

The problem with Willard's argument resides less in its terms and more in its motivation and style. Liberalism is the motivation for the rhetoric of epistemics. At the core of this work, the specter of John Dewey haunts liberalism. Willard holds that Dewey and his search for a public is the major error of liberalism. And, if this represented the practice of liberalism, rather than the theory of a variant of liberalism, Willard would be right. Liberalism as a political practice, at least at its highwater mark from the New Deal to the Great Society, owed less to Dewey, and more to "administrative progressivism." Dewey was publicly critical of this liberal practice, while democratic realists such as Walter Lippmann embraced it.

Beyond the question of realism healing itself, there is the issue of the compatibility of a realist style with Willard's commitments to constructivism. Willard overtly and rightly eschews realism at the outset, but peoples his text with "connoisseurs," "oracles," "mourners" and "noble savages." They have all misread the *Leviathan*, second only to the *Prince* as the quintessential realist text. While Willard sees their realism, he fails to grasp his own. The heart of democratic realism is its insistence on elite or expert rule, legitimized by the odd popular referendum. This was the position of Lippmann. For Willard, the public interest is the division of the experts' loyalties between their specialized field and "their obligation to translate," a public interest without any people, the realist dream. This is a problem for someone who insists, as Willard does, that rhetorical style cannot be divorced from intellectual substance.

Nonetheless, Willard has written a text that students of argumentation will struggle with for sometime to come. How this book will change argumentation remains to be seen, but it may lead to a thoughtful consideration of argument and debate pedagogy. Willard's *Liberalism and the Problem of Knowledge*, with Farrell's *Norms of Rhetorical Culture*, points to the maturity and growing importance of argument theory.

A REVIEW OF *RHETORICAL STUDIES OF NATIONAL POLITICAL DEBATES 1960-1992*

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As someone who studies Political Science, who at the same time enjoys examining the rhetoric of domestic and world leaders, I am always interested in examining new perspectives that are new to me. Robert V. Friedenberg's book *Rhetorical Studies of National Political Debates 1960-1992* is a wonderful example of a text that explores different perspectives while putting our national political debates into rhetorical contexts.

The book is comprised of eleven chapters, ten of which are microanalyses of presidential and vice-presidential debates from 1960-1992. Each chapter is organized around four questions: 1) what were the factors that motivated the candidates to debate, 2) what were the goals of each candidate in debating, 3) what were the rhetorical strategies utilized by each candidate and, 4) what were the effects of the debate? The eleventh chapter is a macroanalysis contributed by the editor, Robert Friedenberg, which examines common trends and patterns from the past debates. The combination of all eleven chapters make for a comprehensive analysis of the presidential debates of the last 30 years.

One of the best chapters is about the Kennedy-Nixon debates in 1960, by Theodore Windt, Jr. Windt examines the candidate's qualifications for the presidency and how each one perceives the debate. He then relates how Kennedy and Nixon prepared. John Kennedy prepared with aides in a room, going over answers orally, and refining his opening statement. After an afternoon nap and dinner, Kennedy went to inspect the television set where the debate would be held and decided to change from a white shirt to a blue one (Windt, 1994: 9). Nixon, on the other hand, poured over just as much information but did not rehearse orally. Nixon's debate strategy was to dispel his "assassin" image. An image he had won for accusing his political opponents of being soft on communism, or being a communist. Nixon did nothing but cram for the debate. Nixon did inspect the television set but refused make-up (Windt, 1994: 9-10). The steps taken by Kennedy make him look relaxed, handsome, even presidential. Kennedy took the debate seriously, while Nixon thought it was less important. Windt describes the first debate was the most important because

"...Kennedy's shrewd preparations and strategy for the debate paid off, while Nixon suffered not only because of his poor visual appearance, but because he miscalculated the importance of the debate, as well as his approach to the debate (Windt: 1994: 24)."

Presidential candidates now used media consultants in predate strategy on what to wear, what to say and how to say it. Winning a political debate can mean the difference whether you win or lose an election.

Windt also discusses the statements made by the candidates, the effects of that first presidential debate and briefly discusses the other three Kennedy-

Nixon debates. He finally concludes with the assertion that the first debate not only gave momentum to Kennedy, but it most likely helped him win a very close election. Nowadays, the importance of political debates is not only emphasized to presidential candidates but most people who run for public office. Learning from the lessons of Kennedy-Nixon, politicians and their aides realize not only is participating in a debate important, but how you prepare, what you wear and what you say are equally as important.

Windt's analysis, as well as the other ten chapters, provide an effective analysis of the presidential debates for three reasons. First of all, each chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the four questions mentioned before, by dividing the chapter into sections; such as predebate strategy, effects of the debate, post debate strategy and others. While at the same time the author uses his/her own interpretations to reinforce the significance of the debate, but provide a perspective that readers may not have been exposed to before. The vice-presidential debate of 1984 between Geraldine Ferraro and George Bush, analyzed by Judith S. Trent, is a good example.

Trent not only examines the four questions, but gives her own insight into a new debate strategy used by George Bush.

Bush "wrapped himself in the protective blanket of the presidency while...adopting the position of challenger. In doing so, he offered...a redefinition of incumbency rhetorical style. The other debater...was unquestionably less unique...but broke all the precedence just by her participation (Trent, 1994: 141)."

This passage demonstrates not only did Trent answer what type of debate strategy used by Bush, but how Bush redefined incumbency by using a dual debate strategy; the protective shield of the presidency, but at the same time he became the challenger for the presidency. Moreover, by looking at the debates from a microanalysis perspective, it gives the reader an even better understanding of common themes and patterns that are outlined in the eleventh chapter.

The second reason the text is an effective analysis is it allows the reader to make his or her own judgements, critiques, predictions about the debate and also to test if his/her conclusions are the same as the author's. Each chapter is clearly marked on what section you will be reading about. Those sections allow the reader to digest the information that he/she had read before, critique it and potentially make predictions about the outcomes of the next sections.

Though the book is organized around four primary questions, it does explore other issues, which is the third reason the text is an effective analysis. These issues include the importance of political debates to particular campaigns, the impact of the preparation teams on how well a candidate may fare in a debate, and how modern presidential and vice-presidential debate formats have developed. These subjects add more depth to the analyses done by the chapter authors and serve notice to the reader there is more involved in a debate than two presidential candidates just agreeing to it.

However, this book like every book, is not without its flaws. Not enough time is spent in examining external issues prior to the debate, nor does it cover in-depth the role of different organizations in presidential debates, such as the League of Women Voters, the Commission on Presidential Debates, and the mainstream media. These organizations, in certain circumstances, may play a major role in determining the debate format, who will participate, the

criterion for the moderators of the debates, debate site location, and at times the issues to be discussed in the debate.

One such example is the analysis of the Carter-Reagan debates by Kurt Ritter and David Henry, who do a good job in their analysis of the debate, but fail to recognize why Carter may have done so poorly. At the time the debate took place Carter was engrossed and obsessed by the Iranian hostage crisis. Carter obsessed about this issue to the point that he wouldn't even allow the Christmas tree in Washington, D.C. to be lit until the hostages were released (Kegley, 1994: 4). Carter was convinced by aides and himself that a successful rescue mission of the hostages would secure a re-election victory (Kegley, 1994: 4). Yet the rescue mission proved to be unsuccessful and Carter had to continue negotiations with Iran. He then faced a tough battle from Senator Edward Kennedy in the Democratic primaries and an even tougher battle with Ronald Reagan in the general election. The Iranian hostage crisis was always in Jimmy Carter's mind and it is understandable why he did so poorly in the debates and eventually, the election.

This isn't to say that the analysis by Ritter and Henry was poor. They may not be responsible for all the information about the Iranian hostage crisis, but accounting for outside variables can show how a rhetorical analysis can be made stronger. Even though the chapters are rhetorical analyses the examination of external campaign issues, as well as other circumstances surrounding the debates, doesn't detract from an analysis, it might make it even stronger.

From a rhetorical, as well as a general perspective, *Rhetorical Studies of National Political Debates 1960-1992* is a comprehensive, easy to follow, well written text that scholars and students can enjoy. Friedenbergs and the other twelve scholars do an excellent job of examining contemporary political debates and the components involved in those debates. I would recommend to others that have an interest in elections, campaign strategy, political communication, the presidency and other academic fields to read this book. It is not only a good resource for those that teach or study history, political science or communication, but is an enjoyable read as well.

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