

CLASSICAL RHETORIC FOR MODERN PROBLEMS:  
ACCOMMODATING STASIS FOR THE WAC/WID CURRICULUM

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Title

Classical Rhetoric for Modern Problems: Accommodating

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Stasis for the WAC/WID Curriculum

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## ABSTRACT

Archer, Seth Andrew, M.A., Department of English, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, North Dakota State University, June 2011. Classical Rhetoric for Modern Problems: Accommodating Stasis for the WAC/WID Curriculum. Major Professor: Dr. Kevin Brooks.

This paper performs a case study of scientific information as it moves between media, in this case, from the journal *Science* to the *New York Times*. In order to monitor the rhetorical shifts between texts, both are analyzed using a modified four tier taxonomic system of stasis as outlined by Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor (140-143, 1983). As the information from the different texts is analyzed under a singular lens, in this case 'the stases,' the rhetorical accommodations, both the subtle and the not subtle, become obvious in a manner since stasis is a "general scheme capable of accounting for the ways issues naturally develop" (Fahnestock 1988, 345). This new use of stasis coupled with the spread of Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) throughout college writing curriculums will develop students' awareness of how scientific information can become attenuated through accommodation in order to avoid communication problems once they become the primary communicators of science.

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## **DEDICATION**

For Jennie:

Once, years ago, during the nickname-ification phase of our relationship, I told you that Stella was a good nickname because, like the age old metaphor of the sun as goodness, you were a beacon of kindness, caring, fortitude, and love. In the subsequent years, nothing about that has changed. I am continually astonished and amazed that you stuck with me through all the procrastination, delays, incidents, and restarts.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
Discourse communities, the coral conversation, and accommodation .....	8
Stasis theory.....	12
Jeanne Fahnestock with Marie Secor .....	15
CHAPTER 3. METHOD.....	22
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS.....	27
Level I: stasis-of-being/stasis-of-definition.....	27
Level II: stasis-of-cause.....	36
Level III: stasis-of-quality .....	39
Level IV: stasis-of-jurisdiction.....	44
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION.....	48
CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION .....	53
WORKS CITED .....	55

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Modified taxonomic grid of Stasis theory, as proposed by Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor with accompanying examples for definitional purposes .....	19
2. Taxonomic stasis hierarchy as applied in this study .....	22
3. Example of taxonomical as rhetorical analysis.....	25
4. Example of analytical stasis method with respect to all three texts considered in this study .....	25
5. Rhetorical occurrences of the first level of the stasis taxonomy .....	34
6. Rhetorical occurrences of the second level of the stasis taxonomy.....	38
7. Rhetorical occurrences of the third level of the stasis taxonomy .....	44
8. Rhetorical occurrences of the fourth level of the stasis taxonomy .....	46
9. Hypothetical taxonomic stasis analysis of accommodated public speech .....	50
10. Possible expanded stases including six categories of taxonomic stasis.....	51

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

As the trend known as Writing across the Curriculum and Writing in the Discipline (WAC/WID) continues to expand in use and in scope, there will be a need for more composition instructors to work in disciplines that they may be largely unfamiliar with. Writing instructors at American universities will find themselves teaching writing in science discourses, teaching writing in engineering discourses, and teaching writing in the health professions; instructors of college writing will frequently teach inside academic based discourse communities that are not their own.

David Russell has written much on the history of teaching writing as well as the current use of WAC/WID. In his book *Writing in the Academic Disciplines* he discusses the significance of WAC/WID over the last 40 years and he suggests that WAC/WID “surpasses any previous movement to improve writing across the curriculum” (291). The significance of WAC/WID has led to a proliferation of its implementation which has resulted in a greater burden on the teachers of these new discipline specific writing classes. English departments are not likely to be able to fill those classes by hiring qualified instructors with multiple fields of study due to talent and/or financial gaps. As a result, the instructors, adjuncts, and professors who fill these new teaching roles will need new tools. Developing a variety of mutable pedagogical tools as teachers immerse themselves into varied discourses seems to be one method for helping WAC/WID teachers adjust to new curriculum developments. This might sound as if it were mounting more responsibility on the workhorses of English departments, but that need not be the case; constructing new pedagogical tools from familiar, extant rhetorical strategies should keep the gap between theory and practice narrowed.



Even as WAC/WID programs were changing American university curriculums through the 1980s, Michael Carter suggested in his 1988 article “Stasis and Kairos: Principles of Social Construction in Classical Rhetoric” “[s]urely we should look to our own rhetorical roots for insight into the inherently social nature of discourse” (Carter 98). This paper is meant to do just that. Building off of a series of Fahnestock and Secor articles which deal with both science writing and stasis theory, this paper takes another step towards the return of stasis to the writing classroom by accommodating Fahnestock and Secor’s stasis taxonomic grid for WAC/WID purposes. Stasis as a rhetorical analysis lens in the WAC/WID classroom might help produce more awareness of language use by future scientists, by those who will report on science, by those who will share information with their friends, or by those who will teach science in a classroom. Good and effective science communication in American classrooms should always and in all forms be a welcome trend, whether it is in a writing classroom or a science classroom.

It is not, of course, within the purview of composition instructors to deliver absolute facts, and certainly not to divine them. Instead, teachers of writing offer students perspective and critical thinking and the tools with which to express their ideas as well as their understanding of the ideas of others. Writing instructors are the gatekeepers of information sharing not of information; writing instructors help students transition into their chosen discourse communities and in WAC/WID programs the teachers are often not a member of their students’ chosen discourse communities. The push to adopt WAC/WID programs that integrate writing as a discipline specific study has led to writing classrooms where the instructors bear the responsibility to make their students develop and maintain the integrity of discourse specific information from their community to the general public.

This is not a process that can be fixed with the development of a single rhetorical analytical lens, instead it is a continuing processes that composition scholars must address, respective of and respectfully to the discourse(s) that they teach.

Writing teachers within WAC/WID curriculums have a unique opportunity to help the situation at the classroom level. In this way writing instructors may contribute towards a remedy to what the authors of “Unscientific America: How Scientific Illiteracy Threatens our Future” refer to as a “crisis in science communication” between scientists and popularized science (Mooney and Kirshenbaum 79).

Taxonomic stasis allows the writing teacher to engage in what may be unfamiliar discourses, but it also allows students of science to engage with a tool for analyzing rhetoric that uses a skillset common in their discipline. By and large science engages in classification: plants, minerals, chemicals, formulas, natural laws, etc. In creating a tool that emphasizes that ability, it may prove to be easier for students of science to recognize the attenuation of information as it is shared from within their discourse community to the general public. In this way they might, as future writers of science, prevent or reduce the informational shifts that can happen to science when shared with larger audiences.

Examples of this kind of problematic science reporting can be seen throughout the media.

In 2007 a Neolithic gravesite with two embracing bodies was found 25 miles south of Verona. It may be that the reporting of the information was skewed with the discovery’s approximation to Valentine’s Day, or to the fact that Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* “occurred” 25 miles away, but even the headlines for this article reveal the most obvious information sharing problems. Rather than just tell the story about an unusual dual grave being found the titles were highly romanticized.

- Archaeologists Find Prehistoric “Romeo And Juliet” Locked In Embrace  
(*Madison Courier*)
- “Romeo And Juliet” Unearthed In Italy (CBS News)
- True romance, Stone Age style; Two skeletons found in a prehistoric embrace hint at the way we were (*LA Times*)
- Eternal Love: Prehistoric Skeletons Locked In An Embrace Unearthed  
(*Milwaukee Journal*)

Without any knowledge of context or additional content of the study, the information about a grave put into earth 5000 years before Shakespeare suffers an informational leap in each title. Instead of explaining the significance of the ritual in prehistoric peoples, the grave is associated with love and death. There could be any number of reasons why the couple is embracing in their grave, the science of the story gets lost as the writers apply the star crossed lovers’ paradigm to the story. The titles are obviously evocative and one is even quite clever; the *LA Times* ties two films into the title: Tarantino’s “True Romance” and Pollack’s “The Way We Were” instead of Shakespeare’s play. Clever or not, the informational shift overlooks the significance of the event: the contribution of knowledge about ritualistic participation by prehistoric peoples.

This obvious shift in information is not an isolated incident. In 2010, archaeologists unearthed a 5500 year old shoe. Along with some brief discussions of the cultural implications within the earthen context of the shoe and cultural advancement of civilization through the Copper Age, the article, which appeared in the *New York Times* Science section, refers to Prada, L.L. Bean and Jimmy Choo, all of which are companies that make shoes. By suggesting that the Copper Age shoe more “closely resembles an L.L. Bean-type

soft-soled walking shoe than anything by Jimmy Choo” the author is not only shifting the information away from the realm of science discourse, but shifts the information towards the irrelevant (scientifically speaking) fashion discourse (Belluck).

There is a need for writers of popularized science information to be more concise, clear and careful in sharing information, there is also a need for the original writers of scientific information. This problem can be addressed at the collegiate level of writing through the development of tools to help WAC/WID teachers sufficiently engage in unfamiliar discourse communities while simultaneously creating awareness of rhetorical shifts. Taxonomic stasis can do much for the field of composition and rhetoric since students in the classroom need

practice in addressing *different audiences, specialist and nonspecialist*, on subjects drawn *from their majors*. Only in such a course will students receive the kind of genuine writing instruction that makes “audience addressed” as *reason for every language choice*. And only in such a course will they experience the *problems, moral as well as technical*, of *accommodating information for different genres, audiences and purposes*.  
(Fahnestock 294, emphasis added)

What taxonomical stasis theory can do for the field of composition and rhetoric, it can also accomplish in any number of disciplines, especially science writing. It is through engagement with discourse specific classes, and their end result (students who will communicate within and outside of that discourse), that taxonomic stasis will find its most effective, dynamic, and practical pedagogical utility. In order to see how effective a tool stasis can be in WAC/WID classes, understanding how stasis has been used, where it came

from, and how to make it contemporaneously effective in the classroom is of paramount concern.

The next chapter will cover some literature about the foundations of the stases, a corollary and its role as a science discourse topic, some general information about stasis theory, particularly its contemporary uses in academic fields, and some specific attention will be paid to Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor's treatment of stasis as a tool for composition and rhetoric. Chapter 3 will explain the method by which the texts dealt with in this study are to be processed through stasis as a taxonomic grid. Chapter 4 will present the results of this new application for stasis and Chapter 5 will explain how, why, and in which ways those results demonstrate that stasis is an effective tool for teaching writing, with particular efficacy in WAC/WID curriculum and discuss some areas for future research and expansion of this study, as well as the limitations of this single informal study.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are three parts to this literature review. First, there is a brief section about corals and the scientific literature that surrounds them and how the term “discourse community” is used throughout this paper. This seems necessary only in as much as the articles dealt with in this study get a bit steeped in coral rhetoric and coral understanding. The first section also acts as a platform into defining this paper’s use of “discourse community,” “accommodation,” and outlines the ways and means of the coral discourse community. This short introduction to the study of coral also seems like a good way to give a veneer of coral context for readers. This section will also introduce the literature from *Science* about coral reproduction, the subsequent articles from the *New York Times* (*NYT*) reporting on the scientific finding about coral.

Second, this literature review will cover the history of stasis and how it came to its current academic uses. This broad view is necessary in order to show that subtle modifications to stasis as performed in this paper are no new actions. Also, covering stasis through history will give an idea to the gravitas stasis theory carries after 2400 years in the field of rhetoric.

Lastly, and most significantly, there is a focus on Jeanne Fahnestock’s writings on science writing and stasis, including her collaborations with Marie Secor. This section illustrates stasis theory’s most commonly accepted uses in the study of composition and rhetoric as well as establishing the direction that this study follows. It is also a significant part of the review insofar as it is the collaboration between Fahnestock and Secor that developed the newer stasis hierarchy applied in Chapter 3.

## **Discourse communities, the coral conversation, and accommodation**

There are a number of ways to approach, codify, or classify discourse communities, including communities like that which focus on coral reproduction. In this essay, though, discourse community is used in a rather broad sense. In his essay surveying discourse community definitions, Erik Borg suggests that two consistent definitive parts of a community is the choosing to belong and the use of written and spoken communication. He suggests that discourse communities have shared goals and necessarily use writing and speaking to “communicate with each other to achieve those goals” (398). The choice to enter into a discourse community is a significant action that students make in their college level studies, and directly reflected in their WAC/WID class(es). A discourse community, for the intents and purposes of this paper, can be considered as broad as, or as narrow as, WAC/WID offerings. One smaller school may offer a general “Writing in the Sciences,” while another larger school with more fiscal and teaching resources may offer more specific classes like “Writing in the Micro-Biological Sciences.”

Like most academic discourse communities, information transfer within scientific discourse communities is performed with support; experiments, observations, results, and hypotheses are presented in proper forums in order to be discussed. Once an idea/hypothesis is confirmed through an established and replicable method, protocols suggest that the investigators publish their research conclusions in peer reviewed journals; if it is not confirmed, it is retested and/or eventually rejected from the body of work. Mariette DiChristina, the Editor-in-Chief of *Scientific America*, states the methods of science succinctly when she suggests that it is “not random opinions but the result of a rational, critical process. Science itself advances gradually through a preponderance of evidence toward a fuller understanding about how things work” (DiChristina 6). The

understanding of coral biological processes has been subject to that same process for centuries.

Charles Darwin was the first to suggest that a large reef could take as long as a million years to grow. Today, that statement seems standard, even conservative, but Darwin's suggestion at the time called into question contemporary assumptions of the Earth's age (Bryson 383). Over the decades, and as the field of marine biology evolved and expanded, many of the issues of coral reproduction became resolved, but some, such as the trigger for spawning, remained unanswered.

It wasn't until 1981 that, thanks to the recently acquired views of Earth from orbit, it was revealed that the reproduction of coral reefs happened at night. Coral around the world, from the Great Barrier Reef to the Caribbean, spawn moments from each other at night, relative to their longitudinal location. The cause for this remained elusive, but recent experiments show some evidence that the corals (a simple multicellular organism) have photoreceptors (cryptochromes) that are able to absorb blue wavelength light. This kind of light is what emits from a full moon and easily penetrates deep into the sea and is suggested to "trigger" the "hundreds of coral species to spawn en masse" (Levy, et al. 467). After years of observation and controlled experiments, in 2007, it was claimed that the coral had photoreceptors that detected UV light, and since the spawning occurs in constant proximity to full moons, that light from the moon may be the catalyst for the coral to begin their spawning procedure. In a laboratory setting, the scientists monitored coral's exposure to the moon, and during the full moon cycle, the peak of ultra violet rays' presence; they noticed that basic light receptors were functioning, presumably making the coral release the



materials needed for its procreation<sup>1</sup>. All of this data was reported in the journal of *Science*.

The article “Light Responsive Cryptochromes from a Simple Multi Cellular Animal, the Coral *Acropora millepora*” outlines the study’s method, the baseline science and natural observations that led to the reason for performing the experiment, the results, and explains how the results are relevant in order to promote the understanding of coral. Like many science articles it follows a general IMRAD format. Mainly, it suggests that since there is an organ that senses UV light and that those light sensing cryptochromes “showed significantly higher expression under full rather than new moonlight” there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the UV light from the full moon “entrains the intrinsic clock of corals” (467, 469). Besides furthering understanding of coral reproduction, the article suggests that the discovery of these cryptochromes “reveals that the basic mechanism by which insects and mammal circadian oscillators respond to light were in place at the origins of multicellularity in animals” (469). This article is steeped in discourse specific conventions: discourse specific language, charts and graphs, and images juxtaposing the control group with the experiment group.

In order to share this same information with a larger audience, it must be accommodated. The accommodation of scientific information is meant to broaden the audience but it is not “simply a matter of translating technical jargon into nontechnical equivalents” (Fahnestock 1986, 280). The role of the accommodator of scientific information is to “bridge the enormous gap between the public's right to know and the

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted here that there is some contention within the microbiology community of the results of the finding in Levy’s (et al) study. The concern in this paper, however, is one of rhetorical shifts of scientific propositions and not the validity or veracity of those propositions.

public's ability to understand" (276). In order to achieve a broader audience, the accommodator does a number of things. It is within the methods and means of accommodation that rhetorical shifts occur. Fahnestock noticed these shifts in her 1986 paper "Accommodating Science" and similar shifts happen in the article accommodating the original article.

The day before the *Science* article's publication, *New York Times* science correspondent William Broad published his accommodated online article reporting on the findings of coral photoreceptors in corals in an article titled "Scientists Discover Details of Coral Reproduction." The day of the *Science* article's publication, a second article from William Broad was published titled "Sexy Corals Keep 'Eye' on Moon, Scientists Say." Broad's accommodation of his already accommodated piece appears to be mostly a general revision making for more concise paragraphs, some additional background information, a change in title, an image of coral spawning, and, most apparent of all, sexed up rhetoric making for a further informational shift, or rhetorical accommodation, for his audience. That rhetorical movement through accommodation becomes obvious just by juxtaposing the titles. It is that kind of change in rhetorical intent that is easily located by an old tool of the rhetorician, stasis theory. This collection of three articles, Levy et al's article in *Science*, the two Broad articles in *NYT*, will be analyzed using a modified approach to stasis since it "accounts for the changes in purpose and content between professional and public science reporting" (Fahnestock 291). Before that, however, a brief overview of stasis is in order and once the gravitas and breadth of stasis is reviewed, then its new application can be properly introduced and understood.

## **Stasis theory**

It has taken stasis more than 2000 years to become the complex and significant theory that is now. The domain of stasis theory was legal rhetoric and was used as a tool to locate where a disagreement occurred. One of the more popular analogies, no doubt due to its use in so many rhetorically constructed defenses, is the crime of murder.

The first level of stasis, the stasis-of-fact (later referred to as stasis-of-being), would be a concern whether or not the person was “murdered” by another person. According to Otto Deiter’s 1950 treatise on stasis, the first level of stasis, the stasis-of-fact occurs in one of two ways: “an affirmative allegation” or “a denial of factuality” (223-224). The first stasis can exist as an affirmative statement, or a negative statement. Using the murder situation, this can appear in two ways: “X killed Y” or “X did not kill Y.” Perhaps the recent killing of Osama bin Laden could help illustrate the definitions of the stases as the same information is processed. That statement would appear in writing as “Navy SEALs killed Osama bin Laden.” This is a statement of fact, and occurs within the first stasis.

A person can argue self-defense which then moves the general argument into the second level of stasis, the stasis-of-quantity since the severity of the murder rhetorically occurs once the ‘being’ of the fact is admitted. Within this level of stasis the “area of disagreement is limited” (Dieter 228). The same example might appear as “the SEALs killed Osama bin Laden and his death is a good thing.” The quantification of the event is limited “and the area of disagreement is more limited” (228).

The typically accepted third level of stasis is that of-quality. Though a killing was committed, there appears to be a large consensus that the qualification of his killing is one of, by and large, an acceptable action because innocent people are presumably safer; at least, that appears to be the perception on American soil. Within this level of stasis, being

and quantification are admitted, but “the extent of the dispute is limited” (228). This statement would appear as “SEALs killed Osama bin Laden and the world is now a safer place.”

Finally there is the stasis-of-jurisdiction/of-policy. Within this level of stasis the action of “murder” would be completely rebuffed and appear as “Navy SEALs killed Osama bin Laden and they were absolutely right to do so.” This statement admits all previous levels of stasis and rejects the killing of bin Laden as overwhelmingly justifiable and acceptable. It is important to remember that stasis theory came out of the forensic category of rhetoric and is necessarily concerned with rightness and wrongness of actions. Although, contrary to its name, Dieter also suggests that the categories of “stasis may be re-arranged, re-designated, widened or narrowed in scope, or further subdivided to suit the whims or wishes of any technical writer without in any way vitiating the essential character and validity of the stasis-theory in general” (228). This mutable quality of the stases contributed to its staying power as a theory of rhetoric.

Stasis, like others of the eldest rhetorical theories, began with the ancient Greeks. The purpose of stasis was to act as a tool to locate the type of dispute in forensic (legal) rhetoric. As Grecian legal rhetorical theory and rhetorical theory in general developed, so did stasis; each time stasis was adapted and reinterpreted. From Aristotle’s ancient manipulations of Hermagoras’ stases to more recent modifications and utilities, the stases remained a heuristic for determining the ‘location(s)’ of a dispute in legal discourse. One fact about stasis certain from the original forensic disputes of Hermagoras and Aristotle, to the more contemporary Fahnestock and Secor taxonomic model (which will be further

discussed in the next section), stasis has always had proponents for its use in composition and rhetoric.

[Stasis] achieves the goals of comp-logic yet avoids most of the problems. Stasis theory classifies arguments in a wholly different way from logic, not by their form (such as categorical or hypothetical syllogism) or by the type of premises used (such as argument from authority or argument from analogy) or even the relationship between premises and conclusions (deductive demonstration or inductive probability), but by the ontological status of the reality claim the conclusion asserts. In stasis theory, an argument of fact differs from an argument of value, and both differ from an argument of policy. (Fulkerson 449)

Stasis, in part, acts as an ontological tool in composition and rhetoric studies; the whole first level of stasis is that “of-being.” The remainders of the stasis levels manage the epistemological veracity of a statement’s ontology; stasis is both ontological and epistemological. As such, it can be used as a tool for understanding the way in which we frame the language we use to represent the (i) being, (ii) quantity, (iii) quality, and (iv) jurisdiction of the world around us, much of which is rooted in our discourse communities. Stasis’ ontological and epistemological capacity makes it a powerful tool which has resulted in its having been a companion as a theoretical lens to many fields of study past that of forensic rhetoric.

Stasis has been applied as a tool for professional workers and students to practice efficient decision making for conflict resolution and teambuilding (Brizee 380); Kathryn Northcut applies stasis to a recent paleorinthological (ancient birds) debate about the

evolutionary ancestor of modern birds (the aviary missing link) (19); stasis has been used to explain Supreme Court rulings (Geiger); the stasis template has been used to help determine ancient epistolary authors (Krato 42); stasis has been used to explain the manner in which President William Jefferson Clinton politically survived the Lewinsky impeachment by his “employ[ing] a graduated apologia strategy that progressed through the stases” (Kramer and Olson 348); and, through it all, stasis has maintained its most prominent role in the pedagogical process of teaching writing, mostly, as a tool for teaching invention in the classroom (Fahnestock and Secor 144).

In almost all manners of its applications, stasis has been applied as a heuristic for the determining the location of a debate. There can be no doubt that by contrasting differing argumentative stances within the (typically) four levels of stasis, stasis can continue to find new homes in multiple discourses; whatever the discourse community, the application of stasis makes apparent the location of disagreement between two differing positions on a specific issue. Stasis can, however, also be used on a subject matter that does not suffer disagreement, but rather suffers accommodation, as when a news report is printed reporting on a scientists report or findings. The accommodation leads to a kind of “disagreement” between the two texts, so while being applied in new ways, stasis still maintains its tendency to make apparent any problems between ontological and epistemological discrepancies of accommodated information.

### **Jeanne Fahnestock with Marie Secor**

In her 1986 article “Accommodating Science,” Fahnestock suggests that “information changes as a function of rhetorical situation certainly deserves scholarly scrutiny” (346). The information changes she wrote of were that of the “changes in purpose and content between professional and public science reporting” (345). She even

notes that this change in information is easily accounted for through the use of stasis theory as a lens.

Fahnestock finds some helpful aspects of stasis in her article “Accommodating Science” where she monitored the rhetorical shifts of accommodated information as it was published in a primary science journal (*Science*) and as the same information appears in a magazine with a more broad audience (*Science82*). This study changed the use of stasis, and makes it possible to find similar additional uses, besides teaching invention, in the composition classroom. Accommodating stasis as a tool for rhetorical analysis among accommodated information coming out of discourse communities, in this case experimental biological science accommodated for news reporting, helps to understand the accommodation of discourse specific texts. Fahnestock and Secor suggested that stasis can be “applicable to all arguments regardless of field” (429, 1988). That kind of mutability makes it a theory with significant potential, particularly in WAC/WID classrooms where students begin engaging in discourse specific rhetoric and composition.

Fahnestock did much for to revive stasis as a theory of rhetoric, especially in science writing, but it was her collaborations with Marie Secor that significantly emphasized the untapped utility of stasis theory. As early as 1983 Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor began their academic engagement with stasis theory together. In “Ground for Argument: Stasis Theory and the Topoi” Fahnestock and Secor outlined a detailed history and timeline of stasis, they suggested the theory’s use in the composition classroom is as a tool for invention, and, most significantly for this paper, they outlined a modified more effective version of the theory for contemporary purposes given the many previous varied alterations of stasis over the last 2400 years (140-144).

Fahnestock and Secor's new stasis structure combines what were originally two separate levels into a singular primary level: a stasis-of-being. Fahnestock and Secor suggest that the original two levels of stasis, of-definition and of-existence, bear "little structural difference between arguments claiming that something exists and those claiming that something ought to be labeled in a certain way" (140); their new stasis taxonomy adjusts for the modern acceptance of language as a social construct. This combination makes contemporary use in rhetoric more accessible, but even they present a simple and rather obvious caveat: arguments of definition and arguments of fact are not identical and one should be careful when arguing whether "something occurred or did not occur" (140). Basically, the world does not conform to the proposition, rather the proposition forms to the world though "we should recognize that [of-definition and of-being] do not require structurally different arguments" (140). Next, they establish a level of stasis that they feel has been overlooked a bit in the many historical renovations, the stasis-of-cause. The "importance [of cause] has gained since the time of Newton", and Fahnestock and Secor feel it should establish the second level within the stases (140). Fahnestock and Secor suggest that the third level, stasis-of-quality, remain largely untouched. Lastly, they suggest that the fourth stasis, of-jurisdiction, having been modeled for use on the courtroom still finds relevance today insofar as context shapes arguments.

Fahnestock and Secor's new taxonomy of stasis provides an accessible modern rhetorical device that can help to bolster its utility in the new age of rhetoric. They suggest that stasis as a tool for invention is still a primary use of stasis, but they suggest that there may be other options for uses in the field of rhetoric. Their modification allows for the reintroduction of stasis at a broad level through WAC/WID programs, since through use of



stasis, as professed by Otto Dieter, “[r]hetoricians in their praxis actually argue, or debate, ‘changes’ as well as ‘contrary motions,’ and hence must *necessarily also be concerned with stases*” (Dieter 216, emphasis added). Dieter’s “contrary motions” are made quite apparent once accommodated information is juxtaposed with its original source, as will be seen in the results of this case study.

After their 1983 treatment of the stases, Fahnestock and Secor continued their engagement with stasis with another short treatment for a 1985 textbook “Oldspeak/Newspeak: Rhetorical Transformations” (Kneupper, ed). In their article “Toward a Modern Version of Stasis” Fahnestock and Secor work through their new four tier stasis and suggest that its modern utility is overlooked too often since stasis is “capable of elucidating much in both public and academic discourse” (225). That same mutable capability is exactly what makes stasis an especially handy tool the process outlined in the next chapter, comparing academic and popular rhetoric concerning the same information.

In that same article they suggest that stasis has much more to offer than only a “heuristic for invention,” even though their treatment mainly focuses on the importance of stasis as a tool for invention. Both scholars recognize the significance and breadth for which stasis can be applied due to its “technically elaborate, philosophically rich theory” which they attempt to “bridge” with “practical applications” trying to make stasis a “first organizing principle” (217, 225). However, this paper is not suggesting that its application in invention or teaching invention is not still applicable, but is more concerned with other “practical applications.” For all practical considerations, their new stasis hierarchy would look like table 1 (below), with both possible parts of the Level one included as a singular level.

**1. Modified taxonomic grid of Stasis theory, as proposed by Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor with accompanying examples for definitional purposes**

Level of stasis	Name of the stasis level	Continuing examples as seen in the second section of Chapter 2
Level I	part A: Stasis-of-being part B: Stasis-of-definition (optional as a second level, extending the total levels to five)	SEALs killed Osama bin Laden
Level II	Stasis-of-cause	SEALs shot Osama bin Laden killing him
Level III	Stasis-of-quality	SEALs killed Osama bin Laden and the world is now safer
Level IV	Stasis-of-jurisdiction	SEALs were right to kill Osama bin Laden

In an attempt to find more practical uses for stasis, her 1986 essay “Accommodating Science” Jeanne Fahnestock (sole author) suggests that the rhetorical movement of scientific writing from journals of science (primary texts) to popular publications (accommodated texts) is a method by which the movement of the “rhetorical life” of the scientific discovery can be monitored. In that essay, she suggests that stasis theory is capable for monitoring the life of a scientific fact as the statements move through the four levels of stasis theory. The scientist, she concluded, who is the primary author of a scientific fact, remains concerned about the fact as it exists within the first two levels of stasis. However, when those same facts become accommodated in popularized texts, the level of stasis where the facts exist move through stasis levels toward (iii) statements-in-quality and (iv) statements-of-jurisdiction.

This notable rhetorical shift of a scientific fact between and among the levels of stasis leads Fahnestock to suggest that the change in purpose of the fact is symptomatic of a

fundamental change in the genre of the statements, since purpose (social action) is a commonly accepted definition of genre.

With a significant change in rhetorical situation comes a change in genre, and instead of simply reporting facts for a different audience scientific accommodations are overwhelmingly epideictic; their main purpose is to celebrate rather than validate. (333)

Accommodated writing, Fahnestock suggests, finds its purpose in more a celebration than validation, and this rhetorical shift fundamentally changes the genre. It is this apparent and basic genre shift that gets revealed through a stasis lens, and this, in part, make stasis a powerful tool for any writing classroom, but particularly WAC/WID classes since it is in those classes that students begin engaging and participating in the discourse community.

In 1988, Fahnestock and Secor published a formal exposition on stasis and its use in English studies in “The Stases in Scientific and Literary Argument.” They suggest that in addition to the theoretical uses for locating dispute in an argument, the stases can “be regarded as a format for the arrangement of arguments, and this a corollary principle of rhetorical analysis” (429). They also suggest that the applicability of stasis as rhetorical analysis lens can be quite broad.

The great template of the stases hovers above whatever piece of writing that we are actually looking at; the stases represent a full set of possibilities from which an author, in a particular situation, under a particular exigence, addressing a particular audience, selects. (430)

In addition to the stases’ utility for rhetorical analysis, Fahnestock and Secor suggest that classical rhetoric have some “kind of sensitivity to audience and discourse

community that we have come to expect in contemporary treatments of theory in rhetoric and composition” (428). The kind of sensitivity to audience and discourse community(ies) under a variety of constraints made clear by stasis theory makes it an invaluable tool to instructors of composition and rhetoric.

When put under the stasis lens for rhetorical analysis based on a taxonomical hierarchy, the article from *Science*, Broad’s first accommodation of the information from the article, and his second accommodation, reveal how simple, accessible, amenable, and effective stasis is as a rhetorical analysis tool. Moreover, stasis becomes a way in which any observer of specific discourses or, especially, discourse specific students in a WAC/WID class, can monitor information shift in accommodation. The simplicity and accessibility of stasis informed rhetorical analysis could become a significant tool for any WAC/WID program in college writing, particularly in discourse specific WAC/WID classes that go through accommodation, as it often seen through many types of science.

## CHAPTER 3. METHOD

This study intends to extend the uses of stasis theory in the study of composition and rhetoric as suggested by Marie Secor and Jeanne Fahnestock in their 1988 paper. The result of their reexamination of stasis resulted in what they refer to as a new “taxonomical grid” (142) for stasis; a taxonomical grid (see table 2 below) for which the comparison of rhetorically accommodated information help to illustrate the tools for accommodating science.

### 2. Taxonomic stasis hierarchy as applied in this study

I	Part A: Stasis-of-being Part B: Stasis-of-definition (optional as a second level, extending the total levels to five)
II	Stasis-of-cause
III	Stasis-of-quality
IV	Stasis-of-jurisdiction

For the purposes of this study all three articles about coral reproduction, the original article from *Science* and the subsequent reporting articles from the *NYT* have been broken into smaller pieces: sometimes just a word, or phrase, but occasionally a whole sentence. Those rhetorical components are then categorized within an appropriate category of stasis. Broken into pieces and classified within a level of the stases, the rhetorical parts of the three articles together will fill out a table of information which has four rows, one for each level of stasis as in table 2 above, and three main columns, one for each article under examination. This four tiered category of stasis from Fahnestock and Secor was chosen and applied in this study since it was Fahnestock and Secor who first explained the connections between stasis and accommodated information.

Mainly, the analysis focuses on and around information related to the study on corals. The demarcation between related information and unrelated information is, as with most rhetorical analyses, a vague line rather than an unambiguous boundary. The classifying of the rhetorical part to the appropriate class of stasis is how this method fundamentally differs from previous applications of the stases.

Prior to the use of stasis in this study, stasis has been applied to comparative logical constructions like syllogisms and enthymemes. In this study, the general sense of the word/phrase that makes up the rhetorical part will determine which level of stasis will be applied. The most obvious example of this would probably those rhetorical parts that fall within the stasis-of-cause. Any suggestion of or inference of causality belongs in this category; as this is a scientific article, these rhetorical instances are easily located.

For example, the article from *Science* suggests at one point that the moon's UV light "entrain[s] the circadian clocks of insects and animals." While this has little to do with the argument made in the coral article, it is a rhetorical construction that suggests, although euphemistically, a causal relationship between the moon's UV light and organisms' circadian clock; such identifying key words are italicized for emphasis as to why that text was included under that level of stasis. The first level of stasis, of-being and of-definition collectively, are readily identified as well. Modal verbs are the most evident within this classification. The phrase "organisms possess" is an obvious rhetorical part that describes the way things are, and therefore would be categorized under the first stases. However, the one word larger rhetorical part "many organisms possess" includes one part that would fall under the third tier of the stases, the of-quality. The word "many" qualifies the being of "endogenous clocks" by limiting the set. Many is a qualifier that reduces meaning from

“all” to a lesser, albeit vague, set. Grammatically, most adjectives and adverbs fall within this category of the stases, as they are largely linguistic qualifiers in and of themselves.

The rhetorical parts of the stasis-of-jurisdiction are the most elusive. The rhetorical parts that fall under this kind of classification are often those parts that seek to find academic or social relevance such as when the scientists suggests that their discovery adds an “evolutionary dimension to circadian clock biology.” The language here is meant to put the whole of the information into perspective for future study. The scientists suggest that their finding will fall under the broader jurisdiction of evolutionary biology.

Since the determination of positioning within the stases can depend on a single word, occasionally the same rhetorical pieces will appear within multiple categories. For clarification throughout the results, the determining words have been italicized to indicate as to why that part is included within that level, as exemplified below in table 3.

Additionally, in order to give a reader a sense of the location in the part within the whole of the text, an informal citation of the paragraph number will appear with each rhetorical part.

The original *Science* article is processed through the template of the stases. Then the accommodated *NYT* article through the “great template” of stasis and those results will be coalesced into a table template that will look like the three entries made in table 3 (below). The same basic method is followed first for the article from *Science* and the first article of the *NYT*’s accommodation. Since the second *NYT* article has some changes, but by and large it is the same article, rather than perform redundant analysis on the second *NYT* article, the changes that occurred will appear in the table formatted in their “track changes” form.

### 3. Example of taxonomical as rhetorical analysis

Stasis	<i>Science</i> Article	<i>NYT</i> Article
Stasis-of-definition and of-being	Many organisms <i>possess</i> endogenous clocks that respond to rhythmic changes (§1)	
Stasis-of-cause	<i>entrain</i> the circadian clocks (§1)	
Stasis-of-quality	Many organisms possess endogenous clocks that respond to <i>rhythmic</i> changes (§1)	

Deletions added to the final column of the final results have strikethrough formatting applied and insertions are double underlined, and again words that are indicative of which stasis the text belongs to are italicized. The additional article will have a column entirely on its own and result in table that resembles table 4 (below).

### 4. Example of analytical stasis method with respect to all three texts considered in this study

Stasis	<i>Science</i> Article	<i>NYT</i> Article	2nd <i>NYT</i> Article
Stasis-of-definition and of-being	Many organisms <i>possess</i> endogenous clocks that respond to rhythmic changes (§1)	Corals debuted more than 500 million years ago (§1)	Corals <del>debuted</del> <u>demerged</u> more than 500 million years ago (§1)
Stasis-of-cause	<i>entrain</i> the circadian clocks (§1)		
Stasis-of-quality	Many organisms possess endogenous clocks that respond to <i>rhythmic</i> changes (§1)		

Each of the first two articles will be broken into their respective rhetorical parts, relevant text will populate the table, the third article's appropriate insertions and deletions



will populate the final (fourth) column of the table and then the rhetoric under this stasis taxonomic framework will be analyzed.

Each tier of the taxonomy will be scrutinized for similarities, for differences, for any kind of aberration or anomaly revealed in comparing the texts. What will result, then will be the specific rhetorical locations where the accommodation of this text occurs, revealing how, if at all, the accommodated article compromises or enhances the integrity of information, dilutes or reinforces the consistency of information, or affects meaning in any way. What should result, then, are the bare bones of information accommodation. Once those are obtained, teachers and students in WAC/WID classes can learn how to more effectively and more carefully accommodate science writing, or possibly, considering the breadth of stasis' utilities, any discourse communities' writing for a larger more popularized audience.

## CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

In order to keep the data manageable, each level of stasis will be contained within its own individual section. This will prevent an overindulgence of information and also allow for swifter reference, as needed, in the following discussion chapter. The separation of the individual stases should also allow for discerning what kind of information constitutes each stasis.

### **Level I: stasis-of-being/stasis-of-definition**

There is no doubt that this category is the largest of the four; much of the language from all three articles occurs in the first level of stasis: stating a thing as it is (the stasis-of-being) fundamental to the action of reporting. For the journal *Science* the basic statements of reporting are what the team of scientists observed, collected, inferred during and after their experiments, and the method of how they performed their experiment. Throughout the whole column words like found, wrote, reported, discovered, possess, exhibited, contained, indicates, reveals, investigated, and exhibited are used to give the reader a solid sense of what is going on in the study.

The *Science* article uses much language to define or explain the being of coral. Compared with the first level stasis of the *NYT* articles, it appears that within this one stasis two similar genres have extant language that defines their respective genres: reporting is built off of being and definitional language. In both the accommodated articles (Broad) and the original (Levy, et al.), there is, as there should be, a number of statements-of-being since the main purpose of both articles is to report the ‘being’ of UV sensitive proteins in corals that may ‘trigger’ the nocturnal spawning event.

There are some significant differences, however. It is within these differences that stasis as rhetorical analysis begins to reveal different rhetorical appeals, authorial intent, and meaning for audiences. Consider the first statements from each article.

The opening line from the *NYT*:

Birds do it. Bees do it. Even lowly corals do it. (Broad)

And the introduction from *Science*:

Many organisms possess endogenous clocks that respond to rhythmic changes in light and temperature caused by the Earth's rotation (1, 2) allowing them to anticipate daily and annual environmental cycles and to adjust their biochemical, physiological, and behavioral processes accordingly (1). (Levy, et. al, citations and formatting in original)<sup>2</sup>

In comparing these rhetorical pieces there are a number of things to consider. First consideration should apply to what is the same/similar in these opening lines: they are both meant to draw in the reader through communal reference; they appeal to a shared ethos between author and audience. For Levy, that means referring to the body of work in biology that has been performed and established regarding animal physiognomy and environmental effects on organisms in their natural environments. This action is replicated time and again throughout the first paragraph. Certainly not isolated to science writing, this kind of establishment of ethos is rather standard in most discourses, most studies involving academic pursuits attempt to establish through shared understanding where the writing is to be placed: the three part Literature Review just above is no exception.

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<sup>2</sup> 1. C.S. Pittendrigh, *Annual Review of Physiology* 55, 17 (1993)  
2. S. Panda, J.B. Hogenesch, S.A. Kay. *Nature* 417, 329 (1993)

Broad, however, paraphrases a line from the Cole Porter song “Let’s Do It (Let’s Fall in Love)” which contains the line “Birds do it/ Bees do it/ Even educated fleas do it/ Let’s do it/ Let’s fall in love.” Time spent explaining the *entendre* in Cole Porter’s lyrics is wasted; forgoing the not-so-subtle coupling reference, scientifically speaking, the *NYT* report uses convoluted language choices that baselessly draw connections between love and the asexual acts of the coral. There is little doubt that even in the human world, there is often sex without love. Even so, in order to draw in the larger audience, Broad appeals to their pathos, their shared biological imperative of reproducing as opposed to Levy’s establishing a foundation for shared ethos of the coral discipline for the more familiar readers.

Broad’s opening statement, though occurring as stasis-of-being/of-definition (basically a rhetorically flourished version of ‘coral reproduce’) gives a number of false impressions about the findings of the study as well as basic understanding of simple multicellular animals. Primarily, the nighttime asexual reproduction of coral is significantly different from how either birds or bees perform reproductive acts and neither a bird nor a bee would be classified as a simple multicellular animal. Additionally, there is an aspect of anthropomorphization to his introductory statement.

The rhetorical connection of the reproductive acts of simple multicellular animal to the complex emotion of love, via the sentiment of Cole Porter’s famous song, is at least problematic, at worst dangerous, for science. Hidden within the obvious statements-of-being of Broad’s opening statement is a tacit stasis-of-quality about the science finding that has been claimed by no one: corals reproduce under the influence of the emotion of love.

This problem of accommodation can compound itself in numerous ways, especially given the networked society.

Levy's introductory statement uses a similar technique to Broad's, though simultaneously conveys significantly different meaning. Instead of reaching back through the collective consciousness of popular culture to create a personal resonance with the reader (a techniques we will see again in the *NYT* article(s)), the *Science* article, rhetorically performing for a very different audience, reaches back through the body of scientific work that has laid the scientific foundations for the understanding of simple multicellular organisms' responses to outside stimuli. As expected in academic writing, Levy and the rest of his researchers extend and build upon the previous conversation(s) about multicellular response mechanisms. Broad, however, seems to set a rhetorical platform for understanding love, an absurd postulation he later expands on by mentioning that

[p]eople have known about the moon's romantic possibilities for a long time. Shakespeare in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" relies on moonlight to set the mood. The 1987 movie "Moonstruck" features a love story centered on "La Bella Luna."

Again, reaching through the collective popular culture references, this time through invoking Shakespeare and Cher, Broad rhetorically shifts the meaning of the study, and not in an insignificant way. As with the reference to Cole Porter's song about love, he draws on a connection between affection and reproduction, an argument within the stasis-of-being that is not approached in any way by the scientists.

Even in the first statements of the comparative articles, the first level of stasis, as a taxonomic rhetorical analysis tool, makes clear that although performing the same social actions (reporting a specific state of being for corals) the writers have gone about it in a different way. The nuance in difference between the two statements has made abundantly clear rhetorical differences in the writing: appeals to audience, establishing ethos, developing pathos and even construction of logos all make an appearance enough to be considered. Stasis makes the rhetorical accommodations obvious and, more importantly, quite easily accessible to scientifically ignorant. But demonstrating effective taxonomic stasis for one statement seems, even in the social sciences, to fall short as a convincing argument.

Another rhetorical instance of statement-of-being performs quite significantly in both texts. Broad's *NYT* article uses the word "discover" or "discovery" six different times. The word is used only once in Levy's *Science* article. There are numerous things happening with this one word between the two texts. It is apparent that the main 'discovery' for Levy and his coauthors is the existence of the cryptochromes in the coral. The whole article in *Science*, its data, its analysis, and its research are all coalesced in order to demonstrate that one significant fact about nature. Moreover, the article gathers the measurable data, the empirical observations and the analysis of that data to express that one fact within the first stasis-of-being, as predicted by Fahnestock.

The intent of the word 'discovery' for Broad becomes a bit more, forgive the pun, broad. He uses it to imply a correlational relationship between the organ in coral that reacts to UV light (the cryptochromes) and the en masse spawning event. His first title for the 18 October article "Scientists Discover Details of Coral Reproduction" implies, basically, bad

science. By accommodating the entire discovery of Levy and his co-researchers, Broad implies that the scientists have discovered the causal relationship between the UV rays of a full moon and the en masse spawning. Even so, Broad's sources avoid stating such explicit cause/effect relationships suggesting this is another "direction to explore" and also some possible (stasis-of-jurisdiction) evolutionary implications. Only once he uses the word discovery in direct correlation to the way in which Levy (et al.) use it when he refers, plainly (and correctly) to "[t]he photoreceptor discovery" (Broad).

Levy's use of the word 'discovery' is less obfuscated and used with much more caution than Broad. There is one statement of fact that they feel confident enough to state as a discovery: corals have UV sensitive cryptochromes. The language of the *Science* article lays out a series of natural relationships between subject and stimuli use to demonstrate the way in which coral reproduce: 'respond,' 'entrain,' and 'indicate.' A brief look at the vast majority of stasis-of-being phrases in Levy's article reveals quite immediately that they are using the language of empirical science.

It makes sense that scientists explaining a natural phenomenon would rely on such statements to establish a foundation for which their research can be rhetorically placed; these kinds of statements are inevitable in a discourse community of the natural sciences and were mentioned as inevitable in science writing by Fahnestock. This type of discourse specific statements are echoed between the two: Broad uses the stasis-of-being to report to a broad audience and Levy (et al.) use language that falls within the stasis-of-being, mainly due to the reporting to a narrow audience with their paper. The way in which both authors tap into the stasis-of-being largely determines their audience. As to why the statements of the first stasis are so clearly demarcated are subject to a number of easy and accessible

analyses: the modal verbs and their rhetorical extensions within this stasis make up the main part of the rhetorical pieces. The rhetorical juxtaposition between parts of the different articles illustrates quite clearly the way audience is formed within and without the discourse community. And as demonstrated briefly with the introductory statements and the use of the word “discovery,” some additional simple ways in which discourse communities are created within the same level of stasis are quite readily revealed. The differences as they exist with the stasis allow for some powerful rhetorical analysis categories to follow: audience, intent, meaning, purpose, etc.

It may also prove noteworthy that the statements in the first stasis that are shared between the two resemble each other at times as well. The idea that they both have statements that “report” suggests a basic rhetorical similarity between the two tests, sheds light on perhaps one of the most obvious similarities between the texts: they are both intending to convey information. The differences and the problems become apparent in the method in which the information is accommodated or not.

The article from *Science* has a disproportionate number of statements that persist in the first level of stasis: ‘can,’ ‘possess,’ ‘uses,’ ‘use,’ ‘have,’ ‘lack,’ ‘spawn,’ ‘exhibited,’ ‘sampled,’ and ‘function (as)’. If the scientific method is performed properly by managing controlled experiments, observing the effects, and measuring the data, then the reader should expect these kinds of words to describe the findings, the data, and/or the observations. On the other hand, it should make appearances in the accommodated version as well: one is reporting its results according to scientific conventions, the other, reporting on that original report.



It makes sense, then, for many general statements about science, particularly those that rely on experiments, which necessitate lots of places, things, processes, and conditions to be performed in the first level of stasis (see table 5 below). It seems that, then, the first level of stasis, inherent in the social action of reporting, would be a helpful tool and powerful taxonomic system for students, who may even be unversed (as of yet) in the particular jargon and discourse of their chosen field(s). When deviations in accommodating information (like Broad's deviation towards the moon, Shakespeare, Cole Porter, love, and Cher) appear in the accommodated literature of scientific discourse, having students who have developed the necessary acumen to see the kinds of problems that can occur in accommodated scientific reports should result in better WAC/WID students which should hopefully lead to stronger science writers and more aware and cognizant accommodators.

##### 5. Rhetorical occurrences of the first level of the stasis taxonomy

	Text from <i>Science</i> (O. Levy, et al.)	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 18 Oct	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 19 Oct
Stasis-of-being and stasis-of-definition	<p>Light-Responsive Cryptochromes from a Simple Multicellular Animal, the Coral <i>Acropora millepora</i> (Title)</p> <p>Many organisms <i>possess</i> endogenous clocks that respond to rhythmic changes (¶1)</p> <p>The circadian clock <i>uses</i> cues (¶1)</p> <p>Medusa <i>have</i> specialized light sensing organs (¶1)</p>	<p>Scientists <i>Discover</i> Details of Coral Reproduction (Title)</p> <p>Birds <i>do</i> it. Bees <i>do</i> it. Even lowly corals <i>do</i> it. (¶1)</p> <p>[Coral] <i>forgoing</i> sex for as long as a year. (¶1)</p> <p>the frenzy can <i>leave</i> pink flotsam (¶2)</p>	<p>sowing waters <del>around the globe</del> with trillions of eggs and sperm (¶2)</p> <p>The moon clearly rules the synchronized mass spawning, <u>which happens during different months in different parts of the globe, but usually in the summer.</u> (¶3)</p>

**Table 5 (continued)**

<p>Stasis-of-being and stasis-of-definition (continued)</p>	<p>cnidarians (corals, sea anemones, and sea pens) <i>lack</i> specialized sense organs (§1)</p> <p>spawn <i>en masse</i> the final trigger being changes in the <i>lunar irradiance intensity</i> (§1)</p> <p>The roles of cryptochromes <i>differ</i> subtly (§2)</p> <p>Proteins <i>function</i> as (§2)</p> <p>CRYs <i>have been identified</i> only in higher animals (§2)</p> <p><i>were also identified</i> (§2)</p> <p>related proteins <i>have been reported</i> in plants (§2)</p> <p><i>We used degenerate primers based on sequences</i> conserved between (§3)</p> <p>The proteins encoded by the genes cry1 and cry2 each <i>contain</i> (§3)</p> <p>To <i>clone two genes</i> from the coral (§3)</p> <p>genes each <i>contain</i> (§3)</p> <p>bearing <i>two</i> chromophorebinding domains (§3)</p> <p><i>exhibited; contained; indicates; reveals;</i> (§3)</p> <p><i>investigated; exhibited</i> (3x); <i>changed; confirmed</i> (§5)</p> <p>we sampled colonies on a <i>full moon night</i> (§6)</p> <p>fragments from <i>each of four colonies ...sampled...four times a day during the new and full moon phases</i> (§6)</p>	<p>the undersea love fests have become <i>tourist attractions for divers</i> (§3)</p> <p><i>a famous ocean photographer ... showed reefs ... exploding in blizzards of rising sperm and eggs</i> (§3)</p> <p><i>discover(y; ed)</i> (Title; §3; §10; qtd. in §12; §15; §18; §24)</p> <p>[a coral specialist at NOAA ]<i>called</i> the finding (§3)</p> <p><i>found</i>; Scientists <i>report</i> (§4)</p> <p>the discovery <i>provides</i> clues to the puzzle and opens up “a new direction to explore” (§10)</p> <p>Corals <i>debuted</i> more than 500 million years ago (§11)</p> <p>The finding <i>sheds light</i> of not only coral reproduction but evolution (§11)</p>	<p><u>Marine biologists say</u> <u>Though the scientists involved say more work is needed to determine how</u> the photoreceptor works, <u>the finding is significant</u> (§8)</p> <p><u>Marine biologists say</u> <u>Though the scientists involved say more work is needed to determine how</u> the photoreceptor works, <u>the finding is significant</u> (§8)</p> <p><u>Corals are actually colonies of individual organisms called polyps, which create the skeletal structure that binds them together.</u> (§11)</p>
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**Table 5 (continued)**

Stasis-of-being and stasis-of-definition (continued)	roles for other photopigments such as opsins <i>cannot</i> currently be ruled out (§7) <i>revealed; showed</i> (§8) Our <i>discovery</i> of cryptochromes in reef building corals <i>reveals</i> (§9)		
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**Level II: stasis-of-cause**

The first level of Fahnestock and Secor’s taxonomic stasis, stasis-of-being, is significant, especially when dealing with the report genre (whether reporting the experiment or on the experiment). But the second stasis, the stasis-of-cause, has a more significant role if not a more prominent role. Particularly the specific paper being dealt with is one that concerns itself with biological stimuli and response; stimuli and response are, for the definitions of cause as taxonomic stasis, essentially the same thing. Regardless of what some may say about the philosophical problems of the cause and effect relationship, language is often used to intend, or at least imply, cause and effect. If this relationship between stimuli and response is mitigated through improper or vague word choice, the explanation of biological procedures could be clouded.

The scientists avoid the loaded word “cause” but they approach the sentiment: ‘respond,’ ‘entrain,’ and ‘mediate’. Each causal word has the same suggestion of cause and effect, but fall short: ‘entrain’ is to pull something behind, suggesting an active relationship, but not a necessary causal relationship; ‘mediate’, in this context, implies agency; and ‘respond’ and variations of ‘respond’ connects ‘stimuli’ and ‘response.’

William Broad in the *Times*, however, wastes no time addressing the cause and effect matter. For Broad, the causal relationship is not only assumed, it is a relationship that gets complicated by connotations and other associations. Instead of causal mitigations, Broad suggests that the moon ‘rules’ over the spawning. Although, not *entirely* untrue (if the science is eventually proven correct), his word choice adds an authoritative connection between the moon and the spawning. Broad communicates to his readers that the moon is not only a trigger. Even with the word ‘respond’ Levy and his co-authors never even mention the moon, their concern is the UV rays; for the scientists UV rays reflected by the moon permeate the water, are absorbed by the cryptochromes, and at the point in time when UV rays are at their highest the coral spawn. The moon is not necessarily a causal agent, as suggested by Broad. The moon does not rule the spawning, rather, at the time when the moon reflects the most UV rays, corals respond by releasing material needed for procreation. The moon certainly has a role in the spawning, but assuming agency beyond reflecting the sun’s light is bad science, insofar as it is not science.

The other statement-of-cause phrasing in Broad’s article(s) uses the scientifically safe choice of the word ‘respond,’ but he segues into his consistent, and at times overbearing, jurisdictional shift: sex. Although using the causal word ‘respond,’ he analogizes the coral spawning to human lovers’ affection for the moon. This analogy between coral spawning and human spawning is implied by Broad’s anthropomorphization of coral asexual reproduction by juxtaposing ‘human lovers’ with the biological response of the ‘photosensitive chemicals’ in the coral cryptochromes (the coral ‘eye’). Even when introducing this shift in content, Broad plays coy, almost as if he is ashamed or shy to bring it up, pausing and using the interjection of “well” to express some sort of reluctance in

making a correlation between coral reproduction and human sexuality. Perhaps he is surprised at his own sexual anthropomorphosis of coral. Even though both authors use the formal word ‘respond,’ juxtaposed causal language in table 6 (below ) shows significant difference between the journalist’s and the scientists’ intentions.

**6. Rhetorical occurrences of the second level of the stasis taxonomy**

	Text from <i>Science</i> (O. Levy, et al.)	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 18 Oct	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 19 Oct
Stasis-of-cause	<p>Many organisms possess endogenous clocks that <i>respond</i> to rhythmic changes (¶1)</p> <p>The circadian clock uses cues such as light to <i>entrain</i> endogenous oscillators (¶1)</p> <p>These photoreceptors <i>react</i> to changes in light intensity and are <i>responsible</i> (¶1)</p> <p>Blue light, which is also known to <i>entrain</i> the circadian clocks of insects and animals (¶2)</p> <p>to test the involvement of CRY genes in sensing and <i>responding</i> to moonlight (¶6)</p> <p>suggest that cryptochromes may <i>mediate</i> the spectacular mass spawning event of the invertebrates (¶9)</p>	<p>the moon clearly <i>rules</i> the synchronized mass spawning (¶3)</p> <p>photosensitive chemicals <i>respond</i> to moonlight, as well as, well, human lovers (¶4)</p> <p>“This looks to be the <i>smoking gun</i>,” (qtd in Broad ¶5)</p> <p>basic mechanisms <i>responding</i> to light (¶12)</p> <p>the moon may simply act as a clock to <i>choreograph</i> sex among ... corals (¶17)</p> <p>cryptochromes <i>respond</i> to blue light (¶20)</p> <p>one [cryptochrome] <i>responded</i> to the light and dark phases of the moon (¶21).</p> <p>the finding <i>sheds light</i> (¶21).</p>	<p>one clue was that cryptochromes <del>respond</del><u>responded</u> to blue light (¶15)</p>

Broad hedges some of his rhetorical choices in his own republished article. In the second production of his paper, as seen in the fourth column of table 6 (above), he changes the phrase “cryptochromes respond to blue light” to “responded to blue light.” The change is miniscule to be sure, but the implications are not. The use of ‘respond’ makes a claim that is universal; it suggests that cryptochromes now and always respond to UV light. The only thing certain according to the scientists’ findings is that *their* samples of coral spawned at the same time as a full moon and that there was a chemical response to UV rays. “The cryptochromes of coral respond to blue light and trigger coral spawning” is a statement that science is not yet ready to admit, since only once has the relationship of cryptochromes and blue light been monitored. The overbearing sense of dominion of the moon over coral spawning implied in the rhetorical selections that fall under the stasis-of-cause.

When seen all together, it becomes quite apparent that this stasis is filled with the verbs that are not modal. The verbs are cause/effect based verbs or some kind of euphemism that resembles cause and effect, even though the accommodated article uses more effusive variations.

Even with such oddly phrased cause/effect relationship formulated for popular audiences, both authors, likely aware of the philosophical and scientific objections to cause/effect relationships do not engage the rhetoric of stasis-of-cause as much as the third stasis, that which determines the qualities of the statements.

### **Level III: stasis-of-quality**

As far as total number of rhetorical occurrences among the analyzed articles the third stasis has not nearly as many as the first stasis, has more occurrences than the stasis-of-cause and is quantitatively comparable to stasis-of-jurisdiction. Nonetheless, there is a

significant number of stasis-of-quality in both articles and they emphasize, perhaps in a bolder manner than the other three stases, the means of accommodation. These words are relatively easy to determine; grammatically they appear to be adjectives and adverbs: the indispensable rhetorical tools of qualification.

Broad's accommodated article contains words implying numerous actions: 'sowing,' 'swirl,' 'dance,' 'merge,' and 'exploding'. The corals, in one paragraph undergo a significant change from asexual simple multicellular organisms to become cogent and organized and, most significantly (and, once again), sexual beings. "Dance" implies some sort of romantic choreography of gestures and "sowing" implies some sort of intentional agrarian model. However, the idiomatic use of "sow" implies something more sexual and lascivious in nature when Broad further describes of the event as an "undersea love-fest." For Broad and his audience, the simple multicellular organism, *Acropora millepora*, has become rhetorically constructed like humans in their sexual qualities. They dance, they plan out their reproduction, and, perhaps most deceptively and inconclusively, they are capable of the complex emotion love. Aesthetically speaking, the use of the word 'dance' coincides with his use of Broad's causal language as well, where it was suggested that the moon "choreographs" the spawning event; though, both word choices have connotations that can easily lead to misinterpreted conclusions not supported by the science that has been performed.

For Levy and his co-authors, however, the stasis-of-quality is largely used as a way to couch the circumstances that surround their findings and use careful specific biological related jargon and ideas. The en masse spawning is "spectacular" as it happens, it is qualified as something as worth noting. Levy (et. al) are qualifying the event as something

sensational; for one moment the science writers are the writers engaging in sensationalism. The third stasis reveals that sensationalism is not solely the province of writers writing for the broader audience.

The data “suggests” implications, and even though photoreceptors have been discovered in the coral, the role of such receptors “differ subtly” from their roles as parts of mammals and insects, which suggests that the role of the photoreceptors of corals might also differ from their more evolved animal counterparts. The scientists qualify their accounts in order to avoid speaking in absolutes. They do, however, use language to approach the jurisdictional nature of the discovery. Broad in the *NYT* is not so subtle in his accommodated texts.

Broad qualifies the simple act of coral asexual reproduction as an “orgy of reproduction.” The ‘orgy’ qualification, similar to the Greek orgy ceremony, rhetorically shifts the corals’ act of reproduction from one of basic biological science towards a more intentionally sexualized state of being, much like (some) people. Language occurring in this level of stasis might be a standard of the science writing genre, but it certainly has the ability to promote incorrect and faulty associations in the actual natural events. The way in which meaning is qualified matters, particularly in science writing.

The qualification of the significance of the report’s findings can be illustrated in one significant omission from Broad’s second, self-edited, article. Broad initially wrote that the discovery of the coral spawning for “Marine biologists [that] the photoreceptor finding [was] significant because it addresses the phenomenon’s central riddle.” One day later that whole statement gets amended to “[t]hough the scientists involved say more work is needed to determine how the photoreceptor works, the finding is significant because it addresses



the spawning's main riddle." Each of these two sentences address what Fahnestock calls the "wonder" application of popularized scientific articles, but they address the wonder in significantly different ways (279). We have in this one rhetorical shift a movement from the third to the first stasis; the opposite of what Fahnestock suggested happens between accommodated scientific information occurs here. Instead of scientists 'cracking a riddle,' Broad's statement states that more research is needed; it states the state of being for the specific science. Stasis helps to reveal one instance where the author fixed his statement-of-quality, toned it down with additional language, and made it a statement of-being, accommodating accommodated information, perhaps.

The main concern with this statement(s) is the interjection of the phrase "phenomenon's central riddle." Broad's article remains a bit unclear as to what is meant by "phenomenon": the phenomenon of mass (i) spawning of corals, (ii) evolution, or (iii) the circadian clock. The referent is clarified the next day when the language of that same statement changes to the "spawning's main riddle" (19 Oct 2007). We see here a rhetorical shift in the popularized articles that remains in the first stasis with the specific authorial choice to not use the word 'spawning' and instead calling it the easily misunderstood referent of "phenomenon." This whole notion is problematic, especially since the scientists will be the first to tell us that the only thing for certain is that the corals have these receptors, not that those receptors serve any specific purpose, much less that they trigger bombastic Dionysian sexual forays along the ocean floor. These rhetorical shifts become quite apparent when juxtaposed as in table 7 (below).

Perhaps the most telling change is one that does not include the main body of either text, only the titles of both *NYT* articles. Initially titled "Scientists Discover Details of

Coral Reproduction” becomes “Sexy Corals Keep ‘Eye’ on Moon Scientists Say.” There are a number of problems with this single editorial change. The original title accurately represents the science that was performed and reported; the scientists did discover some details about coral reproduction. The second title immediately sexualizes the asexual coral and intimates that the cryptochromes are more than what they really are. With caution only contained by single quotation marks, Broad tacitly suggests that the photoreceptors of the corals are more complex than they really are. The scientists notably avoid referring to the coral photoreceptors as “eyes,” knowing that the organ responsible for the corals’ observance of UV light is significantly primitive compared to the modern sight organs of more evolved animals. This oversight, or rhetorical misstep, may seem harmless at first, but given problems with American’s general understanding of science, may be more dangerous than a simple faux pas. This kind of problematic accommodation may be a contributing factor in the “crisis in science communication” (Mooney and Kirshenbaum 79).

It should be no surprise that adjectives and adverbs are the main tools of taxonomy of quality. Though, adjectives and adverbs are not the only rhetorical tools, the verb “exploding” offers evidence to that (also in table 7 below). Again we see the types of grammatical choices as prescribed by genre affecting rhetorical shift. The scientists use modifiers to qualify their findings. The reporter, writing in a more active tone, uses verbs that qualify the scientists’ findings. The previous stasis-of-being and of-cause were not surprising in their significant presence as verbs, and this third level of the stasis we see a split in the grammatical tools between genres. The final stasis, stasis-of-jurisdiction, however, does not have such an obvious grammatical signpost.

## 7. Rhetorical occurrences of the third level of the stasis taxonomy

	Text from <i>Science</i> (O. Levy, et al.)	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 18 Oct	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 19 Oct
Stasis-of-quality	<p>[the mass spawning of the Great Barrier Reef] is a <i>spectacular</i> example (§1)</p> <p>Proteins functions function as <i>circadian oscillator components</i> in Mus but as <i>photoreceptors for clock entrainment</i> in <i>Drosophila</i> (§2)</p> <p>the roles of chryptochromes differ <i>subtly</i> between mammals and insects (§2)</p> <p>CRY1 and CRY2 are only <i>distantly related</i> to <i>Drosophila</i>-type (§4)</p> <p><i>Phylogenetic</i> analyses (§4)</p> <p>CRY-DASH is a <i>typical</i> CRY-DASH protein (§4)</p> <p>Consistent with <i>roles as photoreceptor proteins</i> (§4)</p> <p><i>suggesting that</i> (twice in §5; §7)</p>	<p>Even <i>lowly</i> corals do it (§1)</p> <p><i>swirl and dance</i> and merge to form new life;</p> <p>dissolve in an <i>orgy</i> of reproduction</p> <p><i>sowing</i> (§2)</p> <p>a famous ocean photographer... showed reefs ... <i>exploding in blizzards</i> of rising sperm and eggs (§7)</p> <p>suggesting that light receptors arose <i>surprisingly early</i> in the development of animals (§11)</p> <p><i>big in its implications</i> (§24)</p>	<p><u><i>Sexy Corals</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Keep 'Eye' on Moon</i></u>, Scientists Discover Details of Coral <u><i>Reproduction</i></u> Say (Title)</p> <p><u><i>Marine biologists say</i></u> <u><i>Though the scientists involved say more work is needed to determine how</i></u> the photoreceptor <u><i>works</i></u>, the finding is <i>significant</i> (§8)</p>

### Level IV: stasis-of-jurisdiction

The article from the journal of *Science* remains largely (again, as predicted by Fahnestock) within the first three levels of stasis, but there are a number of rhetorical occurrences where the language would be classified as stasis-of-jurisdiction, one of the most prominent examples of which occur when the science authors project the larger implications their discovery.

The presence of [cryptochromes ] in a phylum close to the base from which all multicellular animals diverge supports the hypothesis that these proteins evolved under the blue light of the Precambrian ocean, possibly as a means to avoid the high daytime ultraviolet levels near the surface. (Levy, et al. 469)

The data from the experiment has left the authors of the *Science* article pushed to direct the findings of their experiments towards a larger and more complex model past microbiology towards that of evolution, but only after establishing the rhetorical foundation of the necessary information through stasis-of-being (literature review and method) and stasis-of-cause (results).

In his article(s) William Broad suggests that, beyond an evolutionary trait, the moon affects the libidos of all multicellular organisms, particularly humans. This focus of the popularized articles intimates a different kind of “wonder” aspect of the scientific discovery, the sexual as opposed to the evolutionary (Fahnestock 279, 1986). Broad extrapolates that since the corals respond to the moon, there is an evolutionary connection between human fascination and coral’s asexual response to UV light. The shift between adding a piece of knowledge to the evolutionary ladder and the sexual sensationalism of the ‘moon’s romantic possibilities,’ is readily revealed through stasis as taxonomy (see table 8 below). It is through identifying this shift that best demonstrates the utility of stasis to monitor rhetorical shift from discourse community to popular audience.

Instead of showing concern for the prehistoric evolutionary process in the Precambrian ocean, the circadian clock, or the process by which proteins evolve, the *NYT* articles make the rhetorical movement to the fourth stasis that finds its central concern with

humans’ interest in the moon suggesting that “[p]eople have known about the moon’s romantic possibilities for a long time.” It is within this series of rhetorical occurrences that Broad gets furthest away from successfully accommodating the information. Through his jurisdictional stasis he anthropomorphizes coral reproduction through juxtaposition of human qualities and habits as portrayed in Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* and the Cher opus, *Moonstruck*.

The obvious nature of rhetorical shift and the grammatical size of the rhetorical parts that are classified under the stasis-of-jurisdiction are significant findings. Within this stasis there is not a clear grammatical signpost that signifies jurisdictional sense; instead whole phrases must be included in order to fully develop the understanding of how the information of the study is to be applied. This complexity of rhetorical makeup and the central nature of determining the jurisdictional suggest that this stasis, the fourth in this applied taxonomy, may be the most significant when applying stasis as a lens for rhetorical analysis (see table 8 below).

### 8. Rhetorical occurrences of the fourth level of the stasis taxonomy

	Text from <i>Science</i> (O. Levy, et al.)	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 18 Oct	Text from <i>NYT</i> William Broad 19 Oct
Stasis-of-jurisdiction	<i>These cry genes are likely to be from coral rather than associated symbiotic algae</i> (§3)  <i>analyses emphasize the similarity of coral CRYs and their vertebrae counterparts</i> (§4)	a coral <i>specialist</i> (§6, §24)  a coral <i>expert</i> (§9)  The finding sheds light of not only <i>coral reproduction but evolution</i> (§11)	<u><i>Sexy Corals Keep ‘Eye’ on Moon.</i></u> <del>Scientists Discover Details of Coral Reproduction</del> <u>Say</u> (Title)

**Table 8 (continued)**

<p>Stasis-of-jurisdiction (continued)</p>	<p>coral CRYs may represent ancestral members of the protein family in the animal kingdom, potentially providing insights into the <i>origins of light perception in animals</i> (§4)</p> <p>roles for other photopigments such as opsins cannot currently <i>be ruled out</i> (§4)</p> <p>suggest that <i>cryptochromes may mediate the spectacular mass spawning event of the invertebrates</i> (§4)</p> <p>supports the hypothesis that these <i>proteins evolved under the blue light of a Precambrian ocean</i>, possibly as a means to avoid high daytime ultraviolet levels near the surface (§4)</p> <p>the basic mechanism by which insects and mammal circadian oscillators respond to light were <i>in place at the origins of multicellularity</i> (§9)</p> <p>adding an <i>evolutionary dimension to circadian clock biology</i> (§9)</p>	<p>“Our discovery,” the scientists write in <i>Science</i>, suggests that <i>the basic mechanisms for responding to light “were in place at the origins of multicellularity in animals”</i> (§12)</p> <p>People, of course, have known about the <i>moon’s romantic possibilities</i> for a long time (§13)</p>	
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## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

What is made most obvious in this brief study on the application of stasis as a tool for rhetorical analysis is that there are still unexplored areas for the theory's use in composition and rhetoric studies. As a lens for analyzing juxtaposed articles relating similar information stasis reveals some of the specific ways and means by which information is accommodated. By dividing rhetorical pieces into their associated stasis taxonomy category, first as the language occurs within a discourse community and second as the language becomes accommodated, simple analysis reveals the means of information accommodation and the rhetorical shift associated with accommodation. We see what Jeanne Fahnestock referred to in 1986 as the "changes in purpose and content between professional and public science reporting" (345).

Moreover, this use of stasis for rhetorical pieces rather than syllogistic arguments are marked by some obvious and helpful grammatical signposts: stasis-of-being largely consists of modal verbs and variations, of-cause appears mostly as more active verbs, adjectives and adverbs are found throughout of-quality, and the most complicated rhetorical occurrences in of-jurisdiction seem to bear the gravity of the whole argument. Given what stasis can reveal about accommodated information and the simplicity by which it can be applied as a lens for rhetorical analysis, more scholarly scrutiny is surely required to completely understand how effective a tool it can become in a WAC/WID classroom.

The relevance of stasis "regardless of field" suggests that there are likely more uses for stasis as a rhetorical analysis tool beyond the scope of writing in the sciences (Fahnestock and Secor 429, 1988). It would seem that since the accommodation of information is necessary to disperse discourse communities' language to a wider audience,

then any accommodations of that discourse community's information should be revealed through taxonomic stasis rhetorical analysis. The part of that discourse community that is revealed may be, in part, what Dale Sullivan refers to in "Beyond Discourse Communities" as a "meaning system:" the written code by which the knowledge of a discourse community is shared (153). That 'meaning system' is revealed in the language that populates the Levy (et al.) section of the analysis, including the claims of jurisdiction. A corresponding meaning system is found in Broad's accommodation of that same information. Further examination of what happens through rhetorical analysis under a stases lens is required, but this brief examination shows it as an effective tool to make apparent the values of the different discourse communities sharing the same information.

Levy's (et al) repeated use of 'circadian clock,' 'entrain,' 'light sensing organs,' and 'evolutionary dimension to circadian clock biology' reveal some of the specific language choices and rhetorical constructions that make up the foundational knowledge base of biological science. The contrasting words in the accommodated article, 'La Bella Luna,' 'sheds light on,' 'eye' and 'the moon's romantic possibilities' demonstrates how the information of a discourse community gets spread throughout larger audiences. The ability to create an awareness of what happens when discourse specific information becomes accommodated through a simple, accessible taxonomy, like stasis theory, a theory already circulating in the composition and rhetoric field, should be able to find a number of additional uses in further research and practice.

The same exercise could be turned into a rhetorical analysis project for any writing class, but particularly a class that involves use of a discourse community's written discourse. The application of stasis in almost any science writing class seems to naturally



follow, including the softer sciences such as anthropology and psychology. Looking at information processed through taxonomic stasis might be helpful to writing for engineers, those who seem to be among the most steeped in discourse specific jargon. The juxtaposition aspect of this type of taxonomic analysis only requires for some discourse specific information to have been accommodated; the scope of use for taxonomic stasis is as wide as the number of accommodated texts. It might be revealing to process media interpretations of presidential addresses and their subsequent commentary through taxonomic stasis. In a case like that, an analysis could be performed using multiple juxtapositions in a table that might look like table 9 (below). Processing a presidential speech like this may or may not reveal media bias, it might also approach the ‘meaning system’ of politicians, or it might get obfuscated through clever and misleading rhetoric from the study’s onset. Whatever those results may be, they could certainly benefit political science students in understanding the discourse community that they are about to enter.

**9. Hypothetical taxonomic stasis analysis of accommodated public speech**

	Presidential speech	Fox	CNN	CBS	NBC	ABC	MSNBC
Stasis I							
Stasis II							
Stasis III							
Stasis IV							

The same exercise could be turned into a rhetorical analysis project for any writing class, but particularly a class that involves use of a discourse community’s written discourse. The application of stasis in almost any science writing class seems to naturally follow, including the social sciences such as anthropology and psychology. Looking at

information processed through taxonomic stasis might be helpful to writing for engineers, those who seem to be among the most steeped in discourse specific jargon. The juxtaposition aspect of this type of taxonomic analysis only requires for some discourse specific information to have been accommodated; the scope of use for taxonomic stasis is as wide as the number of accommodated texts.

There is also the mutability of the stases. The four categories applied in this study are only a part of the larger body of stasis. The stasis-of-quantity omitted by Fahnestock and Secor could certainly be included in any kind of stasis analysis. The first category, of-being, could be redistributed as separate of-definition and of-being categories again. This return of an omitted stasis category and a split of a combined category would result in a similar kind of lens but with more categories for analysis, as shown in table 10 (below).

**10. Possible expanded stases including six categories of taxonomic stasis**

I	Stasis-of-being
II	Stasis-of-definition
III	Stasis-of-cause
IV	Stasis-of-quantity
V	Stasis-of-quality
VI	Stasis-of-jurisdiction

Of course, not all six levels of stasis would have to be used, its mutability and ability to be “re-arranged, re-designated, widened or narrowed in scope, or further subdivided to suit the whims or wishes of any technical writer without in any way vitiating the essential character and validity of the stasis-theory in general” will allow for teachers of WAC/WID to disassemble and reassemble stasis as necessary to fit their classroom needs (Dieter 228).

This study, of course, in no way proves the helpfulness of stasis in the classroom, nor the efficacy of such analysis. However, given the simplicity with which the results can be achieved, further study of taxonomic stasis could not hurt the field of composition and rhetoric studies.

## CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

For all the benefits that WAC/WID programs have brought to the departments that adopt its methodology, there are problems that arise. There are issues of writing teachers teaching within a discourse community they do not belong to, and there is the need for those teachers to engage students within their chosen discourse on a satisfactory level. While there is no single silver bullet solution, engaging and possibly resurrecting classical theories of rhetoric, such as stasis, might offer solutions.

Stasis as a taxonomic tool for rhetorical analysis certainly has a number of pedagogical benefits for teachers. Some teachers of writing will have likely engaged stasis at some time in their academic career. This engagement, no matter how brief, should make their understanding of new uses for the old theory a swift process. Stasis as taxonomic rhetorical analysis can also be effective without fluent understanding of the discourse community specific WAC/WID class; this means that writing teachers teaching classes like “Writing in the Hydrological Sciences” need not necessarily be as familiar with the language of the discourse community as a person who has chosen that field of study. Finally there is the mutability and broad ability for stasis to address nearly any kind of rhetorical situation makes the possibility for stasis nearly as broad as the scope of WAC/WID classes offered.

Students, too, would benefit from taxonomic stasis. The limited amount of classifications makes it accessible to students, avoiding the problems that can come with more open ended rhetorical analysis. Students of science would particularly benefit from the process of taxonomic stasis since the process of classification is a large part of the scientific ethos. Students of science classify, whether the elements in chemistry, life forms

in biology, minerals in geology, or formulas in physics. By utilizing this particular skill, taxonomic stasis engages in complimentary skillsets for the students of science, it seems to follow that this should make the understanding of and the execution of rhetorical analysis more accessible for those students whose studies do not necessarily engage in rhetorical analysis from within their discourse community.

There are a number of reasons that can be used to justify the use of taxonomic stasis in the WAC/WID classroom as a lens for rhetorical analysis. In the short term, stasis should help both teachers and students understand what happens to information as it becomes accommodated for larger, broader, non-discourse specific audiences. In the long term, stasis would make science writers and science accommodators aware of the tools of accommodation resulting in more effective, concise, and accurate accommodation of such information. If this awareness of informational shift can be taught at the point in time at which a student enters their chosen discourse community, teachers of WAC/WID might do more than help students develop deeper understanding of their discourse community, using taxonomic stasis might prepare students to both resist and acknowledge those shifts once they become the primary authors of primary texts as well as those accommodated texts. Stasis in the classroom might help students and teachers in the classroom. Beyond that, the recognition of stasis as an effective tool for the WAC/WID curriculum might just help science as a discipline, not just as another writing exercise in college.

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