation between A and B resembles that between C and D" (176). The metaphor is an argument in the sense that it "draws its strength from the analogy that it condenses." But that analogy itself is not clearly an argument, at least not a clear argument from analogy, where a conclusion is drawn that an analogue has a feature, *x,* on the basis of its similarity to another analogue known to have feature *x.* Reboul's "proving" of B does not proceed this way. In fact, as a "proof" this seems very weak in the persuasive sense that Reboul understands argument. Alternatively, if we see argument having wider goals than just persuasion, goals like contributing to understanding and insight, then the sense of a metaphor operating as a condensed analogy does have argumentative value in the way it can bring about a change in the audience's perspective by having them view a situation in a different light. That, at least, is how Reboul's example works.[6]

However, Reboul's most interesting discussion is reserved for his last question: is not argument itself a figure? His principal claim here is that "argumentation is indissociable from the figures it uses," although this does not show up in most post-Perelmanian studies of argumentation because they invent fictitious arguments rather than using real ones. This claim is supported by identifying several key features of

argumentation: (i) to be effective, argumentation must build on the consensus it establishes with its audience, taking into account features of that audience; (ii) argumentation uses natural language, which is naturally figured; (iii) argumentation does not have the rigor of demonstration (a point that has been emphatically made by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca); and (iv) argumentation is always opposed to another argumentation and thus is polemical in its essence.[7] These characteristics of argumentation, we realize, are also features of the rhetorical figures. And it is because an argument "possesses the same status of imprecision, intersubjectivity, and polemic" (181) that it can be viewed as a figure.

There is much, then, of value in Reboul's treatment. But as I have suggested, its drawback is the restrictive way in which it views the goal of argument as persuasion, at least indirectly. For in Reboul's view, "the essence of rhetoric is persuasion through discourse," and hence a figure is only rhetorical to the extent that it contributes to persuading and, hence further, as soon as it is rhetorical it contributes to argumentation (169). Thus, a link is established between persuasive discourse and argumentation. This, we have seen, is too limiting a goal for rhetorical argumentation and one that is supported neither by the origins of the tradition nor by current models. Reboul further suggests that it is in this way that the authors of *The New Rhetoric* understood the figure. It is the case that they consider a figure to be argumentative if it brings about a change in perspective (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 169) or gains the audience's adherence (Perelman 1982, 39), but such an effect was also shown in the previous chapter to involve more than mere persuasion. Perspectives change through insight, understanding, and agreement, and rhetorical argumentation contributes to all of these.

❖ PERELMAN AND OLBRECHTS-TYTECA

However, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's study of rhetorical figures is an important source for the focus of this chapter, even if they are admittedly more concerned with the techniques of persuasive discourse (1969, 168). The emphasis they give to the figures is on their effects, because although they may be recognizable by their structures, they do not always produce the same effects. A consequence of this is that, for them, the argumentative nature of a figure cannot be described in advance. It is because of this relativity that they turn away from a

traditional categorization of figures as those of thought or speech—a division that Aristotle did not recognize, but which seems to have become obligatory since the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Fahnestock 1999, 7)—and instead focus on three types of effect: choice, presence, and communion.[8] This is not to propose families of figures, but to show that "the effect, or one of the effects, certain figures have in the presentation of data is to impose or to suggest a choice, to increase the impression of presence, or to bring about communion with the audience" (172).

The argumentative effect of an *oratorical definition* can reveal it to be a figure of choice in a case where the structure of a definition is used not to give the meaning of a word but to bring forward aspects of a case or situation that would otherwise be overlooked or ignored (172–173). Focus shifts from the definition itself to its effect on the audience. Only in this sense does the figure appear as argumentative. Likewise, *prolepsis* can be a figure of choice when it does not just anticipate objections and respond to them, but indicates also a range of possible objections from which the ones addressed have been particularly chosen.

Gross and Dearin find the effect of choice in Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca "too obscure for exposition" (2003, 117), and focus their attention on communion and (in a later chapter) presence. There is some ground for their concern, particularly in the sense that if arguers choose those figures that best fit the audience they have in mind, then this seems already a matter of communion. One response to this is suggested in the use of van Eemeren and Houtlosser's similar effect of "topical potential" discussed in Chapter 1. As they define this dimension, it involves not so much fitting one's discourse to the audience but to one's own interests and to the issue at hand. Choice (or topical potential) in these senses involves the attempt of the arguer to control the discourse from the outset by choosing figures that present an issue as the arguer sees it and wants the audience to see it; it also involves selecting those figures best suited to discussing the issue in question. This interpretation of "choice" is suggested by Gross and Dearin's own earlier discussion of the relation between reality and language as Perelman viewed it. In "Rhetoric and Philosophy" (1968, 16–17) Perelman writes,

The choice of a linguistic form is neither purely arbitrary nor simply a carbon copy of reality. The reasons that induce us to prefer one conception of experience, one analogy, to another, are a function of our vision of the world. The form is not separable from

the content; language is not a veil which one need only discard or render transparent in order to perceive the real as such; it is inextricably bound up with a point of view, with the taking of a position.

If language is so inextricably bound up with our view of the real as this suggests, then it makes perfect sense to recommend that an arguer choose the linguistic vehicle that best fits the view of the real that is at issue. This is a further reason for appreciating why the line between tropes (meaning) and schemes (form) is so blurred for Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, effectively eliminating the value of such a distinction in particular instances.

In the case of figures of presence, the effect, as we also saw in the treatment of van Eemeren and Houtlosser, is "to make the object of discourse present to the mind" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 174). An arguer should begin from premises acceptable to the intended audience. But this rote prescription can overlook the difficulties often involved in an audience actually recognizing what is acceptable to them. Employing devices that make something present actively engages an audience and encourages recognition required for the acceptability of premises. An example may forcefully illustrate a principle that an audience then recognizes as acceptable to it as a basic premise. This is really where the use of an expression different from the norm comes to the fore. Among the various figures that might fulfill this function that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca choose to discuss are *onomatopoeia* (where a word is used in imitation of the thing meant), *repetition,* which seems superfluous in a demonstration but has the valuable rhetorical effect of emphasizing so as to attract attention, and *amplification,* in the sense of the oratorical development of a theme.

Figures that relate to communion are those in which "literary devices are used to try to bring about or increase communion with the audience" (177). On the face of it, "communion" is a vague term, but in the context of *The New Rhetoric* and the examples that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca use, the sense of connecting with an audience on that audience's terms comes through. We see this, for example, in *allusion,* where something is evoked without being expressly named, and that something involves knowledge that is peculiar to the audience concerned. Thus an intimacy is created, a connection that might be built upon. Insofar as arguers try to reason from basic premises that are shared with an audience, then ways to establish such connections that

make audiences more inclined to accept premises are essential. Allusion also has ethotic import insofar as such connections increase the audience's appreciation of the arguer.

Similarly, in what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca call *oratorical communication* (178), a speaker invites an audience to enter into deliberation with her or him and think through the issue together, as if they were a common mind at work. Consider how the following discourse on the issue of human cloning works upon an audience concerned by the claims of a scientist (Dr. Seed) that he would open cloning clinics in suburban malls: "Our horrified initial reaction to Dr. Seed's proposal ought now to be critically scrutinized. Thoughtful people will recognize that our strong feelings are sometimes mere prejudice or ignorance masquerading as reason" (Schafer 1998). By introducing the category of "thoughtful people," from which members of the audience are unlikely to believe themselves excluded, the writer establishes the atmosphere of a shared investigation.

In ways like these, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca indicate how such figures can facilitate argumentation. We might also see in the examples of several figures ways in which a figure becomes a part of an argument in the sense of providing the link between premise material and a claim. This is something to be explored further in subsequent sections. Also of value is Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's recognition that a figure becomes argumentative when it brings about a change of perspective (1969, 169). That they see this measured in the principal goal of persuasion (179) does not diminish the value of the insight.

❖   FAHNESTOCK'S FIGURAL LOGIC

The most impressive treatment of rhetorical figures to have appeared in a long time is Fahnestock's (1999). As she explains her purpose, employing a figure she will later analyze, "rhetoric is used in this study to illuminate scientific arguments, but, more important here, scientific arguments are used to illuminate rhetoric" (viii). She goes beyond the well-harvested soil of the metaphor to examine a handful of other figures, like *antithesis, gradatio, incrementum, antimetabole, ploche,* and *polyptoton,* all of which can be identified with arguments or reasoning. In doing so, she lays "bare the cognitive heart of figuration generally" (Harris 2001, 1) and constructs the first truly overwhelming case for figures as arguments (2).

Important to her study is a feature of argumentation generally, and rhetorical argumentation specifically, that is often overlooked because of our habitual fixation on arguments as products that might be "analyzed" in isolation from the contexts in which they arise. The feature in question is that arguments are *experienced:* "whether heard or read, in time, it makes sense to think of them [arguments] as ebbing and surging, now at a 'lower' point of restatement or elaboration and now at a 'higher' point of succinct and epitomizing summation" (Fahnestock 1999, 30). This captures something of the dynamism at the heart of argumentation that will be investigated further in the next chapter's consideration of Bakhtin's suggestive contributions to the study of argument. The experiential aspect is also vividly seen, of course, in the notion of *presence,* of foregrounding objects of a discourse so that the mind attends to them. And a further feature of the experiential aspect that is important at this point lies in the nature of the rhetorical enthymeme, discussed in the previous chapter and elsewhere (Tindale 1999a). The rhetorical enthymeme is an invitation to an audience to become active in the reasoning and its development, and an important part of this is when an enthymeme has the type of "incompleteness" that the audience can remedy.[9]

Fahnestock's study captures the appreciation of the enthymeme insofar as she sees figures invoking the collaboration of audiences. She follows Burke (1969) in considering figures to be able to "express a particular line of argument and simultaneously to induce an audience to participate in that argument simply by virtue of their form" (Fahnestock 1999, 34). How does this work in the case of figures? As Harris (2001) suggests in his critical study of her book, a reader or listener will simply follow the pattern (even if it is against their inclination) "sometimes running ahead of the rhetor and pressing its completion" (3).

This sense of collaboration is brought out most forcefully in Fahnestock's treatment of *antithesis,* the figure that sets contrasting or opposing terms in parallel or balanced cola or phrases. For example: "You have everything to win/and nothing to lose" (1999, 50). Most effective are the double cola, seen for example in Aristotle (*Topics* Bk. II, Ch. 7): "good to friends and evil to enemies." Fahnestock writes of this,

> If it is right to help or do good to one's friends, it is also right to do evil to one's enemies, and if it is wrong to do evil to one's friends, it is wrong to help one's enemies. Here "opposite [good/evil] lies with opposite [friend/enemy]," and therefore either of these statements can be used in support of the other. (52)

What Fahnestock stresses is how this pattern is experienced, how it encourages an active audience to follow the pattern, "fulfill its predictions and even to feel its force" (69). As relevant as such an antithesis would be where the opposites already are accepted by the audience, its greater effect may arise when this is not the case and the argument is constructed so as to set in opposition terms that the audience would not have viewed as such beforehand.

The *antimetabole* (turning about) has a similar predictive aspect to it. In fact, Fahnestock considers that it may be the most predictive because it is easiest to complete following its first clause (124). It is also, like the antithesis, a "premise-gathering machine" (132). The antimetabole involves inverted parallelisms or word reversals. We would recall in this respect President Kennedy's famous antimetabole: Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country. The simplicity of its pattern makes it easy to recognize and complete, and Fahnestock shows scientific reasoning to be rife with this figure, from Pasteur to Newton, Faraday to Lamarck (137–154).

The antimetabole frequently characterizes arguments proposing reciprocal causality, or reverse causality, and given the relation between the verbal form and substance of such reasoning, Fahnestock believes we can predict the appearance of the antimetabole in such arguments on the grounds of what she calls "figural logic" (141). This is the kind of reciprocity we see, for example, in Newton's Third Law of Motion.[10] Thus, when Newton comes to clarify and illustrate his law, he does so, predictably, with antimetaboles:

> Whatever draws or presses another is as much drawn or pressed by that other. If you press a stone with your finger, the finger is also pressed by the stone. If a horse draws a stone tied to a rope, the horse (if I may say so) will be equally drawn back to the stone; for the distended rope, by the same endeavour to relax or unbend itself, will draw the horse as much towards the stone as it does the stone towards the horse. (Newton 1822, 16; 1952, 14, cited in Fahnestock 1999, 142)

The ways in which the antimetabole works as an argument will be considered in the next section.

Fahnestock also looks at examples of what was earlier identified as *amplification,* but through figures that construct series like *incrementum*

and *gradatio.* An ordered, ascending series that builds praise is the kind of thing that exemplifies the former, while the *gradatio* series builds by repeating something of each preceding phrase or claim. Examples of the latter, many drawn from Darwin's *The Origin of the Species*, serve to show the argumentative nature of these types of figure (114–121). We see it also in William Paley's famous: "Design must have had a designer. That designer must have been a person. That person is God" (Paley 1963, 44). Fahnestock takes a more contemporary piece from the *New York Times*, about the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park in the winter of 1994–1995, and adds italics to emphasize the overlapping terms:

> 1. Carcasses of large prey, like elk, slaughtered by wolves will add nutrients and humus to the *soil.* 2. The more fertilized *soil* will support lush vegetation, probably attracting snowshoe *hares.* 3. The presence of *hares* will likely prove a lure for *foxes* and other predators. 4. The *foxes* will also prey on rodents like *mice* in the area. 5. A misplaced *mouse predator,* like a weasel, is likely to fall prey to an owl. (1999, 109)

In fact, this verbal *gradatio* is accompanied by illustrations that create a visual *gradatio* as well, thus increasing the argumentative force. Fahnestock assesses this as a clear presentational choice on the part of the experts who produced the text, deciding that "a gradation would most persuasively express the causal reasoning for the large, mixed audience of the *New York Times*" (109). What the *gradatio* does is lead the audience through reasonable, causal steps towards the position of supporting the reintroduction of the wolves. It also anticipates and addresses concern that the wolves might disrupt the ecology. From this perspective, the *gradatio* itself works as a *prolepsis.*

As a last set of examples illustrating her work, we might consider the figures of repetition that Fahnestock provides in *ploche* (a single word or its variants reappearing throughout a discourse like a braid) and *polyptoton* (repeating a word in different grammatical cases). *Ploche* stands out from the other figures we have discussed because it lacks a detectable pattern (and so does not fit Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's first condition for a figure). But this very invisibility is what, Fahnestock finds, makes it potentially so effective. Undoubtedly, an idea can be made present to an audience through such repetition. But what is difficult is the attribution to an author of any clear intention of use. Still, if

our interest lies primarily in the effect a discourse has on an audience, then such an intention is less significant. As Fahnestock indicates, *ploche* serves to suggest interconnections among different phenomena. Thus, Franklin uses *ploche* for "electric," "electrical," "electrified," and "electrised" to make connections throughout his experiments (190). Much of the same in terms of value and difficulty holds for *polyptoton*. As Fahnestock notes, while the creation of premises from grammatical shifting seems far removed from modern ideas of good argumentative practice, "[i]t is sometimes the goal of an argument to take a concept accepted by an audience in one role or category of sentence action and transfer it to others, an agent becoming an action or an action becoming an attribute and so on" (171). Indeed, there seems nothing to preclude an arguer from using such a strategy to move her audience through premises to a conclusion. And Fahnestock illustrates this with further verbal and visual examples, like those used to show changes in fossils. It is a measure of the success of her treatments that she can make her case even with such difficult and overlooked figures.

What Fahnestock's work certainly undermines is the traditional view that a figure is just a stylistic adornment to discourse, added for effect. She shows it instead to be woven into the very structure of a discourse, determining its scheme and effect. As Fahnestock notes, the way figures have been schematized has been reelaborated for almost 2,500 years (6). A further consideration of some of them as kinds of argument seems both timely and, in light of what Fahnestock has shown, appropriate. Pouncing on her remark about "figural logic," Harris emphasizes how her work amply illustrates the interdependence of figuration and argumentation (Harris 2001, 6), while she stops just short of drawing the conclusion about that interdependence that her work supports.

❖ FIGURES AS ARGUMENTS

To recall the earlier explanation, the feature of arguments relevant to the present discussion is that they are regularized patterns, or codified structures, that transfer acceptability from premises to conclusions. The ways in which they do this are varied and range from the simple to the complex. If any of the figures are to be recognized *as* arguments, then on the occasions that they function as such they will need to encourage the same movement within a discourse, from premise to conclusion. The similarities between arguments and figures have been well

presented by Reboul and Fahnestock. Reboul (1989, 181) shows how an argument "possesses the same status of imprecision, intersubjectivity and polemic" as a figure. Fahnestock takes us much further in laying bare the cognitive heart of figuration. But she has done much more than this by identifying within key figures crucial features of rhetorical argument like collaboration and experience. As part of the latter, she shows how readily figures with their atypical employments of language capture the movements that take place within discourses.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca reinforce a further important feature: arguments aim at a change of perspective, whether this involves persuasion as their account suggests, or the insight, understanding, and agreement seen elsewhere. Related to this is Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's lesson of case-by-case assessment. As they explain it, a figure can be argumentative or not, depending on the case in question, so a figure functions as an argument when it meets certain conditions.[11] I will specify these as follows:

A figure serves as an argument when

(i) it has a recognized structure (is codified);

(ii) its inner activity promotes the movement from premises to a conclusion;

(iii) it has one of the goals of argumentation.

Beyond this, we must bear in mind that we are looking at arguments from a rhetorical, rather than a dialectical or logical, point of view. Thus, certain features become more important to us, and we ask questions that would not be asked, say, from a logical perspective: questions like "How is this discourse *experienced*?" "How does it invite collaboration?"

Our investigation of figures as arguments cannot be exhaustive. The aim is rather to look at some common patterns that fit the requirements here and learn more about rhetorical argument through their analyses.

As already noted, one of the most common sets of figures are those based on similarity, figures like allusion, analogy, and metaphor. This will be an easier place to begin and make some brief points. In a recent defense of the novel, Rushdie (2002) includes the following:

In America, in 1999, over five thousand new novels were published. Five thousand! It would be a miracle if five hundred publishable novels had been written in a year. It would be extraordinary if fifty of them were good. It would be cause for universal celebration if five of them—if one of them—were great.

Publishers are over-publishing because, in house after house, good editors have been fired or not replaced, and an obsession with turnover has replaced the ability to distinguish good books from bad. Let the market decide, too many publishers seem to think. Let's just put this stuff out there. Something's bound to click. So out to the stores they go, into the valley of death go the five thousand, with publicity machines providing inadequate covering fire. This approach is fabulously self-destructive. (55)

In this piece, we see at least two figures in use: *incrementum* in the first paragraph, and *analogy* through an *allusion* in the second. Both are used argumentatively in Rushdie's criticism of the publishing industry, both are used to encourage the audience to hold a certain perspective on the issue. And they are effective in doing this. I want to focus on the second figure here because it relates directly to Rushdie's charge that the industry is self-destructive. How is it self-destructive? In the way that the infamous Light Brigade was self-destructive at Balaclava during the Crimean war, and with the associated sense of folly. And this is made present through the allusion to Tennyson's poem, explicitly invoked through the phrase he uses, referring to the valley of death.

This is an easier example to begin with because we already recognize the argument from analogy as a type of argument with a specific pattern. So analogy, in this sense, is a crossover device, doing double duty in the repertoires of both rhetors and arguers. Rushdie's use here, though, is made denser, richer by the addition of allusion. Given the forum involved, Rushdie expects literary savvy in his audience. The piece first appeared in *The New Yorker,* and makes assumptions about the background of the audience. In fact, if we do not see the allusion, the piece loses much of its force (for which one must then fall back on the *incrementum* of the first paragraph). When we ask our question, "how is this argument *experienced* by its audience?" we recognize how effective it is at making present the theme of self-destructiveness. Moreover, the allusion requires collaboration in an essential way. The audience must complete the analogy, draw the link between premises and conclusion that the analogy embodies.

Can we step beyond the argument from analogy itself and identify allusion as an argument when used in such ways? I think this example allows that we can. Allusion has a codified structure, it involves something being evoked without being expressly named, a knowledge that we expect the audience to have. We see a movement from the premises to the conclusion, from a recognition/understanding already shared between arguer and audience to a recognition/understanding that it is proposed they should share. And it works here to achieve an argumentative goal: to bring the audience to see the publishing industry as self-destructive. It may also have the further ethotic element noted by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, 177) and Leff (2003), insofar as the intimacy created by the allusion increases the audience's appreciation of the arguer. When allusion is used as an argument, it would have conditions like the following:

x is evoked by a discourse

x involves a connection with A that when made present increases the plausibility of A.

Therefore, A is plausible.

In the example under question, x is represented by Rushdie's allusion to Tennyson's poem (and perhaps Tennyson's own deeper allusion to *Psalms*), or more particularly to the self-destructiveness of the actors in that poem, and A by the self-destructiveness of the publishing industry. In assessing such an argument from the point of view of its effect on an audience, certain questions come to the fore:

• Does the audience recognize what has been evoked (do they see the allusion)? This is a question about audience relevance. If the author misjudges this point, the argument is not effective.
• Is the connection between x and A sufficient to increase A's plausibility? This requires a judgment on the part of the evaluator, as assessing plausible reasoning often will.

The next example is less contemporary and comes from Socrates' speech in Plato's *Apology.* This example requires more discussion than the last because it involves the figure *praeteritio,* or pointing to what one claims not to mention, and what is pointed to in this way is a

recognized type of argument. At 34b–e, Socrates tells his audience that he will not use an *ad misericordiam* argument.

> Perhaps one of you might be angry as he recalls that when he himself stood trial on a less dangerous charge, he begged and implored the jury with many tears, that he brought his children and many of his friends and family into court to arouse as much pity as he could, but that I do none of these things, even though I may seem to be running the ultimate risk. Thinking of this, he might feel resentful toward me and, angry about this, cast his vote in anger. If there is such a one among you—I do not deem there is, but if there is—I think it would be right to say in reply: My good sir, I too have a household and, in Homer's phrase, I am not born "from oak or rock" but from men, so that I have a family, indeed three sons, gentlemen of the jury, of whom one is an adolescent while two are children. Nevertheless, I will not beg you to acquit me by bringing them here. Why do I do none of these things? Not through arrogance, gentlemen, nor through lack of respect for you. Whether I am brave in the face of death is another matter, but with regard to my reputation and yours and that of the whole city, it does not seem right to me to do these things, especially at my age and with my reputation.

The *ad misericordiam,* or appeal to pity, attempts to further a case (support a position or conclusion) by bringing in some reference or aspect that is designed to provoke an emotional response in the audience, thus making them more sympathetic to the arguer's point. Insofar as such an appeal has been viewed as a diversion from the matter in question, and hence not strictly relevant to establishing it, it has been judged fallacious (Hamblin 1970). Many current textbook accounts will treat it in this traditional way. But what really comes into question when reviewing such an argument is what we mean by "relevant" and the role that such appeals are deemed to have in argumentation. Images of starving children accompanying a text proposing that we ought to assist in some way may well actively increase our reasons for accepting such a claim (and acting on it) by awakening appropriate moral sensibilities in us. That is, an argument that aims at action addresses us as complete individuals and so needs at some level to relate matters to beliefs we hold. Hence, when performing such a contributory role, and depending on the context in question, an *ad*

misericordiam may indeed be relevant. This is the way more balanced recent accounts have come to view the matter, allowing legitimate uses for it (see Walton 1997).

But, of course, the thrust of this example is Socrates' *refusal* to employ the *ad misericordiam,* thus apparently anticipating the sensibilities of modern logicians who find it fallacious. This is how most commentators have tended to approach the passage, largely taking Socrates at his word. Burnet (1924) notes, for example, that Socrates refuses to make what was a customary appeal but not, as Xenophon had suggested, because the *ad misericordiam* would be illegal, but because it is unworthy of himself or Athens (144). Reeve (1989), in noting the similarity between Socrates' speech in the *Apology* and Gorgias's *Defense of Palamedes,* sees Socrates rejecting the appeal to the *ad misericordiam* and resting his case on truth and justice (7). Others, like Taylor (1956, 166), place their interpretation on this latter point—a direct reading of what Socrates says. Brickhouse and Smith (1989) note how this refusal to adopt a common ploy in his speech seems calculated to undermine his defense since it is likely to enrage some of his jurors who have engaged in a practice he is now calling shameful (206). But given his principles, they conclude, he cannot choose otherwise and still reason rationally (208).

Interestingly, and from a slightly different perspective, Walton identifies this passage as employing a rhetorical strategy of *omission.* He writes: "By saying he is not going to appeal to pity, Socrates is actually (in effect) bringing the subject of pity up, reminding the audience of it, and thereby having the rhetorical effect of putting the subject of pity (implicitly) into the argument" (1997, 47). In Walton's view, this is in keeping with Socrates' penchant for staying silent on certain points, thereby requiring his interlocutor to discover what is at stake. More ominously, it is described as a strategy of deception, of disguising what he is doing. Walton interprets this as an indication of how negatively the appeal to pity was viewed at the time, compelling Socrates to, at least ostensibly, distance himself from it (48). However, in the context of our current investigation a more constructive reading of Socrates' rhetorical aims can be suggested.

What Walton identifies as omission we might more traditionally call the figure *praeteritio.* We saw this figure referred to earlier in van Eemeren and Houtlosser's discussion of the discourse of William the Silent (1999b). I want to explore how Socrates uses this figure as an argument, which is to say that he does appeal to pity, but he does so through the use of a *praeteritio.*

We can, indeed, approach this passage from the perspectives given to us by logical or dialectical argument. In the case of logical argument, as I have suggested, Socrates indicates that the *ad misericordiam* is a regular (even common) argumentative strategy that the audience knows and would expect in this situation. Thus his breaking with conventions by refusing to use this particular appeal supports the view that he deems it fallacious. Socrates is refusing to engage in fallacy. From the perspective of dialectical argumentation, with its interest in the procedures involved, we might consider that there may well have been a dialectical procedure that Socrates alluded to by rejecting it: a procedure that members of the jury expected as part of the speech in such a circumstance. We cannot reconstruct such a procedural approach, but we can find instances of *ad misericordiam* appeals in speeches that are available to us from contemporary sources, like Antiphon. Consider, for example, the opening of his "Against the Stepmother" (Gagarin and MacDowell 1998, 10): "I am still so young and inexperienced in legal matters." The young prosecutor (of his father's alleged murderer) goes on to establish a case on the basis of pity. If we find this strategy in speeches of Sophists, then the refusal to use it could be viewed as another part of Plato's general attempt in the *Apology* to distance Socrates from that group.

However, it is only when we turn to consider his argument from the rhetorical perspective that the real complexity of his strategy emerges. In saying that the use of such a move as the *ad misericordiam* would discredit him (as well as the jury and the state), Socrates introduces the rhetorical move of increasing his credibility by "not" using it. His argument here is what I earlier identified as *ethotic,* and bears resemblance to Leff's treatment of rhetorical *ethos* that was considered in Chapter 1. It is aimed at improving his status or *ethos* and thereby supporting his cause.

As defined by Brinton, "*ēthotic argument* is the kind of argument or technique of argument in which ήθος is invoked, attended to, or represented in such a way as to lend credibility to or detract credibility from conclusions which are being drawn" (1986, 246). Widely used in argumentation, with both legitimate and illegitimate varieties,[12] ethotic arguments look to add weight to the individual that is saying something (or take away weight) by drawing attention to aspects of his or her character and building (or diminishing) that. Hence *weight* is the criterion of strength in ethotic arguments, occurring when the threshold of strength is high. Weight shifts the presumption in a speaker's

favor and makes it more difficult for an opponent to raise doubts. In this instance, Socrates shows himself both reasonable in what he will advance and respectful of the jury and the state.

Yet in a further rhetorical twist, as Walton observed, Socrates actually uses the very strategy he claims to be avoiding by employing a *praeteritio.* His statement *invites* the audience to construct such an appeal to pity for themselves. In saying he will not bring his children before the court and invoke a response of pity, he effectively does bring his children into view. This serves to draw the audience into the account in an intimate way. Since he is talking to them of their expectations and beliefs, he invites a construction from their perspective. Thus producing the children orally but not physically gives license to the imagination of his audience to create the spectacle for themselves. The sense of *spectacle* is important here, because it underlines the way the figure brings objects of the discourse (in this case the absent children) to the attention of the audience; it makes them *present.* Or rather, in the spirit of rhetorical collaboration, the audience makes them present. At the same time, not *actually* producing them supports the appeal to his own *ethos* that is directed to that portion of his audience who will have taken what he says at face value and not have seen the *ad misericordiam* present.

So, we might conclude, Socrates' double strategy of decrying yet still invoking an *ad misericordiam* is deliberate (or, we might say, was an actual aspect of the original speech, whether or not it is a strategy that Plato would have encouraged). Rather than improving on the "current rhetorical commonplaces" then, as Burnet (1924, 67) has suggested, or adopting a deceptive strategy of omission, as Walton suggested, we see Socrates here employing the rhetorical figure *praeteritio* in a quite standard way. In the very process of claiming not to do something, he actually does it. He even supplies his audience with the details of his family in order for them to complete the appeal. But the argument belongs to the audience, not to Socrates. In this case, the strategy meets an important expectation of good rhetorical argumentation in that it creates the opportunity for the audience to become actively engaged in the argument, to complete the reasoning in some way.

The question remains as to the wisdom of adopting this strategy of denial or *praeteritio.* Historically, we know the outcome of the trial to not be favorable to the defendant. Yet from the point of view of strategy alone, one with a combination of features, each aimed at a different part of the audience, might be expected to be better than a solitary

strategy. If we measure success against the accomplishment of what it sets out to achieve, then we might say this fails. But, on the other hand, that is the cumulative goal of his complete speech. The piece being reviewed here has the intermediate goal of winning support from his audience and is part of those aspects of his speech that aim at increasing his credibility. To this degree it may well have "worked." Given the closeness of the vote for conviction, which seems to surprise even Socrates, then we can only speculate as to whether the passage had an effect on that vote. But we can judge it in the terms that we have been employing here: we value argumentation that speaks to more of an audience over that which speaks to less of it, when it evokes the experiential element and invites collaboration. Socrates' *praeteritio* does all of this.[13] More importantly, in this example, the *praeteritio* serves as an argument, to which we can attribute the following conditions to govern such cases:

An arguer, *a,* draws attention to *x* while professing to avoid it.

The audience is invited (implicitly) to construct *x* for themselves.

x, so constructed, increases the plausibility of *a*'s position.

Again, these conditions suggest critical questions that would be appropriate for exploring any argumentative use of a *praeteritio:*

Is *x* sufficiently suggested that the audience in question would be likely to see it?

Are sufficient details provided for the construction of *x* by the audience?

Does plausibility transfer from *x* to *a*'s position?

As was the case with allusion, these questions must be put to a case in context and can never be posed in an abstract way (as the question of an argument's validity might be). Nor do they suddenly render the argument clearly strong or weak. But they serve as tools to enable the evaluators to explore the strength or weakness of an individual case and draw a weighted conclusion for themselves.

The two figures discussed so far both involve some crucial element that is left implicit in the argumentation, and so might be seen to more readily lend themselves to the requirements of experience and

collaboration. A few examples of figures that do not rely on hidden elements in the way that allusion and *praeteritio* do will strengthen the thesis that rhetorical figures can serve as arguments.

Much is made by Fahnestock of the figure antimetabole, and we have seen it used earlier by van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2001, 23). Consider how antimetabole works in the following piece of reasoning that addresses the ethics of human cloning and research on embryos:

> [C]reating multiple embryos from the same embryo damages respect for human life itself—even if it does not contravene respect for any one human individual—and for the transmission of human life. It turns a genetically unique living being of human origin into just an object and one that is replicable in multiple copies. It changes the transmission of human life from a mystery to a manufacturing process. It fails to recognize that we are not free to treat life in any way we see fit, that we do not own life. Rather, we have life and, more importantly, life has us. Recognizing that we owe obligations to life can provide a basis on which to establish respect for life in a secular society. (Somerville 2000, 69)

The antimetabole is phrased with the classic reversal, "We have life and, more importantly, life has us." It comes at the end of three amplifying sentences that up the ante on bad consequences of creating multiple embryos. The antimetabole is a change in strategy; it breaks the rhythm of the amplifying statements as the discourse turns back upon itself. The approaching statements corroborate ways in which, indeed, we have life. But the author's point lies in the second clause of the antimetabole, that life has us. It reverses the power relationship, inviting the reader to think not of the human as the agent (who manipulates life), but as the beneficiary, and hence the one who owes something, that something being respect. It is, then, the figure that carries the argument, that argues the point. And it does this through bringing the reversal to the attention of the audience, altering the audience's perspective on the issue.

In other instances, the antimetabole may indeed serve different functions, like simply emphasizing a point. That seems to be how van Eemeren and Houtlosser used it in stressing the relationship between derailments in strategic maneuvering and fallacies. But when functioning as an argument, it reverses relationships in an audience's mind so as to support a conclusion. It awakens an insight in an audience that the arguer would expect them to accept, and thus increases the

plausibility of the conclusion that insight supports. In Somerville's case, we might suggest, it is basic humanity that is being appealed to and in which the assumed acceptability would be grounded. When used as an argument, the following conditions would capture the move from reasons to conclusion:

> An arguer reverses a relationship, x to y, to suggest y to x.

> The reversal supports a conclusion related to one or the other of the relationships, making that conclusion more plausible.

Again, we have here the requisite elements of experiencing the rhythm of the discourse, "seeing" the reversal, and the invited collaboration of the audience. Critical questions for assessment would include the following:

> Does the reversal work in the argumentative way the author suggests?

> Is plausibility appropriately transferred from the suggested relationship to the conclusion?

As a fourth and final example here, I look at *prolepsis.* This is a figure identified by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969, 169) as involving an argumentative move. Its significance lies in its importance to dialectical argumentation, models of which will often require something very like *prolepsis* in the procedural rules (or dialectical obligations) it proposes for good argumentation. *Prolepsis* in the sense I use it here is the anticipation of objections to one's position and preemptive response to those objections. To identify this as itself a type of argument seems really to do little more than push the dialectic on this in a direction it is already heading.

In a very controversial article, May (2002) advances the position that regular American citizens bear responsibility for the killing of Palestinians by Israelis. The argument for this is developed by means of an analogy between a drowning child and a passerby who could save the child, but chooses not to. "Palestinian civilians are no more able to resist their killing than the child could resist the waves. And Americans, through our taxes, are helping to stir the water." May then turns to defend the analogy: "Some will say there are important differences between the killing of Palestinians and the drowning child," that

the average American citizen is really like a passerby who could not swim. But May counters this by insisting that there are other ways of providing assistance to the drowning child. He then considers a further response, "But suppose one doesn't know what is happening?" And, again, May counters this by considering the options open to the passerby who is unsure whether the child is drowning. Then he considers a third objection—that the analogy itself is misleading.

> Rather than seeing the Israeli invasion as a destructive wave and Palestinian civilians as helpless children, they would offer an analogy of the following type. You're walking along the street and you see a larger kid beating up a smaller one. You learn that the smaller kid has beaten up the larger kid's little sister. Do you have responsibility to stop the beating? And here they would answer, not necessarily.

May attacks this analogy as itself inaccurate (Palestinian *citizen*s—my emphasis—have attacked no one), and even if it were accurate, he proposes, there is an obligation to help the smaller kid. One final objection is considered: "But suppose you don't know who really started it?" This is similarly addressed before the main conclusion is reiterated.

At the heart of the argumentation here is an argument from analogy, but by far the most prevalent strategy used is that of *prolepsis*. The point is made by a series of imagined objections and counters to those objections. This is not just the strategy of counter-argumentation that many theorists already promote in any arguer's repertoire; this is the countering of imagined objections, and so success depends to a large extent on the quality and appropriateness of such imaginings. Once again, the audience is able to "experience" the reasoning insofar as *prolepsis* presents to the mind the semblance of an exchange into which that audience enters. In a similar way, it invites collaboration. Unlike previous figures surveyed, *prolepsis* seems better suited for an audience not predisposed to the position being advanced. Hence, if the arguer is to establish some commonality of acceptance from which to move toward a conclusion, that must be done in more creative ways. Successful *prolepsis* depends on the acceptability of the objections. The ones introduced need to be ones that the audience, even if they had not thought of them themselves, could imagine making or could see it appropriate to make. Again, like other figures, successful use of this also has an ethotic payoff, since using *prolepsis* gives the argumentation

an air of objectivity, shows the arguer trying to conceive things from the other point of view and treating that point of view in a reasonable fashion. So there is much to recommend *prolepsis* as an argument. The following captures the conditions for it being used:

> Arguer *a* imagines objections to her or his position and counters those objections.

> Such objections and counters, appropriately conceived, increase the plausibility of *a*'s position.

As my discussion has indicated, critical questions aimed at assessing *prolepsis* as an argument must address an audience's reaction to it:

> Are the objections raised, although imagined, "real" in the sense that they are plausible objections in the context, and thus acceptable to the audience?

> Are the objections adequately countered so as to increase the plausibility of the position being advanced?

❖ CONCLUSION

Many rhetorical figures are particularly suited to serve as arguments in rhetorical argumentation because of the ways in which they are constructed to engage the audience through their experiential nature and collaborative invitations. The work of Reboul, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, and Fahnestock all point in this direction, and I hope through these few but, I believe, representative examples to have shown the appropriate conclusion to which that work leads. The point has not been to make a general claim about all figures, but rather to show that some figures, on some occasions, can function as arguments, and to provide identifying conditions and questions of assessment for such occasions. In a similar way, I suspect we could approach this from the other end, starting with some traditional types of argument and showing how they serve primarily rhetorical ends and function like figures. The "ethotic argument" from Walton (1996a) is a clear example of this, as the elaboration of this argument in discussions of this chapter would indicate.

This is not to deny that there is something distinct about the arguments drawn from figures. It is their rhetorical nature that makes them most effective, not just in persuading an audience, but engaging them at a quite deep, often emotional level, before reason moves in as an organizing force. They relate to a level of engagement that grounds the argumentative situation, and thus they further demonstrate why the rhetorical is the primary, most influential layer in any model of argument that seeks to integrate the logical, dialectical, and rhetorical. Those who limit the rhetorical to matters of style have missed this and failed to see how it conditions and determines the organization of the logical choices and dialectical procedures. Ways in which this deep engagement constructs the context will be explored further in the next chapter.

❖ NOTES

1. The seminal role of these two thinkers in rhetorical argumentation was acknowledged in Chapter 1. While Perelman has attracted more scholarly attention and been judged the originator of the principal ideas, recent work on Olbrechts-Tyteca has come to challenge this view in interesting ways (see Warnick 1997).

2. For a more developed definition of "ethotic argument" see the discussion of Socrates later in this chapter. (See also Tindale and Welzel, forthcoming.)

3. I treat this not as a fallacy but as a legitimate argument scheme.

4. I am grateful to Randy Harris for these examples.

5. The analogy Reboul draws is not exactly Aristotle's meaning in using the statement, but that is beside the point here.

6. A better discussion of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's treatment of metaphor is provided by Gross and Dearin (2003, 121–122).

7. Here, "opposition" should not immediately suggest conflict: opposing opinions can invite discussion aimed at understanding and involve a variety of agreements; conflicts may be such as to invite no discussion at all.

8. As this discussion proceeds, the influence of this division on van Eemeren and Houtlosser's similar triad of topical potential, presentational devices, and audience demand should become apparent.

9. This is not necessarily incompleteness in the traditional sense associated with the enthymeme (Tindale 1999a, 9–11), but in the sense of the enthymeme as a probable argument, the details of which must be matched against, and confirmed by, the audience's experience. Some of Antiphon's arguments in the previous chapter were seen to have this feature.

10. To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction; or, the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other are always equal, and directed to contrary parts.

11. The title of the relevant chapter in Gross and Dearin's (2003) study of Perelman, "The Figures as Argument," suggests a thesis similar to the one I am expounding here. But with the exceptions of irony and metaphor, their discussion and examples are actually intended only "to demonstrate the pervasiveness of figures as a component of arguments" (130).

12. Under this very general term of ethotic argument, or person as argument, we can include the *ad verecundiam* (appeal to authority or expertise) and the *ad hominem* (argument against the man). But there is also a very general sense of appeal to *ethos* that involves just calling on the good character of someone to support a conclusion. While ethotic appeals may rarely be sufficient to establish a conclusion, the point here is that they serve as a type of reason for conclusions. Aristotle extended great importance to them (*Rhetoric*, 2.1.5–7).

13. With regard to the ethotic move, Socrates does successfully give himself weight in this passage. On any objective reading we can see him attending to his character, as this appears to the audience he wishes to influence, and saying the correct things to strengthen the image of his character in their eyes. His expressed desire not to discredit himself, his audience, or the state, is aimed at thereby making himself more credible.