



Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice

By Sonja K. Foss

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Understanding the processes of rhetorical criticism--the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts--creates opportunities for more effective communication. When we are aware of the various options available in the construction of messages and how they function to produce effects, we have the tools needed to question the messages in artifacts rather than responding uncritically. Sonja Foss, who has an enviable talent for synthesizing complex rhetorical concepts and processes into clear explanations, presents nine methods of rhetorical criticism. She carefully explains and illustrates the theory behind each method with abundant examples of applications. Interesting and lively essays, some written by students, encourage readers to develop their critical skills. Useful bibliographies list additional samples for each type of criticism. Rhetorical criticism is not a process confined to a few assignments in a rhetorical or media criticism course. It is an everyday activity we can use to understand our responses to symbols of all kinds and to create our own symbols to generate the responses we desire.

Also by Sonja K. Foss and available from Waveland Press: with Karen A. Foss and Robert Trapp, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, Third Edition (ISBN 9781577662051); with Karen A. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin, *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* (ISBN 9781577664963); with Mary E. Domenico and Karen A. Foss, *Gender Stories: Negotiating Identity in a Binary World* (ISBN 9781577667919); with Karen A. Foss, *Inviting Transformation: Presentational Speaking for a Changing World*, Third Edition (ISBN 9781577667216); with Karen A. Foss and Robert Trapp, *Readings in Contemporary Rhetoric* (ISBN 9781577662068); with Karen A. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin, *Readings in Feminist Rhetorical Theory* (ISBN 9781577664970).

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Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice By Sonja K. Foss Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #148884 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Waveland Pr Inc
- Published on: 2008-08-08
- Ingredients: Example Ingredients
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 1.00" h x 6.90" w x 9.40" l, 1.70 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 444 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"This edition remains the consummate single-book source for how to conceive of and undertake rhetorical criticism. The chapters are concise and authoritative as they move the reader through an array of methodological approaches. This book rarely leaves my desk. Highly recommended." --D. Robert DeChaine, California State University, Los Angeles

From the Back Cover

"This is a valuable revision, particularly the chapter on pentadic criticism. The textbook challenges to be an excellent primary text for undergraduate rhetorical criticism classes. The student sample essays are particularly useful to illustrate the methods." -- Clarke Rountree, University of Alabama "An important update for a strong method-driven approach to critical engagement of texts." -- Robert Reid, University of Dubuque

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