



PROJECT MUSE®

Out of Style

Paul G. Butler

Published by Utah State University Press

Butler, Paul G.

Out of Style: Reanimating Stylistic Study in Composition and Rhetoric.

Utah State University Press, 2008.

Project MUSE.muse.jhu.edu/book/9415.

➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/9415>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On a recent summer morning, unable to write in my office because a fire had disabled a transformer on campus and cut power to most of the university, I piled approximately twenty books and my laptop computer into the backseat of my car and headed to the Truckee Book and Bean, near Lake Tahoe, California. As I pulled onto I-80, the main east-west route in the area, a sign said the town of Truckee was just nineteen miles from my home in northwest Reno, with all but a few of those miles across the California border. Along the way, I passed through some of the West's most scenic terrain, with Truckee the first leg in a route that ascends through the Tahoe National Forest and Donner Pass before eventually descending into Sacramento and San Francisco. The Book and Bean, which I had discovered earlier in the summer after a colleague suggested it, is one of a handful of coffeehouses or similar venues that have seen me through the writing and revising process of this book. For those like me who do our best work in public spaces, it is gratifying to know that the European café tradition is alive and well in the American coffeehouse, whatever shape or vision that takes in different locations. For me, those spaces include, roughly in chronological order, Borders in Syracuse; Space Untitled (now Pomegranate) and the Reading Room of the New York Public Library in Manhattan; Baker Boys and Basic in Jersey City; Barnes and Noble, Bibo, Borders, and Walden's Coffeehouse in Reno; and the Book and Bean. I appreciate the cheerful reception I received in all these places and the long, uninterrupted hours I spent at their small and large open tables with laptop in hand.

Along with these scenes of writing, I would also like to acknowledge the institutional spaces that informed the writing of this book. While grounded in theory rather than pedagogy,

Out of Style's origins clearly benefited from the teaching of a number of fine professors in composition and rhetoric. First, I thank those with whom I was privileged to study at Syracuse University: Collin Brooke, Fred Gale, Xin Liu Gale, Margaret Himley, Becky Howard, Louise Wetherbee Phelps, Kendall Phillips, Eileen Schell, Catherine Smith, Gay Washburn, and Jim Zebroski; at the University of Arizona: Theresa Enos and Roxanne Mountford; and at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette: Ann Dobie and Jim McDonald. Without the help of several extraordinary mentors at Syracuse, this book could not have come to fruition, and in that regard I thank Collin Brooke, Dana Harrington, and Jim Zebroski for patient, productive, and wise counsel that always exceeded my expectations. Jim continued to offer unfailing encouragement through a process that he often, and appropriately, described as a "marathon." I am particularly indebted to Louise Wetherbee Phelps, a scholar whose dedication to and passion for the study of style opened up a treasure trove of understanding through the incredible knowledge and wisdom she generously shared with me. As scholars and teachers of composition and rhetoric, we too often wonder about the impact we have on students' lives, and I want to affirm here the power of teaching to make a difference; teachers have made an important difference in my life.

My trajectory in completing this book has certainly been aided by a number of fine colleagues in a profession I feel thankful every day to have found. To that end I thank my talented and supportive former colleagues at Montclair State University, especially First-Year Writing Director Emily Isaacs, Laura Nicosia, and Jessica Restaino. At the University of Nevada, Reno, I am fortunate to work with a superb group of colleagues in rhetoric and composition and more generally in writing studies: Kathy Boardman, Shane Borrowman, Chris Coake, Jane Detweiler, Christine Norris, Gailmarie Pahmeier, Susan Palwick, Mark Waldo, and Mary Webb. I am grateful to the many other English Department colleagues who have offered support during the year, especially Michael Branch, Joe Calabrese,

Cathryn Donohue, Marilee Dupree, David Fenimore, Valerie Fridland, Justin Gifford, Cheryll Glotfelty, Don Hardy, Ann Keniston, James Mardock, Eric Rasmussen, and Ann Ronald. I am indebted to three individuals who do much to help the entire department and who offered great assistance during this undertaking: Cami Allen, Alec Ausbrooks, and Michelle Beaty. I thank Dean Heather Hardy for her generous support and the Scholarly and Creative Activities Grants Program of the College of Liberal Arts. In addition, I am grateful to colleague Jen Hill, who encouraged me in my SCAGP application and, in particular, to English Department Chair Stacy Burton, whose support for faculty and dedicated stewardship of the department make her an unusually visionary leader. I am also extremely grateful to Amy March and Sarah Perrault, doctoral students in rhetoric and composition at the University of Nevada, Reno, who read my work with extraordinary care and insight and offered highly intelligent editorial comments that helped me improve my manuscript.

I would also like to thank a number of individuals in the field whose support has made a difference in my ability to complete this book. For their feedback on my work, I owe a debt of gratitude to Janice Lauer and Duane Roen, who read a version of chapter four in preparation for its publication in *Rhetoric Review*. I thank *Rhetoric Review* editor Theresa Enos for supporting my work and the Taylor and Francis Group LLC for permission to reproduce that article as part of chapter four. I am indebted to the two anonymous readers for Utah State University Press who offered incredibly helpful and prescient suggestions on revising my manuscript and in the process enabled me to write a much better book. I also thank Richard Leo Enos of Texas Christian University, who gave knowledgeable and generous advice on an early version of the historical account I provide in chapter two. His suggestions opened up many new scholarly sources and avenues for me to pursue. At Utah State University Press, I thank Michael Spooner for his patient, helpful, and enthusiastic support of this book. He has offered the kind of encouragement

that anyone undertaking a project of this scope would welcome and appreciate.

The book has benefited from friends in the field whose good will has bolstered me during the long hours. In particular, I thank Susan Adams, Lindal Buchanan, Tracy Hamler Carrick, Risa Gorelick, Tobi Jacobi, Seth Kahn, Deanya Lattimore, Brad Lucas, Nancy Mack, Joddy Murray, Mary Queen, Amy Robillard, Brooke Rollins, Bonnie Selting, and Joseph J. Williams. I also thank my students, graduate and undergraduate, who have helped make my work fascinating and enjoyable. Outside composition, I thank Michael Clarke, Aaron Dalenburg, Carl Landorno, Bev Lassiter, Lee Medina, Scott Sutherland, Pete and Wendy Tomco, and Diana Wilson Wing.

To the circle of friends who have offered so much during this project I add family members who have provided tremendous help and encouragement through the years: I am grateful to Robert Butler, who is always interested in talking about the life of scholars and teachers, and Tod and Katie Butler, who give me a much-needed refuge at their Anchorage “homestead” as well constant support for my efforts. I also thank Matt and Aislinn Butler Hetterman; Chris, Pacey, and Jaida Butler Harris; Josh, Liz, and Koda Butler; Ann and John Osborn; Ken Fleshman and Vicki Maddox; Carolyn, Jim, and Amei Gove; Barb Fleshman and Bill and Nathan White; and Sally Butler. The book is dedicated to the memory of Shirley Butler, who always believed in my ability to achieve whatever goals I set for myself.

Finally, I dedicate the book to Joan L. Baxter, affectionately known as Mrs. B., a committed and gifted teacher who always said she believed that teaching and writing were my natural inclinations and showed me how they can make a difference in others’ lives. In a culture that doesn’t seem to admire teaching or the life of the mind very much, we are fortunate to have exemplary individuals like Joan Baxter who remind us daily of the real values that sustain us.

Reno, Nevada
January 2008

OUT OF STYLE

