

# Pathos in Criticism: Edwin Black's Communism-As-Cancer Metaphor

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*Edwin Black's essay on "The Second Persona," introduced to rhetorical critics a rationale and model for a type of ideological criticism. Because it ignored the role of pathos in both the rhetoric Black purported to critique and in the construction of his own audience, Black's essay mis-described key features of Robert Welch's Blue Book, which was his explicit example of right-wing discourse. This critique of Black's essay invites readers to explore further the relationship between ideology and pathos and to expand our tools for building pathos and for examining pathos in public rhetoric, including the use of pathos in our own academic writing.*

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Perhaps the most common topic of political debate in the US in the mid-twentieth century was the status of the threat represented by Communism. If you were associated with well-to-do businesspeople, you might well have come across this topic in its most elaborate form in Robert Welch's *Blue Book*—which served as a manifesto for the John Birch Society, and which receives mention and attention among right-wing ideologues even in the twenty-first century. If you are an academic studying rhetoric, you are most likely to have become familiar with the academic critique of Welch's rhetoric through Edwin Black's famous essay, "The Second Persona."<sup>1</sup>

Black's essay was one of the early models of what was to become a major strand of rhetorical study—ideological criticism. I will be arguing that his signal essay, because it focuses on ideology without attending to pathos, seriously mis-describes Welch's rhetoric. The goal of this argument is not to challenge Professor Black's contributions to the field, or to discredit ideological criticism, but rather to encourage the integration of recent work on pathos with the work on ideology accomplished in

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Black's era. Before providing a detailed analysis of Black's reading of Welch and an alternative reading of Welch's use of pathos, the essay first describes the major contribution made by Black's essay to the field, reviews the major extant options for integrating ideology and pathos, and extends on them by attending to the pivotal role of affiliations and the importance of action tendencies in emotion. The essay closes by asking the reader, as a representative of the practice of rhetorical criticism, to reflect on the emotional rewards of our critical practices, especially in light of the possibility that we have tendencies that undesirably limit the breadth of social affiliations that may be encouraged by our essays.

### **Situating Black's Essay: Ideological Critique**

Black's essay is worthy of sustained re-evaluation because it contributed an important stimulus for the extension of the capabilities of rhetorical critics. In the late twentieth century, rhetorical criticism underwent a creative expansion, developing a healthy repertoire of approaches to the analysis of an ever-broadening range of human communication. From the primarily historical study of public address, rhetoricians spread out to study the tropes, genres, fantasy themes, narratives, ideographs, and multiple implied personas of virtually any type of human-generated text, from television programs to country music, to mainstream movies, to public parks and monuments, to scientific reports. Scholars worked to come to terms with an account of "ideas" grounded in the materiality of symbols and their social circulation, rather than in logos (whether Plato's transcendent version or Aristotle's syllogistic one).

Professor Black's "Second Persona" was a pioneering essay justifying the field's move toward adding overt ideological judgment of public texts to the already established practices of historical description and assessment of technical proficiency. The level of importance of any academic essay is difficult to demonstrate, and Black was by no means alone in pushing the field in this direction,<sup>2</sup> but his essay has been repeatedly anthologized, and it fostered a series of further investigations into implied textual personas, including Philip Wander's analysis of the "Third Persona" and Charles Morris's "Fourth Persona."<sup>3</sup>

By directing attention toward the audience that a text envisioned and encouraged, Black made an early and substantial contribution toward what has been called the "constitutive" perspective, which emphasizes evaluation of the worldview contained in a text rather than the text's spatio-temporally located effects. This move from a logic of influence to a constitutive perspective was a key adaptation to the coming of electronic mass mediation. As the circulation of fragments of political speeches intensified,<sup>4</sup> and as the political dimensions of other mass mediated discourses became ever more evident, rhetorical critics searched for ways to understand and assess these mobile forms of discursive action. Black's essay played a unique role in this shift because it illustrated that the concept of "ideology" could provide a means for making sense of such discourse, while still utilizing traditional rhetorical concepts such as style and audience, and while apparently respecting academic strictures against *ad hominem* moral attacks.

### **Re-Situating Black's Essay: Understandings of Pathos, Affect, and Emotion**

In the decades following the publication of "Second Persona," ideological criticism became common in the field, even vying for status as the dominant critical practice. More recently, however, sustained engagements with the categories of "emotion" and "affect" across multiple disciplines, including some by rhetorical theorists, have been encouraging a further broadening of conceptualizations of human action.<sup>5</sup> This focus on affect and emotion is making a notable case that ideology in isolation does not guide public action, but rather the forces that Aristotle described under the heading of pathos are also influential in public discourse and its effects.

Although pathos is often publically disdained as and equated with excessive emotionality, it can be technically defined as the deliberate art for the construction of shared public emotion. If humans are desirably and inherently emotional beings, and also inherently and desirably social beings, then it may be preferable that our construction of shared emotion be deliberate rather than unreflective. In other words, the same arguments for critical reflection on ideology apply to emotion.

Recent work in rhetorical studies has begun the expansion of such reflection, but there remain several theoretical and methodological issues to work out. One major problem is how to integrate theories of ideology (or logos) with theories of pathos. As Jerry Miller and Raymie McKerrow have pointed out, it is perhaps not accurate to treat "emotion" and "reason" as two completely separate phenomena,<sup>6</sup> but there exists no settled account of their relationship. One approach is to ignore the question in favor of a focus on the mutual contribution of the two factors to a singular goal. Susanna Engbers' insightful rereading of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's oratory takes this approach.<sup>7</sup> Engbers endorses the well-established view that Stanton's oratory was strengthened by her mastery and performance of logos. But Engbers establishes that Stanton's oratory was also strengthened by her adroit arousal of sympathy. Because both pathos and logos successfully animate Stanton's discourse and work together toward achieving a political goal, Engbers can ignore questions about their relationship. Nonetheless, by maintaining focus on a politically contested goal, Engbers' approach retains a particular virtue of traditional rhetorical studies—a focus on the agonistic nature of public discourse.

A second approach to the relationship of ideology and emotion subsumes emotion to ideology and presumes that a single ideology dominates, rather than emphasizing the public contests over policy and ideology. In concert with studies in cultural anthropology and political history,<sup>8</sup> rhetoricians and cultural studies scholars working from this approach read public emotion as a product of culture or ideology, and therefore assume that pathos is both subordinate to and consonant with those forces. From this perspective, whatever "embodied" force might exist in emotion is completely managed by social discourses, or perhaps even produced as a self-sufficient origin point by those discourses. This approach is, in effect, if not in intent, illustrated by the work of Robert Hariman and John Lucaites.

In their essay, "Visual Tropes and Late-Modern Emotion in US Public Culture,"<sup>9</sup> Hariman and Lucaites argue that modernism does not lack emotion, but rather

includes a particular “structure of feeling”; they thus are desirably directing our attention toward the force of emotion in public life. Their account, however, treats emotion in a fashion almost indistinguishable from ideology. They write, “we believe that emotions are structured socially and aesthetically,” and they indicate that their central claim is that “there is a late-modern structure of feeling that is articulated through visual images in the public media.”<sup>10</sup> They suggest that this structure of feeling is articulated through visual tropes, which “constrain as well as create opportunities for critical reflection and civic engagement.”<sup>11</sup> One could simply substitute the word “ideas” for “emotions” in each case, and these statements would be unaffected.

Although they define emotions as “an embodied disposition to action,” the only source for such emotions that they explicitly identify is social interaction, claiming that “emotions acquire internal differentiation and general coherence that reflect the patterns of experience developed over time in community interaction: for example, rural, urban, working class, upper class.”<sup>12</sup> On such an account, all that one need know about emotions is how a particular social group has “represented” them (their term). Indeed, Hariman and Lucaites explicitly reject a view of emotion as sourced outside of social codings when they write, “The conventional wisdom would be that emotions remain expressive experiences which erupt from primitive springs within the individual and are not a part of the rational organization of modern life. . . . We believe otherwise.”<sup>13</sup>

Although emotions are surely shaped by cultures, and never merely eruptions from primitive wellsprings, when emotion is described in this fashion, the embodiment of emotion is difficult to distinguish from the embodiment of ideology. Both ideas and emotions are impressed on human bodies through the circulation of social representations, whether visual or verbal. Ideas and emotions have no distinguishable attributes, as both are solely identified as words, tropes, or other modes of representation. Additionally, and importantly, this view implies that emotions and ideologies cannot be in conflict with one another, because emotions are always already subordinated to a dominant cultural or social formation; there is a single “structure of feeling”—in this case modernism. If there is a potential for diverse human emotional expressions, that potential is trained into uniformity by an overarching grid of ideology or culture, which manifest a strong coherence if not unity. Public discourse (including architecture) is not a space of active contest, but instead a canvass on which a single structure of feeling is stamped by some other, singularly dominant cultural force. This same set of assumptions can be read to guide, at least in large measure, treatments of affect or emotion by other rhetoricians or related critics and theorists.<sup>14</sup> The assumption of a unity behind emotion and ideology also appears to ground the passionate and poetic prose defending a particular ideology that has been persistently and influentially offered by Wander.<sup>15</sup>

A third approach contests these assumptions, denying the unity of control of ideology or public representation and positing affect as a separate, potentially conflicting, force. One key version of this option has arisen from Brian Massumi’s

centralization of the concept of “affect,” which he deploys to contest the assumption that an “ideological master structure” precodes all human experience.<sup>16</sup> Like Hariman and Lucaites, Massumi sees emotion as culturally shaped, defining it as “the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience.”<sup>17</sup> However, he defines affect as partially separate from emotion, and as a pure intensity that cannot be fully captured by systems of representation. Describing affect as excess, he suggests that “emotion and affect—if affect is intensity—follow different logics and pertain to different orders.”<sup>18</sup> Utilizing Massumi’s perspective leads one to “read” affect as a kind of force that is not simply reducible to visual or verbal tropes (or any other kind of representation).

Other theorists and critics also portray affect or emotion as not fully captured or constituted through modes of visual or verbal representation (and hence not necessarily consonant with a dominant ideology). Joshua Gunn has employed a psychoanalytic and embodied perspective to theorize the importance of the nonverbal dimensions of public speech and to explore Huey Long’s discourse.<sup>19</sup> Teresa Brennan has likewise emphasized the role of the olfactory and the psychological processes by which unwanted affects are “offloaded” onto mothers.<sup>20</sup> Lawrence Grossberg’s address of affect in popular culture similarly denies that affect is fully subordinate to a dominant ideology, arguing instead that it is a distinctive “plane of every day life,” and he emphasizes its plurivocity.<sup>21</sup> A particular virtue of this third approach is that it enables theorists and critics to identify human affect or emotions (and hence pathos) as a resource for contesting dominant ideologies.<sup>22</sup>

Other approaches are less common. One might place affect or emotion as the dominant source of human social action, and subordinate ideology to affect. This is the thrust of recent work by Jonathan Haidt.<sup>23</sup> Alternately, one may elide the concept of ideology, as Christian Lundberg does, by fusing trope and affect via the sense of social distribution conjured by the term “economies.”<sup>24</sup>

These approaches to the relationship of emotion and ideology may each have their uses: sometimes it is sufficient to know that a pathetic appeal and ideological position both support a goal or policy;<sup>25</sup> always, the specific versions of emotions are culturally or socially constituted, and sometimes they may be uniquely so;<sup>26</sup> sometimes affects engage ideological visions and exceed capture by discourses in ways that matter.<sup>27</sup> Rereading Black’s essay with these issues in mind will indicate, however, that seriously flawed readings can be produced if one begins with the presumption that public emotions are necessarily consonant with, subordinate to, produced by, or predictable based on a dominant ideology. In order to further heighten our capacity to detect the forces of affect or emotion in action, one can specify more fully two dimensions of the existing approaches, the action tendencies associated with specific emotions and the pivotal nature of affiliation in affect.

### *Action Tendencies*

Across the past two decades, academics from several disciplines have increasingly been exploring the ways in which “the body” has social significance. Debra Hawhee

and others have begun to articulate some ways in which to integrate such “body studies” with rhetorical studies.<sup>28</sup> Further attention to particular ways in which bodies are predisposed to be moved by specific emotions can add to their insights.

Both Aristotle and contemporary social scientists studying emotion have posited that particular “action tendencies” are associated with specific emotions. Although Aristotle’s attention was not focused on action tendencies, but rather on states of mind, at several places his writing assumes these tendencies. He defines anger as a desire for a specific kind of action, “conspicuous retaliation,” and he suggests that “when a person is outraged, he always chooses to act.”<sup>29</sup> In a similar manner he links the emotion of kindness specifically to the action of “offering services” to those who are in need.<sup>30</sup> Contemporary psychologists, political psychologists, and behavioral economists have substantially fleshed out Aristotle’s implicit assumption that specific emotions entail specific action tendencies. For example, fear is more likely to result in a self-centered, individual focus, and anger tends to be more outwardly focused, and hence more social.<sup>31</sup>

Aristotle, of course, did not grapple with the question of whether such action tendencies were universal or solely culture-specific, as his observations were confined to his own culture. But if one models the human body/mind as having both biological and symbolic inputs that are fused through complex processes sometimes called “development,” one can consistently maintain both that emotions are culturally shaped and that they carry predispositions to action that have transcultural aspects.<sup>32</sup> If neither socio-cultural processes nor the hormonal and neural components of affect always trump the other, one would expect to see cross-cultural tendencies that nonetheless are rarely universal, even though often predominant, and which are manifested with distinguishable variations by different individuals, families, organizations, cultures, or societies. Accepting that emotions carry action tendencies that are not simply dictated by a uniform, coherent, and pervasive ideology or culture nonetheless has implications for critical analysis. One must assume that a discourse that arouses a particular suite of emotions will simultaneously arouse predispositions toward particular action tendencies, and these tendencies may not be dictated by or even consonant with an ideology otherwise expressed in the discourse.

### *Emotion is Relational*

The second dimension of pathos-based criticism that this re-reading of Black’s analysis will highlight is that affiliational affects are pivotal in rhetoric. Although individual feelings have an ineradicable subjective component, emotions are not merely warning signs within an individual, but rather they are generally also relational signals for co-orienting people. My anger is a message to you—and my potential allies—it is not *just* a personal, internal feeling. My sorrowing is a call for you to change your behavior (stop hurting me! spend some time with me! value me! fix this, please!), it is not merely an internal alert about an undesired event in my life (though it may also be that). If emotions were not social messages, but rather just

internal warning signs, there would be no explanation for many of their bodily manifestations—tears, glowering, reddening, volume shifts, chest expansion, etc. Although these signals are culturally modulated, suppressed, heightened, and perhaps even on occasion utterly unique fabrications of a particular culture, people in all cultures offer emotional signals about relationships to other people.

In public discourse, this inherently relational quality of emotions constitutes a predisposition toward partisanship, or what is often called a “we/they” orientation.<sup>33</sup> Some rhetorical scholars have previously noted the significance of these affiliational dimensions of emotion in political rhetoric. Bruce Gronbeck, for example, has argued that emotional appeals, even “sentimental” ones can “do important political work” such as recruiting active members and celebrating shared successes.<sup>34</sup> There is substantial reason to believe, however, that affiliation is not merely one among a list of potential affective tasks of political rhetoric, but a pivotal factor around which most social emotions are predisposed to turn.<sup>35</sup> This claim adds to the now familiar concept of identification. It is to say not only that people identify cognitively with particular images and others, but that the intensity of the feelings about affiliations that people experience carry an enormous potential power, a power that may supercede ideology and constrain all other elements of response to a discourse. Most importantly for critical practice, this dictum applies to scholars of rhetoric themselves, and a failure to attend deliberately to our own affiliations can lead us to embarrassingly faulty analyses.

Black’s essay serves as a signal instance of this risk; because the essay ignores pathos, especially the signature features of embodied action tendencies and the power of affective affiliations, the essay produces a mis-leading critique of Welch’s rhetoric. To reduce the chances of such error for myself requires explicit attention to my own affiliations. My feelings in the discovery process that have led to this essay have been surprise and then embarrassment for the practice in which I have participated and a profound sense of being humbled. Although an effort to be clear about where Black went wrong may produce a tone of indictment as I explicate these errors, I encourage readers to hear this indictment not as a castigation of an external enemy or of a scapegoat among us, but rather, as an encouragement to shared caution. We are all prone to Black’s errors, due both to our shared emotional predispositions and to our participation in a community of discourse-focused critics.

### **Black’s Critique as “Ideological”**

In arguing for an approach to rhetorical criticism centrally driven by ideology, Black defines ideology in this way: “It is ideology—ideology in the sense that Marx used the term: the network of interconnected convictions that functions in a man epistemically and that shapes his identity by determining how he views the world.”<sup>36</sup> Notice that for Black, ideology is not only determinative, but also unified. To call this a network and to highlight the interconnectedness of the convictions is to posit coherence. Black expresses more fully his assumption that this level of coherence should be presumed to be extremely high at the end of the essay, when he traces the

triumph of his analysis to its ability to show an absolute coherence between Welch's ideology and his choice of metaphor: "The two are not merely compatible; they are complementary at every curve and angle. They serve one another at a variety of levels; they meet in a seamless jointure."<sup>37</sup>

A high level of coherence is crucial to Black's analysis because one cannot isolate components of discourse, such as metaphors, and talk about their ideological effects, unless one can safely assume relatively tight and stable linkages between particular components of discourses within ideologies. His analysis requires that one be able to treat, in his words, a metaphor as a "a verbal token of ideology," so that the metaphor can be an entry into a broader, "plexus of attitudes that may not at all be discussed in the discourse or even implied in any way other than the use of the single term."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the presumption of an internal coherence to ideologies is also required to permit judgments that extend beyond a discourse's immediate technical effectiveness. Black indicates the desirability of such broadened judgments on the grounds that "there is something acutely unsatisfying about criticism that stops short of appraisal," because "we require order, and the judicial phase of criticism is a way of bringing order to our history."<sup>39</sup> To the extent that rhetorical critics wish to do more than merely act as technical coaches, but instead to play a role in history, then broad judgments are necessary. For Black: "It is through moral judgments that we sort out our past, that we coax the networks and the continuities out of what has come before."<sup>40</sup>

Black suggested that this compulsion to judgment was blocked for academics by the fact that moral judgments are passed on people, not on objects. Moral judgments were therefore not appropriate to the texts that were the only legitimate object of judgment for academic critics. He solved this problem by linking stylistic tokens to ideology and both to an implied auditor. He wrote: "if we could, in a sense, discover for a complex linguistic formulation a corresponding form of character—we should then be able to subsume that discourse under a moral order and thus satisfy our obligation to history."<sup>41</sup> By claiming that a discursive token (such as a metaphor) revealed the ideological allegiances of the character of the implied auditors that a text sought to constitute, Black created a method and a rationale that bridged the gap between moral judgment (which was typically reserved for assessment of individuals' behavior) and the rhetorical critics' presumed field of expertise, the study of discourse.

This view of the nature of ideologies carries with it the assumption that humans are most centrally defined by their ideas, even if, in contrast to Plato, these ideas have become understood as discursive structures, rather than as trans-substantial truths. Black's claim (above) that a person's identity is shaped epistemically, through how one "views the world," articulates that assumption. People, on this account, are not constituted through their habits, or their feelings, or their relationships with others, but by the act of looking out on the world through the lens of discourse. People are most fundamentally self-definers, and their definitions of themselves are made with regard to beliefs rather than affiliations or feelings. In Black's words, "Each one of us, after all, defines himself by what he believes and does."<sup>42</sup> Given these assumptions,



humans can be understood as “rational” or “irrational” to the extent that their ideology is coherent and effectively serves identifiable ends. Black articulates this perspective through the judgment he ultimately passes on the communism-as-cancer metaphor. He concludes: “The form of consciousness to which the metaphor is attached is not one that commends itself. It is not one that a *reasonable man* would freely choose, and he would not choose it because it does not compensate him with either prudential efficacy or spiritual solace for the anguished exactions it demands.”<sup>43</sup> Black’s human is—or should be—a reasonable being, balancing prudential goals, and employing emotion only for solace when prudence cannot be achieved.

If you are a skeptical reader, you may have noticed that Black’s analysis is not completely tone deaf to elements of human being other than ideology. His humans have not just “beliefs” but also attitudes and actions, not just pragmatic goals, but also the capacity for spiritual solace. But in such pairings, Black always places beliefs first and actions and spirit second (literally, with regard to textual order). As quoted above, for him beliefs are *determinative*. Moreover, throughout his analysis of the communism-as-cancer metaphor, Black portrays emotions solely as negative, not only in their affective valence, but also in their consequences. Thus, he tells his readers that “the metaphor would strike a special fire with a congeries of more generally puritanical attitudes,” and it would “promote in the audience a terror that robs him of the will to resist,” and that “an auditor who is responsive to the metaphor would likely be just the sort of person who would seek culpability.”<sup>44</sup> Likewise, the actions promoted by the metaphor are only hotheaded and irrational: “Given the equation, communism = cancer = death, we may expect that those enamored of the metaphor would, in the face of really proximate ‘communism,’ tend either to despairing acts of suicide or to the fervent embrace of communism as an avenue to grace.”<sup>45</sup> In each of these cases, the emotions that are described are extreme, and this extremity is itself an undesirable consequence, which then produces other chilling consequences.

Black might well argue that this negative portrait of emotion is attributable to the nature of the particular metaphor he is examining, rather than resulting from a bias in his overarching assumptions about the nature of the role of emotion *in toto*. He might suggest that if he were dealing with some other discourse, his approach could countenance room for positive emotions. Such a defense, however, is belied by the plethora of positive affects that pervade Welch’s *Blue Book* (which is the only right-wing discourse that Black directly cites). Black omits any mention of these.<sup>46</sup> Such omissions are part of what invalidates Black’s judgment of the metaphor and its associated discourse and ideology. The other component is Black’s flatly inaccurate depiction of Welch’s deployment of the cancer metaphor.

### **Black’s Mischaracterization of the “Cancer as Collectivism” Discourse**

Black’s judgment is that the use of the “communism-as-cancer” metaphor betokens a character that deserves an “adverse” moral judgment, which is “so clearly implied” by

the discourse itself that, in his conclusion, Black states that he need not further specify it beyond the warrants and grounds he has laid out.<sup>47</sup> The putatively sufficient warrant and grounds for that judgment begin with a specific description of the metaphor (Black numbers these as items #1 and #2). Black then associates the metaphor with the ideologies of individualism based in property rights and religious fundamentalism (Black's items #3 and #4). These then produce the judgment that the metaphor creates an "implacable" state of mind dominated by "guilt" and prone to launch nuclear weapons (items #5 and #6 on Black's list).<sup>48</sup>

This reading by Black requires overlooking most of what Welch does with the metaphor, and indeed, it involves renaming the metaphor. In *The Blue Book*, a widely circulated record of Welch's two day long speech before an audience of 11 businessmen, inaugurating the John Birch Society on December 9, 1958, Welch does not use a "Communism-as-cancer" metaphor. Instead, he uses the metaphor "the cancer of collectivism." This distinction matters, because Welch describes in great detail an immediate threat from a Communist takeover, within the context of a longer-term fight against the threat of socialism or "collectivism." The Communists are not themselves the cancer, collectivism is. This distinction may not appear to matter if one assumes that coherent ideologies should be the main object of the critic's attention—such a perspective would probably claim that Communists and collectivism are essentially "the same thing." However, if one is interested in how a discourse might motivate potential audiences (or what kind of "structure of feeling" the use of a metaphor might forward) the distinction is informative.

Welch indicates repeatedly that he faces a substantial motivational challenge. He explicitly recognizes that the fight against socialism or collectivism is a long, slow battle, about which the average person is not easy to "wake up" to or make "aware."<sup>49</sup> To rouse the audience against what he sees as the temptations of socialism, Welch uses a dual-component motivational structure. He deploys the cancer of collectivism metaphor to depict an underlying weakness, which is then made salient and threatening by emphatic depictions of the international slave-masters of Communism. The threat of Communism (at least somewhat more plausible in 1958) provides an intensity of motivational resources that are lacking in the long, slow, impersonal process of cancer (or socialism). I will now contrast the evidence for Welch's use of such a dualistic motivational framework with Black's ideologically based misreading of the motivations involved.

Black's essay claims that the "Communism-as-cancer" metaphor holds that (1) "cancer is a kind of horrible pregnancy,"<sup>50</sup> rather than an externally caused virus, and (2) it "is thought to be incurable."<sup>51</sup> The claim that cancer betokens the incurable is central to Black's negative judgment of the discourse. At one point Black speculates, that "Perhaps there is associated with this metaphor not a different estimate of the probable effects of nuclear war, but rather a conviction that the body-politic is already doomed, so that its preservation—the preservation of an organism already ravaged and fast expiring—is not really important."<sup>52</sup> Later he states that the logic linking the incurableness of cancer with nuclear war is a tight and obvious

relationship: “In such a context, an unalarmed attitude toward the use of atomic weapons is not just reasonable; it is obvious.”<sup>53</sup>

These conclusions depend both on Black’s argument that cancer is perceived by the public as incurable, and also that it is part of the body itself, specifically that it is not caused by a virus. Black writes, “It is not an invasion of the body by alien organisms.”<sup>54</sup> He admits that cancer perhaps actually can be caused by a virus, but dismisses this as irrelevant, because it is “only the hypotheses of some medical researchers, and not associated with the popular conception of cancer.”<sup>55</sup> But Black is wrong about both the incurability and the public invisibility of a viral cause. Welch *explicitly* portrays the cancer as curable *and* caused by a virus. Moreover, its viral character is central to Welch’s narrative about the role of collectivism in the US in both the past and the future. Amazingly, Black himself quotes Welch using a version of the metaphor that presumes that cancer is a virus: “even if we did not have the Communist conspirators deliberately helping to spread the virus for their own purposes.”<sup>56</sup>

This quotation is merely the tip of the viral outbreak. Welch spends five pages elaborating the viral version of the cancer metaphor. He argues that civilizations have a life cycle, and that—if they are not cut off in their younger years by other factors—in the end they will die of cancer, in the same way that aged human beings do. In the case of civilizations, the cancer is specifically the cancer of collectivism. Crucially, however, Welch argues that the United States is not an old nation, but a young one: “It had the strength and vigor and promise of a healthy young man in his late teens.”<sup>57</sup> The US has a premature cancer only because of a viral exposure to aging Europe. Welch laments that the treasonous actions of President Wilson and Roosevelt had led to the World Wars, which had exposed the healthy young nation to the virus by putting this

healthy young country in the same house, and for a while in the same bed, with this parent who was already yielding to the collectivist cancer. . . . the closer our relationship with this parent civilization has become, and the more exposed to the unhealthy air and the raging virus of the sick room we have been, the sicker and more morbidly diseased has the patient become.<sup>58</sup>

Precisely because the US is a young nation, it has the capability of overcoming this premature, virally induced cancer. Welch reassures his audience: “if I thought all hope were gone I wouldn’t be here, and neither would you.”<sup>59</sup> He goes on to recount the story of a young man who got cancer, underwent radical surgery, and survived to live a productive and happy life. Welch then generalizes from the individual example to the strong possibility of a positive outcome for the United States:

it is *certain* that in those very rare cases where a healthy young man of twenty-five does, in some way, contract cancer, a sufficiently accurate diagnosis and sufficiently drastic surgery can restore him to health and enable him to go on and live out a normal, active, successful and happy life.<sup>60</sup>

Black is thus demonstrably incorrect to claim that this rhetoric posits that “there is a chance of salvation—of cure, but the chance is a slight one.”<sup>61</sup> Welch makes the cure *certain*, as long as the proper measures are taken. Black is correct that Welch seeks

drastic action, for Welch insists “But it can’t be done by half measures.”<sup>62</sup> However, Welch does not prescribe nuclear war (in fact, he opposes the growth of the military and attacks previous international involvements). Instead, Welch encourages action that addresses not just the metaphor of “cancer” taken in isolation, but rather the specific configuration of a young, strong patient, with the resources to overcome the disease. The nation needs to be separated from the sources of infection and weakness. Because the cancer of collectivism is within us, and communicated to us by our parent cultures, striking out at one external source—the Soviet Communists (e.g., by nuclear war)—would not be a satisfactory surgery.

Welch weaves together the threat from the Communists and from the disease itself in the next paragraph, but on his account the opposition to the external threat of the Communists is effective only if the internal surgery succeeds. Indeed, the Communists have to be stopped in order to prevent them “from agitating our cancerous tissues, reimplanting the virus, and working to spread it, so that we never have any chance of recovery.”<sup>63</sup> But the broader action is isolation from any source of collectivist virus:

Push the Communists back, get out of the bed of a Europe that is dying with this cancer of collectivism, and breathe our own healthy air of opportunity, enterprise, and freedom; then the cancer we already have, even though it is of considerable growth, can be cut out. And despite the bad scars and the loss of some muscles, this young, strong, great new nation, restored to vigor, courage, ambition, and self-confidence, can still go ahead to fulfill its great destiny.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast to Black’s fixation (perhaps understandable in its era), nuclear war is not ideologically tied to the use of a cancer metaphor. When a disease is already within one’s own body, the treatments must be largely local, not primarily external. Welch draws extensive attention to the Soviet Communists, but he does so in order to build an effective emotional appeal, not because the Soviets are the originary or ideological source of the threat (remember that we got our infection originally from “being in bed” with Europe).

There is much that one might reasonably object to in the “logos” of Welch’s text (e.g., that Presidents Wilson and Roosevelt willfully and knowingly committed treason in order to get the US into European wars so that they might be exposed to Europe’s viral cancer). But whatever those argumentative weaknesses, Black’s objection to a “form of consciousness” putatively latent in the metaphor “Communism as cancer” is patently incorrect. Welch’s extensive and creative development of the cancer metaphor reveals the multiplicity of rhetorical potentials lurking in a metaphor and how the selection among those potentials may be driven by the urge to create an immediate emotional impact, rather than being the pre-determined output of an ideology.

### **Welch’s Pathetic Appeals**

If we want to understand why Welch’s *Blue Book* has been read by rightwing activists for over half a century, we cannot find the answer by bemoaning an illogic putatively

inherent to its metaphors. We need to look, not to ideological coherence, nor to a putatively pathological mind that would take up such metaphors, but to the appeal constituted through skillful pathetic deployments. Welch motivates action against a long term and diffuse threat—locally spawned and supported socialism/collectivism—through arousal against an immediate and embodied foreign threat—Soviet Communists. This motivational pattern is repeated several times in Welch’s discourse, using rhetorical devices far exceeding the “cancer” metaphor and relying heavily on narrative. Welch inter-animates “Communism” and “cancer” to forward his goal of resisting collectivism, producing a motivational set that Black’s ideological approach literally cannot read. I turn now to an effort to describe the two most prominent emotional bases that gave Welch’s discourse a narrow effectiveness felt across more than half a century—moral outrage and tribal affiliation. The first is revealed by sensitivity to the action tendencies of different emotions and the second by attention to the affiliational tendencies of public political rhetoric.

### *Anger Not Simply Fear*

Black’s objection to what he constructed as the Communism-as-cancer metaphor was based on the presumption that extreme fear motivated extreme, but hopeless, actions (especially the launching of nuclear weapons). This construction is a faulty projection of the most probable bodily movements (i.e., “action tendencies”) that result from fear. Research conducted in a broad variety of different conditions indicates that, at least in the culture Welch was addressing, fear tends to produce either a freezing or flight reaction, not collective and aggressive actions (such as launching nuclear weapons).<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, such research shows that fear is a selfish emotion, leading to a focus on self-preservation, rather than a broad orientation to others.<sup>66</sup>

The action tendencies associated with fear mean that a rhetor who is seeking to motivate an audience to do anything other than attend to individual interest or to flee would be ill-advised to focus on creating fear. A frightening threat in our midst is more likely to motivate selfish withdrawal rather than collective action (such as war). Whether one accepts the findings of this substantial body of research or not, attention to Welch’s text shows that this skilled rhetor did not rest his motivational efforts on fear. He rested it on anger in one of its most common social manifestations, moral outrage.

Aristotle described anger as the result of a threat to status.<sup>67</sup> Anger is not, therefore, generated by depicting a large and powerful enemy (which might produce fear), but by showing an enemy that has violated perceived justice, status hierarchies, or morality. This is why the focus on Soviet Communists is crucial to Welch’s rhetoric. The Communists provide a visible, unified agent that can be plausibly portrayed to his immediate audience as violating justice and moral decency (a task that would be much more difficult with regard to a diffuse internal collectivism). Welch builds the portrait of Communist evil at length. He provides numerous stories of their atrocities, including their shooting of thousands of POWs in Korea and their actions in the Spanish Civil War, where they “herded priests and their congregations into

churches, set the churches on fire, and burned the Christians and their buildings together.”<sup>68</sup> The Communists are “gangsters” who use “assassination,” “mass murders,” “torture,” and “concentration camps.”<sup>69</sup> They are guilty of “epic cruelties” and “vicious and purposeful savagery.”<sup>70</sup> They are ruthless in their pursuit of pure power and they seek “enslavement” and “police-state rule.”<sup>71</sup> Thus, Welch paints Communists not merely as threatening because they bring collectivism, but also as brutally “amoral.”<sup>72</sup> Certainly the “incredibly brutal rule of a Communist police state” might be feared, but Welch’s account also makes it enraging, because it emanates from a small group of men—from “the Kremlin”—willing to do anything to forward their own interests.<sup>73</sup> Welch’s portrait of the Soviet Communists might be frightening, even terrifying, if his portrait of their evil nature did not make them into an object of hate and righteous anger. Black ignores these passages, because they form no significant part of the *ideological* battle between socialism and capitalism. These passages are, however, crucial to the motivational effectiveness of Welch’s *rhetoric* for its audience.

Welch is explicit that he is seeking to build a collective alliance with himself at its head. His conspiracy rhetoric, though it might fail the test of logos, might effectively build affiliations among those whom it successfully enrages. The potential impediments to the effectiveness of these appeals lie less in ideology-as-logos, and more in the possibilities they offer for relationships among specific bodies. I suggest that Welch’s rhetoric has been powerfully effective for a small group of elites because his efforts at identification work for such elites extremely well, but Welch’s rhetoric also explicitly distances most of what one might describe as “the populace” from an appealing role in this affiliative group.

### *Elite Affiliation*

Welch proposes himself as dictatorial leader of a voluntary association.<sup>74</sup> The voluntary association is to be made up of people like his immediate audience, who are portrayed as elites, who are to lead a largely quiescent mass public. Welch refers several times to an active elite “whose total influence determines what gets done, what the masses think, and which way community, state, or nation moves on the ideological parade ground.”<sup>75</sup> This elite group—whether “ten percent or thirty percent of the population”—consists of those “from a factory foreman to the chairman of a political party.”<sup>76</sup>

In contrast, the majority of people are goodhearted, but passive, and intuitive creatures, rather than readers and thinkers. For example, Welch dismisses the immediate use of television, because, “television is tuned to, and aimed at, the masses. . . . despite all of the brainwashing that has been attempted so far—the masses are still instinctively with us in opposition to Communism.”<sup>77</sup> The “us” excludes the masses from Welch’s implied auditors, the elites. Welch draws the lines between us and them in a telling manner when he berates the airline pilots for striking, because they are “a group of men all professionally trained, all well paid, and all in responsible

jobs of a level to make them admired by the public,” but who, by striking, “are bringing themselves down” to the category of “chauffeurs and truck drivers.”<sup>78</sup>

Welch’s rhetoric strengthens the affiliative bounty for some potential audiences and weakens it for others by creating a clear, dualistic status hierarchy within his projected affiliative network. This hierarchy offers the emotional appeal of high status for some (his immediate audience), but at the cost of repelling or deterring others by demeaning them (the mass public; members of unions). The character of status rewards is complex, and research on individual life courses suggests that high status drives are associated with a variety of different life paths, which vary by contexts such as culture.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, high status has some clear payoffs.<sup>80</sup> It is reasonable to surmise, therefore, that for many people in Welch’s target audience, imagining oneself in a high status affiliation might feel appealing. Simultaneously, however, he explicitly excludes some people (chauffeurs and truck drivers and factory workers, at the least) from these rewards, and probably therefore from affiliation with his group and his leadership.

Identifying Welch’s rhetoric as primarily focused on affiliative emotions also explains the otherwise bizarre claims he makes that various individuals and groups are Communists. These include administrators and faculty of elite northeastern universities, Democrats, liberals, and certainly all unions. The list grows rapidly and extends in many directions precisely because the criteria is not based in logos—i.e., the ability to provide distinct evidence that one has pledged allegiance to Communism—but rather one becomes an enemy simply by acting in ways that work in opposition to Welch’s affiliative group. In a rhetoric based in emotional affiliations, the criteria for labeling one a Communist is merely the question, “are you with us or not?” FDR and Wilson are Communist traitors—not because there are documents demonstrating that they are card carrying Communists—but because their actions opposed the preferences of Welch’s projected tribe.

### *Motivated Actions*

Attending to Welch’s intense focus on affect-based construction of affiliations has one final explanatory payoff. The intensity of affect in Welch’s depiction of the Communist menace appears to contrast markedly with the actions he proposes as responses. This disconnect between imminent evil and mild recommended actions may be in part why Black was led to feel the need to posit an alternative agency, and so proposed nuclear war as the Right’s unstated plan. Welch proposes the following actions in a numbered list: reading rooms, expansion of the circulation of conservative periodicals, support of conservative radio stations and programs, letter writing campaigns, organization of “fronts” (single issue organizations/campaigns), exposing hidden Communists, sending questioners to the lectures of opponents to challenge them, providing speakers bureaus, extending the organization internationally, and becoming active in electoral politics. Among the things that may strike one as bizarre and unsatisfying about Welch’s motivational set, this mismatch between moral outrage and pedantic response surely must be counted. How can letter writing

and reading rooms be taken as an appropriate response to evil men who seek to enslave us?

If the standard were the “rational” criteria of prudential efficacy, perhaps the hours that Welch devotes to describing these plans would have to be dismissed as ludicrous—perhaps as a proof of his lack of seriousness (this section takes up more than 20 pages in the print version). If the driving force behind the discourse is understood, instead, as providing his target audience the emotional rewards of an hierarchical affiliative network, then all that attention to reading and writing, attending public meetings, and building communication networks is fitting. Creating and extending a communicative web built upon verbal harangue of an enemy—with one’s self at the top—may be sufficiently emotionally rewarding in itself.

Whatever the shortcomings in its logos or ideology, Welch’s discourse was not *emotionally* deficient in the ways Black suggests. For those who could identify themselves as an educated, well-informed, propertied elite, socialism/collectivism formed a plausible threat to their standing.<sup>81</sup> Communism, as an immediate, brutal, and amoral agent personifying that threat was a resource for providing an activating source of anger and moral outrage. Ramping up affiliative communication was itself emotionally rewarding, and it provided the means for strengthening their tribe, while enjoying shared anger at their opponents.

### **But What About Judgment?**

There remains an important way in which Black’s proposal for ideological analysis exceeds the scope of the analysis based in pathos that I have provided to this point. Black’s ideological analysis has the virtue of rendering a judgment outside of the intended goals and context of a speaker’s discourse, whereas the pathetic analysis I have offered has asked only about the ways in which the discourse might have achieved its intended effects. Opening up the territory of ideological analysis, as Black (and others) did, made the move to social judgment possible for rhetorical scholars. In the particular case at hand, I would therefore want also to suggest that Welch’s rhetoric is condemnable because its affective reach is stunted. A few are able to participate in these emotional rewards, while the majority—not only the Communist enemy, but also the mass of the people in the US—are excluded from the positive experience of shared affiliation.

Such a judgment is solidly based in both ideological and affective considerations, but to settle for that judgment alone would not be to take advantage of all of the resources that the study of pathos has to offer. It would imply satisfaction with more contemporary rightwing discourses that jettison only Welch’s overt denigration of the mass of citizens, and it fails to address the complex issues associated with the deployment of partisan moral outrage. Attention to broader contexts is necessary for more broadly useful judgments. As essays by Lundberg and Chaput would enjoin us, it would be desirable to make judgments of particular



affective loadings at least in part by the way in which a rhetorically induced emotional activation functions to reshape a broad affective field.<sup>82</sup>

Although a full analysis of that sort would require another essay, the trajectory of that analysis rests on the different reconfigurations of what both Black and Welch perceive as a similar affective climate. Both men explicitly indicate that they are responding to the experience of a loss of purposefulness in life, due to what Jean-Francois Lyotard would later call the end of grand metanarratives.<sup>83</sup> Black's version of this sentiment reads

While in ages past men living in the tribal warmth of the *polis* had the essential nature of the world determined for them in their communal heritage of mythopoesis, and they were able then to assess the probity of utterance by reference to its mimetic relationship to the stable reality that undergirded their consciousness, there is now but the rending of change and the clamor of competing fictions.<sup>84</sup>

Welch takes several pages to articulate his version of this "deep and basic anxiety," tracing it to a loss of faith, "Not just loss of faith in God and all His works but loss of faith in man and his works too, in his reasons for existence, in his purposes, and in his hopes."<sup>85</sup>

Both men respond to that felt loss by building affiliations among an elite group, and both build these affiliations in substantial part by identifying a powerful and threatening political enemy. Both also, however, strive to construct a framework that posits a telos constructed of positive affects to replace those that have been lost.

#### *Welch's Struggle to Structure Positive Affect*

Welch's portrait of his enemy has already been sufficiently described. His address, however, also emphasizes the importance of providing a positive goal: "We can never win even that half unless both leadership and following have a positive dream which is more important as a hope than the negative nightmare is as a fear; unless the promise of what we can build supplies more motivation than the terror of what we must destroy."<sup>86</sup> In answer, the later part of his address tries out a series of possible positive goals, one after the other. Perhaps Welch struggles because it is difficult to find spiritual solace of the noble sort he seeks in an elite affiliation dedicated to advancing individualism. But whether inherent to the position he adopts or not, the concluding section of his text first tries out a motivational grounding in freedom or "less government and more responsibility."<sup>87</sup> He then shifts to a vaguely specified spiritual faith (which is explicitly post-Fundamentalist and mixed with evolutionism). His effort culminates with an even greater abstraction: the "upward reach to the heart of man," a "mighty purpose beyond our understanding."<sup>88</sup> These options are emotionally bolstered by various quotations of poetry that are lofty, but only vaguely germane. Welch appears unable to settle on a potent, positive affective set. As long as he focused his emotional appeals on Communists as an enemy, his pathos had power

and clear focus, but when he turned his effort toward defining a positive shared affect, he foundered.

*The Re-Structuring of Affect by Black's "Second Persona"*

Black's rhetoric was more motivationally effective for his audience, if we understand that audience as a relatively small group of academics. Like Welch, Black provided a successful arousal against a political enemy, but he also produced a positive affective identification based in scholarly virtues.

Black describes his as "an age when seventy percent of the population of this country lives in a pre-processed environment, when our main connection with a larger world consists of shadows on a pane of glass, when our politics seems at times a public nightmare privately dreamed."<sup>89</sup> He responds to what he has described as the lack of tribally determined purpose in part by noting that individual identities now form the center of life's quest: "Few of us are born to grow into an identity that was incipiently structured before our births. That was, centuries ago, the way with men, but it certainly is not with us. The quest for identity is the modern pilgrimage."<sup>90</sup> Black's enemies fail to embody that quest.

Just as Welch relied heavily on the rhetorical resource of attacking an enemy, Black's essay repeatedly offers its readers an emotional appeal grounded in our superiority to a partisan enemy. In doing so, Black can be every bit as vivid as Welch. In one instance, he writes that the Rightists believe in "a polity already in the advanced stages of an inexorable disease whose suppurating sores are everywhere manifest and whose voice is a death rattle."<sup>91</sup> Not surprisingly, these vivid portraits of the enemy identify a fault that is different than that cited by Welch. Black's target group, the "fundamentalists," are demeaned specifically for their narrow-minded morality: "The guilt is there. Coherence demands it, and the discourse confirms it. It finds expression in all the classic patterns: the zealous righteousness, the suspiciousness, the morbidity, the feverish expiations."<sup>92</sup> Black's opponents adopt a rhetoric that no *reasonable* person would adopt (quotations above and below). Instead of a quest for understanding, they exhibit un-reflexive emotional responses.

The affective strength of Black's rhetoric nonetheless lies not merely in negative condemnation; his rhetoric also encourages positive, uplifting emotions—*We* are making order of history! Given the nature of his audience as academics, this "we" had to be carefully crafted. Black's success rests in his use of a shared tradition of academic identity even as it weds and energizes that tradition with partisanship. Black's essay maintains a structure in which affiliative emotions arouse us, and intensify our mutual identification, but those emotions are not a part of the explicit purpose. "We" are not simply or even primarily partisans. Our judgments do not arise from our self-interests. Instead, we are authorized by specialized knowledge to pass such judgments. The positive basis for affective affiliation offered in Black's essay drew on, resonated with, and reinvigorated the academic virtue of developing and sharing understanding and insight. By revealing what others could not see, Black and

his audience are acting consistently with the path on which Plato had set the academy more than two millennia before: the route to virtue travels through knowledge.

Black thus forwarded a positive-if-partisan affective position to replace what he portrayed as the positive affects destroyed by the passing of undivided community. His execution of this task is most visible—and most important as a model to later work in the field—in the way in which he organizes the technical and partisan elements in this kind of ideological critique. His essay first provides a relatively long and careful methodical introduction to the problems of the discipline. In this section he tempts us with a grand place for ourselves as movers of history, but also skillfully retreats to the (then) academically unobjectionable demand for order: “It is not so much that we crave magistracy as that we require order, and the judicial phase of criticism is a way of bringing order to our history.” Having offered the (blush) magisterial feeling of creating order, and the comfort of an academic rather than political goal, he then moves to the fervid descriptions of the out-groups’ preposterous, threatening, and heinous rhetoric. After indulging us in a smorgasbord of their political venom, he then raises the discourse to a more measured sounding judgment, one that is not made by the critic (or the critic’s willing audience) so much as demanded by the data:

What moral judgment may we make of this metaphor and of discourse that importantly contains it? The judgment seems superfluous, not because it is elusive, but because it is so clearly implied. The form of consciousness to which the metaphor is attached is not one that commends itself. It is not one that a reasonable man would freely choose.<sup>93</sup>

We are academics, *we* are reasonable (wo)men. *We* have now participated in a reasoned, academically licensed, judgment of the rhetoric (of our enemies). To forestall any remnant of squeamishness, Black then moves to a level of abstraction above the specific judgment, concluding the essay not with a judgment of the Right, but with a technical purpose: “It suggests that there are strong and multifarious links between a style and an outlook, and that the critic may, with legitimate confidence, move from the manifest evidence of style to the human personality that this evidence projects as a beckoning archetype.”<sup>94</sup> We are reassured that our indulgence in the case study is an academic exercise, designed to produce an academic conclusion about rhetoric, not about our political enemies. Although we may have been energized by partisan sentiments, our positive motivations are clear: our argument has been based on reason, it adds to the structure of Reason, and it thereby conforms to the strictures of the Academy.

This formula was laudable at its initiation, if one accepts that the pathos and logos of Welch were condemnable, and if one believes that academics have an appropriate role in uncovering unsound reasoning and destructive emotions. Crucially, however, when this apparatus was turned on mass mediated entertainment texts and news, Black’s concept of “the second persona” meant that it is not simply the sources or texts that ideological critics condemned, and therefore placed ourselves in alliance against. It was the members of the general public, who were presumed (due to the

commercial success of the media) to adopt the “second persona” of these texts. Ideological critiques that used this formula thereby rhetorically constituted a set of affective affiliations that was explicitly or *de facto* indicting the public at large, making them into the (academic) reader’s enemy, even when the author’s intention might have been to ally academics with the public against what was presumed to be their oppressors.<sup>95</sup> If affiliation is highly influential in people’s emotional responses, such an alignment makes it highly unlikely that its use could persuade the public to one’s views. If a rhetorical critic’s primary goal is to affiliate with other academics, then this version of ideological criticism is rhetorically sufficient. If the primary goal is instead to move the public to better feelings and better understandings, then a corrective to our shared practices may now be warranted.

### **Toward Correctives: Attending to and Expanding Our Affiliative Feelings**

Black’s rhetoric responded to the felt loss of local community by offering rhetorical scholars the positive affects of affiliation with a scholarly community that could use the traditional tools of academic understanding to bring order to history. If such scholars could not directly change the world, they could provide reasoned judgments upon which such changes could be modeled. The appeal of this approach was intensified by the vigorous identification of a political enemy. When applied to texts that receive mass consumption, the assumptions in Black’s approach tend, however, to place the public as affiliated with that enemy. To correct for this tendency, *readers* of academic criticism should add to our assessments a deliberate reflection on what we feel when we read any piece of criticism, and a consideration of what those feelings imply about our affiliations and those on offer by the critic. For *authors* of rhetorical criticism, this analysis suggests that attention to one’s own pathos, especially the affiliations one is crafting, should also be routine.

Adding in such reflection will require some substantial changes, but it may not be as threatening to our collective academic practices as some might fear. Taking pathos seriously as a powerful force, one not fully accounted for by ideology, does not require the conclusion that rhetoricians know nothing more than anyone else does, or that we ought to drop our moral judgments, or that we should have no enemies. Indeed, recent studies of affect and emotion make it evident that it is by no means desirable to try to eradicate emotion, or even to place it under the control of a calculative reason. The goal cannot be to eliminate our affiliative networks, *but to broaden them*. A familiarity with our own proclivities toward affective narrowing may help us to choose our enemies more strategically and to frame moral judgments in ways that invite more of our fellow travelers on the planet to share our judgments, rather than to feel condemned by them.

Of course, not all treatments of ideology employ Black’s formula, and certainly not wholly so.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, some rhetorical scholars have already included direct engagement with the public in their academic activities, and doing so may help to dampen the affiliational problems that arise when academics talk about the public to other academics. For such rhetoricians, the reading of Welch’s use of emotion offered

herein may add insight into strategies for creating pathos. That analysis may also add to the tools available for doing rhetorical criticism. It further suggests the potential fruitfulness of attending to the burgeoning multi-disciplinary research that is exploring the distinctive patterns and complexities of affective or emotion-based processes.<sup>97</sup>

There remains the academic challenge of integrating theoretical accounts of pathos and ethos. Black's essay misread key elements of Welch's discourse. This suggests that attention to ideological dimensions of rhetoric cannot substitute for specific attention to pathos. Even in influential rhetorics, pathos and ideology do not necessarily form a seamless whole. Welch's rhetoric also directly illustrates that emotional appeals do not have to derive from a rhetor's ideology. Their force can arise from the energizing appeal of affiliation or from particular action tendencies associated with particular emotions (which may be similarly available to rhetors using different ideologies, even if only within a given culture or society). Such emotions can be developed through narratives that are not determined by an ideology.

Taken together, these various findings indicate that coherence between ideology and pathos is not necessary for rhetoric to be effective, or even laudable on other grounds. In Welch's case, the pathos and ideology of his rhetoric, whatever faults there may be in each, and even though they do not derive from a single source, work consonantly toward a singular, narrow goal—the building of an affiliation among elites to oppose socialism/Communism. In Black's case, the ideology and pathos work in some dimensions at cross-purposes to each other, although both foster energetic affiliations among the academic community they most directly address. To determine whether there may be identifiable patterns among the relationships between pathos and ideology in the practice of rhetoric more generally will require additional scholarship. Perhaps we might celebrate the chance to participate together in that exploration, even as we struggle to share good judgments about our social history more broadly.

## Notes

- [1] Robert Welch, *The Blue Book of the John Birch Society* (Belmont: Western Islands, 1961); Edwin Black, "The Second Persona," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 56 (1970): 109–19. The online edition of *The Blue Book* is paginated differently; the simplest way to track quotations there may be to use the search function.
- [2] Some other important voices have included Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 74–86; Michael Calvin McGee, "The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980): 1–16; Raymie E. McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," *Communication Monographs* 56 (1989): 91–111; Philip Wander and Steven Jenkins, "Rhetoric, Society, and the Critical Response," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58 (1972): 441–50.
- [3] Philip Wander, "The Third Persona: An Ideological Turn in Rhetorical Theory," *Central States Speech Journal* 35 (1984): 197–216; Charles E. Morris III, "Pink Herring and the Fourth Persona: J. Edgar Hoover's Sex Crime Panic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88 (2002): 228–45; Jeffrey B. Kurtz, "Condemning Webster: Judgment and Audience in Emerson's 'Fugitive Slave Law,'" *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87 (2001): 278–90.

- [4] Michael Calvin McGee, "Text, Context, and the Fragmentation of Contemporary Culture," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 274–89.
- [5] To credit a few early examples not otherwise cited in this essay: Craig R. Smith and Michael J. Hyde, "Rethinking 'the Public': The Role of Emotion in Being-with Others," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77 (1991): 446–66; John M. Murphy, "A Time of Shame and Sorrow: Robert F. Kennedy and the American Jeremiad," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76 (1990): 401–14; Craig Waddell, "The Role of Pathos in the Decision-Making Process: A Study in the Rhetoric of Science Policy," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76 (1990): 381–400.
- [6] Jerry L. Miller and Raymie E. McKerrow, "Political Argument and Emotion: An Analysis of 2000 Presidential Campaign Discourse," *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 37 (2001): 43–58.
- [7] Susanna Kelly Engbers, "With Great Sympathy: Elizabeth Cady Stanton's Innovative Appeals to Emotion," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 37 (2007): 307–32.
- [8] Jean L. Briggs, *Never in Anger: Portrait of an Eskimo Family* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970); Catherine A. Lutz, *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll & Their Challenge to Western Theory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988); Barbara Rosenswein, ed., *Anger's Past: The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).
- [9] Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, "Visual Tropes and Late-Modern Emotion in US Public Culture," *Poroi* 5, no. 2, article 2, (2008): 47–93. <http://ir.uiowa.edu/poroi/vol5/iss2/2>.
- [10] Hariman and Lucaites, "Visual Tropes," 48.
- [11] Hariman and Lucaites, "Visual Tropes," 48–49.
- [12] Hariman and Lucaites, "Visual Tropes," 49.
- [13] Hariman and Lucaites, "Visual Tropes," 51. It is possible that Hariman and/or Lucaites might accept the view that emotions have contributing streams that arise from both biological and social wellsprings, but the essay doesn't say that and the use of the terms "primitive" and "expressive" are so negative as to suggest an opposition to considering biological inputs. Their use of the term "rational life" is also problematic. Moreover, if biological inputs are always essentially trumped by the shapings of social experience, then they are irrelevant.
- [14] Catherine Chaput, "Rhetorical Circulation in Late Capitalism: Neoliberalism and the Overdetermination of Affective Energy," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 43 (2010): 1–25; Phaedra C. Pezzullo, "Articulating 'Sexy' Anti-Toxic Activism on Screen: The Cultural Politics of a Civil Action and Erin Brockovich," in *The Environmental Communication Yearbook, Volume 3*, ed. Stephen P. Depoe (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 21–47; Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); John Louis Lucaites and James P. McDaniel, "Telescopic Mourning/Warring in the Global Village: Decomposing (Japanese) Authority Figures," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 1 (2004): 1–28. Lucaites and Hariman recognize "tensions" in this dominant ideology/structure of feeling, but none-the-less portray them as part of a singular structure in Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, "Dissent and Emotional Management in a Liberal-Democratic Society: The Kent State Iconic Photograph," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (2001): 5–32.
- [15] Philip C. Wander, "On Ideology: Second Thoughts," *Western Journal of Communication*, 75 (2011): 421–28.
- [16] Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 3.
- [17] Massumi, *Parables*, 28.
- [18] Massumi, *Parables*, 27.
- [19] Joshua Gunn, "On Speech and Public Release," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 13, no. 2 (2010): 1–41; "Hystericizing Huey: Emotional Appeals, Desire, and the Psychodynamics of Demagoguery," *Western Journal of Communication* 71 (2007): 1–27.
- [20] Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

- [21] Lawrence Grossberg, *Dancing in Spite of Myself: Essays on Popular Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), 150.
- [22] This insight was developed in conversation with Barbara Biesecker.
- [23] Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion* (New York: Pantheon, 2012), 59–67.
- [24] Christian Lundberg, “Enjoying God’s Death: *The Passion of the Christ* and the Practices of an Evangelical Public,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95 (2009): 387–411.
- [25] Jeremy Engels, “The Politics of Resentment and the Tyranny of the Minority: Rethinking Victimhood for Resentful Times,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 40 (2010): 303–25; Barbara Biesecker, “No Time for Mourning: The Rhetorical Production of the Melancholic Citizen-Subject in the War on Terror,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 40 (2007): 147–69; Stephen Browne, “‘Like Gory Spectres’: Representing Evil in Theodore Weld’s American Slavery as It Is,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 277–92.
- [26] Mary M. Garrett, “Pathos Reconsidered from the Perspective of Classical Chinese Rhetorical Theories,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 79 (1993): 19–39.
- [27] James M. Jasper, “The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and around Social Movements,” *Sociological Forum* 13 (1998): 397–424; Guobin Yang, “Achieving Emotions in Collective Action: Emotional Processes and Movement Mobilization in the 1989 Chinese Student Movement,” *Sociological Quarterly* 41 (2000): 593–614; Erin J. Rand, “Gay Pride and Its Queer Discontents: ACT UP and the Political Deployment of Affect,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 98 (2012): 75–80.
- [28] Debra Hawhee, *Moving Bodies: Kenneth Burke at the Edges of Language* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009).
- [29] Aristotle, “The Rhetoric, Bk 2: Ch 2,” in *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, trans. George A. Kennedy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 124 & 139.
- [30] Aristotle, *The Rhetoric*, Bk 2: Ch 5, 150.
- [31] Jennifer S. Lerner, Roxana M. Gonzalez, Deborah A. Small, and Baruch Fischhoff, “Effects of Fear and Anger on Perceived Risks of Terrorism: A National Field Experiment,” *Psychological Science* 14 (2003): 144–50; Linda J. Skitka, Christopher W. Bauman, Nicholas P. Aramovich, and G. Scott Morgan, “Confrontational and Preventative Policy Responses to Terrorism: Anger Wants a Fight and Fear Wants ‘Them’ to Go Away,” *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 28 (2006), 375–84; Melody S. Sadler, Megan Lineberger, Joshua Correll, and Bernadette Park, “Emotions, Attributions, and Policy Endorsement in Response to the September 11th Terrorist Attacks,” *Basic And Applied Social Psychology*, 27 (2005): 249–58; Leonie Huddy, Stanley Feldman, Charles Taber, and Gallya Lahav, “Threat, Anxiety, and Support of Antiterrorism Policies,” *American Journal of Political Science* 49 (2005): 593–608. For a general overview of action tendencies in emotion science, see, for example, Elaine Fox, *Emotion Science: Cognitive and Neuroscientific Approaches to Understanding Human Emotions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).
- [32] For a detailed “dynamic systems” treatment of development from a progressive perspective see Anne Fausto-Sterling, Cynthia Garcia Coll, Meaghan Lamarre, “Sexing the Baby: Part 2 Applying Dynamic Systems Theory to the Emergences of Sex-related Differences in Infants and Toddlers,” *Social Science and Medicine* 74 (2012): 1693–1702.
- [33] A balanced and well-documented treatment of these affiliational tendencies is provided by Donald R. Kinder and Cindy D. Kam, *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).
- [34] Bruce E. Gronbeck, “The Sentimentalization of American Political Rhetoric,” *Poroi*, 4 (2005): 27–53, especially pp. 35, 36, 38. <http://ir.uiowa.edu/poroi/vol4/iss1/2>.
- [35] Drew Westen, *The Political Brain: The Role of Emotion in Deciding the Fate of the Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books, 2007).
- [36] Black, “Second Persona,” 112.

- [37] Black, "Second Persona," 119.
- [38] Black, "Second Persona," 113.
- [39] Black, "Second Persona," 109.
- [40] Black, "Second Persona," 109.
- [41] Black, "Second Persona," 110.
- [42] Black, "Second Persona," 113.
- [43] Black, "Second Persona," 119, emphasis added.
- [44] Black, "Second Persona," 116, 118.
- [45] Black, "Second Persona," 118.
- [46] Black's essay straddled the divide between the "single text" tradition of rhetorical criticism and the new approaches to studying the mass mediation of political discourse. On the one hand, his essay centralizes Robert Welch's use of the cancer metaphor, citing examples only from Welch's speech inaugurating the John Birch Society. As Black notes, Welch "cultivates the metaphor with the fixity of a true connoisseur" (Black, "Second Persona," 115). On the other hand, Black claims to be reading the metaphor as it is used by many political figures on the Right (although the only other name he mentions is Billy James Hargis, whom he does not directly quote). This conflation of a single speaker's discourse with the mass mediated approach is consistent with Black's assumption that ideologies are coherent and uniform and that single tokens therefore represent the ideology.
- [47] Black, "Second Persona," 119.
- [48] Black refers to the right-wing propensity for nuclear war three times: "Hence, Rightists seem less inhibited by the fear of nuclear war than others" (116); the other two instances are quoted later in my text.
- [49] See Welch, *Blue Book*, a major rationale occurs on the two pages 24–25, where one finds "awakening" (24) "wake up" and on 24 "newly awakened"; one finds aware on p. 7 and 77, for example; similar ideas are presented when he talks about "innocent and idealistic Americans" are falling under Soviet rule "before they ever realize it is happening" (p. 19) or p. 22 where he describes Americans as being "stampeded" under false pretenses.
- [50] Black, "Second Persona," 115.
- [51] Black, "Second Persona," 116.
- [52] Black, "Second Persona," 116.
- [53] Black, "Second Persona," 117.
- [54] Black, "Second Persona," 115–16.
- [55] Black, "Second Persona," 116.
- [56] Black, "Second Persona," 114.
- [57] Welch, *Blue Book*, 43.
- [58] Welch, *Blue Book*, 44.
- [59] Welch, *Blue Book*, 45.
- [60] Welch, *Blue Book*, 45, emphasis added.
- [61] Black, "Second Persona," 117.
- [62] Welch, *Blue Book*, 45.
- [63] Welch, *Blue Book*, 45.
- [64] Welch, *Blue Book*, 46.
- [65] Op. Cit., note 32.
- [66] Michael Pfau argues for the constitution of a constructive notion of civic fear, which has many valuable qualities, but this structure of feeling is not currently circulating in our polity; Michael William Pfau, "Whose Afraid of Fear Appeals? Contingency, Courage, and Deliberation in Rhetorical Theory and Practice," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 40 (2007): 216–37.
- [67] Aristotle, *The Rhetoric*, Book 2: Ch. 2; Daniel M. Gross, *The Secret History of Emotion: From Aristotle's Rhetoric to Modern Brain Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- [68] Welch, *Blue Book*, 26.



- [69] Welch, *Blue Book*, 21, 10, 27, 17.
- [70] Welch, *Blue Book*, 26, 27.
- [71] Welch, *Blue Book*, 17.
- [72] Welch, *Blue Book*, 54.
- [73] Welch, *Blue Book*, 11.
- [74] Charles J. Stewart, Craig Allen Smith, Robert E. Denton, Jr., “Personal Needs and Social Movements: John Birchers and Gray Panthers,” in *Persuasion and Social Movements*, 5th ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 2007), 135–54. Stewart, Smith, and Denton provide a more detailed analysis of the autocratic nature of the organization Welch seeks to construct. Welch says, in part, “For we simply are not going to be able to save our country from either the immediate threat of Communism, or the long-range threat of socialism, by organizational leadership. Our only possible chance is dynamic personal leadership,” and “with all of my own shortcomings, there wasn’t anybody else on the horizon willing to give their whole lives to the job, with the determination and dedication I would put into it” (Welch, *Blue Book*, 103, 114; see also 107).
- [75] Welch, *Blue Book*, 48.
- [76] Welch, *Blue Book*, 48.
- [77] Welch, *Blue Book*, 70.
- [78] Welch, *Blue Book*, 78.
- [79] Jonathan B. Freeman, Nicholas O. Rule, Reginald B. Adams Jr., and Nalini Ambady, “Culture Shapes a Mesolimbic Response to Signals of Dominance and Subordination that Associates with Behavior,” *Neuroimage* 47 (2009): 353–59; Kathrin Jonkmann, Ulrich Trautwein, and Oliver Ludtke, “Social Dominance in Adolescence: The Moderating Role of the Classroom Context and Behavioral Heterogeneity,” *Child Development* 80 (2009): 338–55.
- [80] Richard G. Wilkinson, “Health, Hierarchy, and Social Anxiety,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Science* 896 (1999): 48–63.
- [81] Randle J. Hart, “Practicing Birchism: The Assumption and Limits of Idiocultural Coherence in Framing Theory,” *Social Movement Studies* 7 (2008): 121–47. Hart shows poll results suggesting that the eventual membership of the John Birch society identified themselves more with the fight against creeping socialism in the US than against the world-wide fight against Soviet Communism.
- [82] Lundberg, “Enjoying God’s Death”: Chaput, “Rhetorical Circulation.”
- [83] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
- [84] Black, “Second Persona,” 112.
- [85] Welch, *The Blue Book*, 47.
- [86] Welch, *Blue Book*, 114.
- [87] Welch, *Blue Book*, 117.
- [88] Welch, *Blue Book*, 139–41, also 137.
- [89] Black, “Second Persona,” 111.
- [90] Black, “Second Persona,” 113.
- [91] Black, “Second Persona,” 116.
- [92] Black, “Second Persona,” 118.
- [93] Black, “Second Persona,” 118–19.
- [94] Black, “Second Persona,” 119.
- [95] The most fully elaborated version of this apparatus applied to mass media criticism that I have read is Dana Cloud’s essay, “The Irony Bribe and Reality Television: Investment and Detachment in *The Bachelor*,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 27 (2010): 413–37; in this essay the mass public, even when they show skepticism of a mass-mediated text, are only duped at a second level, whereas the critic/academic reader is given an escape from the iron grip of the mass-mediated text only because they are aware that the mass audience are

doubly duped; an example of unintended effects in more limited uses is evident in Robert Asen, *Invoking the Invisible Hand: Social Security and the Privatization Debates* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2009). Asen's book is a model of excellence in many ways, but my analysis leads one to ask what emotional affiliations it projects when it labels the opponents of Social Security as dishonest, and functioning under "false pretenses," because they chose their strategies based on the arguments that they thought would align with public sentiments, rather than using the arguments that Asen finds to be most in tune with what he projects as their ideology (236).

- [96] E.g., Thomas R. Dunn, "Remembering 'A Great Fag': Visualizing Public Memory and the Construction of Queer Space," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97 (2011): 435–60; Phaedra C. Pezzullo, *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice?* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007); Leah Ceccarelli, "Manufactured Scientific Controversy: Science, Rhetoric, and Public Debate," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 14 (2011): 195–228.
- [97] E.g., Anne Bartsch, Markus Appel, and Dennis Storch, "Predicting Emotions and Meta-Emotions at the Movies: The Role of the Need for Affect in Audiences' Experience of Horror and Drama," *Communication Research* 37 (2010): 167–90; Taya R. Cohen, "Moral Emotions and Unethical Bargaining: The Differential Effects of Empathy and Perspective Taking in Deterring Deceitful Negotiation," *Journal of Business Ethics* 94 (2010): 569–79; Ronald Inglehart, Roberto Foa, Christopher Peterson, and Christian Welzel, "Development, Freedom, and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective (1981–2007)," *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 3 (2008): 264–85.

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