

---

## 6.2: Moving Thumos

### Moving *Thumos*: Images, Emotion, and Activism

[Eric Mason](#), Nova Southeastern University

*Enculturation* 6.2 (2009): <http://enculturation.gmu.edu/6.2/mason>

The scene opens with snow-covered hills beyond a sea of icy blue-green water, a cold wind blowing clouds across the screen. All-caps lettering floats in front of the polar landscape calling upon us to “Save the Greenbacks,” and a voice states that the “plight of the greenbacks continues.” Cut to a figure standing in the snow wearing a red jacket with a high-contrast patch on the chest on which can barely be made out the shape of a whale. A close-up follows of a dollar half buried in ice and snow. The individual bends down to retrieve the dollar, which is in two pieces, and declares that “this [dollar] barely stood a chance . . . but together we can save thousands just like it by taking part in Kia’s ‘Save the Greenbacks’ program.” Two other “activists” join the first in examining the torn dollar (their whale patches now clearly visible) and they raise a handmade “Save the Greenbacks” banner (with amateurishly off-center lettering) before we are shown a group of Kia vehicles on which we can save money if we “hurry” and buy “today” (“[Arctic](#)”).

The television ad described above undoubtedly alludes to the efforts by groups such as Greenpeace to draw media attention to environmental concerns. This ad most directly evokes the activist movements to stop the hunting of baby harp seals and to rescue animals following the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill off the Alaskan coast. Another Kia ad in the same campaign shows individuals gathering dollars on a beach and collecting them into a rubber raft—a craft strongly associated with Greenpeace’s efforts to ban commercial whaling—while warning us that “greenbacks are disappearing at an alarming rate” (“Beach”). The similarity between “greenback” and “humpback” is unambiguous, especially so in view of the whale patches worn by individuals in both ads. The rubber raft, the handmade banner, the concern with future events (i.e., extinction), the call to action—all of these features are appropriated generally from environmental activism and specifically from what Kevin DeLuca calls “image events.” In *Image Politics*, DeLuca studies how “image events”—staged acts of protest intended for media dissemination—emerged as the primary rhetorical tactic of environmental groups such as Earth First! and Greenpeace (3–4). That the Kia ad designers can expect the audience to recognize the events appropriated in their commercials is proof that the image events of past activists continue to circulate in our cultural consciousness.

In this essay, I connect the circulation and success of image events to the method of rhetorical argument known as the enthymeme. While scholars most often define the enthymeme as “a syllogism with a missing premise,” there really is no disciplinary consensus regarding what constitutes an enthymeme. There is, however, a growing recognition that “elements of Aristotle’s classic enthymeme are implicit in current theories of visual argumentation” (Smith 114). The historical flexibility of the enthymeme reveals its status as a “rich set of relationships with the potential of being expressed in a multitude of ways”—a quality, I would argue, that makes the enthymeme, despite its verbal heritage, well-suited to theorizing visual forms of rhetoric (Emmel 132). In short, I am arguing that image events aspire to be visual enthymemes. This formulation might seem to establish an unfortunate hierarchy between the material event and its argumentative structure, one in which words trump images. DeLuca specifically criticizes the desire to make words primary in a discussion of image events, and singles out Roger Aden’s essay, “The Enthymeme as Postmodern Argument Form,” as representative of the “tendency in the discipline of rhetoric to study television and other imagistic media by focusing on words to the neglect of images” (18). Admittedly, Aden’s examples deviate little from the common depiction of the enthymeme as an “incomplete” linguistic structure, a “syllogism with one (or more) premises missing” (Simonson 303). He does put this linguistic structure in the broader context of persuasive rhetorical forms, but ultimately Aden’s enthymemes are relations between observations, generalizations, and inferences composed of words. But my conception of the enthymeme is not word-based; it is *thumos*-based.

---

*Thumos* is a Greek term that refers to an individual's capacity for emotion and which forms the root of the word enthymeme ("from *en* and *thymos*, 'in heart'); etymologically, an enthymeme is an argument that is realized in an individual's *thumos* (Walker 171). Unlike some other rhetorical concepts, *thumos* was an active term not only in treatises like Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, but also in ancient Greek poetics and in sophistic discourse. Since most accounts of the enthymeme as a logic-ruled linguistic structure are based on Aristotle's systematic treatment of the enthymeme, a *thumos*-driven conception of argument hopes to displace this word-centric model by returning to a "sophistic, non-Aristotelian notion of the enthymeme that is pervasive in the Hellenistic rhetorical tradition" (Lauer 53). In this tradition, Jeffrey Walker tells us, an enthymeme is not strictly propositional and may include among its 'premises' such things as sense perceptions, mental imagery, memories, cognitive schema, deepset beliefs and values (ideologies), bodily states, the aesthetic effects of things like music or drugs, and existing emotional predispositions . . . as well as explicit propositions or "ideas" overtly present to the psyche. (174)

The adoption of this expansive notion of the available resources from which to construct enthymemes underscores the importance of the visual nature of image events.

The idea that image events aspire to be visual enthymemes should also not raise fears of word-centrism because there is a crucial temporal distinction to be made here: the formation of visual enthymemes occurs after the image event is disseminated. As DeLuca writes, in the *production* of image events we "witness people acting passionately ('irrationally') on behalf of nature and place, [with] commitments that owe as much to love and emotional connections as they do to instrumental reason" (59). I argue that in the *reception* of image events we witness people forming enthymemes on behalf of emotion and reason, and these enthymemes can be constructed from visual resources that generate action. As Walker writes in *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, the "conclusion" of an enthymeme is "not a proposition or 'thought' but an action or will to act. . . . a *physically embodied will to act*" (174, original emphasis). If the *conclusion* of an enthymeme need not be a proposition composed of words, why would we restrict its *initiation* in this way?

### Image and Emotion in Rhetorical Theory

Rhetorical scholars have often had trouble accounting for the role of emotions and images in argument as anything more than adjuncts or distractions to the underlying linguistic argument. Consider Aden's account of postmodern argument as a "condensed, mediated" recombination of "previously articulated fragments" (55). This would seem to describe the Kia (and many other) ads well, although the fragments of discourse these ads recirculate are both verbal and visual. Under a *thumos*-based account of the enthymeme, this ad's borrowing of features from other texts—the "already said"—is simply not enough to be enthymematic. To be an enthymeme, the ad would have to tap into the "already felt" as well. It may seem here that I am being naïve by suggesting that ads don't routinely make use of audience emotions. Rather, I am claiming that any description of these texts as enthymematic is inadequate without a serious consideration of the emotion at the heart of the enthymeme.

In Aden's article, for example, even though he observes that the arguments of political candidate and ex-KKK member David Duke found traction by appealing to "frustration," "anti-government sentiment," and prejudices such as "racial fear," he introduces these as "cultural factors" that are secondary to the argument being made (56–57). Aden writes that "Duke's rhetoric features subjects deeply ingrained in the American psyche," and then he provides examples of enthymemes that make no explicit reference to the emotions that make these subjects resonate in the first place (59). This is a type of form/content bifurcation—emotions are associated with the *content* of argument without ever being allowed to enter the structural *form* of the enthymeme. Similar bifurcations are common in theories of visual argument. In writing about the visual argumentation within a public service announcement by UNICEF, Hatfield, Hinck, and Birkholt state that the "power of its emotional appeal enables the message to overcome audience exhaustion," what they call "compassion fatigue" (148). Here, the emotion is again not part of the structure of the argument but a way to overcome one's emotional resistance to paying attention to the real message. In a manner similar to the way in which emotion has been dismissed, image events have also often been dismissed as "gimmicks or the antics of the unruly . . . [or reduced]

---

to flares sent out to gain the attention for the 'real' rhetoric" (DeLuca 17).

If emotion *is* the reason for the audience accepting an observation that is presented, then it is misleading for Aden to state that "Duke relies on the 'already said' to provide both the political cover he desires and the political response he craves" (60). By focusing on the verbal (the "said") and by using emotive words ("desires" and "craves") to describe someone portrayed as attempting to appeal to the worst in people, the role of emotion is either ignored or demonized. Granted, Aden's article is a potent analysis of persuasive method, but it does this without integrating emotion into the structure of the enthymeme. In fact, Aden seems to overall devalue the role of emotion in public discourse. He writes that a greater understanding of enthymemes will help critics to "identify both the unsaid/already said and [reveal] the means by which public figures attempt to further their own ends at expense of . . . the societal good"; this understanding will also help break the "cycle of cynicism" in public discourse (61; 62). Aden associates the condensed enthymematic form with immoral intent by stating that it is the "enthymeme that allows Duke to appeal to prejudice without overtly doing so" (57). His statements that public argument should be more "open" and "explicit," and "public officials [forced] to clarify their arguments" suggest that public discourse is negatively influenced by non-verbal elements, such as emotions and the images that evoke them (62).

Despite a general distrust of emotion that stretches back to Socrates, critical interest in emotion has increased significantly among rhetoricians in recent years. Foremost in prompting this interest is the recognition that emotions are not merely experienced privately but can be understood "as evidence of one's position in social relations and as a form of social action" (Jacobs and Micciche 4). In their introduction to *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion and Composition Studies*, editors Dale Jacobs and Laura R. Micciche find the potential for rhetoric to enable social change embedded in the word "emotion" itself:

[A] key term for us is *move*. We take, as our starting point, the Latin root of emotion, *motere*, which means "to move," suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion. Movement, or repositioning oneself in the face of ever-changing situations, is a central goal of classical and contemporary rhetorical theory. Effective rhetoric is dynamic rather than static; effective rhetoric moves us towards new ways of knowing and creates avenues for social change. In our book, linking emotion with movement underscores the rhetorical nature of emotion as a mode of articulation by which thought and action are moved, or are always in flux, and are a source of moving others. (3)

These scholars explicitly connect emotion with moving people to action, a central goal of activists. Arguably, this emphasis on action is evident in Aristotle as well. Larry Arnhart claims that the connection between emotion and action is always assumed in the Aristotelian enthymeme "since enthymematic argumentation is a *practical* form of reasoning, its aim is to move men not just to *think*, but also to *act*; and arguments cannot move men to action unless it somehow elicits the motivational power of emotion" (10). While many approaches to argument have either de-emphasized the role of emotion, or, less kindly, associated it with distraction, fallacious reasoning, or deception, these scholars suggest that a social capacity for emotion must be the warrant of any form of rhetoric that claims to be effective, including visual rhetoric. Visual rhetoric has had trouble being seen as legitimate as well. Even in classroom practice, where "visual literacy is an old and perennial" concern, images are often conceived "as a problematic, something added, an anomaly" (George 13). In these classrooms, image analysis is common, but image production is not considered a serious rhetorical practice, despite the fact that images have become "commonplace in all aspects of contemporary public discourse" (McComiskey 188). The lack of instruction in the rhetorical uses of images, and in how to take advantage of media to disseminate visual arguments, is unfortunate, especially considering the common notion that teaching argumentation is "necessary for the life of the polis" (Roberts-Miller 3).

Once one connects emotion and image together as critical elements of effective rhetoric, it is unsurprising to note that activists embrace the visual as central to the political work enabled by mass media. For instance, the [2005 Live 8 concerts](#) made extensive use of visual media to disseminate this event's anti-poverty message. This "political event," as organizer Bob Geldorf called it, functioned in at least one way like Greenpeace's naval

---

confrontations with whaling boats: it did not succeed primarily as a direct action but as an image event (qtd. in Tyrangiel 66; see DeLuca 1-6). Watched by approximately 2 billion people and accessible to roughly 80% of globe, it set a new standard for media dissemination of political activism. The image-based interactive features available to viewers, including the “G8 Gallery,” were where supporters were encouraged to submit images to Live 8 organizers. These images were printed and placed along a 2-mile stretch of the “Long Walk to Justice,” the closing march to Edinburgh. Local authorities and activists used image-based strategies as well. The actual marchers along the Long Walk to Justice had pictures of them taken by police, and many activists carried cameras; both sides seemed to want to dissuade the use of force by the other by threatening to make such acts visible. The intensely visual nature of this event led activist-musician Bono of U2 to state that the fact that Live 8 organizers had moved on from the “tin-cupping of Live Aid” to applying “real pressure” on world leaders—moved on from the direct action of raising money to the orchestrating of events that raise awareness—was a sign that they had “moved into real politics and real activism” (qtd. in Tyrangiel 66).

Since images and emotions often tend to be dismissed using similar strategies, it is likely that a defense of the legitimate and necessary role of emotion in argument and a defense of the legitimate and necessary role of images in argument will be mutually supportive. If image events succeed when they function as visual enthymemes, “moving *thumos*” can be considered an effective strategy for the political work of activism. Addressing emotion is vital to activism because the “mind, by itself, is never sufficient to originate action or movement. . . . Action requires an affective state” (Miller and Bee 203, 204). The widespread validation of the “emotive power of the image” suggests that the production of images is therefore appropriate to responsible rhetorical pedagogies (LaGrandeur 119). Once one accepts “emotion as a central [and legitimate] ingredient in the act of persuasion,” it is easy to agree with Ellen Quandahl that “this heart-word [*thumos*] ought to become a key term for rhetoric” (Jacobs and Micciche 2; 14). If so, “enthymeme” ought to become a key term for activism as well.

### **Reinstating *Thumos* at/as the Heart of Enthymematic Argument**

As stated earlier, *thumos*, in its broadest sense, refers to an individual’s capacity for emotion and is thus directly implicated in one’s capacity to be moved by discursive and non-discursive phenomena—to respond to rhetoric. It is variously translated from the Greek as “spiritedness” or “mind” or “passion” or “heart,” although these words do not fit without difficulty into the variable models of the psyche active in ancient Greek thought. Plato’s well-known division of the soul into reason, spirit, and appetite in book 4 of the *Republic* differs from earlier accounts by insisting that *thumos* (spirit) is ideally ruled by reason. The relationship between the three parts is therefore “more coercive than dialogical,” as evidenced in Socrates’ second speech in the *Phaedrus*, where the tripartite soul is compared to a charioteer guiding two horses (Nienkamp 31). Put simply, the noble white horse (spirit) aligns itself with the charioteer (reason) to control the ignoble dark horse (appetite). In this model, the alignment between reason and spirit is so close that some have even argued that this in fact a bipartite soul, since the aims of the charioteer and the white horse are the same (Robinson 117).

The trivial role given to *thumos* in the Platonic soul is unlike earlier articulations of *thumos*, such as those found in Homer’s epic poem, the *Iliad*. Rather than hierarchize the parts of the soul by insisting that one rule over the other, Homer presents *thumos* as the seat of emotions in order to explore the psychic interiors of the characters in his epic poem, the very first line of which focuses our attention on the anger of Achilles. But *thumos* is just one part of Homer’s version of the psyche, which is, to modern readers, a “strange collection of interior elements, some neither purely organic nor purely psychic—*kardia* and *?tor* meaning heart, *phrenes* meaning lungs, or diaphragm, or mind, *noos* meaning mind, plan, or purpose, *psuch?* meaning a breath that flees the body at the point of death, and *thumos*” (Koziak 37). Homer indicates that emotions are “in” the *thumos*, that emotions emerge “out of” the *thumos*, and that one can affect one’s *thumos* emotionally (for instance, by gladdening it) (43).

---

Considering *thumos*' malleability, it is not surprising that Plato's and Aristotle's more systematic formulations of the soul would downgrade its role. Luckily, *thumos* is not being introduced here for its ability to provide systematic coherence to the process of persuasion or to the structure of the psyche. The feature most relevant to the functioning of the enthymeme is that the Homeric *thumos* is not merely a container for emotion, it also participates in deliberation. It is in the *thumos* that "one considers things, draws inferences, becomes impassioned, forms desires, has intentions, and makes plans" (Walker 173). Consider Homer's exposition in the *Iliad* of Odysseus's mental state as the Trojans advance upon him:

And troubled, he spoke then to his own great-hearted *thumos*:

"Ah me, what will become of me? It will be a great evil

If I run, fearing their multitude, yet deadlier if I am caught

Alone; and Kronos' son drove to flight the rest of the Danaans.

Yet still. Why does the *thumos* within me debate on these things? (11.401-12)

While some have argued that Odysseus' ultimate decision to stand his ground in the face of the Trojan assault is a triumph of reason over emotion, Barbara Koziak argues that this ignores the fact that Homer shows that "both the emotion and the reason seem to reside in the *thumos*" and that, rather than reason winning over emotion, it is true instead that "one package of a reason and emotion wins over another" (51). As later lines in *The Iliad* show, the emotion of fear is packaged with the reason that Odysseus is badly outnumbered, and the emotion of anger is packaged with the reason that this is an opportunity to win honor as a warrior. By siding with the latter, Odysseus "both reasons and feels himself into staying" (Koziak 51). That this articulation of emotion and reason into action occurs in the *thumos* suggests rich possibilities for the enthymeme.

The desire to redefine the enthymeme as a visual and emotional structure proceeds from Poster's historicizing of the highly variable definitions of the enthymeme, an analysis which shows that "rhetorical terms are not so much immutable entities with fixed and unchangeable meanings, but rather methods by which a culture analyzes its own discursive practices" (1). That these practices are increasingly visual in contemporary society is undeniable. One might even say that our historical context invites a visual redefinition of the enthymeme. But how will this redefinition connect the enthymeme to image events? Since the majority of models of the enthymeme emphasize its relation to the syllogism (stated variously as it being a truncated, abbreviated, or incomplete syllogism), the enthymeme is most often portrayed as a "formally deficient" structure (Bitzer 404). In comparison to the "complete" syllogism composed of a major premise, minor premise, and conclusion, the enthymeme seems to be lacking a premise. However, as Brian Massumi writes in *Parables for the Virtual*, "the effect of the mass media and other image- and information-based media simply [cannot] be explained in terms of a lack" (43). Rather, Massumi focuses on what he calls the "potential" embodied in the "image/expression events in which we bathe . . . images as conveyors of forces of emergence" (42-43). It is this potential of images as "forces of emergence" that make them appropriate vehicles for activism. Since the "exemplary event is a deferred completion," the "incompleteness" of a visual enthymeme is its potential as an event (Massumi 64). A theory of visual enthymemes will hopefully shift focus from the propositional structure of traditional argument to a notion of rhetorical argument as event.

### Re-seeing the Enthymeme for the First Time

Although DeLuca writes that image events fall "outside the domain of a rhetoric traditionally conceived," the qualities of image events DeLuca identifies resonate with a classical understanding of the enthymeme that is not exclusively Aristotelian (*xii*). Certainly, Aristotle is responsible for much of the scholarly attention given to the enthymeme, since he called it the "body" or substance of persuasion in the opening of the *Rhetoric* (1354a). In fact, Poster writes that the "only universally agreed upon notion of why the enthymeme is of any but historical importance" is that it is "central to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*" (5). Beyond the affirmation of the importance of the enthymeme, Aristotle is not as helpful as one might think. As Lloyd Bitzer observes: "the reader of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* will find no unambiguous statement defining the enthymeme" (399). Even within textbooks, which should be "conservative recapitulations of the agreed upon assumptions of an academic discipline," Poster categorizes

---

seven competing definitions of the enthymeme (1). Out of the seven, six make explicit reference to the syllogism, reproducing the narrow reading of the enthymeme as a logic-based linguistic structure (the divergent one defines the enthymeme simply as “informal deductive reasoning”) (Poster 4). But a *thumos*-based conception of the enthymeme draws attention to those aspects that engage emotion most directly. According to the approaches introduced below, enthymemes are: 1) stylistically kairotic, 2) composed of oppositions or contradictions, 3) premonitory (future-oriented), and 4) amenable to visual resources. These are all qualities that successful image events possess as well.

From Isocrates and Anaximenes, two philosophers roughly contemporary with Aristotle, one encounters the first professional and technical descriptions of the enthymeme. Although some claim that Isocrates' use of enthymeme suggests merely a “well-turned phrase, a well considered-thought,” this downplays the importance of *kairos* in Isocrates' system of rhetoric (Poster 12). *Kairos* is typically associated with right timing, or due measure or proportion (Kinneavy 85). *Kairos* is an important factor in the tactics of grassroots environmental groups as well. DeLuca writes that the success of grassroots tactics “requires people close by who can seize on the wing the possibilities that offer themselves at a given moment” (76). In *Against the Sophists*, Isocrates portrays the essence of rhetorical skill as being the ability “to see what *kairos* demands, and speak a discourse wholly wrought with fitting enthymemes” (16–17). Being kairotic, these enthymemes will “in some sense come as a surprise” and therefore “will not be fully predictable, will not follow as inevitable conclusions necessitated by the ‘premises’ preceding them” (Walker 179). In other words, the typical view of the enthymeme as an audience's expression of unstated premises that completes the enthymeme ignores the stylistic force of the enthymeme's presentation—of the production of “what might be called an ‘enthymematic moment’ in the audience's experience” (Walker 175, original emphasis). Bono emphasizes this type of enthymematic event when he states of Live 8 that “There's got to be a moment, an explosive moment of concentration on [poverty]. The point of Live 8 is to provide the colossal, dramatic moment where everybody gets to grips with it” (qtd. in Tyrangiel 66). This attention to style is not opposed to issues of logic and reason. Robert Danisch presents the enthymeme as the “intersection of argument, style, and emotion,” arguing that “style is constitutive of reason and reason constitutive of style” (221, 233). By incorporating style in its function, the enthymeme remains an appropriate strategy in this era of “[c]ritique through spectacle, not critique versus spectacle” (DeLuca 22).

Part of the stylistic force of the enthymeme comes from its use of opposition. Anaximenes writes that enthymemes are composed of contradictions or “oppositions” embodied “not only in words or in actions . . . but also in anything else” (10 1430a). These contradictions can often be situated in “principles of justice, law, expediency, honor, feasibility, facility, or probability” or in “the character of the speaker or the usual course of events.” Anaximenes places enthymemes within an “exetastic discourse” consisting of an “‘exhibition’ of inconsistencies or contradictions in someone's intentions, deeds, or words” (Walker 176). Such deconstructive intent is clear in the tactics of activists to “contest social norms and deconstruct the established naming of the world” (DeLuca 59). The image events distributed make deliberate use of opposition to further these ends. For instance, the images distributed as part of Greenpeace's efforts to stop whaling operations regularly utilize the visual opposition between the rubber raft (a small craft filled with smiling members of the progressive counter culture) and the whaling boat (a “massive depersonalized, technical juggernaut of Soviet communism”) (DeLuca 98-99). Images of activists chained to vehicles and lying across or buried in roads evoke an opposition between action and immobility, between helplessness and authority. Also, the “contrary images” presented when grandparents are arrested while protesting derive their force from a similar set of “emotionally significant oppositions” that work to produce shame in viewers (DeLuca 10-11; Walker 178). Based on the qualities advocated by Isocrates and Anaximenes, the sophistic enthymeme emerges as a “concise emphatic statement of an emotionally charged opposition” (Walker 177). This is also the foundation of image events.

Thomas Farrell's contemporary approach to the enthymeme stresses its status as “premonitory” discourse, which he defines as “interested, unfinished reference” regarding a “world yet to come into existence” (104). The call to action embedded in image events is just such a kind of future-oriented discourse, and environmental groups display a “rich tradition of struggle that provides a spark of hope for those confronting a daunting *future*” (DeLuca 163, emphasis added). This concern with the future poses special problems for image events dealing with environmental concerns. The distended timeline of environmental effects can conflict with the

---

intended *kairos* of the performance—the consequences of inaction may simply seem too far off to be motivational. As DeLuca points out, environmental groups must also contend with the powerful ideograph of progress. By arguing that “humanity, by dominating nature through the use of instrumental reason and technology, will achieve progress,” industrialists have made it difficult to think of the future without the unrelenting exploitation of natural resources (DeLuca 40).

It is clear that visuals are exceptionally well-suited to provide the sophistic qualities of enthymematic discourse. The gestalt nature of images—their all-at-once-ness or “immediacy”—make them ideal for the “sudden, dramatic sense of opening prospects” that characterizes enthymemes (Walker 179). What is referenced by enthymemes is the “mosaic of commonplaces, conventions, traditions, and provisional interests making up the *doxa* [popular opinion] of rhetorical culture” (Farrell 99). The corporate-centric control of the production and distribution of mediated images has led to an association of images with corporate interests. Kathleen Welch identifies a series of “visual *koinos topos*,” or visual commonplaces, that infuse news media (165). These specific visual *topoi* she claims are “sight bites . . . fragmentary . . . visual shards that lead nowhere except to the visual similarity of the commercials” (Welch 163). But it is also true, if visual commonplaces can be used, as Welch argues, to “reduce the ability of any decoder in any discourse community to absorb and assess what is going on,” that visual commonplaces can also be utilized to improve the ability to decode and assess (and produce) meaning. After all, rhetoric allows us to see the available means of persuasion but does not restrict us from the use of any particular appeal. The anxiety over the ability of enthymematic images to persuade, and even to deceive, is understandable. But only if one rejects the possibility that images can be used for a variety of rhetorical ends.

### **Activating *Thumos***

When activists seek to take advantage of the potential of image events, they harness their enthymematic potential to move *thumos*. There are really two events here: the image event coordinated by activists to disseminate through media and the event realized in the reception of these image events. Whether an audience responds to an enthymeme is “at least in part, connected with its eventfulness,” but the scope of this event should not be limited to the original act of protest (Farrell 102). As Massumi claims: “what the mass-media transmit is not fundamentally image-content but event-potential. A mediatized event has the potential to transfer into new domains, and when it does it *repeats its eventfulness*, with a change in its nature” (269, emphasis added). The enthymematic function of image events demonstrates that the domain in which the event is repeated is the domain of *thumos*.

Because *thumos* is not simply a specific emotional appeal but the place of rational/emotional deliberation, it is related to the classical notion of *koinoi topoi*, the common topics or common places of rhetorical argument. As Welch explains: “A *topos* is not a *what* Greek keyword; rather it is a *how* keyword, . . . it is part of informed performance. ‘*Topos*’ in Greek signifies place; it is a location where one takes oneself in order to develop an issue” (114-15). In other words, such places facilitate the invention and performance of arguments. The role of the *thumos* in moving people to action suggests that the effective rhetor should forefront “*presentational* and *inventional* concerns: the means by which enthymemes can most effectively be generated ‘in’ a listener’s *thymos*” (Walker 175, original emphasis). Emmel claims that “[t]he paradigm of the enthymeme is not a form imposed on the process but rather a form representative of *how that process takes shape*” (137, emphasis added). Not just a structure, the enthymeme might be seen as a method similar to what Gregory Ulmer describes as that of the “chorographer, then, [who] writes with paradigms (sets), not arguments” (38). Visual enthymemes are not simply examples of images structured to have a certain effect on audiences but a description of both how images are produced in *kairotic* ways and how those images are received by audiences through an interactive package of reason and emotion. Composing image events with paradigms requires the articulation of the shared visual elements of discourse to the *thumotic* capacity of the audience. The power of these articulations is evident in the

---

visual enthymemes activists produce.

### Works Cited

- Aden, Roger C. "The Enthymeme as Postmodern Argument Form: Condensed, Mediated Argument Then and Now." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 31 (1994): 54–63.
- Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Trans. George A. Kennedy. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991.
- Arnhart, Larry. *Aristotle on Political Reasoning: A Commentary on the "Rhetoric"*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois UP, 1981.
- Bitzer, Lloyd. "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 45.4 (1959): 399–408.
- Danisch, Robert. "Aphorisms, Enthymemes, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. on the First Amendment." *Rhetoric Review* 27.3 (2008): 219–35.
- DeLuca, Kevin Michael. *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism*. New York: Guilford P, 1999.
- Emmel, Barbara A. "Toward a Pedagogy of the Enthymeme: The Roles of Dialogue, Intention, and Function in Shaping Argument." *Rhetoric Review* 13.1 (1994): 132–49.
- Farrell, Thomas. "Aristotle's Enthymeme as Tacit Reference." *Rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric*. Ed. Alan G. Gross and Arthur E. Walzer. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2000. 93–106.
- George, Diana. "From Analysis to Design: Visual Communication in the Teaching of Writing." *CCC* 54.1 (2002): 11–39.
- Hatfield, Katherine L., Ashley Hinck, and Marty J. Birkholt. "Seeing the Visual in Argumentation: A Rhetorical Analysis of UNICEF Belgium's Smurf Public Service Announcement." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 43 (2007): 144–51.
- Homer. *The Iliad of Homer*. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1951.
- Isocrates. "Against the Sophists." *Isocrates*. Vol. 3. Trans. LaRue Van Hook. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1945.
- Jacobs, Dale and Laura R. Micciche. "Introduction: Rhetoric, Editing, and Emotion." *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion and Composition Studies*. Ed. Dale Jacobs and Laura R. Micciche. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003. 1–10.
- KIA Motors America. "Arctic." David and Goliath. 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Beach." David and Goliath. 2005.
- Kinneavy, James L. "Kairos: A Neglected Concept in Classical Rhetoric." *Landmark Essays on Rhetorical Invention in Writing*. Ed. Richard E. Young and Yameng Liu. Davis: Hermagoras P, 1994. 221–40.
- Koziak, Barbara. *Retrieving Political Emotion: Thumos, Aristotle, and Gender*. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 2000.
- LaGrandeur, Kevin. "Digital Images and Classical Persuasion." *Eloquent Images: Word and Image in the Age of New Media*. Ed. Mary E. Hocks and Michelle R. Kendrick. Cambridge: MIT P, 2003. 117–36.
- Lauer, Janice. *Invention in Rhetoric and Composition*. West Lafayette: Parlor Press, 2004.
- Massumi, Brian. *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation*. Durham: Duke UP, 2002.
- McComiskey, Bruce. "Visual Rhetoric and the New Public Discourse." *JAC* 24.1 (2004): 187–206.
- Miller, Arthur B. and John D. Bee. "Enthymemes: Body and Soul." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 5 (1972): 201–14.
- Nienkamp, Jean. *Internal Rhetoric: Toward a History and Theory of Self-Persuasion*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2001.
- Poster, Carol. "A Historicist Recontextualization of the Enthymeme." *RSQ* 22.2 (1992): 1–24.
- Quandahl, Ellen. "A Feeling for Aristotle: Emotion in the Sphere of Ethics." *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion and Composition Studies*. Ed. Dale Jacobs and Laura R. Micciche. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2003. 11–22.
- Roberts-Miller, Patricia. *Deliberate Conflict: Argument, Political Theory, and Composition Classes*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2004.
- Robinson, T. M. *Plato's Psychology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995.

- 
- Simonson, Solomon. "A Definitive Note on the Enthymeme." *The American Journal of Philology* 66.3 (1945): 303–306.
- Smith, Valerie J. "Aristotle's Classic Enthymeme and the Visual Argumentation of the Twenty-First Century." *Argumentation and Advocacy* 43 (2007). 114–23.
- Tyrangiel, Josh. "Three Big Shots, Eight Very Big Shows." *Time* 27 June 2005: 66.
- Ulmer, Gregory. *Heuristics: The Logic of Invention*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994.
- Walker, Jeffrey. *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000.
- Welch, Kathleen E. *Electric Rhetoric: Classical Rhetoric, Oralism, and a New Literacy*. Cambridge: MIT P, 1999.