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Arguing Affect: The Rhetoric of Peripheral Persuasion.

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Arguing affect: The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion

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The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1988
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UMI
ARGUING AFFECT: THE RHETORIC OF PERIPHERAL PERSUASION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Speech Communication, Theatre, and Communication Disorders

by

Lewis Blaine Hershey, II
M. A., The University of North Carolina, 1985
May 1988
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ABSTRACT

This study explores the theoretical parameters of peripheral persuasion. Chapter one reviews social scientific approaches to the study of persuasion from researchers in communication theory, psychology, and marketing. This review reveals a bifurcation of the persuasion concept into cognitive and affective dimensions. After demonstrating a bias in social scientific research for the cognitive dimensions of persuasion, chapter one links the affective dimensions of persuasion with the concept of peripheral persuasion and emerging trends in rhetorical theory that emphasize narrative models of communication.

Chapter two scrutinizes the distinction between cognitive or central routes to persuasion and affective or peripheral routes to persuasion in terms of The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion developed by Cacioppo and Petty (1984a). The chapter further considers the tenets of the model in light of recent criticism of the ELM by Stiff
(1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987).

Chapter three develops a rhetoric of peripheral persuasion by placing the concept of peripheral persuasion in the context of emerging theories of narrative based upon narrative models (Fisher, 1984). The chapter further examines criticism of Fisher's model by Rowland (1987) and Warnick (1987). The chapter concludes with a discussion of how peripheral persuasion is consistent with non-controversial elements of narrative models of rhetorical theory.

Chapter four demonstrates the explanatory power of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion. Using print advertisements from a recent Benson & Hedges campaign (1987) this chapter illustrates the usefulness of a theory of peripheral persuasion for linking theoretical and social scientific approaches to the study of persuasion. The chapter also includes a discussion of non-print peripheral persuasion contexts.
CHAPTER ONE

Statement of the Problem

Recent trends in rhetorical theory and criticism indicate an interest in non-traditional conceptualization and application of argument and rhetoric (Conley, 1984; Fisher, 1978, 1980, 1984, 1985a, 1985b; Frentz, 1985; Kauffman, 1981; O'Keefe; 1977; and Willard, 1980). For example, Kauffman (1981) asserts that characters in a play argue through their gestures and actions as well as their words (pp. 407-408). Fisher (1984) maintains that argument resides in all forms of symbolic activity, discursive as well as nondiscursive (p. 8). Moreover this trend reveals a growing eclecticism in the development of rhetorical theory. Specifically the roots of this eclecticism may be traced through decades of scholarship in such diverse fields as psychology, anthropology, literary criticism, marketing, and, of course, rhetoric.

In these diverse fields the primary area of shared interest in argument lies in the study of persuasion (e.g. Burke, 1969b; Cacioppo and Petty, 1979; Goffman, 1959;
Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982; Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, 1953; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979, 1983; and Ryan and Bonfield, 1975). Indeed perhaps not since Plato and the Sophists has so much attention been given to the study and practice of persuasive communication. For the most part study has concentrated on the hypothesis that cognitive processes mediate persuasive appeals within individuals.

The focus on the role of cognitive processes is not surprising. At least since Aristotle (Roberts and Bywater, trans., 1984), appeals to reasoned audience consideration of persuasive discourse have been the preferred paradigm of scholars and researchers alike. As investigators in fields such as psychology, anthropology, and marketing began to develop models of persuasion, cognitive processing of information often figured prominently in research efforts (Bandura, 1977; Derryberry and Rothbart, 1984; Edell and Staelin, 1983; Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard, 1986; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Goffman, 1959; Hovland and Janis, 1959; Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc, 1984; Kelly, 1981; Littlejohn, 1978; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979; Ryan and Bonfield, 1975; Zajonc and Markus, 1984).

However, research on the role of cognition in persuasion often obscures another trend in persuasion research: Scholarship that explores the persuasive dimension of affect sans cognition in communicative processes. Scholars such as Fisher and Kauffman implicitly
recognize this trend. Fisher notes that public opinion and morality on issues like nuclear disarmament cannot be understood as the result of strictly rational, logical appeals. Kaufman suggests that dramatic performance, including the actions of the characters, functions argumentatively.

In a rush to embrace eclecticism, scholars in rhetoric continue to examine these new dimensions of argument as if they were not new at all. For example Fisher's "good reasons" substitute for "rationality" so that while argument styles may change, the processing of argument remains conceptually static. The flaw in this way of thinking is that Fisher, Kaufman, and others imply that argument content may not be separated easily from argument processing. If arguments can be made irrationally, perhaps they can be processed irrationally, in the absence of cognitive mediation.

As early as Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1959) researchers recognized an emotional aspect to persuasive communication. Yet emotional reactions were thought to be mediated upon or by cognitive processes (Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc, 1984). As Zajonc and Markus (1984) note, these "cognitive theories of emotion" consider "cognition as a necessary factor (e.g., Lazarus, 1966; Mandler, 1975; Schachter and Singer, 1962)" (p.75). Affect was not dismissed as an aspect of persuasion, but it was believed
that emotional response was one of the variables the individual weighed when confronted by persuasive stimuli.

Later researchers sometimes specifically addressed an affective dimension to persuasion though usually only as it related to cognitive structures. For example, Isen, Shalker, and Karp (1978) explore affect as it impinges on retrieval of material from memory. However, some researchers began to explore the possibility that cognitive and affective structures might be distinct aspects of human information processing.

Research on Affect

Scientific research on affect has had a spotted history. As Campos and Barrett (1984) observed:

Not long ago (until approximately 1972), emotions suffered a not-very-benign neglect by psychologists. The neglect seemed well justified: Emotions appeared unamenable to measurement with any degree of specificity; . . .

This neglect did not always exist. At one time, the conscious aspect of emotions, called "affect" or "hedonic tone" by theorists like Wundt (1904), Titchener (1905), or Beebe-Center (1932), constituted one of the three central topics in psychological theory, along with sensation and association. Moreover, in Freud's early theory, affect also played a central explanatory role (pp. 229-230).

Thus recent research into the role of affect in persuasion represents a return of sorts for some fields.
Lutz (1977) investigated causal relations among cognition, affect, and behavioral intentions. The significance of the Lutz study stems from the consideration of affect conceptually equal to cognition for the study of persuasion. Moreland and Zajonc (1977) suggested further refinement of the affect versus cognition controversy. Their study presents evidence that stimuli recognition (operationalized as the ability to recall or identify previously presented items) may not be a necessary condition for the achievement of exposure effects. Their work on "mere exposure" effects attempted to find how exposure functioned if conscious recall of the stimuli was not present. Wilson (1979) confirmed the existence of exposure effects in the absence of cognitive learning possibilities. In Wilson's study the subjects could not recall exposure to the stimuli. Similarly, Zajonc (1980) demonstrated statistically significant differences in subject preferences for previously encountered but unrecalled stimuli. Considered collectively, these studies in psychology and marketing indicate a growing recognition that affect may be an important and perhaps conceptually distinct element of the persuasive process.

Zajonc and Markus (1984) identified this trend when they wrote,

conceptual isolation of affect and cognition is likely to persist unless we come to understand which elements of these two processes make contact with each other and how the influence of one process over the other is
actually effected. . . . The interface of affect and cognition presents a considerable theoretical and experimental challenge because it is not clear just how and where the affect-cognition interface should best be studied (p. 73).

While the present study does not address all the concerns raised by Zajonc and Markus (e.g., physiological mechanisms of information processing), it does seek to examine further the theoretical challenges in developing a rhetoric of affective persuasive appeals.

**Purpose of the Study**

This study examines the concept of affect as a strategy for persuasive communication. Specifically, this study reviews research and scholarship in psychology, marketing, communication theory, and rhetoric as it relates to affective persuasive appeals. The findings of this review are then conceptually applied to Cacioppo and Petty’s Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (1984a). This model attempts to identify audience conditions in which affect may be expected to function persuasively (the model is examined in greater detail in chapter two). The purpose of this study is to attempt to develop a rhetoric of peripheral persuasion based on affect under conditions of audience low-elaboration likelihood. Implicit to this discussion is the argument that affect-based persuasion
using peripheral cues may involve audience participation without increasing elaboration-likelihood. In this sense affect-based persuasion may be distinguished from traditional emotional appeals employed in a cognitively based persuasive strategy. Focus on this model is useful because it represents an attempt to synthesize various approaches to persuasion under one conceptual framework. Moreover though the model recognizes the possibility of noncognitive processing of persuasive cues, it still suffers from an over-emphasis on cognitive processing in the study of persuasion. This study argues that a more complete understanding of persuasion necessitates conceptualization of its noncognitive dimensions.

A survey review of work on persuasion across the fields of psychology, communication theory, marketing, and rhetoric is necessary for at least two reasons. First an appreciation for the eclectic nature of the study of persuasion is enhanced by an historical overview. Second an understanding of the need for a rhetoric of affective persuasion stems from the realization that current research emphasizes the role of cognition in persuasion at the expense of affect.

Psychology and Communication Theory

The relationship between research in social psychology
and communication theory is an intimate one. Many of the current issues in communication research have their roots in psychological studies (Littlejohn, 1978). For this reason, this section will first review relevant studies from psychology.

Psychology and Affect

Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1959) were among early psychologists who recognized the interplay of cognitive and affective factors in communication and persuasion. They note several elements to persuasive communication, including group membership (p. 271), motivation and source effects (p. 13), individual personality differences (p. 14), language and higher-thought processes (p. 99), the role of intention (p. 295), and argument types and organization as factors in audience effects (p. 14). Hovland, et al. also observed that affect-laden messages, such as fear appeals (p. 57), may form one dimension of persuasive communication. Still, the authors and the research they discuss tended to place cognition in the forefront of persuasive communication mediation.

Sherif and Hovland (1961), in their study of social judgement, recognized that many of the cues affecting attitude formation and change come from the communication of socially derived norms of behavior:
The conditions under which social anchors are effective in modifying judgement have implications for the process by which individuals internalize categories which are social in origin. The greater the stimulus ambiguity or the difficulty of the task, the greater the effectiveness of socially provided anchors (p. 184).

In chapter three the ambiguity of communicative stimuli as a persuasive strategy will be explored in greater detail. For now it is important to note that social anchors may operate in subtly affective situations. That is, persuasive cues may be ambiguous in either cognitively or affectively processed dimensions. Sherif and Hovland go on to suggest that "It is apparent that a great need in linking judgement study and investigations of attitude and attitude change is intensive research into judgement of affective and motivationally relevant material" (p. 203). It is clear from their discussion that Sherif and Hovland recognized the importance of the study of affective stimuli to further our understanding of communication processes.

While cognitive theories of communication and information processing continue to dominate research in psychology (e.g., Simon, 1979), a number of researchers have begun to focus on affect as a possibly distinct mechanism for the processing of persuasive communication. Moreland and Zajonc (1977, 1979) suggested that exposure effects may be produced without stimulus recognition (in a
cognitive sense). Wilson (1979) confirmed this hypothesis, observing that exposure effects occur in the absence of traditional learning factors as understood in a cognitive approach to learning theory. Zajonc (1980) extended the study of exposure beyond simple effects to the influence of affective judgment.

In his study Zajonc found that subjects who could not discriminate between old and new stimuli (recognition memory) still preferred old to new stimuli when asked to make affective judgments. The author suggested that affective reactions may "precategorize" stimuli, effectively increasing information processing rates. While the physiological implications discussed by Zajonc are beyond the scope of this study, the wide range of possible dimensions to the study of affect in persuasion and attitude change help justify an eclectic approach to the development a rhetoric of affective persuasion.

The relationship of affect to cognition is the subject of an entire volume of studies compiled by Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc (1984). Topics of selected studies include the role of emotion in the perception of the self and others (Moore, Underwood, and Rosenhan), emotion and attention (Derryberry and Rothbart), emotion in socialization (Dienstbier), and the interface of affect and cognition in both psychological and physiological contexts (Zajonc and Markus).

All of the studies reviewed above have important
implications for the study of persuasive communication. However the link to persuasion research is often found in the extension of psychological research and research methodology by communication theorists.

Communication Theory and Affect

As mentioned above (Littlejohn, 1978), much of the research in communication theory has psychological constructs at its base. Nevertheless many researchers have moved beyond simple adoption of psychological topics and nomenclature for the study of communication to an extension and enrichment of theories of human communication in their own right. Areas of communication research that often impinge upon the development of a rhetoric of affective communication include interpersonal communication (Burgoon and Hale, 1984; Knapp, 1984), deception research (Cody and O’Hair, 1983; Hocking and Leathers, 1980), non-verbal communication (Burgoon, Buller, Hale, and deTurck, 1984) and affective and cognitive manifestations of involvement (Cegala, 1984).

Each of these areas has a potential contribution to make to a rhetoric of affective persuasion. Knapp’s (1984) focus on relational communication in dyads mentioned the importance of emotional expression in the creation and maintenance of intimate relationships. Burgoon and Hale
(1984) identified the themes of relational communication. While not an endorsement of any particular approach, their work helps focus further research in relational communication that may apply aspects of affective persuasive paradigms.

Work in non-verbal communication may also aid in the development of a rhetoric of affective communication. For example in their study of relational messages associated with non-verbal behaviors, Burgoon, Buller, Hale, and deTurck (1984) manipulated non-verbal cues such as eye-contact, proximity, and touch to test their influence on social meaning. Eye-contact, proximity, and touch can be manipulated to suggest increased intimacy or the lack of it. In either case manipulations of intimacy may suggest different kinds of topics and arguments appropriate for facilitating successful persuasive communication in a given situation.

Hocking and Leathers (1980) attempted to identify specific kinds of non-verbal cues used as predictors of lying behavior. Although they were unable to produce statistically significant relationships between non-verbal behaviors and deception, their research serves as evidence that individuals do attempt to validate source credibility through means other than an analysis of overt arguments.

Cody and O'Hair's (1983) work with gender as a factor in deception and communicator dominance suggested the
possibility that strictly sex differences in audiences may generate different affective reactions to persuasion. Though their research focuses on communicator dominance and gender, more subtle manipulations of gender and persuasive cues suggest further areas of consideration when examining the role of affect in persuasion.

Cegala (1984) reported that positive affective states correlate with higher performance on cognitive tests (recall). Though the results of his experiment were mixed, the findings confirmed a significant affective component for interaction involvement.

In sum the research and scholarship in psychology and communication theory suggests a continuing interest in the role of affect in persuasive communication. Less certain is the relationship of affect to cognition. Studies indicate that the cognitive-affective relationship may be complementary, hierarchical, mutually interactive, or separate processes and/or constructs. In any event it seems likely that more speculation regarding the role of affect in persuasive communication contexts will be helpful in defining the parameters of future research.

Marketing and Affect

Marketing research into consumer behavior and models of
information processing reveals a growing interest in the affective dimensions of persuasive communication. DeBruucker (1979) argued that the majority of purchase behaviors occur under low-involvement conditions. These behaviors include purchases like snacks and beverages for which there exists little product differentiation. Under these circumstances, marketers need to be aware of how consumers process product information, or at least, how purchase decisions are made. Low-involvement conditions correspond to the low-elaboration likelihood conditions to be discussed later. In both cases researchers are investigating the role of affect in persuasion.

Ryan and Bonfield (1975) review the evolution of the Fishbein Extended Model and its application to the study of consumer behavior. As the authors noted, the Fishbein model as originally developed is an "extension" of Dulany's (1968) work on propositional control (communication theorists refer to the Fishbein model as the behavioral intentions model). They observed that the prediction efficacy of the model is a function of three factors: Specificity of intention, time between measures and behavior, and the degree of individual control. Under highly cognitive conditions the Fishbein Extended Model can be an accurate predictor of consumer behavior. But Ryan and Bonfield (1975) recognize that such situations do not exhaust the realm of consumer behavior and that other independent variables, such as the perceived
attitude of significant others toward the act, must be explored further to understand better the dimensions of consumer behavior.

Lutz (1977, 1985) reported that consumer attitudes may be complex, multilayered constructs in which affect and cognition play varied roles. For Lutz, under high-involvement conditions, decision making seemed to be a highly hierarchical process consistent with traditional cognitive processing approaches. However Lutz noted threshold effects are applicable here; cognitive processing requires some base level of exposure before becoming effective. Regarding the Fishbein model, Lutz suggested that the attitude toward the act is the only significantly explanatory variable. Lutz also recognized that "simple flow chart models and linear relationships may not adequately account for the motivation of buyers to process information" (p. 207). Normative components, Lutz concluded, need greater investigation. Presumably this includes low-involvement conditions and perhaps social influences as well.

Mitchell and Olson (1981) reported that advertising content, operationalized as an independent variable, produces significant effects on consumers' beliefs about product attributes, attitudes, and purchase intentions. These findings support for the hypothesis that several factors influence consumer decision making behavior,
at least under some circumstances.

While all these studies recognize the complexity of consumer behavior and underscore the many dimensions of the persuasive communications that seek to influence it, most of these approaches still assume a cognitive paradigm for the processing of persuasive communication. Yet when considered in light of the studies in psychology and communication theory cited above, it seems apparent that further exploration into the affective dimensions of advertising content and low-involvement situations may be of use to researchers of persuasion.

Cacioppo and Petty’s Elaboration Likelihood Model

Cacioppo and Petty (1984a) sought to identify those circumstances under which cognitive processing is likely to occur and when other means of information processing, such as affective response, is likely to be dominant. For the authors,

the term elaboration likelihood refers to the likelihood one engages in issue-relevant thinking with the aim of determining the merits of the arguments for a position rather than the total amount of thinking per se in which one engages (p. 674).

Issue-relevant thinking is a key phrase here in that the engagement of the individual in thinking or not determines
the "route" the stimuli will follow as they are processed.

These "routes to persuasion" (Cacioppo and Petty, 1984a; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986a) were termed central routes for cognitive processing and peripheral routes for affective response processing. Consistent with research in psychology, communication theory, and marketing, the authors attempted to link their discussion of high elaboration likelihood to traditional approaches of cognitive processing of information. Essentially, high elaboration likelihood situations will motivate individuals to think carefully about the merits of the arguments for a recommendation. Moreover, high elaboration likelihood situations predict relatively enduring attitude change when persuasive appeals are successful (Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987, p. 234).

As given the model synthesizes a wide range of persuasion research from psychology and adapts it to a marketing context. By specifying the conditions in which attitude change may be most enduring, Cacioppo and Petty provided a conceptual framework for marketing managers. Managers may then generate promotional strategies to involve consumer attention toward the adoption of a given product. Summarizing the development and purpose of the ELM, Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo wrote that:

The Elaboration Likelihood Model represents an attempt to integrate the many seemingly conflicting findings in
the persuasion literature under one conceptual umbrella by specifying a finite number of ways in which source message, and other variables have an impact on attitude change (p.233).

The usefulness of such a conceptual framework is almost self-evident. By unifying disparate approaches to the study of persuasion, the ELM may be useful for extending our knowledge of the various influences operating in any given persuasive situation. However the model is not without its critics.

Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987) argued that the ELM does not specify which route to information processing a given persuasive cue will take. They cite the claim of Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987) that depending upon the circumstances, the same cue may be processed by either central or peripheral routes, or both, as an untestable hypothesis (Stiff and Bolster, 1987). Additionally, Stiff (1986) claimed that a meta-analysis of persuasion research in which variables identified by the ELM as affecting either central or peripheral routes to persuasion does not yield significant results to support the model. These two claims form the basis of the current controversy over the efficacy of the ELM for explaining how persuasive information is processed by the individual.

Although Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987) raise objections to the ELM, the response of Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987) and Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer,
and Haugtvedt (1987) indicates that the controversy is likely to continue for some time. Petty et al. (1987) maintained that the ELM does indeed make the distinctions between central and peripheral routes of processing a given cue is likely to follow. The authors further argued that Stiff's (1986) meta-analysis is methodologically flawed, combining studies that are statistically incompatible (Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987). However, as with traditional approaches to persuasion studies, the majority of this dialogue focuses on cognitive or central processing routes of persuasion. Little or nothing that attempts to explain how peripheral appeals function is evident in the literature. The present study explores how rhetorical theory may explain the functioning of peripheral persuasive appeals.

**Rhetorical Theory and the ELM**

A rhetorical approach to the ELM offers a number of advantages to the study of persuasion not evident in the current controversy. First, rhetoric can examine the heuristic possibilities of the model for the generation of theory without concern for arguments about whether or not the predictions of the model can be operationalized, empirically tested, or quantitatively falsified. While such approaches are useful for establishing the parameters of a
given theory when applied, it seems clear that the ELM is still a theory under development. Before testable hypotheses may be successfully generated, further conceptualization of the elements of the ELM are needed.

Second while ELM tenuously unites research from psychology, communication theory, and marketing under one conceptual framework, little attempt is made to integrate work on persuasion found in the field of rhetoric. On the one hand this absence is understandable, given the scientific, quantitative approach to persuasion undertaken in these three fields. On the other hand it seems prudent to pursue the study of persuasion using all the available resources. Zajonc and Markus (1984) observed that the study of affect is still "abstract... and rests entirely on inferences made for variations in behavior and their relationships to input" (pp. 75-76). With the limits of science for the study of affect identified, it seems that the growing eclecticism exhibited in the study of persuasion invites the conceptualization of the elements of the ELM from a rhetorical perspective.

Third while the majority of attention given to persuasion studies focuses on cognitive processing of message factors, contemporary rhetorical theory provides a conceptual approach for identifying how peripheral routes to persuasion may operate. A review of scholarship in rhetoric indicates an interest in and need for the explication of the
affective dimensions of persuasive communication.

Rhetorical Theory and the Conceptualization of Affect in Persuasion

Historically, rhetoric has focused on cognitive processing of arguments in the study of persuasion. However, the recent development of narrative models of argument include affective dimensions of persuasion (Burke 1966, 1969a, 1969b; Conley, 1984; Farrell, 1986; Fisher, 1980, 1984, 1985a, 1985b; Fisher and Filoy, 1982; and, Frentz, 1985). A brief review of narrative models of argument illuminates the usefulness of a rhetorical approach to the explication of peripheral routes to persuasion.

Burke (1966; 1969a, 1969b) offers a widely eclectic approach to the study of language and its rhetorical dimensions across many communicative contexts. Specifically, his work on persuasion is useful as an aid for understanding contemporary rhetorical theory. For Burke (1969a, 1969b), persuasion equals identification, the symbolic merging of one individual's perspective with that of another.

Breaking with traditional approaches to persuasion, Burke argued that identification may be accomplished through a variety of communicative strategies. Most importantly, Burke posits that some of the most effective persuasive
strategies may be aesthetic ones. Aesthetic appeals encourage identification through imaginative participation, often an affective, not rational, process (1966, pp. 25-43; 1969b, pp. 19-23, 49-58, 78-83, and, 1973, pp. 191-220, 293-304). In contrast to the conclusions of Cacioppo and Petty (1984a), Burke maintains that successful and lasting attitude change is possible through affective persuasive strategies.

Conley (1984) observed that the concept of the enthymeme, a "reliance on probabilities" (p. 163) is one area of consensus among contemporary scholars in rhetoric. Yet he argues that what constitutes a probability for most scholars is less clear. He asserts that Burke (and for that matter, Perelman) is a rhetorician whose works have not been fully integrated into the body of contemporary rhetorical theory (pp. 180-182). Conley proposes that current scholarship should attempt this integration and extend the discussions of Burke to rhetorical discourse not already explained by traditional approaches. This extension implies a speculative, interactive approach to persuasion that may include affective dimension of argument as wholly consistent with rhetorical study.

Farrell (1986) noted that even traditional approaches to rhetorical or poetical language study must imply the possibilities of the other. While not an advocate of an artificial distinction between rhetoric and poetics, Farrell
recognizes that even when separated for purposes of study, an understanding of both elements is necessary for a full appreciation of either dimension (p. 15).

Fisher (1984) explicitly adopted a narrative paradigm for the conceptualization of argument. Though his application of narrative seems to reflect an antiquated formalistic approach, his work nevertheless underscores a realization that the study of rhetoric, especially in mass media contexts, requires a broader conceptual frame than traditional approaches allow. While this work and subsequent elaborations (Fisher, 1985a, 1985b) are themselves controversial (e.g., Warnick, 1987; Rowland, 1987), few dispute the desired benefits to be gained by a broadening of the scope of rhetorical theory beyond simply rational argument paradigms.

Frentz (1985) adopted a conversation metaphor for rhetorical theory. For Frentz, discussants collapse historical arguments into a "temporal holism" of the present; combining the various perspectives of past arguments into the present consciousness of the individual (p. 7). Frentz cites the film *My Dinner With Andre* as an example. In the film, two friends discuss their experiences and how they view the world. But as the film progresses, the viewer notes that the story is not about the characters' experiences or Andre's adventures. It is a film about how the characters talk about the past, how the past remains a
dynamic part of the present through conversational telling and retelling. While such a process may involve a conscious, cognitive activity on the part of the individual regarding the specific content of the arguments themselves, the conversational narrative itself is a relatively unconscious act. As such many affective elements may prefigure any conscious attempts at synthesis.

Summary

The extension of rhetorical theory beyond consideration of strictly rational conceptualization of argument is an appropriate response to the increasingly complex nature of persuasive communication. Yet, as a whole, this process is often unwieldy, threatening to obscure important elements of persuasion in a rush to embrace eclecticism. This study seeks a narrower focus. By specifically concentrating on the rhetoric of peripheral appeals, this study pursues two goals. First, it is hoped that a rhetoric of peripheral persuasion will increase our understanding of the ELM and its role in the development of theories of persuasion. Second, a rhetoric of peripheral appeals may contribute to our understanding of the relationship between narrative and argument.
Outline of the Study

Following this introduction the rest of this study is divided into three chapters. Chapter Two introduces and explores the Elaboration Likelihood Model of persuasion. In addition to a discussion of the Model, this chapter reviews the on-going controversy between the Model's originators and its critics (Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987; Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt, 1987; Stiff, 1986; and, Stiff and Boster, 1987). Finally, this chapter discusses the benefits derived from taking a rhetorical perspective of low-elaboration likelihood persuasive appeals.

Chapter Three develops a rhetoric of affective argument. This chapter presents concepts and discussions from contemporary and often eclectic approaches to rhetorical theory as the conceptual building blocks of a rhetoric of low-elaboration likelihood persuasion.

Chapter Four applies the concepts developed in chapter three for the criticism of selected Benson and Hedges print advertisements. These advertisements are especially useful for this study because of their notable lack of ad copy. The "informational" aspect of these persuasive appeals resides in the nondiscursive acts of the persons in the photographs. In short these commercial persuasive attempts
are unlikely to evoke cognitive participation as discussed in the ELM. This application demonstrates the explanatory power of a rhetoric of low-elaboration likelihood persuasive appeals. This chapter concludes with a summary of the study and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER TWO

This chapter discusses the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1981, 1986b) and Cacioppo and Petty (1984a). In exploring the development of the ELM this chapter reviews related works by Petty and Cacioppo and their associates (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979, 1981, 1983, 1984; Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt, 1987; Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987; Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann, 1979). Following this exploration of the ELM this chapter identifies criticism of the model by Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987). Finally this chapter argues that a rhetorical perspective toward the ELM provides theoretical benefits not addressed by the discussants in the current controversy.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion

As indicated in chapter one the ELM "represents an attempt to integrate the many seemingly conflicting findings in the persuasion literature under one conceptual umbrella" (Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987, p. 233). The authors integrate persuasion theories by indicating the channels or routes persuasive messages are likely to follow.
when processed by an individual. According to the ELM these routes may be distinguished as central or peripheral routes. Which route a given message will follow when processed by the individual is a function of involvement and/or ability to process the message (Cacioppo and Petty, 1984a; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979, 1981, 1984a; Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987). Thus the key elements of the ELM are central and peripheral routes to persuasion, involvement, and ability to process messages.

Central Routes to Persuasion

Petty and Cacioppo (1983) argue that "the central route views attitude change as resulting from a diligent consideration of information that is central to what people feel are the true merits of the advocacy" (p. 3). The nature of centrality is expanded further by Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987) when they write that:

The most effortful procedure for evaluating an advocacy involves drawing upon prior experience and knowledge to scrutinize carefully and elaborate the issue-relevant arguments in the persuasive communication along the dimensions that are perceived central to the merits of the attitude object. According to the ELM, attitudes formed or changed via this central route are postulated to be relatively persistent, predictive of behavior, and resistant to change until they are challenged by cogent contrary information along the dimension or dimensions perceived central to the merits of the object (p. 234).
For the authors the central route to persuasion is theoretically consistent with traditional or cognitive approaches to persuasion. This "cognitive bias" in the study of persuasion was reviewed in chapter one and reflects the belief that cognitive activity governs or mediates emotional responses to persuasion (i.e., Isen, Shalker, and Karp, 1978; Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc, 1984). For example, central routes to persuasion are predicted by the ELM when an individual said to be highly involved with the subject matter of a persuasive message.

Extending this example by illustration, suppose a candidate for political office declares opposition to abortion. Individuals for whom the question of abortion is personally involving may take stands for or against the politician. The reaction of individuals to the candidacy of this hypothetical politician may be highly emotional. Yet the ELM predicts that this very involvement will lead to a close scrutiny of the candidate's attempts at persuasion. Thus the central route to persuasion does not preclude emotional involvement. Rather the ELM predicts that under high involvement conditions an individual's response to attempts at persuasion will follow a cognitive, central route when mentally processed.
Peripheral Routes to Persuasion

In developing their conceptual umbrella Petty and Cacioppo recognized that the central route to persuasion at best explained only one aspect of persuasive information processing. Noting other theoretical approaches to persuasion Petty and Cacioppo (1983) postulate "a more peripheral route to attitude change. Under this second view attitudes change because the attitude object has been associated with either positive or negative cues or the person uses a simple decision rule to evaluate a communication" (p. 4).

An example of a decision rule might be "the more arguments the better." More specifically, in the absence of arguments or in instances where products are perceived as highly interchangeable (such as in a convenience store) a decision rule might be "buy the most attractively packaged item." In these instances and for a variety of reasons either personal or environmental the ELM predicts that the individual will not closely scrutinize persuasive messages.

By including a "variety" of reasons in the determination of the route to persuasion a message will follow the ELM expands our understanding of persuasion beyond consideration of simply the processing of the message itself. In short, the ELM recognizes that other factors such as personality and/or social pressures affect how
persuasion occurs by influencing the route messages will follow when processed by the individual. For example, Petty and Cacioppo (1983) note that "for teenage smokers, who may be more concerned with impressing their peers than with their health, the major reason why they smoke may relate to the image of the particular brand" (p. 22). In this instance the teenager may not engage in a scrutiny of issue-relevant messages about the particular brand of cigarettes. Rather the teenager may not consider identification with an image as the reason for smoking at all. In chapter three the implications of this persuasion through identification for rhetorical theory are discussed in more detail. The point here is that use of peripheral routes to persuasion are distinguished by an absence of issue-relevant thinking on the part of the individual processing the persuasive message. Once again Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987) explain:

This does not mean that people never form attitudes when motivation and/or ability to scrutinize a message are low, but rather that attitudes may be changed as a result of relatively simple associations (as in classical conditioning; Staats & Staats, 1958), inferences (as in self-perception; Bem, 1972), or heuristics (Chaiken, 1980, 1987) in these situations. Attitudes formed or changed via this peripheral route are postulated to be relatively less persistent, resistant, and predictive of behavior (p. 234).

It is important to note here that while the present study agrees with Petty et al. that several factors
influence the route to persuasion likely followed in processing, it differs in the interpretation of what peripheral routes to persuasion may mean for the formation of attitudes and their resistance to change. From the passage above a certain ambiguity concerning the role of peripheral persuasion is evident. For example the classical conditioning model of "relatively simple associations" denies the complexity of peripheral cues triggering social dimensions of group identification and affiliation needs as factors in persuasion. Bem’s work with self-perception is more misleading as the inference process described by Bem is hypothesized to be a cognitive function. At best the peripheral dimensions of social cues interact with the central dimensions of inference in the Bem model. In this sense the distinction between peripheral and central routes to persuasion is blurred. Chaiken’s work with heuristics similarly blends the peripheral and central routes effectively diluting an understanding of the truly distinct persuasive power of peripheral messages.

In chapter three this study will expand upon the differences between the interpretation of the persuasive power of peripheral cues offered by Petty et al. and the proposition advocated here. Namely this study argues that peripheral routes to persuasion as identified by the ELM have a distinct rhetorical function. Chapter three argues that peripheral routes to persuasion may lead to relatively
enduring attitude and/or behavior changes more typical of the effective persuasive appeals followed by central routes. The difference advocated here is interpretative. Petty et al. maintain that peripheral routes to persuasion while sometimes effective are qualitatively inferior to persuasion achieved through central routes. This study accepts the definition of the combination of situational and personality factors that according to the ELM constitute message processing via peripheral routes. However it is in the consideration of the theoretical implications of peripheral persuasion as a viable and potent rhetorical strategy that this study suggests an alternative analysis of the ELM may be useful. Chapter three argues that peripheral routes to persuasion offer a means for avoiding the constraints of persuasion via central routes while yet providing the opportunity for relatively enduring attitude change.

From the preceding discussion it should be clear that what constitutes a cue for central or peripheral processing of persuasive message is derived from the interaction of the message with the individual doing the processing. As Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo go on to state that the difference between whether a message is processed via a central or peripheral route does not depend upon the nature of the message itself. A given message variable or group of variables may be processed by either a central or peripheral route:
Variables may serve as persuasive arguments, providing information as to the central merits of an object or issue, or they may serve as peripheral cues, allowing favorable or unfavorable attitude formation in the absence of a diligent consideration of the true merits of the object or issue (p. 234).

In sum, peripheral routes to persuasion are likely to be characterized by an absence of issue-relevant thinking about the message. This absence is further generated by the interaction of message content or form of presentation with the situational constraints surrounding the reception of the message. These constraints may include external distractions to processing such as environmental noise or brevity in terms of length of exposure to the message. The ability or motivation to process the message is also a key element in identifying the routes to persuasion a message will follow when processed.

Involvement

It is clear from the discussion of the ELM that how a particular message is processed is dependent upon the interaction of the message and the individual. What might constitute a central cue for one person may only be a peripheral cue for another. Which route is followed in the processing of persuasive information is a function of involvement or the degree of motivation to process possessed
by the individual. High issue involvement occurs when an issue has "intrinsic importance" or "personal meaning" (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979). Low issue involvement is predicted when an issue lacks personal relevance. When involvement is high in response to a persuasive message the model predicts a relatively high likelihood that an individual will engage in issue-relevant thinking. When involvement is low the model suggests that persuasion occurs from means other than conscious consideration or elaboration of issue-relevant thinking. Thus elaboration likelihood is a function of involvement.

The above description of involvement is consistent with the theory of social judgement developed by Sherif and Hovland (1961). The key terms of social judgement theory are latitudes of acceptance, rejection, noncommitment, and ego-involvement. Briefly summarizing Sherif and Hovland the latitudes of acceptance or rejection consist of the psychological distances around certain attitudinal "anchors" a person may have regarding some issue. If persuasive messages fall within the latitude of acceptance then the theory predicts an increased likelihood of attitude change. The converse is true of the latitude of rejection. Noncommitment represents another latitude in which the persuasive message does not evoke a response because the individual has no firmly held attitudinal anchor regarding the subject matter of the message. Sherif and Hovland
postulate that attitudes and messages are contrasted by the individual processing a persuasive communication:

On the basis of studies of social judgement, we can predict that an established attitude provides an anchor in appraising a communication pertinent to it. Communication, particularly persuasive communication, may be conceived as another anchor in the judgement situation (p. 128).

Ego-involvement represents the degree to which an attitude affects the self-concept. Presumably high ego-involvement may also affect the range of the latitude of acceptance or rejection. For example in some cases the threat to the self-concept may be so great as to reduce the latitude of acceptance to a single point. In such cases only persuasive messages that completely agree with the held attitude will be accepted and attitude change will be impossible. Sherif and Hovland seem to suggest this possibility when they note that "the degree of the individual's personal involvement in an issue should be closely related to important characteristics of his latitudes of acceptance and rejection" (p. 129).

Social judgement theory identifies the importance of involvement in the processing of persuasive communication. In the context of the ELM social judgement theory supports the prediction that high involvement in some aspect of a persuasive message will result in a greater likelihood of participation in issue-relevant thinking. Under such
conditions messages may be expected to follow central routes to persuasion. Under conditions of low involvement the ELM predicts that the individual will not engage in issue-relevant thinking and that processing of the persuasive message will follow a peripheral route.

An example of the role of involvement can be seen in two possible responses to the same persuasive stimulus. In 1986 an advertisement for Magnavox brand television sets appeared during prime-time television viewing on the three major networks. This ad featured a salesperson asking a potential customer, a man, if he could be helped with anything. The customer says "I'm not sure" and proceeds to describe at a rapid speed the various technical specifications he is looking for in a television and remote control system. The salesperson nods, listens, and answers that the current Magnavox remote control system can handle all the functions just described. For the stereo-knowledgeable viewer this ad could be highly involving leading to a careful appraisal of just what each technical dimensions of the customer's request suggests in the way of performance. Under this set of conditions the ELM predicts processing of the persuasive appeal by the central route.

Another viewer of this ad may not be at all familiar with the technical specifications of television and stereo equipment. Though this viewer may be involved in wanting a good product, the technical content of the ad is not
intrinsically involving. However the number of arguments (i.e., the technical specifications desired by the customer) the Magnavox purchase answers may create a positive affect response. Under this set of conditions the ELM predicts processing of the persuasive appeal by the peripheral route.

In summary the ELM predicts how the role of involvement influences the processing of persuasive messages in a way consistent with social judgement theory. Sherif and Hovland also seem to recognize the potential importance of affect in persuasion when they write that "it is apparent that a great need in linking judgement study and investigation of attitude and attitude change is intensive research into the judgement of affective and motivationally relevant material" (p. 203). It is a premise of this study that part of that "intensive research" should include a theoretical examination of the affective dimensions of persuasive messages under low elaboration likelihood conditions. The need for investigation into the affective dimensions of persuasion stems from criticism of social judgement theory. Littlejohn (1978) observes that social judgement theory "assumes, for example, that there is a sequential, causal mechanism whereby judgement as a cognitive activity precedes attitude change" (p. 146). By extension it seems that the ELM makes a similar judgement; that cognitive central processing of persuasive messages is a more potent and reliable strategy. Chapter three identifies the rhetorical
conditions that may not only favor processing of persuasive messages via peripheral routes but also suggests the superiority of affect-based peripheral persuasion over cognitive cues for facilitating enduring attitude change.

Ability of Process Messages

While involvement is the primary determinant of elaboration likelihood the ELM model recognizes that other factors may intervene to prohibit effective issue-relevant thinking. These factors comprise an individual’s ability to respond and include elements like external distractions of noise or exposure to the message and internal distractions such as innate cognitive ability and other cognitive agenda.

In the previous Magnavox example external distractions might include leaving the immediate vicinity of the television during the duration of the commercial thus limiting exposure. Other external distractions may be found in conversations with others present during the duration of the ad. Internal distractions may include daydreaming, preoccupation with previously presented ads or television shows, or anticipation of other matters to be addressed once the ad is over. Combined with involvement, this ability to process may influence which route to persuasion a message follows. As Petty and Cacioppo (1984a) note:
If people are unmotivated or are unable to think about the message, and no other salient cues are available, they might invoke the simple but reasonable decision rule, "the more arguments the better," and their attitudes might change in the absence of thinking about or scrutinizing the arguments. Accordingly, persuasion may require only that people realize that the message contains relatively few or relatively many arguments" (p. 70).

As discussed earlier the decision rule may serve as a substitute for cognitive processing of persuasive appeals. In some instances the use of decision rules may be the product of previous cognitive effort. For example if after careful consideration a person decides all products are the same then the decision rule "buy the most attractive" may be appropriately the result of cognitive processes. In such instances the link between cognition and affect is confirmed.

In other instances the use of a decision rule may be more intuitive. For example if a person lacks a certain degree of cognitive resources s/he may have learned through trial and error similar to classical conditioning that the best decision is often accompanied by the most arguments. It is possible that the individual may be unconscious of this learning or may even avoid conscious recognition of his or her "lack" or "stupidity" for psychological reasons. Under such circumstances the ability to process may very well predict that a persuasive appeal will be processed via the peripheral route.

In sum the key features of the ELM are central routes
to persuasion, peripheral routes to persuasion, involvement and ability to process messages in any given context as factors influencing the processing of persuasive information. Figure 1 provides a schematic of the ELM as discussed by Petty and Cacioppo (1983) and Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987). The left-hand side of the model indicates that persuasive messages are influenced by two factors: (1) motivation to process (involvement) and, (2) ability to process. Before a message can be predicted to follow either a central or peripheral route, both of these factors must be considered. It is important to note that all messages have elements that may be processed by either route. Whether or not any given element of a persuasive message is processed by either the central or peripheral route depends upon the individual's involvement and ability to process.

As was noted in chapter one the ELM is primarily a cognitive model of persuasion. In so far as the ELM attempts to explain persuasion by means other than cognitive processing it is an extension of earlier approaches to persuasion. However the right-hand side of the model
SOURCE AND MESSAGE FACTORS IN PERSUASION

PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

PERIPHERAL ATTITUDE SHIFT
Attitude is relatively temporary, susceptible, and unpredictable of behavior.

MOTIVATED TO PROCESS?
personal relevance: need for cognition; personal responsibility; etc.

ABILITY TO PROCESS?
attention; repetition; prior knowledge; message comprehensibility; etc.

NATURE OF COGNITIVE PROCESSING:
(initial attitude, argument quality, etc.)

FAVORABLE UNFAVORABLE NEITHER OR THOUGHTS THOUGHTS NEUTRAL PREDOMINATE PREDOMINATE PREDOMINATE

COGNITIVE STRUCTURE CHANGE:
Are new cognitions adopted and stored in memory? Are different responses made salient than previously?

Yes (Favorable) Yes (Unfavorable)

CENTRAL ATTITUDE CHANGE

CENTRAL POSITIVE ATTITUDE CHANGE

ATTITUDE CHANGE

Attitude is relatively enduring, resistant, and predictive of behavior.

FIGURE 1

(Source: Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987)
indicates that persuasion via the peripheral route is more ephemeral than persuasion achieved through the central route. It is here that the diagram reflects the bias of the ELM toward cognitive processing of persuasive messages. In all the studies undertaken by Petty and Cacioppo and their associates cited above manipulated independent variables addressed cognitive message cues. None of the studies attempted to manipulate or measure the effectiveness of peripheral persuasive messages. In addition to dismissing discussion of peripheral persuasion to hypothetical examples that confirm the prediction of the model the ELM does not encourage speculation on how central and peripheral cues may interact. While the diagram does chart possible redirection of processing and attention to different message cues little exploration of the interaction between central and peripheral cue processing is evident in the model.

One response to the lack of experimental data on peripheral persuasion involves setting up studies designed to measure responses to peripheral cues. Pretesting of subjects to determine levels of involvement concerning various issues may identify subject-groups for whom a selected persuasive message will be peripherally processed. Use of Chi-square analysis to determine simple differences of attitudes between a control and an experimental group would be feasible. Even more sophisticated tests such as
the t-test or ANOVA's could be employed to discriminate the effects of peripheral persuasive messages, if any, in a given experimental situation.

But the present study argues that plans for experimentation would be premature. As discussed earlier in this chapter the ELM does not sufficiently describe the parameters of peripheral persuasion to warrant experimental study. As identified in the studies by Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953), Izard (1977), Izard, Kagan, and Zajonc (1984) and Sherif and Hovland (1961) theorizing about the role of affect in persuasion has been incomplete. It seems prudent to suggest that a theory of the role of affect in persuasion would help point out where scientific experimentation is possible. Chapter three attempts to construct a theory of affective persuasion that must precede experimentation. Moreover other objections to the ELM suggest that reconsideration of the theoretical tenets of the model are in order.

**Objections to the ELM**

consideration of persuasive information processing as either a central or peripheral mental process has generated controversy. Specifically Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987) have argued that the ELM does not account for or predict behavior as its supporters claim.

Stiff (1986) identifies central routes as requiring that individuals "exert considerable cognitive effort [when] evaluating the message's arguments and assessing the extent to which they support the claim of the message" (p. 75). Peripheral routes, according to Stiff, require "relatively little cognitive effort" to process information and "rely on non-content cues to make judgments about message recommendations" (p. 76).

Stiff recognizes that in some circumstances individuals will process persuasive messages in ways described by the ELM (1986, p. 75). Nevertheless he asserts several objections to the model. First Stiff believes the model insists that "recipients of a persuasive message must decide which set of cues [i.e., central or peripheral] they will focus on when processing it" (p. 76). Second Stiff claims that "Petty and Cacioppo fail to assess directly the cognitive processes themselves" (p. 77) relying instead on reports on attitudes measured by subject responses on semantic differential scales. Third Stiff argues that Petty and Cacioppo "offer no data showing that low involvement message recipients process more peripheral information than
high-involvement recipients" (p. 77). Stiff conducts meta-
analyses of the studies cited by Petty and Cacioppo and
concludes that there is insufficient evidence to support the
claims of the ELM. For Stiff (1986):

The meta-analytic procedures used in the present study
are discussed by Hunter et al. (1982). Essentially,
these procedures involve the estimation of effect sizes
between variables of interest for each individual
study. Once all of the relevant effect sizes are
identified, they are cumulated into a set of summary
statistics describing the entire body of research.

The effect size statistic selected for use in the
present study was the correlation coefficient. Its use
permits identification of possible sources of variance
in the estimate of average $r$. Hunter et al. (1982)
discuss techniques for separating the variance in $r$ due
to statistical artifacts — i.e., sampling error,
measurement error, restriction in range — from
variance in $r$ due to unknown determinants. Once these
statistical artifacts have been identified, the
estimate of the true variance in $r$ provides an estimate
of the stability of the estimated effect size (p. 82).

Essentially Stiff argues that on the basis of his meta-
analyses the ELM does not accurately predict how persuasive
messages will be processed (p. 87). He offers instead
Kahneman's (1973) elastic capacity model as a more accurate
descriptor of persuasive cue processing.

Stiff favors the Kahneman model because it predicts
"where individuals engage in parallel [i.e., simultaneous
processing of more than one item of information] processing
and are influenced by both central and peripheral persuasive
cues" (p. 79). As Stiff describes it, the Kahneman model
"suggests that humans are multi-channel limited capacity
processors capable of parallel processing" (p. 79). Stiff
argues that the hypothesized allocation of processing capacity to the demands of both central and peripheral cues better explains human cognitive activity than does the ELM. Stiff favors the limited capacity model because he believes the ELM assumes the serial or sequential processing of information. Moreover Stiff asserts that persuasive messages may be processed both by central and peripheral routes simultaneously (p. 77). He suggests that the ELM denies the possibility of simultaneous processing of messages by central and peripheral routes (p. 76). Stiff also asserts that the measurement of pupil dilation used in the Kahneman model as an indicator of cognitive effort more directly indicates the presence or absence of central versus peripheral processing than the measures used in studies supporting the ELM (p. 78). Stiff offers study by Kahneman, Peavler, and Onuska (1968) in which task difficulty correlated with pupil dilation as evidence that pupil dilation directly measures involvement (p. 78). However Stiff does not demonstrate that task difficulty and involvement are correlated and later argues that indirect assessment of his hypotheses regarding central and peripheral processing is acceptable (p. 81). The point of this overview is not to refute Stiff or the criticisms he offers of the ELM. Rather the present study seeks to identify points on which operationalization of the ELM and for that matter the study of persuasion suffer from
disagreement over theoretical issues such as what constitutes involvement.

The merits of the Kahneman model lie in its suggestion that individuals may process information holistically and the recognition that there is likely some finite limit to any person’s processing capacity. These strengths do offer some interesting avenues for researchers. For example semioticians studying intercultural differences in cognitive processing may wish to investigate whether serial or parallel processing is an inherent function of language. The differences in essentially syntactic languages like English and essentially pictographic languages like Japanese may "train" their users in serial or parallel processing respectively. If such differences exist then the Kahneman model may be a more universally applicable information processing model than the ELM. Other tests perhaps from the field of physiological psychology may offer more precise determination of the usefulness of either model to predict how persuasive information is processed.

Focus on a limited capacity model may also encourage researchers to attempt identification of the upper and lower limits of cognitive activity. Research in this area will likely merge physiological psychology with concerns in education for how to utilize best an individual’s capacity to facilitate learning.

These hypothetical examples of the implications of the
Kahneman model support its usefulness as a heuristic research tool. Nevertheless, the Kahneman model in and of itself does not invalidate the ELM. The predictions of the ELM may still be of substantial use in appropriate persuasive contexts. In fact, comparison of the ELM and the Kahneman model may remind researchers to identify the domain of a given theory more carefully without necessarily invalidating either model.

Moreover, Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo (1987) specifically contest the criticisms of the ELM identified by Stiff. As noted in chapter one, the authors reject Stiff's meta-analysis as methodologically flawed:

The technique of meta-analysis works best when averages can be taken across a very large number of studies employing different subjects, topics, and manipulations. When an estimate is based upon only two or three data points, as in Stiff's analysis of credibility, the effects observed may be too dependent on factors other than the variable of interest that can have an impact on the effect size. When averaging across many studies, these extraneous variables may be less problematic since they are more likely to be randomly distributed across the conditions of interest. It is important to note that Stiff recognized that his analysis included only a "minute portion of the total credibility literature" (p. 85), and he concluded that a "more comprehensive analysis of the effects of involvement on the source credibility-attitude relationship would be more enlightening" (p. 88). On this point, we agree (Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987, p. 244).

Besides faulting Stiff's lack of familiarity with involvement literature, Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt (1987) argue that Stiff and Boster's use of five
graduate students to assess likely involvement of undergraduates on issues relevant to persuasive messages:

Stiff and Boster argue that it is better to have 5 graduate students make ratings of involvement than 28 undergraduates. Although it is undoubtedly difficult for any judge to guess how involved another group of people was at another point in time, we believe our procedure is more justifiable than theirs on a number of grounds. First, 28 raters will produce a more reliable (less idiosyncratic) judgment than 5 raters. Second, our preference for undergraduate judges is based on the fact that undergraduates were the subjects in all of the studies comprising the meta-analysis. Thus, our judges would be at a similar level of psychological development as the subjects in the original studies and might better identify with the concerns of others in their own age group. . . . In sum, we believe that there are grounds to prefer our rating procedure over that employed by Stiff" (p. 260).

To summarize briefly Petty et al. argue that Stiff and Boster's criticism of the ELM is both conceptually and methodologically flawed. Moreover they contend that "Stiff and Boster continue to misrepresent the ELM and attack straw-man positions" (Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt, 1987, p. 262). A close reading of the criticism of the ELM offered by Stiff and Stiff and Boster does reveal a lack of consistency especially on the issue of involvement and how to measure involvement. Petty et al. do appear to answer the criticism of their model reasonably if not definitively. An appraisal of the methodological points of contention is beyond the scope of the present study. The review of the controversy over the ELM is offered for two
First there is at issue conceptual differences regarding how persuasive information is processed that warrant further theorizing about the role of arguments and simple cues in persuasion. Second the controversial nature of the methodological arguments surrounding the ELM would seem to support the premise of the present study that the development of a theory of persuasion delineating aspects of the ELM is necessary before more effective testing of the model is possible.

In response to the specific objections raised by Stiff, the authors maintain the ELM does specify where and when a message is likely to be processed by either the central or peripheral route. But they reject the idea that individuals consciously decide between the two routes. For its originators the ELM describes how persuasive cues are processed, predicting the likely path a cue will follow under a given set of conditions. Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt (1987) maintain that Stiff's interpretation of the ELM is too deterministic and static. They argue that,

Stiff continues to misperceive the ELM as a theory postulating "central processing" of "central cues" and peripheral processing" of "peripheral cues." Rather, the ELM outlines two general "routes" to persuasion. The central route is followed when people are motivated and able to engage in a careful scrutiny of the central merits of an attitude object. . . . The peripheral route is followed when motivation and/or ability to evaluate the central merits of an attitude object are personally low, and attitudes are affected primarily by
simple cues in the persuasion environment (p. 258).

Petty, Cacioppo, and their associates do not respond to Stiff’s claim that research supporting the ELM does not measure cognitive activity directly. However, the criticism that the model rests on "unchecked assumptions" (Stiff, 1986, p. 77) seems tenuous at best. For example Stiff believes the measurement of pupil dilation used to support the Elastic Capacity Model (Kahneman, Peavler, and Onuska, 1968) is a direct measure of cognitive activity. However in both cases (pupil dilation and semantic differential scaling by subjects), the assumption that each method measures cognitive activity remains unchecked by direct means. Stiff may prefer pupil dilation as an indicator of cognitive activity because it does not require self-report from subjects. But Stiff does not cite any evidence that pupil dilation is indicative of cognitive activity. The relationship is an inferred one. Stiff’s objections to the ELM rest partially on this criticism that the model does not directly measure cognitive activity. If this lack of direct measure is an important weakness to the ELM then one would expect Stiff to include evidence of direct measurement of cognitive activity as a strength of the Kahneman model. In this sense both models rest on similarly untested assumptions.

Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo also dispute
Stiff's claim that no evidence exists supporting greater processing of peripheral appeal under low involvement conditions than under high involvement conditions. Petty, Cacioppo, and Goldman (1981) and Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1983) both claim greater peripheral processing under low involvement conditions. In the latter study the authors found that argument quality influenced persuasion under both high and low elaboration likelihood conditions (p. 141). Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt point out this finding as ignored by Stiff and Stiff and Boster in their criticism of the ELM. Petty, Cacioppo, and Goldman (1981) seek to identify how personal involvement influences the processing of arguments in persuasion. While argument quality does not appear to be a factor in persuasion under low involvement conditions source expertise does influence persuasion under low involvement conditions (p. 847). In both the cited studies peripheral cues seem more influential than argument quality under low involvement conditions. Stiff and Stiff and Boster continue to deny these reports.

Stiff and Boster (1987) reply to Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo by refocusing some of the criticism of the model onto the schematic diagram used to illustrate the model. They argue that:

Although Petty and Cacioppo (1986) now emphasize that these two types of processing represent endpoints on the elaboration likelihood continuum, it is difficult to imagine how this diagram could be used to explain
parallel processing of central and peripheral information (p. 250).

Though Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt deny this point examination of the model as presented in figure 1 does not readily indicate how parallel processing might occur. At the same time Stiff and Boster do not recognize that the continuum claim is at least two years older than they indicate (Cacioppo and Petty, 1984a, p. 673). In short both sides must yield some point of argument to the other while recognizing the need for further debate to resolve this issue.

Summary of the current controversy

In evaluating the critique of the ELM offered by Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987) it appears that both sides maintain defensible positions. While it is unclear how the schematic diagram of the ELM accounts for parallel processing the model's opponents fail to demonstrate substantial proof of their other objections. The model's supporters also dispute the methodological validity of Stiff's analysis of the model. As mentioned in chapter one this controversial exchange is likely to continue.

Though the current study recognizes the controversial nature of the ELM it is not concerned with resolving the issues raised by Stiff (1986) and Stiff and Boster (1987).
Rather this study focuses on one aspect of the ELM overlooked by both its critics and supporters. Specifically neither side considers the affective dimensions of persuasion under low involvement, low elaboration likelihood conditions. Given the recognized bias of current research toward cognitive processing it seems useful to attempt to frame the theoretical parameters of affect-based low elaboration likelihood persuasion. A number of reasons support a theoretical exploration of affect-based persuasion under low elaboration likelihood conditions.

First Petty and Cacioppo (1984a) note that there are dimensions to peripheral cues that are based on affect-governed conditions:

Although previous research on peripheral cues has focused on how attributes of the message source (e.g., expertise, attractiveness) can induce persuasion without issue-relevant thinking when people are either relatively unmotivated or unable to think about issue-relevant arguments, the present research provides an initial indication that features of the persuasive message may also serve as peripheral cues. Thus, in addition to the number of arguments, message factors.. . . the overall persuasion context (e.g., the presence of pleasant surroundings). . . . may also lead people to infer that they like or don’t like the advocacy or that it is or is not worth supporting (p. 78).

Though Petty and Cacioppo do not extend their discussion of affect-based persuasion beyond "pleasant surroundings" they do recognize that peripheral cues include affect-based stimuli. Similarly Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann (1983) assert that "a person may accept an advocacy simply because
Second while the ELM predicts that attitude change resulting from peripheral routes may be less resistant to change it does recognize that in some situations peripheral appeals may constitute an effective persuasive strategy. Petty and Cacioppo (1983) argue that:

The basic tenet of the ELM is that different methods of inducing persuasion may work best, depending upon whether the elaboration likelihood of the communication situation (that is, the probability of message or issue-relevant thought occurring) is high or low. When elaboration likelihood is high, the central route to persuasion should be particularly effective, but when the elaboration likelihood is low, the peripheral route should be better (pp. 4-5).

When the conditions under which peripheral routes to persuasion may be more effective are combined with other influences such as social factors the affective dimensions of peripheral appeals become clearer. Chapter three examines the theoretical basis for affect-based persuasive appeals from a rhetorical perspective.

Third this study seeks to demonstrate that affect-based peripheral appeals may constitute an important and previously neglected aspect of persuasion study. This goal is consistent with Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann's (1983) observation that "future work could be aimed at uncovering the various moderators of the route to persuasion and tracking the various consequents of the two different
routes" (p. 144). Also as Petty and Cacioppo (1983) note "that attitudes do not always change in a thoughtful manner" (p. 4), the importance of identifying and conceptualizing the role of affect in persuasion is heightened. While the ELM does suggest that affect (in the form of classical conditioning of response) may influence persuasion under peripheral conditions the model explicitly predicts that persuasion by affect will be less resistant to change and counter-argumentation than persuasion via the central route (Petty, Cacioppo, Kasmer, and Haugtvedt, p. 259). In chapter three this premise is challenged. In short the present study argues that there are situations in which peripheral message cues may facilitate long-term attitude change.

Finally, as noted in chapter one, the study of persuasion is historically grounded in the field of rhetoric. Yet the current controversy over the ELM ignores the contributions to the study of persuasion made from areas outside the social sciences. Additionally recent trends in rhetorical theory that adopt a narrative paradigm for the study of argument explicitly include an affect-based dimension to persuasion. In light of these reasons it seems both prudent and justified that the theoretical examination of the affective dimensions of low elaboration likelihood persuasive appeals adopt a rhetorical perspective.
CHAPTER THREE

Though the relationship between rhetoric and emotions may be traced at least as far back as Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics* (e.g., Hershey, 1986; Weiss, 1982) the recent work of Fisher (1984, 1985a, 1985b) indicates a new interest on the part of scholars for the study of rhetorical and aesthetic uses of language. Fisher's assertion that human beings be considered paradigmatically as *homo narrans*, or story-telling animals has generated considerable controversy (e.g., Rowland, 1987; Warnick, 1987). Nevertheless several scholars have been quick to embrace Fisher's model of human communication with its expanded view of how rhetoric functions (Condit, 1987a, 1987b; Farrell, 1985, 1986; Frentz, 1985). This chapter acknowledges that Fisher's model helps place the study of affect in contemporary rhetorical theory. However it is also the case that the earlier work of Kenneth Burke (1969b) links the application of rhetoric to aesthetic works as well and by implication to emotional appeals. The purpose of this chapter is to review
how these two recent developments in contemporary rhetorical theory provide a theoretical framework for the construction of a rhetoric of affect-based low elaboration likelihood persuasion.

The Narrative Paradigm and Rhetorical Theory

Fisher (1984) first proposed the narrative paradigm to offer a theoretical and conceptual framework for understanding public moral arguments. Intrigued by the recognition that aesthetic works of art such as dramatic productions and novels advocate a perspective on human behavior or values (Fisher and Filoy, 1982), Fisher considers that persuasion exists in a number of communicative contexts not traditionally addressed as "rhetorical." For Fisher:

The narrative paradigm, then, can be considered a dialectical synthesis of two traditional strands in the history of rhetoric: the argumentative, persuasive theme and the literary, aesthetic theme. As will be seen, the narrative paradigm insists that human communication should be viewed as historical as well as situational, as stories competing with other stories constituted by good reasons, as being rational when they satisfy the demands of narrative probability and narrative fidelity, and as inevitably moral inducements. . . . The narrative paradigm does not deny reason and rationality; it reconstitutes them, making them amenable to all forms of human communication (1984, p. 2).

Fisher posits a number of terms in his narrative paradigm that require explanation. Specifically the terms narrative
probability and narrative fidelity necessitate further
discussion. Fisher defines narrative probability as an
"inherent awareness of . . . what constitutes a coherent
story" (p. 8). For Fisher individuals organize the
phenomenal world of experience into cohesive stories that
provide structure and order to an otherwise chaotic world.
Narrative fidelity is an extension of narrative probability
whereby individuals constantly compare "whether the stories
they experience ring true with the stories they know to be
ture in their lives" (p. 8).

Fisher's definition of narrative probability and
narrative fidelity are part of five presuppositions that
structure the narrative paradigm (p. 7). Briefly summarized
the presuppositions posit that: (1) humans are storytellers;
(2) decision-making occurs through the recognition of "'good
reasons' which vary in form among communication situations,
genres, and media" (p. 7); (3) good reasons are in turn
determined by an on-going process of dynamic social
exchange; (4) rationality is defined by stories which
adhere to the tenets of narrative probability and narrative
fidelity; and, (5) the world of human existence requires a
choice among competing stories "in a process of continual
recreation" (p. 8).

Fisher basically favors adoption of the narrative
paradigm for assessing human communication processes because
he believes narratives are "moral constructs" (p. 10).
Narratives embody morality reflecting as Aristotle believed that people "have a natural tendency to prefer the true and the just" (p. 9). Because narratives embody the historical and social dimensions of group as well as individual experience Fisher argues that narratives favor "what works" or "rings true" which for him is inevitably morally sound. For Fisher this characteristic of narrative has an important advantage over other theoretical perspectives for what he calls "public moral argument" (p. 11).

By "public moral argument" Fisher refers to any ongoing controversial issue debated by people in a free society. He uses the example of debate over nuclear arms to illustrate the difference between the narrative paradigm and the rational world paradigm.

The rational world paradigm constitutes the application of logic and expert testimony to rhetorical situations requiring human-decision making. Fisher traces the development of this paradigm (1984, 1985b) at some length and concludes that its proponents are "purveyors of ideological, bureaucratic, or technical arguments. Such arguments may overlap, be used by the same arguer, but each is distinguished by a particular privileged position: political 'truth,' administrative sanction, or subject matter expertise" (1984, p. 11).

While Fisher does not denigrate the effectiveness of the rational paradigm for effective decision-making he
believes that its usefulness is limited in some circumstances. In the case of the nuclear controversy Fisher maintains that the ability of an individual to judge the merits of technical arguments or indeed assess the competency of the experts themselves is impossible:

Here is revealed the fate of non-experts who would argue about nuclear warfare. Only experts can argue with experts and their arguments -- while public-- cannot be rationally questioned. . . . In the audience of experts, the public is left with no compelling reason, from the perspective of the rational world paradigm, to believe one over the other. One is not a judge but a spectator who must choose between actors. From the narrative paradigm view, the experts are storytellers and the audience is not a group of observers but are active participants in the meaning-formation of the stories. . . . Experts and lay persons meet on common ground, given the narrative paradigm.

From the narrative perspective, the proper role of the expert in public moral argument is that of counselor, which is, as Benjamin (1963) notes, the true function of the storyteller. His or her contribution to public dialogue is to impart knowledge, like a teacher, or wisdom, like a sage. It is not to pronounce a story that ends all storytelling. The expert assumes the role of public counselor whenever she or he crosses the boundary of technical knowledge into the territory of life as it ought to be lived (1984, p. 13).

For Fisher the narrative paradigm provides a theoretical perspective for understanding how rhetorical processes operate in the realm of public moral argument. Unlike the rational world paradigm which denies the active participation of lay persons the narrative paradigm conceptualizes the active involvement of all interested parties. Experts may have positions of higher status and respect but judgement is reserved for the collective whole
of the audience. In effect the narrative paradigm makes experts part of the story itself and one in which all participate equally.

This equalizing property of narrative is of course the ultimate grounding of Fisher's claim that narrative is an essentially moral construct. Additionally he favors adoption of the narrative paradigm for rhetorical theory because "narrative as a mode of discourse is more universal and probably more efficacious than argument for nontechnical forms of communication" (p. 14). Fisher offers three reasons for this claim:

First, narration comes closer to capturing the experience of the world, simultaneously appealing to the various senses, to reason and emotion, to intellect and imagination, and to fact and value. It does not presume intellectual contact only. Second, one does not have to be taught narrative probability and narrative fidelity; one culturally acquires them through a universal faculty and experience. . . . Third, narration works by suggestion and identification; argument operates by inferential moves and deliberation. Both forms, however, are modes of expressing good reasons -- given the narrative paradigm -- so the differences between them are structural rather than substantive (pp. 14-15).

Essentially Fisher believes the narrative paradigm accounts for human communication that reasons but does not argue. He distinguishes these functions in a technical sense. Argument for Fisher is a logical process that utilizes the tools of rhetoric such as syllogisms, patterns of deduction and induction, use of evidence from experts, and demonstration. Reasoning for Fisher may include these
elements but is not limited to them. Thus the imaginative and evocative language of literature may also persuade an audience. For the present study Fisher's first reason is the most cogent for it links emotional appeals with developing rhetorical theory.

In his focus on the social and historical nature of narrative Fisher underscores the importance of contact with others as a potential source of persuasion. Moreover Fisher recognizes that people do in fact tell stories but that the narrative paradigm extends well beyond discourse to 'stand as the organizing principle of all symbolic interaction. The distinction is that Fisher views narrative as both a mode of discourse (p. 14) and a paradigm for all human communication (p. 3). Fisher (1985b) explicitly extends this latter view of narrative beyond discourse:

It [the narrative paradigm] envisions existing institutions as providing "plots" that are always in the process of re-creation rather than as scripts; it stresses that people are full participants in the making of messages, whether they are agents (authors) or audience members (co-authors) (p. 86). Fisher sees all human activity as organized by narrative principles and consistent with his presuppositions for the narrative paradigm. While this study argues that much of Fisher's work is useful for understanding the role of affect in persuasion it is necessary to note that the narrative paradigm is also controversial.
Criticism of the Narrative Paradigm and Implications for the Rhetoric of Affective Persuasion

Though often insightful the narrative paradigm suffers from difficulties in interpretation that may prove problematic in application to rhetorical criticism. Rowland (1987) for example asserts that one problem of the narrative paradigm is its scope:

The problem here is that narrative has been defined so broadly that the term loses much of its explanatory power. At one level, Fisher is clearly correct in labeling his work on narrative as a metaparadigm. His definition of narrative subsumes all other forms of human communication; it is tautologically true. Yet if all forms of discourse are narrative, it is hard to see how the paradigm could aid the critic in describing or evaluating a particular work (p. 265).

Rowland is quite correct that the narrative paradigm will be of limited practical value to the critic looking for some method for analyzing rhetorical discourse. If the efficacy of the narrative paradigm were to be found in methodological application then the criticism offered by Rowland would require that we reject the narrative paradigm as non-method.

But the value of the narrative paradigm is theoretical not practical. Rhetorical theory may benefit from consideration of narrative as paradigmatic where rhetorical criticism may find narrative to be of little practical use.
Though Rowland rejects paradigmatic status for narrative he believes that eventually it may offer important contributions to rhetorical theory:

The conclusions outlined above do not undercut the study of narrative; if anything they re-emphasize its importance. Nor do they necessarily deny the value of approaching human communication through a more developed "narrative paradigm." It is possible that Fisher and others could develop narrative as a model for understanding communication in a manner similar to the way that Burke developed dramatism. Just as Burke showed that the dramatistic metaphor could be applied to works that were not traditionally considered drama, it may be possible to develop a narrative approach that will inform the study of discourse that does not tell a story. The criticism developed here should serve as a challenge to encourage further development of such an approach (p. 274).

Of course the observations offered by Rowland could also be disputed. His point that paradigms should provide an "approach" to study is ambiguous. That the narrative paradigm does not offer a method of analysis is evident. That it may offer a conceptual framework from which to "approach" the study of discourse remains unrefuted. It is possible then to note the objections to the narrative paradigm raised by Rowland on a practical level while still endorsing the conceptual implications of the Fisher's model.

Another problem with the critique offered by Rowland stems from his claim of "discourse that does not tell a story" (p. 274). Fisher contends just the reverse: Not only does all discourse tell a story but all human endeavors are in essence "stories" (Fisher, 1985b, pp. 74; 86).
Without specific refutation of this aspect of the narrative paradigm Rowland's criticism applies only to the efficacy of the narrative paradigm as a tool for rhetorical criticism. His rejection of Fisher's broader claim of narrative as the paradigmatic description of human symbolic action rests on arguments of insufficient scope.

Though restriction to theoretical issues may relieve the narrative paradigm of the criticisms made by Rowland other scholars have found difficulty with the narrative paradigm at the conceptual level. For example Warnick (1987) argues that the narrative paradigm does not pass its own test of narrative rationality:

Because Fisher has taken equivocal or contradictory positions on issues that determine how narrative rationality is to be used to assess texts, the narrative rationality concept in his paradigm itself lacks narrative probability or coherence. First, Fisher is unclear about the status of traditional rationality in his model. In 1984, he disparaged traditional logic because of its presumed tendency to close off discussion and exclude the public from decision-making. In 1985, he reluctantly and provisionally readmitted traditional rationality into the narrative paradigm without indicating how or when it should be necessary in assessing texts (p. 191).

Warnick uses "text" in the same way advocated by Fisher; meaning the whole of an on-going process of communicative exchange as exampled in the public moral argument surrounding nuclear disarmament. In addition to a lack of coherence Warnick further objects to the narrative paradigm because it relies on "consensus as a criterion for judging
the values in a text" (p. 181). She suggests instead that Fisher's model may be more useful as a "system of critical criteria" (p. 181) rather than a theoretical paradigm.

The criticisms of the narrative paradigm offered by Warnick more seriously threaten its paradigmatic status than those posited by Rowland. Certainly coherence and consistency are crucial requirements to any theory. It is possible to separate the narrative paradigm from its criticism on this issue by noting that Warnick finds inconsistency in Fisher's defense of the narrative paradigm. While it is true that Fisher does reluctantly include traditional rationality in his later article (in this study Fisher, 1985a) it is also true that Fisher has argued from the beginning that the narrative paradigm does not replace traditional rationality but subsumes it (Fisher, 1984, p.3).

Moreover Warnick seems to want to share some of Fisher's assumption about public moral argument without adequately rejecting his conclusions. For example Warnick rejects "consensus" as a critical criterion while essentially accepting the argument made by Fisher that public moral argument may be defined at least partially by an inability to rely on the authority of experts to make policy (i.e. moral) decision. If all participants are to be involved in the resolution of public moral argument then on what basis is consensus an inadequate criterion? Warnick further obfuscates Fisher's direct address on morality by
regulating the narrative paradigm to the role of "a system of critical criteria" (p. 181). Again the critic may wonder who determines the application of this system?

While Warnick raises questions about the application and evaluation of the narrative paradigm she does not clearly indicate an alternative system of analysis to amend the shortcomings she believes exist in Fisher’s work. This absence of a constructive approach to Fisher’s work seriously limits the scope of her own essay.

In sum it is clear that the narrative paradigm as developed by Fisher expands the parameters of rhetorical theory to include all aspects of human communication. Fisher specifically emphasizes aesthetic and emotional elements of communication as possessing an appeal to "reasoning" that he distinguishes from argument. Rowland (1987) and Warnick (1987) voice objections to aspects of the narrative paradigm proposed by Fisher. Rowland is concerned with practical application and rightly points out the limitations of the narrative paradigm for use as a method for rhetorical criticism. Warnick attacks the internal consistency of the arguments Fisher uses to advocate the model. Her objections warrant consideration though it is unclear at this point whether the narrative paradigm suffers the same lack of consistency she identifies in Fisher’s arguments. The lack of a proposed alternative to those shortcomings identified by Warnick further limits the
usefulness of her response to Fisher.

In spite of these objections neither critic finds fault in the premise of the paradigm that aesthetic and emotional uses of communication may be effective elements in the construction of persuasive messages. As will be discussed in the following section the relationship of aesthetic and argumentative uses of language has been developed more fully in the theories of literature and language of Kenneth Burke.

Rhetoric, Emotions, and Behavior

Though the relationship between rhetoric as reasoned discourse and literature as emotional or cathartic discourse has been discussed for centuries, it is in the work of Kenneth Burke that the inseparability of logical and emotional discourse is most apparent. An innovative thinker and advocate of "the new rhetoric" Burke (1963b) proposes a definition of persuasion that has implications for rhetorical theory. Specifically Burke's discussion goes beyond traditional definitions of rhetoric that focus on "reasoned discourse:"

Here is perhaps the simplest case of persuasion. You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his. Persuasion by flattery is but a special case of persuasion in general. But flattery can safely serve as our paradigm if we systematically widen its meaning, to see behind it the conditions of identification or consubstantiality in general. And you give the "signs"
of such consubstantiality by deference to an audience's "opinions" (p. 55).

Within this definition, two ideas are of particular interest to the present study. The first is that Burke's implied definition of language extends far beyond discourse to include actions and behaviors. This position is implicit in dramatism whereby human beings are analyzed as one would critique actors in a play. Actors perform roles by means of speech and gesture each providing the means for communicating ideas and feelings to the audience. Burke chooses to focus on language because he believes all thought and knowledge must necessarily proceed through language. But persuasion for Burke is a process of identification and the means for achieving identification can include the actions of others.

For Burke then persuasion may occur in the absence of speech or discourse if behavior "speaks" in such a way that it identifies with the "language" of the audience. Other scholars have noted the ability of action to argue in conjunction with or in place of speech. For example, Kauffman (1981) extends argument to dramatic productions in which "verbal and nonverbal forms combine to aid the audience in forming judgments about the credibility of a message" (p. 413). For Kauffman rhetorical properties of poetic language are evidenced in appeals to audience participation. Dramatic characters act and speak to their
audiences making de facto claims upon their hearers to engage them enthymematically in the dramatic process. For example Kauffman observes that in dramas like Aeschylus’ Oresteia "poetic-rhetorical discourse attempts to speak to the moral, ethical, and social problems which seem to inhere in human society" (p. 413). However he notes that "only the audience members can supply the necessary propositions: "this person is like me" or "these things could happen to me"" (p. 415). In this sense the audience provides the missing or unstated link in the argument implied by the performance.

Campbell (1982) argues that "theatre depends upon the example for its rhetorical force" (p. 13). By force Campbell means the imaginative involvement of the audience in the action presented on stage or in the least some emotional response to the action on stage. Campbell further suggests that rhetorical theory needs to accommodate the differences between traditional concepts of argument and emotional appeals:

I am suggesting that the rhetorical effectiveness of plays is not based upon sound argument. For instance, Antony’s funeral speech in Julius Caesar is an interesting rhetorical act... but it can hardly be called an argument. Antony’s play on words, his sarcasm, and the emotional appeals involving Caesar’s cloak and his mutilated body do not qualify as reasoned progressions from premises to conclusions (p. 17).

Campbell’s example from Julius Caesar notes that audiences may be persuaded by means other than "sound argument."
Like the "good reasons" suggested by Fisher the emotions roused by Antony in *Julius Caesar* serve to persuade the audience that Antony's is the better position. The point here is that the emotional appeals in the social context of the mob combine to achieve persuasion (i.e., the movement to action advocated by Antony) where the "reasoned arguments" of Brutus fail. Moreover, Antony's speech and action are not simply examples in favor of his cause. He identifies his position with the sympathies and feelings; indeed the affective state of the audience. They are moved not by the strength of Antony's reason but by the shared emotional experience of the situation. The conspirators against Caesar have argued reasonably. Though Brutus' speech has emotional dimensions in his stated love of Caesar these feelings are subordinated to the quite rational needs of the state. The mechanism of persuasion is the contrast of emotion with the need for rational decision-making in national affairs. Caesar's death is de-personalized by the superordinate needs of the state. Anthony's persuasion counters not through rebuttal but by qualitatively changing the dimensions of evaluation from rational to emotional ones. As Campbell implies the use of emotional appeals is a wholly appropriate persuasive strategy in some circumstances.

The second idea from Burke's definition cogent to the present discussion is the importance of "an audience's
'opinions.' From this emphasis it is possible to discern a focus on the reception of persuasive communication. For Burke effective persuasion not only considers the state of mind of its audience but actually defers to it. Elsewhere Burke (1984) notes that deference of this kind is a fundamental aspect of style and points out the difficulty to effective persuasion if audience needs are ignored:

In its simplest manifestation, style is ingratiation. It is an attempt to gain favor by the hypnotic or suggestive process of "saying the right thing." Obviously, it is most effective when there is agreement as to what the right thing is. A plain-spoken people will distrust a man who, bred to different ways of statement, is overly polite and deferential with them, and tends to put his commands in the form of questions (saying "Would you like to do this?" when he means "Do this"). They may even suspect him of "sneakiness." He, conversely, may consider their blunt manner a bit boastful, even at times when they are almost consumed with humility. The ways by which the mannered speaker would ingratiate himself with mannered listeners, or the plain-spoken one with blunt listeners, may thus become style gone wrong when the two groups cross (p. 50).

When considered in light of the definition of persuasion as identification viewing style as a means of ingratiation has important implications for rhetorical theory. While in the passage above Burke considers the need to "speak" in a manner acceptable to one's listeners the definition of persuasion offered earlier reminds us that "speaking" may be used metaphorically. In persuasive contexts messages may "speak" in a variety of ways to communicate by gestures, symbols, appeals to status, or
irony the identification of the receiver with the message.

This is a subtle shift in rhetorical theory. While many rhetoricians from Plato and Aristotle through Cicero and Quintilian recognize the importance of audiences for the success of oratory (Farrell, 1985; Kennedy, 1980) few advocate the superiority of the audience's position over that of the orator. Yet in the mass media context deference to the wants of the potential consumer are the rule rather than the exception in the construction of persuasive messages. As such mass media advertising provides a fertile ground developing rhetorical theory that accounts for ingratiation as an organizing strategy in the construction of persuasive messages.

Beyond this definition of persuasion Burke notes that there are strictly formal qualities of communication that likewise have persuasive potential:

At least, we know that many purely formal patterns can readily awaken an attitude of collaborative expectancy in us. For instance, imagine a passage built about a set of oppositions ("we do this, but they on the other hand do that; we stay here, but they go there; we look up, but they look down," etc.). Once you grasp the trend of the form, it invites participation regardless of the subject matter. . . . in cases where a decision is still to be reached, a yielding to the form prepares for assent to the matter identified with it. Thus, you are drawn to the form, not in your capacity as a partisan, but because of some "universal" appeal in it. And this attitude of assent may then be transferred to the matter which happens to be associated with the form (1969b, p. 58).

What constitutes form varies considerably when it is
remembered that persuasion may be accomplished without discourse, strictly through gesture in some cases. Formal appeal in this sense is a persuasive medium wholly separate from content elements of the "message." Students of behavior will recognize the similarity of participatory persuasion here as analogous to classical conditioning. Still a difference can be discerned in the often self-conscious nature of participation in the formal elements of persuasive communication. As Burke notes:

As for the purely formal kinds of appeal which we previously mentioned when trying to show how they involve the principle of identification, their universal nature makes it particularly easy to shift them from rhetoric to poetic. Thus, viewing even tendentious oratory from the standpoint of literary appreciation rather than in terms of its use, Longinus analyzes "sublimity" of effect in and for itself. Where Demosthenes would transport his auditors the better to persuade them, Longinus treats the state of transport as the aim. Hence he seeks to convey the quality of the excitement, and to disclose the means by which it is produced (p. 55).

In this passage Burke makes an uncharacteristic distinction between rhetoric and poetic. The passage recognizes that poor rhetoric may still be appreciated on aesthetic terms. Poor rhetoric may simply mean an ineffective attempt at persuasion. Even so there remains the sense in which someone who "agrees" to participate in the aesthetic form is more closely "associated" with the subject matter "which happens to be associated with the form" (p. 58) than someone else who does not make the conscious switch from practical
to aesthetic concerns. In the *Julius Caesar* example cited earlier someone who rejects the "arguments" of Antony because they do not correspond to traditional expectations of logical reasoning may yet admire from an aesthetic perspective the style Antony employs in his speech to the mob. This kind of admiration links aesthetic appreciation to rhetorical design by stylistic ingratiation. This link by means of style provides a more subtle means for establishing identification between message and audience than more traditional linkage by way of argument.

In chapter four this emerging conceptualization of ingratiation through aesthetic means for rhetorical ends is applied to the advertising campaign of Benson and Hedges cigarettes (See Appendix A). In the mass media context of print advertising the use of visual appeals in the form of social interaction may suggest cues to behavior or attitude formation without use of discursive copy. The syllogistics of ingratiation become realized in the visual image; appealing to the audience by the deceptively simple use of an implied social situation. In the absence of discourse the audience is confronted only with a picture of group interaction. As Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) note "communications which call attention to group membership may prompt the individual to take account of group norms in forming his opinion on a given issue." (p. 271). In the Benson and Hedges ads the "given issue" is cigarette smoking. The rhetoric of
peripheral persuasion argues that in the absence of discursive appeals to engage in issue-relevant thinking the audience for the ad will "take account of group norms in forming his [her, their] opinion."

Even when considered in terms of discourse persuasion may incorporate various paradigms that change the meaning of "reasoned discourse." Traditionally reasoned discourse has meant logical arguments supported by examples or probabilities. However recent trends advocate other models of discursive behavior as persuasive.

For example Farrell (1985) suggests that aesthetic appreciation of (and by definition participation in) rhetorical discourse is not only possible but inevitable. For Farrell "rhetoric viewed aesthetically is an intrinsic feature of the human condition" (p. 15). Farrell believes this characteristic of human beings to be a paradox when one attempts to use a "practical" art such as rhetoric. Despite the intention of practicality inherent in "traditional" rhetoric the tendency to see rhetorical discourse aesthetically cannot be denied. As Burke points out aesthetic participation in the form of rhetoric invites identification and with it persuasion through ingratiation.

Frentz (1985) places rhetoric in a conversational context that moralizes in much the same way as the narrative paradigm Fisher advocates. The conversation metaphor is derived from the language-action paradigm of Frentz and
Farrell (1976). As Frentz (1985) describes:

Originally, the actional paradigm was a heuristic perspective on conversation designed to explain the structure and meaning of varied instances of interpersonal communication. The paradigm consists of three hierarchical layers of context. Form of life contexts are ranges of shared experience among agents—sometimes cultural, sometimes institutional, and sometimes interpersonal. Encounter contexts are physical locations where social actors are mutually aware of each other's presence. Finally, episodic contexts—those regions defined by conversations themselves—are rule conforming sequences of symbolic acts generated by two or more actors collectively oriented toward emergent goals (p. 6).

It is from this background that Frentz argues that rhetorical conversation has moralizing qualities. When morality becomes the topic of conversation these qualities combine in what for Frentz is an unusual rhetorical situation:

When conversations transcend encounter time, the participants experience time on a form of life level. As its name implies, form of life is an historical concept—fusing past and future in the present. When agents experience the temporal holism of a form of life all at once, in the consciousness of the present in an on-going conversation, they place themselves in a narrative context in which past and potential conversations are experienced as an historical unity emerging in the present—a unity whose evolving direction can be determined in part through cooperative action. By experiencing time in this way, agents are compelled to rediscover two preconditions to moral action: the unity of their individual lives as actors in a dramatic story, and the moral tradition within which the present narrative is being acted out (p. 7).

The importance of this passage for the construction of a theory of peripheral persuasion is that Frentz identifies
two features of rhetorical processes also found in persuasive peripheral messages under low elaboration likelihood conditions. First the emphasis Frentz places on "cooperative action" and "the unity of their individual lives as actors in a dramatic story" underscores the essentially social nature of rhetoric and persuasion. Second the references to "dramatic story" and "narrative" reminds the reader that the aesthetic viewing of rhetorical processes includes the enactment of the aesthetics of rhetorical conversation. In this case the "audience" moves beyond appreciation of aesthetic form in rhetoric to participation in the aesthetic form of rhetoric. Identification and ingratiation become more subtle as the participant lacks even the distance allowed a more passive observer.

Condit (1987a) also offers a model of rhetoric and persuasion that seeks the construction of public virtue as its goal. While accepting that the rhetorical conversation model proposed by Frentz is "constructive for the building of private virtue through local social situations" Condit expresses doubt that Frentz's model "does not help us to act morally in the public realm, nor to understand collective morality" (p. 94). She argues that public morality may be constructed because "public rhetoric requires that an individual speak a public language that includes linguistic commitments shared by all who are constituents of a
community" (p. 82). Condit refers to this public language as social discourse units. For Condit construction of a public morality is possible through rhetorical means because:

Social discourse units carry moral import beyond individual interest, in part, because they indicate shared commitments and prescribe what each person as member of a collectivity is obligated to do within the collectivity. More fundamentally, these terms are moral because the public arena, by its very nature, requires the use of terms that match the essential requirements of morality -- the sacrifice of self interests for larger goods. Public argument centers on those greater goods because the contest between competing interest groups leads each group to attempt to identify their interests with larger goods. Unlike the participants of private conversations, the "public" does not endorse enactment of social policies for apparently selfish interests. Only when a policy can be presented as bearing greater goods will it be endorsed (p. 82).

Though Condit would replace the rhetorical conversation model with her own "collective 'craft'" (p. 93) metaphor both she and Frentz underscore the importance of social interaction and influence for rhetorical theory. To the extent that persons are involved in either rhetorical conversations or the collective crafting of virtue they are participating in a process of persuasion.

While all these scholars cite Burke’s works in support of their own approaches to rhetorical theory Fisher (1985b) observes the synthesizing scope of Burke's work:

"In the beginning, logos meant story, rationale, conception, discourse, and/or thought. Thus, all forms of human expression and communication -- from epic to
architecture, from biblical narrative to statuary—came within its purview. At least this was the case until the time of the pre-Socratic philosophers, Plato, and Aristotle. As a result of their thinking, *logos* and *mythos*, which had been conjoined, were dissociated (p. 74).

Fisher later links Burke's work with this earlier conception of *logos*:

Rhetoric, for Burke, is not purely an epistemological transaction; it is more fundamentally an ontological experience. It works by identification rather than demonstration. As his theory recognizes reason as well as aesthetic qualities in all forms of human communication, it recaptures and reinforces the original sense of *logos* (p. 86).

From this discussion it is clear that Fisher believes that rhetorical theory incorporates all human activity insofar as it has the potential to persuade others. Here it seems appropriate to consider explicitly emotional behaviors and attitudes as potentially persuasive. Booth (1974) notes that "gut reactions" also have their place in rhetorical theory:

In short, every desire, every feeling, can become a good reason when called into the court of symbolic exchange. ... It is true that "gut reactions" can be very bad reasons for action. But so can logical proofs. The real art lies always in the proper weighing -- and what is proper is a matter finally of shared norms, discovered and applied in the experience of individuals whose very individuality is forged from other selves (p. 164).

Booth is concerned that what constitutes reasoning too often neglects recognition of emotional feelings as both
persuasive and in some cases preferable to rationality in decision making (pp. 162-167). Here and in other places Booth reiterates the dual themes of emotions as legitimate elements in a theory of rhetoric and the understanding that who we are as persons is inextricably bound up in our interactions with others:

Not only do human beings successfully infer other human beings' states of mind from symbolic clues; we know that they characteristically, in all societies, build each other's minds. This is obvious knowledge -- all the more genuine for being obvious. What an adult man or woman is, in all societies, is in large degree what other men and women have created through symbolic exchange. Each of us "takes in" other selves to build a self (p. 114).

Like those theorists mentioned above Booth believes that rhetorical theory needs to address social and emotional dimensions of human communication as legitimate persuasive devices or influences. Booth includes these dimensions in what he calls the rhetoric of assent. Whether in the rhetoric of assent, the narrative paradigm, rhetoric viewed aesthetically, rhetorical conversation, or rhetorical crafting of public morality the shift in emerging rhetorical theory appears to be one in which emotions and social influences are considered as dimensions of persuasive communication.

Though the trend in rhetorical theory to recognize the place of emotional response in persuasion is encouraging much of the language of the scholars cited above places
emotional appeals still in the context of cognitive persuasive appeals. Though an expansion of traditional rhetorical theory these modifications leave several questions unanswered. For instance what is the role of emotion or affect in relatively unconscious communication? Can unconscious communication be persuasive? If persuasion as defined by Burke includes non-discursive communication what are the means for advocating some position or another under such circumstances? In short what are the persuasive conditions in which emotional appeals combine with peripheral cues to social influences as the featured "message" of persuasive communication? To answer these questions necessitates constructing a theory of rhetoric for low elaboration likelihood situations.

The Rhetoric of Low Elaboration Likelihood Persuasive Appeals

When considered in conjunction with Burke's expanded definition of persuasion the formal elements of communicative appeals are of increased importance. Especially in those contexts where discourse is absent the aesthetic form of the communicative appeal provides the means for conveying persuasive messages. In his discussion on ingratiation Burke observes that aesthetic appreciation of even blatant persuasive rhetoric may encourage
identification where the "arguments" of the message fail. Just as individuals may be caught up in the participatory dimension of discursive form it seems likely that non-discursive form invite tacit participation as well. As Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) note communication that features group membership invites consideration of the implied norms of the group when forming an opinion on an issue. In the absence of discourse reference to group norms becomes even more important for the recipient of persuasive communication. In chapter four the analysis of the Benson and Hedges campaign features discussion of ads with virtually no discourse and visual appeals to group interaction. As developed in the following chapter the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion suggests that persons may be persuaded to participate in the non-discursive form of the ad on an affective dimension.

Cacioppo and Petty (1984a) predict that under low elaboration likelihood conditions individuals will not engage in issue-relevant thinking. Simply stated when individuals are not personally involved with the subject matter of a persuasive appeal it is unlikely that they will cognitively process and evaluate the arguments supporting the appeal. Indeed it is quite the case that they will not participate at all in a "reasoning" process in the traditional rhetorical sense. So it may be that the person flipping through a magazine in a doctor's office or watching
an advertisement on television pays little "attention" to the "message." However it is possible that these same persons may have an affective response to the form of the presentation in these media. In these cases the individual becomes ingratiated by the aesthetics of the ad itself. The aesthetic appeal of the ad should not surprise us since the production quality of advertising is often superior to other "messages" such as news or entertainment found in the same media.

The rhetorical dimension of the affective response to participation in the formal qualities of a persuasive appeal links the study of attitude formation and change to contemporary rhetorical theory. Because involvement in messages of low elaboration likelihood is low processing of information is done through peripheral routes. While the individual may process the aesthetic dimensions of the ad peripherally it is important to note that this type of ingratiating is more subtle than Burke's example. For the low involvement individual is unlikely to have switched from cognitive processing to peripheral processing. In short the recipient of peripheral persuasion may identify with the "message" or aesthetic image without recognizing that he or she has done so. The implications for this kind of rhetorical strategy are discussed in greater detail in chapter four. But it does seem possible that peripheral persuasion offers a means for bypassing cognitive resistance
to attitude change. If this possibility can be demonstrated then the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may significantly contribute to the development of rhetorical theory.

If we are persuaded to participate in the experience of a strictly affective response to some message then the subject matter of the appeal becomes tenuously connected to our affective reaction. Suppose for example a person sees an advertisement for a new car but is not at present considering buying one. Suppose too that this car is of foreign origin and that the reader of this advertisement has never considered owning a foreign made car. Since there is nothing in the reader or the advertisement to excite issue-relevant thinking we may suppose further that the "information" in this advertisement will be processed peripherally.

Peripheral processing features the emotional or affective dimensions of persuasive communication in the absence of issue-relevant thinking and cognitive processing. In our example the car advertisement may employ excellent color photograph, attractive models, beautiful scenery, and perhaps only enough discourse to encourage the formation of a positive image of the car. This discursive information may simply invite the reader to "remember" some feeling of excitement and compare that affective state with the experience of owning/driving the car in the advertisement. Does this advertisement qualify as a rhetorical strategy to
persuade its audience to the adoption of some particular
attitude?

In this hypothetical example the advertisement is
arguing affect. It is not simply arguing affectively as
Antony's speech in *Julius Caesar* does. Rather the reasoned
and calculated strategy is the generation of affect; of a
positive emotional response instead of a logical reasoned
conclusion about the car in the advertisement. This
strategy marks a departure in traditional rhetorical theory
that recognizes that emotional appeals and responses may be
incorporated into arguments. It is part of a theory of
rhetoric that rejects the hierarchical ordering of cognition
above emotion in human communication. The rhetoric of
identification implies that emotional and cognitive appeals
may work in unison or independently as legitimate persuasive
devices. They are interdependent forms of language but
separate in the sense that the routes to persuasion each
follows differs in how the information in the appeal is
acted upon by the receiver.

**Identification versus Arguing Affect**

In a broad sense the rhetoric of low elaboration
likelihood is a special case of the rhetoric of persuasion
through identification. Identification is achieved through
aesthetic ingratiation under low involvement conditions.
Because involvement is low issue-relevant thinking is unlikely. But it is also true that cognitive awareness that one is processing a persuasive message is equally absent. In short arguing affect necessitates conditions of low involvement combined with unique characteristics of both the message and its reception. These characteristics distinguish arguing affect as a rhetorical strategy from arguing affectively. For convenience it is useful to separate discussion of message characteristics from processing or reception characteristics.

Message Characteristics

The rhetoric of low elaboration likelihood uses message characteristics that are unlikely to elicit issue-relevant thinking on the part of the receiver of the message. Examples of these characteristics include use of music in ads or colorful photographs of beautiful models of either gender. This latter example applies only when the product or message does not specifically address attractiveness as some hair conditioners or cosmetic ads may. As such these messages will tend to favor non-discursive mediums of communication over discursive communication. Appeals to senses but not cognition might include pictures with little or no language present, use of music rather than description
as accompaniment to images, and a dependence on non-verbal interaction among persons in the message as a substitute for reasoned verbal argument. These characteristics encourage low elaboration likelihood reception for several reasons.

First, pictures without description do not automatically engage cognitive processing in the way that reading or listening must necessarily do. Language in the traditional sense is a cognitive rational process. Information may be communicated without language though the complexity of a given message might be limited under low elaboration likelihood conditions. For example social interaction may communicate the social acceptability of a product's use in some situations but may not specify the limits of that acceptability.

Secondly, use of music instead of description can enhance an emotional response to a persuasive message providing the music itself does not become the focus of attention (Batra and Ray, 1986). For example, Gorn (1980) reports that music may be used to influence consumer choice behavior in a manner consistent with classical conditioning.

Thirdly, the use of non-verbal messages implied in the interaction of persons in persuasive message appeals features the social element of communication and persuasion discussed above (Booth, 1974; Burke, 1969b; Campbell, 1982; and Kauffman, 1981). In constructing a rhetoric of low elaboration likelihood attention to the social dimension of
persuasion is consistent with research in marketing that identifies the influence of group and aggregate behavior on the formation of an individual's attitudes. For example, Nisbett and Wilson (1977) suggest that membership in subcultural groups influences reports on decision-making processes. Subcultural group membership provides an even more intensive exposure to social norms as influences on decision-making. This tendency is consistent with the social influence postulated to occur in Frentz's rhetorical conversation model and Condit's rhetorical crafting metaphor. Solomon (1983) argues that product consumption helps individuals determine their place in the greater social symbolic order:

[Consumers employ product symbolism to define social reality and to ensure that behaviors appropriate to that reality will ensue. ... product symbolism is often consumed by the social actor for the purpose of defining and clarifying behavior patterns associated with social roles. The consumer often relies upon the social information inherent in products to shape self-image and to maximize the quality of role performance (p. 320).]

By way of example a consumer may buy an expensive Italian sports car because s/he values its "sexy" image. According to Solomon this purchase will both communicate this image of self to others and encourage the consumer to believe that s/he has sexy attributes as well. If consumers are using products to clarify their social roles then it seems likely that information about those roles may function as non-
verbal communication in persuasive messages.

Of these message characteristics the focus on social influences communicated through non-discursive means represents a point of departure from Burke's definition of persuasion. Though Burke's definition is ambiguous on exactly what constitutes language it is clear from his other writings that he places the word at the center of human communication and meaning itself (e.g. Burke, 1966). Yet the non-verbal non-discursive social element of low elaboration likelihood persuasive appeals may communicate an emotional message that need not be cognitively processed in terms of language. As noted in chapter one Zajonc (1980) has demonstrated that individuals may have emotional responses in the absence of cognition altogether. Thus the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion extends Burke's concept of persuasion through identification beyond strictly language oriented views of meaning.

Reception Characteristics

How a persuasive message is received is also a factor in the development of a rhetoric of low elaboration likelihood. As the ELM suggests low elaboration likelihood corresponds with low involvement in the processing of the message on the part of the receiver. The primary characteristic of reception then is a lack of issue-relevant
thinking. Arguing affect is a persuasive strategy specifically designed for by-passing cognitive processing structures.

It is in this characteristic of reception that arguing affect may be seen as a dimension of rhetorical theory most clearly. Since in most cases cognition causes individuals to evaluate persuasive messages along logical or reasonable grounds it is more difficult to overcome objections that may stem from the subject matter itself. For example while an individual may not find the reasoning behind a cigarette advertisement objectionable the arousal of cognitive processing structures will likely include that person's knowledge of the dangers of cigarette smoking derived from other sources. Similarly a political candidates' arguments may engage cognitive appraisal of other aspects of his or her candidacy. In sum it may be difficult to contain the parameters of cognitive processing once issue-relevant thinking has been engaged.

If the avoidance of cognitive processing is a rhetorical goal then the concept of arguing affect emerges as a potentially organizing mechanism for the formation of persuasive messages. By emphasizing the characteristics of low elaboration likelihood appeals one may increase the chances of persuading through the generation of an emotional response as the basis for further decision-making. More simply once an emotional response or affect is part of the
individual's overall experience it becomes a factor in subsequent responses of persuasion including cognitive processing. For example if the automobile industry were to create a positive emotional response toward domestic car manufacturers in general then one might expect those persons exposed to the persuasive message to support more readily tariffs against foreign car manufacturers. The emotional component of their experience becomes a factor in the mediation of subsequent arguments asking them to consider the merits of establishing tariffs.

Of course in most instances emotional appeals can be more effectively linked to cognitive appeals under high involvement situations. But there will remain opportunities for persuasive communication in which low elaboration likelihood will predominate. It is under these circumstances that arguing affect may be a preferable rhetorical strategy.

Summary

This chapter has identified the rhetoric of low elaboration likelihood as a special case of rhetoric by identification. The usual application of identification as a means of persuasion emphasizes discourse and cognition in the reception process. In contrast the rhetoric of low elaboration likelihood suggests that the arousal of emotion
can itself be the desired end of persuasive communication. Under such circumstances avoidance of cognitive processing of persuasive information may be a direct attempt to avoid the consequences of issue-relevant thinking. In both cases persuasion by means of identification includes ingratiating through participation in aesthetic form. Under low elaboration likelihood conditions aesthetic form will be usually restricted to non-discursive forms such as visual images.

While it seems likely that emotionally based peripheral cues may be used in conjunction with more direct appeals to cognition in most circumstances the possibility of utilizing peripheral appeals as the primary vehicle for persuasive communication exists. Chapter four examines three samples of this strategy in a recent Benson and Hedges advertising campaign. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of arguing affect for rhetorical theory and suggestions for further study.
CHAPTER FOUR

In the previous chapter conditions that favor peripheral persuasive appeals as the strategy of choice in the construction of persuasive messages were identified. Conditions that favor the use of peripheral appeals include low elaboration likelihood on the part of the message recipient and message characteristics of non-discursive communication favoring visual imagery that may convey implicit norms of social interaction. This chapter approaches three examples of advertising from a recent Benson and Hedges campaign (see appendix A) from the standpoint of peripheral persuasion as the primary rhetorical strategy.

From a rhetorical perspective consistent with the discussion in chapter three the "persuasion" of the Benson and Hedges campaign exists on a number of interwoven levels. Consistent with the work of Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) the lack of written description in the ads leaves the interpretation of the visual image more or less to the receiver of the message. In two cases (figures one and three) there exists an implied though ambiguous social
interaction. In figure two there is only one person presented but clues toward the social context of this ad exist and will be discussed at greater length later. The point here is that the dominance of the visual image without a corresponding discursive description of the social interaction meets one of the conditions favoring peripheral persuasion.

The quality of the visual image in all the ads also helps meet the conditions of peripheral persuasion. All of the ads use soft colors and in two cases (figures one and two) also use a soft focus exposure. This literally makes the picture "less clear." But more importantly the aesthetic appreciation of the image is enhanced by the techniques of lighting, color selection, and soft focus. The use of a "slice of life" presentation in which the person or persons present seem to be going about their daily routine also has rhetorical implications. Specifically the "slice of life" format aims at increasing potential identification by something along the lines of "these people are like me" in the minds of the audience for the ad. Consistent with the conditions set forth by Burke (1969b) these ads allow the receiver to appreciate the strictly formal qualities of the ad without necessarily attending to the "message" of the ad at all. In short the conditions for rhetoric by ingratiation thorough participation in the aesthetic appreciation of the ad enhances peripheral
Finally the lack of substantial discursive communication in the ads reduces the likelihood that the recipient of the ads will engage in issue-relevant thinking. In these ads one would expect issue-relevant thinking to center on the decision whether or not to purchase Benson and Hedges cigarettes. However conscious consideration of cigarette smoking may also trigger negative connotations associated with health hazards in cigarette smoking. In the absence of a communicative mechanism to trigger issue-relevant thinking the ads encourage low elaboration likelihood processing. As the ELM predicts peripheral persuasion may be more successful under low elaboration likelihood conditions.

With these conditions in mind this chapter examines the three Benson and Hedges ads in appendix A. The rest of this chapter is divided into four parts. The first section analyzes the content of the ads with particular attention to the social interaction implied by the visual image in each ad. The second section discusses the processing of the ads under low elaboration likelihood conditions as predicted by the ELM. The third section considers how an understanding of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion enhances an appreciation of the range of means available for persuasive communication. The fourth section summarizes the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion and suggests directions for future
Ad Content: Visual Images and Normative Cues from Implied Social Interaction

In the Benson and Hedges ad in figure one, two people are seen in reposed conversation in a series of three photographs. The first two of these photographs show what seems to be an attentive younger woman listening to a well-dressed older man speaking to her on some topic of informal conversation. The third photograph shows the same couple but much more closely than either of the first two shots. The effect of this close-up is that the audience for the ad is literally closer and by implication more involved in the relaxed context of the interaction. Considered sequentially the third and larger photograph shows the couple in reaction to some aspect of their conversation. Both persons are smiling and/or laughing. The verbal portion of their interaction is not transcribed. The only ad copy present is a simple statement: "For people who like to smoke... Benson & Hedges because quality matters." Additional discursive communication is found in the Surgeon General's Warning in the lower right-hand corner of the ad.

Closer examination of the ad in figure one reveals some subtle relational messages. The close proximity of the couple indicates some level of intimacy. Their physical
distance serves a deceptively dual function. On the one hand it communicates a level of intimacy from their intrusion into each other's personal space (Hall, 1966). On the other hand there is a subtle sense in which the audience is included in this intimate exchange. On at least a symbolic exchange level the audience for the ad shares in the dimensions of trust and intimacy characteristic of intimate relationships. The subjects' facial expressions and eye contact suggest both friendliness and interest. Their location on a couch with plants in the background enhances an impression of informality.

In this visually pleasant context the woman is smoking a cigarette. From the ad the social interaction may be determined to be congenial and friendly. Less certain is the nature of the relationship. We do not know whether this couple has a friendship or romantic relationship. Possibly the man is the woman's father. In the absence of any discourse that might clarify this relational ambiguity is a distinguishing characteristic of the ad. However closer examination of the ad reveals the possibility that relational ambiguity may be a deliberate part of the ad's persuasive strategy.

As noted in chapter three Burke (1969b) observes that the formal elements of a message may overshadow the content of a message in some cases. Under low elaboration likelihood conditions the aesthetic appeal of message
constructions serves as a peripheral cue in the processing of the message. In figure one with its absence of central cues to engage in issue-relevant thinking the aesthetic dimension of the ad is necessarily featured. The relational ambiguity of the couple in the ad is not only contained in the aesthetic form but is enhanced by it.

As discussed above the couple in figure one seems engaged in a relaxed informal conversation. Yet there are mixed signals as to the status of their relationship that are contained by the aesthetic dimension of the ad. For example the blue couch and relaxed attire and pose of the woman may indicate an apartment setting. The presence of the plants and the ceramic pot holding the plant immediately behind the man further suggest the informality of a residence. However the man is dressed in a blue three-piece pin-striped business suit. His business attire contrasts sharply with her casual dress in a white sleeveless blouse and khaki possibly knickerbocker pants. His formality is further suggested by a starched white shirt with crisply pressed cuffs. Apparently the man is visiting the woman either at her home or in an office setting more likely associated with her "style" than with his. To further confuse the nature of their relationship the woman is wearing a traditionally man's watch on her right wrist. We do not know if it is the man's watch, the watch of a third party, or a watch she has purchased for herself. What
is evident is that it is unusual to see a man’s watch on the right wrist of a woman.

In figure two there are only two photographs and a single female subject in both. The setting of figure two is less ambiguous than in figure one. The woman in figure two is clearly in a bathroom. Though uncertain it seems likely that the bathroom is in a residence. The tiled bathtub and the free-standing porcelain sink together with the other furnishings around the sunken bathtub indicate a residence. Also as in figure one the lighting comes from a background window and much of the visual field is in blue. Whereas figure one contained mostly dark blue the tiles in figure two are light blue. Figure two also lacks ad copy except for the same message about Benson & Hedges cigarettes found in figure one.

The woman in figure two is bare-shouldered and wrapped in a linen sheet. In the first and smaller picture she is smiling holding a cigarette and seeming to recall some memory with fondness or mirth. In the second photo she is seated and taking a long inhalation from her cigarette.

Though alone in figure two the attire of the woman suggests possibilities about social interaction that are ambiguous. The choice of a rumpled sheet as attire may be insignificant though the stereotypical use of a sheet as clothing after sex is fairly frequent in mass media entertainment in television and film. Additionally the
woman is without substantial make-up and with messy hair. Whether this woman has just risen from a night’s sleep or has left a lover in another room is indeterminable. What is certain is that the receiver of this ad is again asked to participate in an intimate setting through the aesthetic dimension of the visual ad. Once again the smoking of a cigarette is part of that interaction.

The informality and intimacy of both figures one and two imply a relationship to the ad on the part of the receiver that enhances participation in the aesthetic form of the message. The rhetorical dimensions of this strategy will be explored in more detail in the third section of this chapter.

Figure three also has two photographs. Each photograph shows two featured people with an undetermined number of others in the background. The featured couple in figure three are a man and a woman. Both are casually dressed. The man is seated and reading a paper in a typewriter before him. He is dressed in a blue knit short-sleeved sports shirt and has a yellow sweater wrapped around his neck. The woman is standing behind him in the first picture and then appears to be crouched behind and to his side in the second. She is wearing a white sweater with white pants and a red shirt and bandanna on her head. She has her arm around the man’s shoulder and he appears to be showing her something on the typed page.
As in the other figures the people in figure three also seem to be involved in an intimate relationship. Indications of intimacy may be found in their close proximity, her arm around his shoulder, his apparent sharing of some point or insight with her. Unlike the other figures figure three presents a more public context. Though the exact location of the photographs in the ad is uncertain the background indicates glass doors and at least two other persons in conversation.

The difference between figure three and the first two ads is that smoking as part of the social interaction is moved into a more public social context. As with the previous ads figure three lacks any discursive copy concerning the relationship of those pictured or arguments addressing smoking-relevant issues. The "message" of all three ads available to the receiver is largely dependant upon the implied norms of the social context. Under these conditions the persuasive impact of the ads is conveyed largely through peripheral appeals.

Ad Processing Under Low Elaboration Likelihood Conditions

The ELM predicts that without any explaining copy attending the ads and in the absence of some special interest in the ads on the part of the receiver the
information present in the ad will be processed by the peripheral route to persuasion. Additionally the absence of any clarifying rules about the relationship of those pictured suggests that the implicit norms of the interaction will convey a persuasive message of affect. The message of these ads suggest several possible meanings.

Because the ads lack the cues to participate in issue-relevant thinking the conditions are ripe for the aesthetic dimensions of the ads to serve in a persuasive capacity. As noted in chapter three Burke (1969b) argues that aesthetic form may arouse a "collaborate expectancy in us" generating an "attitude of assent" (p. 59). From this attitude the feelings aroused by participation in the aesthetic form may be "transferred to the subject matter which happens to be associated with the form" (p. 59).

The key to understanding peripheral persuasion lies in the conceptualization of the phrase "participation in the aesthetic form" and its implications for rhetorical theory. The ELM predicts that peripheral routes to persuasion are more effective when involvement is low and attendance to central cues is absent. Participation is a somewhat ambiguous term. In the usual sense participation implies an involvement on the part of the participant. However Burke's use of the term is not limited to a conscious decision to engage the aesthetic dimension of form. Rather Burke believes that attendance to formal qualities in message
presentation may be relatively unconscious.

More simply the "universal" quality of aesthetic form is its social and shared communicative properties. For Burke participation in aesthetic form may follow either of two general paths. As indicated earlier in chapter three (Burke, 1969b) one path to participation in aesthetic form may be through conscious appreciation of the design of a message. In this vein Burke notes that "viewing even tendentious oratory from the standpoint of literary appreciation rather than in terms of its use, Longinus analyzes 'sublimity' of effect in and for itself" (p. 55).

However it is by means of the second path that participation in aesthetic form may be relatively unconscious. Burke calls this means "purely formal patterns" that "awaken an attitude of collaborative expectancy in us" (p. 58). As noted in chapter three Burke uses the example of "a set of oppositions" in which "once you grasp the trend of the form, it invites participation regardless of the subject matter" (p. 58). Burke argues that our membership in various communities is grounded in our ability to recognize and demonstrate communicative competence. It is for this reason that rhetoric and aesthetics are inseparably linked according to Burke's perspective. Social meaning is persuasive because of its shared nature. In the present example the aesthetic form of the ads embody the social cues "of identification or
consubstantiality in general" (p. 55). For Burke it is not even a case of choosing to accept the aesthetics of a message while rejecting the rhetoric of the message. Recognition of the existence of the aesthetic form of message presentation is evidence of participation.

At first glance this line of reasoning seems tautologically true. In a gross sense we understand messages because they "speak our language." By the same token the proof that messages "speak our language" is found in the fact we understand them. But this is an oversimplification of a very complex process. In the case of aesthetic form participation may proceed without conscious recognition that one is participating in an extrinsically designed path to message processing. It is the ability to participate unconsciously in the form of communication that constitutes universal appeal. This is an essential ingredient of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion. Participation in aesthetic form whether consciously or not provides the avenue for "ingratiation" as Burke uses the term. Identification and with it persuasion follows from participation in aesthetic form.

The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may be more subtle still. As noted earlier Zajonc (1980) has demonstrated that exposure alone has the capacity to influence emotional responses to messages. Though Burke's discussion of ingratiation is more complex the conceptual
basis is similar to the work of Zajonc. In short the processing of information by peripheral routes requires only enough attention to permit exposure of sufficient length to assimilate the visual image of the ads.

In the ads in appendix A the visual image presents either a social context (figures 1 and 3) in which an ambiguous but pleasant social interaction exists or an equally ambiguous context with perhaps some implications for a social context (figure 2). Though the ads cannot determine how involved its potential receivers will be it can and does severely limit inclusion of cues to central processing. The choice to use very little copy, to refrain from a discussion of related issues (i.e. "quality" is not even defined), to present an ambiguous situation that relies on social cues for interpretation, favors processing via peripheral routes (Wyer and Carlston, 1979). The ads simply do as little as possible to encourage high elaboration likelihood and processing via central routes.

Peripheral Appeals and the Means to Persuasion

The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion expands the parameters of existing rhetorical theory by incorporating aesthetic form and social interaction into rhetorical processes. The works of such theorists as Burke, Fisher, Farrell, and Frentz provide the conceptual basis for
consideration of aesthetic form as a means to persuasion. As noted in chapter three the work of Hovland, Janis, and Kelley (1953) suggests that social interaction in the form of group membership and implicit cues to normative behavior may influence persuasion. The ELM provides a model for understanding how individuals attend to messages and recognizes that processing of persuasive information involves characteristics of both the message and the receiver. Beyond the synthesis of these disparate approaches to persuasion the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion discussed in the present chapter offers a means for identifying rhetorical strategies previously outside the parameters of rhetorical theory.

The most important contribution of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion lies in its identification of the use of aesthetic low elaboration likelihood messages as the primary strategy for persuasion. In contrast to ELM's prediction that peripheral persuasion will be ephemeral the arguing affect model predicts that under certain circumstances peripheral persuasion may be enduring and highly resistant to counter-argument.

Under low elaboration likelihood conditions processing of the ads will likely be limited to an affective response to the social interaction in the ads. In the absence of cues to central processing the cues for evaluation may be derived from the social interaction (or in figure 2 the
intra-action) pictured in the ads. If enough exposure or multiple exposures to the ads are available the affective response to the ads may become part of the long term memory of the recipient. In related research Mitchell (1986) concludes that:

the visual component in advertisements may affect both the formation of product attribute beliefs and the attitude toward the advertisement. Both of these components then have an effect on brand attitudes. . . . the results demonstrate that although AA [the attitude toward the ad] and brand attitude are related when attitudes are formed in an advertising context, they appear to measure separate hypothetical constructs (p. 23).

The premise of the arguing affect model draws support from the research of Mitchell (1986). To some extent the affect generated by participation in the aesthetic form of the ad is separate from the attitude one holds about Benson and Hedges cigarettes and perhaps cigarette smoking in general. Under low elaboration likelihood conditions this separation may lead the audience for the ad to respond more to the affect generated by participation in the aesthetic form of the ad than to the formation of attitudes about the cigarettes. At this point the subtle social interaction cues embodied in the ad become part of the recipient's "personal knowledge" on the subject of smoking.

Here it is useful to distinguish what target audiences exist based upon the formal structure of the ads. The rhetoric of identification assumes the existence of a
community or "audience" to which the signs of consubstantiality may be conveyed. Based upon this understanding of Burke's definition of persuasion the rhetoric of ingratiating is possible only to those persons who may "participate" in the form of a message because they already understand its "language." As discussed earlier in this chapter participation does not necessarily require conscious recognition that the individual is responding to the aesthetic form of the ad. This is similar to the claim made by Fisher that "one does not have to be taught narrative probability and narrative fidelity; one culturally acquires them through a universal faculty and experience" (p. 15). For both theorists the appeal of form is universal partly because participation does not depend upon some conscious or even self-reflexive activity.

There are at least two broad categories of audiences for the Benson and Hedges ads. These categories are smokers and non-smokers. Smokers seem the most obvious target as the ads are attempting to sell cigarettes and address themselves to "people who smoke." But it is in the non-smokers' audience that the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion described in this chapter may have its most important impact. In this sense the ads may serve not as a selling tool but as propaganda.

If the ads are viewed as propaganda aimed at non-smokers the social cues in the ads take on new meanings.
Cigarette smoking in this new context is seen as an acceptable part of social interaction. The non-smoker is even more vulnerable to this strategy since s/he will be less likely to feel addressed by the ad directly and be more inclined to participate in the aesthetic form of the ad.

Once the ad becomes part of the non-smoker's long term memory an interesting dynamic becomes possible from the standpoint of persuasion. While under low elaboration likelihood conditions the ad manipulates proxemic and other non-verbal cues to create a positive affective response in the recipient toward the pictured interaction. Subsequent exposure to this and similar ads may strengthen this response without subjecting it to a more critical examination of the "arguments" as would be expected under high elaboration likelihood conditions. But when the ad is retrieved from memory it becomes part of a cognitively based information and/or decision-making process.

For the non-smoker the cognitive process influenced by these ads may address social concerns about smoking in general. For example individuals asked to respond to surveys of attitudes toward smoking in public may include non-smokers. The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion predicts that the non-smoker who has participated in the aesthetic form of the ads will be more tolerant of public smoking than the non-smoker who has not seen the ads.

Another aspect of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion
that utilizes social interaction as argument is found in how the arguments of social interaction may be expected to be judged. Since peripheral persuasion operates under low elaboration likelihood conditions "judgement" of arguments will not be a conscious or necessarily logical process. Acceptance or rejection of the arguments of social interaction will be based upon the nature of the interaction itself.

The relative intimacy of the ads suggests that participation in the aesthetic form of the ads will be analogous to participation in conversation. As noted in chapter three Frantz (1985) argues that participation in conversation generates different criteria for the evaluation of arguments than those presumably operating in more traditional rhetorical contexts. The unity of the participant of the ad with the social interaction in the ad blurs the distinction that separates the criteria of the audience from the normative behavior of the social interaction. Because the pictured ads include both smoking and the tolerance of others to it participation in the aesthetic form of the ads subtly generates a rhetorical process of persuasion through identification.

Predictions of this sort of course need to be tested empirically especially as the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion attempts to synthesize scientific and speculative approaches to the study of persuasion. However in terms of
The present study the significance of this example is that it allows for the by-passing of cognitive obstacles to persuasion by utilizing aesthetic appeals under low elaboration likelihood conditions. Arguing the merits of allowing cigarette smoking in public contexts in the face of mountainous medical evidence against such practices seem difficult at best. Aesthetic appeals simply include smoking as part of an on-going pleasant social interaction.

The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion predicts that under low elaboration likelihood conditions it may be possible to use social cues to normative behavior to generate affective responses to the message. If the aesthetic dimensions of the message are also featured then peripheral rhetoric may persuade through ingratiation and identification. Such an approach expands the parameters of rhetorical theory by identifying the elements of situations, message characteristics, and audience characteristics necessary for successful use of aesthetic means toward rhetorical ends.

Summary and Suggestions for Further Study

The rhetoric of peripheral persuasion synthesizes approaches to the study of persuasion from scientific and speculative directions. Based upon The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (Cacioppo and Petty, 1981;
1986b; and Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt, and Cacioppo, 1987) the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion integrates developments in contemporary rhetorical theory that stress narrative models for communication (Fisher, 1984) with theoretical works addressing the interaction of rhetoric and aesthetic uses of language (Burke, 1969a; 1969b; 1984). From this synthesis a number of dimensions to the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may be identified.

First peripheral persuasion is most likely to occur under low elaboration likelihood conditions. Low elaboration likelihood conditions include use of peripheral persuasive cues such as visual images that do not elicit issue-relevant thinking. Low elaboration likelihood is also correlated with low involvement.

Second peripheral persuasion is more likely to occur when particular message and receiver characteristics are present. In addition to those peripheral cues identified with low elaboration likelihood conditions the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion emphasizes aesthetic dimensions of persuasive messages especially those which manipulate social interaction. This aspect of peripheral persuasion has important implications for current research in rhetorical theory that utilizes narrative models. In short the potential for aesthetic form to elicit participation as a precursor to persuasion through identification marks a new dimension to the parameters of rhetorical theory.
Third peripheral persuasion is more likely to occur if consideration of message content is made in a different context. This means that the affective response to peripheral appeals is later recalled from memory in different but related context. The example of the non-smoker responding to a survey about the rights of smokers to smoke in public stresses the use of the product of peripheral persuasion in a different context.

This last aspect of peripheral persuasion suggests that empirical research on the predictions of the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may further link scientific and speculative approaches to the study of persuasion. Other areas of research may include marketing, management, and political rhetoric.

Research in marketing may help discover differences in the effectiveness of peripheral persuasion for low cost versus high cost items. The use of peripheral persuasion to target broader audiences than those typically associated with the customer base of a business may have implications for marketing strategy. For example the work of Wells (1975) uses "psychographics" in the identification of target markets and seems ideally suited for use of peripherally-based persuasive campaigns. Rather than identifying customer groups by traditional demographics or product use characteristics Wells segments markets by shared psychological needs. Prominent in the needs categories are
aspirational needs. Aspirational needs may include long-range plans for financial and material success or they may simply include dreams and fantasies for an "ideal" lifestyle. As aspirational needs become more aligned with fantasy the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion that incorporates aesthetic form as the medium for advertising may enhance persuasion and consumer behavior.

Already a number of firms appear to use peripheral appeals as the basis of their promotional activity. Advertisements for such products as Chanel perfume, Calvin Klein designer fashions, and Coca-Cola all seem to rest upon peripheral appeals. Chanel's "share the fantasy" series is a surreal montage of high-status images of planes, pools, designer living interiors, and landscaped environments. Certainly the appearance of these ads on television reaches an audience far wider than the one that actually lives the suggested lifestyle. The "shared fantasy" is virtual participation in that lifestyle apparently by using Chanel products.

Designer fashions also make use of peripheral appeals to persuasion in both print and non-print media. The Calvin Klein products offer a particularly vivid example. Their line of perfume ("Obsession") is often promoted in magazine print advertising by means of a tangled mass of bodies photographed in black and white. The ad is highly suggestive and erotic in what is called "good taste" but
again the "message" of appeals to engage in issue-relevant thinking in a traditional sense is notably absent. It is literally an arousing ad that depends upon the creation of affect for participation in the aesthetic form of the ad. The arousal of the ad is for the completion of the aesthetic form not for consideration of product characteristics in as they are usually conceptualized in marketing.

Ads for Calvin Klein clothing are similarly devoid of invitations to "reason" about the characteristics of the product. In both print and non-print ads well dressed and attractive people stand isolated from one another in black and white photographs or film. In non-print ads, movement is also surreal usually in slow-motion and accompanied by echoing synthesizer music. The value of these products and even the status of them is not mentioned. Only the image is presented and one presumes that participation in the image is made available by buying the product.

This last point directly addresses the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion. In advertising persuasion is measured by behavior (i.e., sales). From a strictly theoretical perspective the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may be discussed in terms of identification. Theoretically speaking participation in aesthetic form may be accomplished imaginatively. Even in the public context of shared "universal" appeals an individual may internalize participation. In contrast persuasion in advertising
depends upon completing the form through an overt act of consumption.

The "Max Headroom" television ads provide another example of how peripheral appeals substitute emotional processing for rational thought in a persuasive context. The existence of Max Headroom only in the high-tech world of television and computers identifies the target market of the ad. Participation in the world of Max Headroom can only be an imaginative exercise. The significance of the Max Headroom ads lie in the exclusiveness of that world. In the other examples peripheral persuasion affords a more efficient means for evoking participation than central routes to persuasion afford. In the case of Max Headroom participation in the form of the ad is the only available means to persuasion. No rational means to persuasion can concretize the world of Max Headroom. But participation in the aesthetic and imaginative world of the ads creates an identification where traditional reasoning cannot. Once again the act of consumption is the validating test of the persuasive effectiveness of the ad. But unlike the other examples noted above where a "real" world equivalent exists for the "fantasies" of the ads no "real" world Max Headroom "club" of Coke drinkers conversing with their computer-generated leader is possible.

Research in management communication may explore the use of peripheral persuasion in the dissemination of
corporate culture to various corporate publics. Especially in relation to storytelling to organizational socialization, the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may help focus attention on the aesthetic elements of organizational storytelling. For example Brown (1985) observes that stories told by employees to newcomers about how the organization operates are more effective as a means for socialization than are "official" communications in the form of job descriptions and procedure manuals. Perhaps further research may identify whether or not successful stories make use of greater aesthetic devices than unsuccessful stories.

Research in political communication may also benefit from consideration of peripheral persuasion as a preferred rhetorical strategy. By attending to the rhetorical elements of aesthetic form the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion may help generate new theoretical models of persuasive communication in political campaigns. For example the 1980 Presidential campaign of Ronald Reagan made use of ads that featured peripheral persuasion tactics. In particular the Republicans ran an ad featuring a bear wandering the wilderness as a symbol for the Soviet Union. The United States was visually represented by a costumed American Indian. While the ad did feature a voice-over the story was highly allegorical featuring phrases like: "Some say there is no bear in the woods. . . ." and, "But if there is a bear, we need someone who will face the bear. . . ." This
entire ad featured only participation in the story itself as a means to persuasion. At no time were the economic, political, and/or military aspects of superpower relations addressed in accordance with "the issues." But the powerful image of a man facing down a bear generated a strong emotional response. The literal interpretation (i.e. the rational response) of the ad is ridiculous: Man faces bear -- Man can win. But the emotional dimensions of participation in the aesthetic form of the ad have potential persuasive power. Like the ads for consumer goods political rhetoric also invites participation thorough overt action. Unlike traditional rhetoric ads of this type "speak" to images of cultural/national identity through shared symbols conveyed by peripheral appeals.

In sum the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion argues affect. In contrast to the use of emotional appeals in more traditional rhetoric the rhetoric of peripheral persuasion seeks the creation of affect through participation in aesthetic form as its purpose. Peripheral persuasion does not argue for its target to think emotionally. Rather peripheral persuasion argues to be emotional and to act upon the emotion by participating in the form. This link is based upon the universal appeal of participation in aesthetic form. The strength of this dimension of rhetoric lies in its potential to by-pass cognitive obstacles to persuasion that may resist cognitive deliberation.
REFERENCES


For people who like to smoke...

BENSON & HEDGES because quality matters.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking By Pregnant Women May Result in Fetal Injury, Premature Birth, And Low Birth Weight.

Figure 1. Source: Newsweek, February 16, 1987.
For people who like to smoke...

BENSON & HEDGES
because quality matters.

Figure 2. Source: Newsweek, February 23, 1987.
For people who like to smoke...

BENSON & HEDGES
because quality matters.

Figure 3. Source: Newsweek, September 28, 1987.
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