

This is a pre-print version of the Timothy J. Briggs' webtext published in *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, Pedagogy*, 21(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/21.1/reviews/briggs>

Transcript for "Review of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action: Audio Visual Rhetoric for Writing Teachers* by Bump Halbritter."

00.00 Text Screen: "We apparently, as a discipline, don't recognize that these [audio-visual] media are really ours. We write *about* them, not *with* them. That's not what we *do*. Even if that *is* what we do" (Halbritter, 2013, p. ix).

00.16 Image: Front cover of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Mid-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitars and bass guitar. This music is used throughout this section of the video. Voiceover: "*Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action: Audio-Visual Rhetoric for Writing Teachers* is a provocative book by Bump Halbritter (2013) that positions movie making as a legitimate form of writing in the writing classroom."

00.32 Image: A photograph of Bump Halbritter with a zooming in effect. Voiceover: "Halbritter is an Associate Professor in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures at Michigan State University. Early in the book, he revealed:"

00:42 Text Screen: Quotation from page 4 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "This book emerges from its author's dissatisfaction with established definitions of writing, definitions that did not allow him to derive all of the properties of his own writing and writerly actions" (p. 4).

00:56 Image: Front cover of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Given this impetus, Halbritter's primary goals in writing this book were: (1) to expand the definition of writing, and (2) to situate this expanded definition in the context of teaching academic writers. He pursued these goals throughout the book engaging in what Kenneth Burke called "terministic catharsis" by

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adding new ways of thinking about writing and rethinking some of the old ways."

01:23 Fade to black. Fade music out.

01:26 Subtitle Text Screen: "Symbolic Action"

01:31 Image: First page of Chapter 1 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Fast-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of electric guitar, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, and drums. This music is used throughout this section of the video. Voiceover: "In Chapter 1 Halbritter began the process of expanding the definition of writing using Kenneth Burke's concept of symbolic action as presented in his 1966 book . . ."

01:43 Image: Front cover of Kenneth Burke's *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*. Voiceover: ". . . *Language as Symbolic Action*. He quickly noted, however, that Burke's definition of symbolic action in this book was limited to language and pointed out that his 1978 essay . . ."

01:56 Image: First page of Kenneth Burke's "(Nonsymbolic) Motion (Symbolic) Action." Voiceover: "'(Nonsymbolic) Motion (Symbolic) Action' broadened his notion of symbolic action."

02:03 Image: A photograph of Kenneth Burke. Voiceover: "In Burke's words, quote: "Action, as so defined, would involve modes of behavior made possible by the acquiring of a conventional, arbitrary symbol system, a definition that would apply to modes of symbolicity as different as primitive speech, styles of music, painting, sculpture, dance, highly developed mathematical nomenclatures, traffic signals, road maps, or mere dreams," unquote. After presenting this quote, Halbritter wrote:"

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02:39 Text Screen: Quotation from page 8 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*.
Voiceover: ". . . I suggest that we embrace the larger territory of Burke's *symbolic action*: a territory that includes language as only one of the conventional, arbitrary symbol systems at a *writer's* disposal" (p. 8).

02:53 Image: Page 8 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "At this point, Halbritter enlisted a number of scholars to assist him in expanding the definition of writing. For example, . . ."

03:02 Image: A photograph of Lawrence Lessig. Voiceover: ". . . from Lawrence Lessig, he brought to the table the concept of remix as writing."

03:07 Image: A photograph of Patricia Dunn. Voiceover: "And from Patricia Dunn, he borrowed the idea of "multisensory options" as an avenue for engaging students with various learning styles."

03:17 Image: "Computers and Composition" in the stylized lettering of the journal. Voiceover: "Interestingly, Halbritter left out significant voices from the computers and writing community—most notably . . ."

03:24 Image: Photograph of Cynthia Selfe. Voiceover: ". . . Cynthia Selfe—who has long argued for a broader definition of writing."

03:29: Image: Page 18 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "But despite this limitation, the chapter moved the definition of writing toward a new key."

03:36 Fade to black. Fade music out.

03:38 Subtitle Text Screen: "Learning Goals"

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03:44 Image: First page of Chapter 2 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Mid-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitar, electric guitar, and bass guitar. This music is used throughout this section of the video. Voiceover: "In Chapter 2 Halbritter began to discuss the teaching of 21st century writing by considering the learning goals of the writing classroom. Specifically, he focused on Donald Murray's 1972 essay . . ."

03:59 Image: First page of "Teach Writing as a Process Not Product" by Donald Murray. Voiceover: ". . . 'Teach Writing as a Process Not Product' and the ten implications Murray presented for process pedagogy. To update Murray's implications for the 21st century, Halbritter used the metaphor of . . ."

04:13 Image: Photograph of my hand turning the tuning peg on my acoustic guitar. Voiceover: ". . . retuning—the practice of changing the standard tuning of a string instrument to achieve a desired sound."

04:20 Image: Photograph of Donald Murray. Voiceover: "His goal was to listen for places where Murray's ideas resonate with his expanded definition of writing, and places where Murray's ideas need to be retuned. For example, his retuning of Murray's third implication read:"

04:35 Text Screen: Quotation from page 47 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Students use their own *forms of symbolic action*. Too often . . . we teach *writing* to our students as if it were a foreign *form of symbolic action* . . ." (p. 47).

04:45 Text Screen: Quotation from page 47 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Actually, most of our students have learned a great deal of *forms of symbolic action* before they come to us, and they are quite willing to

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exploit those *forms of symbolic action* if they are allowed to embark on a serious search for their own truth" (p. 47).

05:01 Image: Page 47 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "By engaging in this retuning process, Halbritter successfully transformed Murray's implications into a teaching philosophy for 21st century writing where . . ."

05:12 Text Screen: Quotation from page 72 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . carefully scaffolded learning goals are the true products of the process-based writing course."

05:19 Fade to black. Fade music out.

05:21 Subtitle Text Screen: "Multidimensional Rhetoric"

05:26 Image: First page of Chapter 3 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Slow-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, and drums. This music is used throughout this section of the video. Voiceover: "In Chapter 3 Halbritter introduced new terminology into the conversation on audio-visual writing: multidimensional rhetoric. According to Halbritter . . ."

05:39 Text Screen: Quotation from page 75 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Video production involves . . . still and moving images, text, animations, visual transitions and effects, and a soundtrack that may feature audio that is tied to the visual track, sound effects that are "overdubbed," and/or "voice-over" narration" (p. 75).

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05:58 Image: Page 88 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "These elements of video production are the layers of multidimensional rhetoric and might be best understood through a simple demonstration."

06:06 Image: Black screen. Music stops. Voiceover: "Let's begin with the sound of a speaking voice, otherwise known as voiceover narration. This is a single layer."

06:15 Image: Black screen. Music begins again and continues through the rest of this section. Voiceover: "If we add a musical soundtrack, then we have two layers."

06:20 Image: Video footage of myself sitting at my dining room table typing on my MacBook Pro. Voiceover: "Video footage of myself sitting at my dining room table working on my MacBook Pro constitutes a third layer."

06:20 Image: Video footage of myself with the words "Writing Space" placed in the lower left-hand corner. Voiceover: "Written text that explicitly labels the visual information "Writing Space" is a fourth layer. Halbritter argued that multidimensional rhetoric is valuable for teaching audio-visual writing because . . ."

06:43 Text Screen: Quotation from page 76 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "There are times when we need to be able to consider audio-visual texts as being all there at once, and times when we need to break these texts into precisely determined component pieces so that they may be layered in new ways to meet new rhetorical aims" (p. 76).

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07:01 Image: Page 95 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "In the next two chapters he dove into the technological tools needed to create the layers of multidimensional rhetoric, namely, microphones and cameras."

07:13 Fade to black. Fade music out.

07:15 Subtitle Text Screen: "Mics and Cameras"

07:20 Image: First page of Chapter 4 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Slow-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitar, electric guitar, and bass guitar. This music is used throughout this section of the video. Voiceover: "In Chapter 4 Halbritter discussed microphones in great detail."

07:26 Image: Page 134 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "He reviewed different types of mics . . ."

07:29 Image: Page 125 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . explained their recording patterns . . ."

07:31 Image: Page 156 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . and suggested several room layouts for different recording situations."

07:35 Image: First page of Chapter 5 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "In Chapter 5 he focused on cameras, but instead of reviewing different types of equipment, he offered ten important rules for video recording, such as . . ."

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07:47 Text Screen: Quotation from page 175 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . Rule #3: Audio-visual writers choose cameras according to their rhetorical purposes. And . . ." (p. 175).

07:55 Text Screen: Quotation from page 185 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . Rule #7: The white balance is the right balance" (p. 185).

08:01 Image: Page 147 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Admittedly, these two chapters are a bit technical."

08:05 Image: Page 142 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Also, readers who have limited access to technology might feel somewhat excluded by the discussion of audio-visual equipment."

08:13 Image: Page 163 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "But for those who do have access, the technical knowledge Halbritter shared is invaluable for helping writing teachers feel more comfortable with the tools of audio-visual writing."

08:24 Fade to black. Fade music out.

08:27 Subtitle Text Screen: "Teaching"

08:32 Image: First page of Chapter 6 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Music: Mid-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitars and bass guitar. This music is used throughout this section of the video.

Voiceover: "In Chapter 6 Halbritter brought it all together by answering the proverbial question on every writing teacher's mind: How do I teach this stuff Monday morning? His answer: We use audio-visual writing to address

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problems that exist in the writing classroom, problems such as using metaphors and engaging in inquiry."

08:55 Image: Page 201 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "For each writing problem, Halbritter explained the problem, discussed the theory underpinning it . . ."

09:01 Image: Page 202 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . identified the lesson and learning goals related to it, described an assignment for addressing the problem . . ."

09:08 Image: Page 204 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . explained how the assignment might be delivered . . ."

09:11 Image: Page 207 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: ". . . and advocated an approach to assessing the deliverables."

09:15 Image: Page 208 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "In regards to assessment, Halbritter offered the following advice:"

09:20 Text Screen: Quotation from page 200 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "Assess the lesson/learning goal(s), not the assignment . . ." (p. 200).

09:25 Text Screen: Quotation from page 200 of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "As long as our learning goals are met, our assignments are working. Consequently, the products of our students' efforts do not need to be scrutinized under the rubric of audience expectations for professional or publishable moviemaking" (p. 200).

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09:42 Image: Page 221 from *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "To make this advice concrete, Halbritter presented an example of a scoring rubric that he created collaboratively with his students for a documentary project."

09:42 Image: Front cover of *Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action*. Voiceover: "*Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action* is a valuable contribution to the theory and practice of teaching audio-visual writing and rightly deserved the 2013 Distinguished Book Award from *Computers and Composition*. Not only will writing teachers come away with an expanded definition of writing and knowledge regarding the tools and pedagogy to engage students in composing audio-visual texts, but they also might be challenged to rethink their notions of the process-based writing course."

10:25 Fade to black. Fade music out.

10:30 Text Screen: "Written and Produced by Timothy J. Briggs" Music: Fast-tempo blues/folk instrumental consisting of acoustic guitars. This music is used throughout the credits.

10:35 Text Screen: "Special thanks to visual journalist G. L. Kohuth and Michigan State University for permission to use the photograph of Bump Halbritter."

10:43 Scrolling Text Screen:

"References"

Halbritter, Bump. (2013). *Mics, cameras, symbolic action: Audio-visual rhetoric for writing teachers*. Anderson, SC: Parlor Press.

"Music (In Order)"

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10:52 Image: Black screen.

10:55 Music stops.