ABSTRACT

KALIN, JASON PATRICK. Reanimating Memory: The Prospects of Memory in a Digital Age. (Under the direction of Dr. Victoria J. Gallagher.)

From Plato to the present, memory has been linked to techne. And memory and techne have coevolved to a present time and place when and where we are told to “Remember everything.” This dissertation takes that declaration as the exigence for exploring the intermediation of digital media and rhetorical practices of digital memory as performed by individuals, collectives, and publics. By examining rhetorical practices of digital memory, this dissertation demonstrates (1) how memory becomes central to thinking about and experiencing digital media technologies, and (2) how rhetorical concepts must be adapted and updated to meet the demand of digital media technologies. This dissertation, thus, enlarges the rhetorical concept of memory by moving it into the realm of digital media, contributing to the fields of rhetorical theory, memory studies, and digital media theory.

This dissertation reanimates memory as the central capacity of rhetorical theory and practice because, in contemporary culture defined by digital media, sociotechnical practices have become, once again, newly and fundamentally memorial and mnemonic. In contrast to many rhetorical studies of memory, this dissertation is less interested in what memory is than in what memory does, thus advancing a non-representational visual and material rhetoric that focuses on how memory produces and enacts relations through time and place. Combining visual, material, and digital rhetorics with digital media theory, particularly media ecology and software studies, this dissertation analyzes and evaluates how and to what extent the material affordances and constraints of digital technologies are the media and mediation of memory. Studying practices of digital memory relating to digital imaging technologies, social networking, and digital curation show how practices of memory have become enabled by, embedded with, and embodied in digital media technologies, thereby unsettling traditional experiences of temporality and
spatiality, of permanence and ephemerality, of public and private, of remembering and forgetting. This dissertation reconsiders contemporary theories of memory in rhetoric and memory studies and posits an emerging monumentality whereby memory becomes the digital medium through which we live our everyday lives.
Reanimating Memory: The Prospects of Memory in a Digital Age

by
Jason Patrick Kalin

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
North Carolina State University
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Communication, Rhetoric and Digital Media

Raleigh, North Carolina

2012

APPROVED BY:

________________________________________  _______________________________________
Victoria J. Gallagher              Carolyn R. Miller
Chair of Advisory Committee

________________________________________  _______________________________________
David Rieder             Hans Kellner
DEDICATION

For Mom and Dad
BIOGRAPHY

Jason Kalin is a rhetorical scholar with interests in rhetorical theory and criticism, memory studies, and digital media theory. His dissertation explores the practices of remembering and forgetting as they are transformed by digital media technologies. Within this research project, he is working to understand how memory may allow individuals and publics to reimagine their pasts, presents, and futures. Prior to attending North Carolina State University, he received his BA in English and Religion from the University of Rochester in 2005 and his MA in English from Case Western Reserve University in 2008. In Fall 2008, he joined the Communication, Rhetoric, and Digital Media program at North Carolina State University. He has presented his work at numerous national conferences including the National Communication Association, College Composition and Communication, and the Rhetoric Society of America. He has published an article discussing student perceptions regarding the use of technologies to collaborate in the International Journal of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Now is the time and place to remember all the colleagues, friends, and family without whom I could not have come as far as I have. Truly, this dissertation begins with y’all. I came to North Carolina State University and the Communication, Rhetoric, & Digital Media (CRDM) program humbled by the opportunity to work with the best scholars in rhetoric and communication. I leave more humbled than ever. I am amazed by the intellectual and social community of which I have been privileged to play a small part these last four years.

The first acknowledgement must go to my committee: Hans Kellner, David Rieder, Carolyn Miller, and especially, my chair, Victoria Gallagher. I thank Dr. Kellner for his lectures in contemporary rhetorical theory and for agreeing to take extra time to do directed reading in the history of rhetoric and the canon of memory, which helped inform much of this dissertation. And I will always remember his advice whenever I feel overwhelmed by all the reading that must be done: “If nothing else, read the title. Because that’s something too.” I thank Dr. Rieder for pushing the theoretical boundaries of digital media and showing me what is possible when you mix theory and digital media to see what they can do. His inventiveness and passion have inspired me to be a more creative scholar. I thank Dr. Miller for her erudition and commitment, including her extraordinary ability not only to read everything (and I mean everything) but also to provide critical insights into what she has read. She always manages to ask the right question and to make the right comment. Finally, I thank Dr. Gallagher. Her class in visual and material rhetoric, in just my second semester, started me on this project, and she has been there throughout with her guidance, patience, encouragement, and enthusiasm. She has been an amazing scholarly role model. Her commitment to this dissertation has been fundamental to its
completion; her commitment to me as a scholar and a person has been fundamental to my growth as both. Thank you, Dr. G.

Thanks also are due to the other CRDM faculty members who have helped me along the way as a scholar and teacher: Deanna Dannels, Jeremy Packer, Susan Miller-Cochran, and Adriana de Souza e Silva. I thank Dr. David Berube for the research opportunities during my first year. And I would especially like to thank Steve Wiley and Jason Swarts, two remarkable CRDM program directors who have helped move the program forward to ensure its continued growth and success. The faculty members of CRDM, with their support both inside and outside the classroom, help make the program what it is. I deeply appreciate their generosity with their time and energy, and I will miss such an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment.

The administrative staff of the Graduate School, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Department of English, the Department of Communication, and the CRDM program are to be thanked, as well, especially Jan Raymondi and Joan Alford.

I must thank the best cohort ever—Kati Fargo Ahern, Jacob Dickerson, Jordan Frith, David Gruber, Matt Morain, Dan Sutko, and Zach Rash. Without y’all and your unique contributions to our group dynamics, these past four years would not have been the same. I especially treasure the time we spent outside the classroom growing together as friends, moving one another’s stuff from house to house, grilling out in backyards, and drinking beers whenever and wherever. Kati, thank you for bringing goodies to class and for your ear-splitting, head-spinning laugh (gold stars for everyone). Jacob, thank you for being the occasional grumpy, fist-shaking curmudgeon that every technology-loving cohort needs. Jordan, thank you for always being the first (and last) to speak in class. You were never afraid to say something. Zach, thank you
for being the opposite of Jordan and waiting to jump into the conversation at just the right time. David, thank you for your wild gesticulations and deep philosophical questions. I look forward to the day when you are a world-renowned scholar (more than you already are), and I can say, “I used to share a cubicle with him.” Matt, thank you for never missing a pun and for your dedication to beer drinking and board games (along with your wife, Tracy). Dan, thank you for being a good roommate and friend. We might not have agreed on all the particulars of household management, but we lived together for three years and are better for it, I would like to think. And finally, Lauren Clark, though not part of the cohort proper, deserves special thanks. Thank you, Lauren, for being you and for all the memories we share.

Though partial to my cohort, the CRDM program has had and continues to have outstanding cohorts. I would like to thank in particular Kelly Martin, Kathy Oswald, Shayne Pepper, and Dawn Shepherd who showed us how we do things around here even as everyone was figuring out how we do things around here. I would also like to acknowledge the new cohorts for continuing to push the program into new areas of study and continuing its growth and success, especially Kevin Brock, Fernanda Duarte, Meagan Kittle Autry, Kate Maddalena, Ryan McGrady, Josh Reeves, and Jeff Swift. I wish everyone in CRDM the best of luck.

I would also like to thank Raleigh, NC for being such a wonderful place to live. And I will miss being able to say with confidence, “Just another beautiful day in Raleigh, North Carolina.”

Finally, as always, many thanks are due to my family. My parents, Toby and Patti, and my brother, Todd, have always given me their unconditional love. My parents taught me, through their examples, not only the value of a work ethic and a commitment to a job well done, but also
the value of always trying to be a better person and to do the right thing. They gave me the support, time, and space I needed to pursue my goals. And they have put up with and accepted, shall we say, my sometimes peculiar rhetoric and communication. From phone calls to holiday cards to care packages of homemade chocolate-chip cookies, my family has provided the encouragement necessary for me to flourish both professionally and personally. They always tell me how proud they are of me, and I only wish to make them proud.

Onward and outward.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES ................................................................................................................................. x

CHAPTER ONE ........................................................................................................................................ 1

The Future of Memory Is Here Now .................................................................................................... 1

In the Middle of Memory Studies: Traversing the Topoi of Memory ................................................. 13

Rhetoric, Memory, & Digital Media: Canvassing the Chapters ...................................................... 30

CHAPTER TWO ..................................................................................................................................... 35

The Scene of Digital Memory: A Tropological Detour through the Topoi of Memory ................. 35

Turning in/to Tropes: The Conceptual Thickening of Memory ....................................................... 38

Metaphors of Memory ..................................................................................................................... 39

Metonymy of Memory ....................................................................................................................... 57

Synecdoche of Memory .................................................................................................................... 68

Ironies of Memory ............................................................................................................................. 81

Returning to a New Memory ............................................................................................................ 88

CHAPTER THREE ................................................................................................................................. 93

The Monumentality of the Mundane: Public Memory and the Rhetorical Circulation of Digital Images ................................................................................................................................. 93

Visual and Material Rhetorics: A Non-Representational Approach to Memory ............................ 96

In Regard of the Digital Image: The Psychosis of Digital Imaging .................................................. 102
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Psychotic Photographers & the Obamas (Photograph by Elliott Erwitt/Magnum) ...106

Figure 2: A view from the National Mall in Washington, DC (CNN)............................................109

Figure 3: A view of President Obama's Oath, "The Moment" (CNN Martin) .............................112

Figure 4: A 2D view displaying each image in the synth .................................................................117

Figure 5: A point cloud displaying outline of Capitol building ......................................................117

Figure 6: The Prickly Pear Oil for Women .........................................................................................148

Figure 7: Argyle St - Then In Now .....................................................................................................148

Figure 8: Rep. Giffords’s last tweet juxtaposed with a photograph in the hospital room ..........184

Figure 9: First tweets from the scene ...............................................................................................185

Figure 10: Tweets extending the topic ...............................................................................................186
CHAPTER ONE

The Future of Memory Is Here Now

Now let us turn to the treasure-house of inventions, the custodian of all the parts of rhetoric, memory.
—  Rhetorica ad Herennium (3.28)

But it is strengthened, like all our other faculties, by exercise, and all the study of the orator of which we have been speaking is ineffectual unless the other departments of it be held together by memory as by an animating principle. All knowledge depends on memory, and we shall be taught to no purpose if whatever we hear escapes from us. It is the power of memory that brings before us those multitudes of precedents, laws, judgments, sayings, and facts of which an orator should always have an abundance and which he should always be ready to produce. Accordingly, memory is called, not without reason, the treasury of eloquence.
—  Quintilian (Institutes of Oratory, 11.2.1)

You have more of your memories stored online than all of your ancestors ever left behind. The future of memory is already here.
—  Matt Buchanan (2010)

From Plato to the present, memory has been linked to techne. And memory and techne have coevolved to a present time and place when and where we are told to “Remember everything.” That is the tagline of the popular online note-taking application, Evernote, which, as its website explains, “makes it easy to remember things big and small from your notable life using your computer, phone, and the web” (Evernote). Remember everything. Capture anything. Access anywhere. The web’s memorial motto. No thought, no event, no moment is so insignificant that it should not or cannot be captured. And because these notable memories are stored online with Evernote, they can be accessed at any time or place with networked technologies. All across the web, users are being implored to upload their personal memories.
Annotate, archive, organize. Build a personal learning network. Create a group knowledge repository. All your stuff in one place. Pin your history to the world. Connect and share. And Google, working to digitize and organize the world’s knowledge, its memories, explains the Archive button of its popular email client, Gmail: “With all that space, you can archive instead of deleting messages, so they won’t clutter your inbox but will remain searchable in case you ever need them again” (Google), once again revealing the underlying logic of digital memories—save everything, delete nothing, search when needed.

Because the space for digital memory abounds—hard drives, databases, and data clouds—digital memories abound, as well: Facebook has over 845 million active users who upload more than 250 million photos per day (Facebook, 2012). A special report for The Economist stated that “the amount of information increases tenfold every five years” and predicted that “by 2013 the amount of traffic flowing over the internet will reach 667 exabytes” (Cukier, 2010, p. 2). The appetite for both information and storage has become insatiable. We can always have more memory; we can never have enough. Given the expanding capabilities and declining cost of digital storage, Mayer-Schönberger (2009), in his book Delete: The Virtue of Forgetting in the Digital Age, states, “Since the beginning of time, for us humans, forgetting has been the norm and remembering the exception. Because of digital technology and global networks, however, this balance has shifted. Today, with help of widespread technology, forgetting has become the exception and remembering the default” (p. 2). Although a default of remembering provides an important insight into contemporary memory practices, Mayer-Schönberger, paradoxically, does not acknowledge sufficiently the excess of information. Saper
(2010), for example, posits, “Much like an infinite Borgesian library, the abundance of remembering must inevitably lead to forgetting on a scale unknown in the history of memory techniques” (para. 14). More important than presuming a default of remembering or one of forgetting is what such possible defaults oblige us to think about, namely how digital media affect the present and future scene of memory—the practices, places, and networks of mnemonic accumulation and circulation. Within this framework, we should value remembering and forgetting, not as default positions, but as capacities of memory—its combinatory power to produce connections through time and place. Therefore, we should put aside the question of what is remembering or forgetting within a digital media culture and instead focus on what remembering or forgetting can do within this culture. What does memory do within this digital media culture that has unsettled our more traditional experiences of temporality and spatiality? What are the exploitable ambiguities and curiosities of memorial traces and mediations that are accumulated and circulated? What do memories allow participants—individuals and groups—to do within a social or public scene? With these questions, we begin to explore the persuasive constellation of forces and the rhetorical consequences of “Remember everything. Capture anything. Access anywhere.”

Although Evernote’s tagline helps define the present scene of digital memory, this memorial motto would not be out of place in ancient Greek or Roman culture. If we can imagine for a moment a sophist traveling through the agora or a Roman orator standing in the forum shouting, “Remember everything. Capture anything. Access anywhere,” we begin to have a sense of the esteem and power given to memory within these rhetorical cultures, an esteem
and power, I argue, that is returning in a contemporary culture saturated with digital media. The sophist or Roman orator or Evernote user is promoting the power of memory as *techne*, and *techne* as memory belongs to the rhetorical tradition. In her seminal study, Yates (1966) reminds readers:

> The first basic fact which the student of the history of the classical art of memory must remember is that the art belonged to rhetoric as a technique by which the orator could improve his memory, which would enable him to deliver long speeches from memory with unfailing accuracy. (p. 2)

The art of memory as taught within the rhetorical tradition emphasizes the capacity to store and retrieve, to remember and recall parts of a speech during the act of oration; mnemotechnics enable the orator to give a virtuosic public performance. Hence, the art of memory becomes the animating principle of rhetorical practice: memory as the organizing capacity that guides the other rhetorical capacities—invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. In short, memory as *techne* needs to be placed in the middle of rhetorical theory and practice. As we become more reliant on digital media to store information and knowledge, as we increasingly cannot forget our memories, we should ask how the rhetorical art of memory both informs and needs to be informed by the affordances and constraints of digital media so that we can understand better what rhetoric and memory could become in the present and for the future.

In *The Art of Memory*, Yates (1966) identifies the three classical works describing the *ars memoria*, in chronological order: the anonymously written (or the forgotten author of) *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero’s *On the Orator*, and Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory*. Each text treats memory as
a practical technique by which the orator could improve his memory to deliver speeches with accuracy. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which influenced both Cicero and Quintilian, refers to memory as the “treasure-house of invention” (3.16.28). Similarly, Quintilian writes, “Accordingly, memory is called, not without reason, the treasury of eloquence” (11.2.1). This conception of memory as the treasury of things invented recalls Aristotle’s discussion of *topoi* in that both provide the orator with inventional commonplaces and arrangements of argument familiar with and persuasive to his audience. The place system of remembering begins with the story of Simonides.

In *On the Orator*, Cicero tells the story of Simonides, a poet, who was attending a banquet. After performing his lyric poem in honor of the nobleman Scopas, Simonides was requested to meet two young men outside the banquet hall. Once he was outside, the roof of the hall collapsed on the dinner guests, rendering their bodies unrecognizable. Simonides, remembering the order in which they had been seated, was able to identify their bodies and return them to their families. The story of Simonides presents the two main principles of the art of memory: the remembrance of images and the reliance on organization, an order, a place system (Yates, 1966). The art of memory thus is a two step process. First, the orator imprints in his memory a series of places, well-known architectural spaces, which form the background images. Quintilian recommends a building that is both spacious and varied, such as a house including the living room, bedrooms, and parlors along with statues and other ornaments (11.2.17-22). Second, the images by which the speech is to be remembered—images typically related to the speech’s main parts, points, or details—are imprinted on the places which have
been memorized in the architectural space. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* recommends that these memory images be striking and singular so that they more forcefully imprint themselves on the memory place. As an example of a striking image, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* advises the reader to use an image of ram’s testicles to represent, punningly, the witnesses (*testes*) in a lawsuit (3.20.33).

These memory images are imprinted on the memory places. For example, the image associated with the first part of the speech should be superimposed on the image of the first place, the second image of the speech on the image of the second place, and so on: “The method ensures that the points are remembered in the right order, since the order is fixed by the sequences of places in the building” (Yates, 1966, p. 3). When delivering the speech, the orator, as Quintilian describes, walks through the architectural place bringing to mind the superimposed images. In this way, the art of memory facilitates the storage of knowledge for future recall.

The art of memory not only supports the proper ordering of a speech, but also allows the orator to adapt to changing rhetorical situations by moving to any place in the memory space. The orator could improvise a speech by walking through his treasure-house of things invented in different ways. Indeed, the striking memory images and fixed memory places allow orators to rearrange topics in the process of writing or delivering a speech. The rhetor, especially in Roman forums, had to memorize and so master his speech that he could adapt to the demands of his always changing rhetorical situation: “reciting a well-learned speech, grasping the elements of somebody else's argument, organizing new statements as they were read or spoken, recalling the specifics of a tortuous system of laws, responding fluently to unexpected questions, objections, or turns in a discussion” (West, 2006). Memory, thus, became the central capacity,
the animating principle, of rhetoric. Memory, as the treasury of eloquence, gave the orator access
to all other rhetorical tools and strategies, including the other rhetorical canons—invention,
arrangement, style, and delivery. Memory was the very process and practice of rhetoric.
Furthermore, over the centuries, the art of memory expanded to incorporate all aspects of
culture. Yates (1966) and Carruthers (1900/2008) show how medieval and Renaissance scholars
developed the art of memory into memory palaces and memory theaters that attempted to
organize all knowledge. Indeed, Carruthers (1990/2008) argues that “medieval culture was
fundamentally memorial” (p. 9). In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the cultivation and
practice of memory was the modality through which to master the information explosion
brought on by new technologies and new worlds (Carruthers, 1990/2008; Sloane, 2001; Yates;
1966). At the same time, however, memory was losing its place in rhetoric.

Peter Ramus, the French logician, rhetorician, and pedagogue, separated dialectic and
rhetoric, giving the former invention, arrangement, and memory and the latter style and delivery.
Whereas Carruthers (1990/2008) argues that in medieval culture memory and writing co-existed
happily, Ramus initiated a move in which the resources of print technology supplanted the art of
memory. The cultivation and practice of memory was slowly neglected and forgotten—no
longer the source of eloquence. Memory’s place within rhetoric remained maligned until late in
the twentieth century. Corbett and Connors (1990), for example, typify memory’s forgotten
importance: “After rhetoric came to be concerned mainly with written discourse, there was no
further need to deal with memorizing. . . . There will be no consideration in this book of this
aspect of rhetoric” (p. 27). Brooke (2009) notes that such studies treat technologies as simple
extensions of limited personal memory: “Memory in this approach is something less than a practice” (p. 143). Because the canon of memory focuses on practical techniques, we should understand remembering and forgetting as practices that take place in time, and thus are never permanent states. Although the art of memory supports a well-ordered memory, the art cannot guarantee it because memory, as a thing or force, exists beyond our ability to control it. Within the art of memory, memories become forces acting and performing, accumulating and circulating in place and in time; any act of remembering or forgetting is an inventional performance expressing a memory for the times.

As we adopt and develop theories of memory for present and future times increasingly articulated through digital media, the art of memory, as the capacity for inventional performance, will become especially important to the rhetorical practices of individuals and publics. Changes in technology spur changes in memory, and adapting to changes in technology stimulates new performances of memory. Ulmer (1989), for example, asks, “What happens to human memory, when in addition to the prosthesis it already possesses (alphabetic writing), it gains the services of electronics (specifically, of video)?” (162). For Ulmer, memory becomes the point of inception for conducting ourselves differently within a digital media culture, what he calls electracy, and he argues for and develops a new genre of discourse, the mystoriography, that adapts mnemotechnics to digital media. Ulmer is most interested in the individual’s memory, as the my in mystoriography suggests. Indeed, even when he expands to the public engagement of memory, he advances a genre of monumentality called the MEmorial, once again emphasizing the ME, the individual’s memory of any particular public event (Ulmer, 2005). In contrast, I am more
interested in developing an art of memory responsive to collective memory and public memory as they are articulated and performed within digital media. How do the principles of the art of memory, such as relating striking images to familiar places, find expression in public forms and practices of memory? How do such practices help us move from the individual performance of memory in public to a public’s performance of memory for the public? To begin to address these questions, chapters three and four engage the power and efficacy of digital images to perform collective memory and public memory and to explore what we might learn about memory from the practices of digital imaging technologies.

In addition to surprising or strange images, the art of memory relied upon the notion of rhetorical copiousness, encouraging rhetors to develop, organize, and draw upon an abundance of memory. Orators were expected to furnish and expand their memory places with new images and topics, what we, again, might call the ancient practice of “Remember everything. Capture anything. Access anywhere.” In rhetorical practice developing an abundant memory was known as cultivating copia, or copiousness. Crowley (1994) explains:

Because ancient rhetoricians believed that language was a powerful force for persuasion, they urged their students to develop copia in all parts of their art. Copia can be loosely translated from Latin to mean an abundant and ready supply of language—something appropriate to say or write whenever the occasion arises. (p. 16)

The practice of copia emphasizes the abundance and expansiveness of rhetorical figures and arguments, as highlighted, for instance, by all the tropes of amplification. To develop copia, students of rhetoric were encouraged to collect and copy florilegia (flowers of reading) or
commonplaces into notebooks so that they could practice and imitate those commonplaces while committing them to memory. This rhetorical practice gave students a ready supply of figures and arguments for any topic and occasion. As such, the collection and stockpiling of commonplaces, *topoi* of memory, was only the initial part of the process. Richards (2008) points out, “Once collected, the devices and commonplaces supported the classroom exercise of declamation, the practice of arguing on different sides of a problem” (p. 87). Richards notes that this exercise exploits the productive ambiguity that exists within arguments. Crowley (1994) similarly notes that *copia* allowed students to declaim with inventiveness and style as the need arose: “[Rhetors] simply retrieved any relevant topics or commentary from their ordered places within memory, reorganized and expanded upon them, and added their own interpretations of the traditional material” (p. 222). *Copia* trains rhetors to declaim on different topics at different times by preparing them to recall by re-inventing, re-arranging, re-styling, and re-delivering their memories of reading to make them compelling, to give them force to evoke particular responses in specific audiences. Such practices take advantage of the inventive copiousness that the rhetor has gathered together in memory (Carruthers, 1998). The practice of *copia* emphasizes the capaciousness of memory, and capaciousness signals capacities, such as accumulation, circulation, amplification, and declamation. The capaciousness and capacities of memory stress spatial collage and temporal montage of memory practices and places. Furthermore, *copia* highlights that memories are not selected primarily according to some predisposed representation or meaning, but rather according to what works, what exerts persuasive force at a given place and time, thereby generating productive practices of remembering and forgetting.
Indeed, *copia* resists representational and interpretative closure by insisting upon productive ambiguity—closure-but-not-closure. Given the importance of *copia* to both memory and invention, I argue in the conclusion that the curation of *copia* will continue to become an increasingly important mnemotechnic of digital media culture.

Most rhetorical studies of memory focus upon its communicative qualities, asking what any particular memory means and how that memory is understood by individuals, collectives, or publics. These studies are concerned with the representation of memory, namely whether the proper representations of the past are absent or present in public memory. Here, I am suggesting that we need to focus more on the persuasive force of any particular memory event—what memory does, how it performs—as that memory accumulates and circulates through places and times. In doing so, I seek to reanimate memory by examining the intermediation of practices of memory and digital media technologies as performed by individuals, collectives, and publics. As Olick (2007) points out, we exist comfortably within a diversity of temporalities and spatialities. New media and technology, especially new digital media technologies, allow us to do so. Consequently, rhetorical scholars need to study how memory produces and is produced within the temporalities and spatialities of digital media culture. Here, I am not suggesting an “add technology and stir” position (Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, 2010; Sterne, 2006); rather, I am advocating that we use the rhetorical canon of memory to understand how memory constitutes digital memory practices, places, and networks in time. Rather than only investigating technology to study memory as byproduct, we should use memory to understand technology along with its users and uses. That is, we should ask not only how do digital technologies produce new
practices, forms, and discourses of memory, but also how do memory practices produce new practices, forms, and discourses of digital technologies. This intermediation is the scene of memory we should seek to traverse.

To do so, I reanimate the rhetorical capacity of memory, placing it at the center of rhetorical theory to understand not only how it is interarticulated with invention, arrangement, style, and delivery, but also how those interarticulations shape individual, collective, and public memory. Carruthers (1990/2008) contends that medieval culture was fundamentally memorial. I argue that contemporary life as mediated by digital media technologies has become, once again, newly and fundamentally memorial. By reanimating and retheorizing the rhetorical canon of memory, we can begin to understand how individuals, collectives, and publics construct—invent, arrange, style, remember and forget, and deliver—their pasts, presents, and futures. Indeed, resituating memory in the middle of rhetorical practice allows us to understand how this constructive process takes place. For example, the canon of invention has long occupied the center of rhetorical theory and practice, thus emphasizing rhetoric as the art of beginning (Muckelbauer, 2008; Sellars, 2006). Invention, as it is still too often taught, stresses the individual, the self, as the source of originality and creative expression. In contrast, I argue that putting the canon of memory in the middle emphasizes how rhetoric always already takes place in the middle—of multiple lines of argument, of the meeting of two eternities we call the present. Moreover, reanimating memory demonstrates that the resources for originality and creativity reside outside in collective and public memory as much as, if not more than, inside the individual’s personal memory (see also LeFevre, 1987). Indeed, situating memory in the middle
of rhetorical theory allows us to move from the genius to the *scenius*, or communal genius. *Scenius*, coined by Brian Eno, refers to “the intelligence and the intuition of a whole cultural scene. It is the communal form of the concept of genius” (as cited in Kelly, 2008, para. 1). If we are to invent, we must first find ourselves in the middle of memory.

**In the Middle of Memory Studies: Traversing the *Topoi* of Memory**

Whereas the art of memory has been limited traditionally to the individual rhetor, I explore the intermediation of practices of collective and public memory and digital media technologies. Although mnemotechnics help us grasp the capacities of memory within rhetoric, memory itself remains an “amorphous phenomenon” that cuts across spatiotemporal relations among the past, present, and future and that defines relationships between individuals and collectives (Le Goff, 1992, p. 51). Given the amorphous qualities of memory that exceed the individual, Olick and Robbins (1998), reviewing the literature in sociology, describe the emerging field of *social memory studies* as a “nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, centerless enterprise” (p. 106). Ten years later in a similar review, Roediger and Wertsch (2008) note that *memory studies* is already multidisciplinary, touching upon most academic disciplines. They suggest that although *memory* is a singular noun, it is most useful preceded by a modifier. And these modifiers have proliferated: Tulving (2007), a psychologist, asks, “Are there 256 kinds of memory?” while implying that this number likely underestimates the amount of modifying terms. Pick a discipline and it has its own set of modifiers, reflecting and selecting its theories and methodologies. Cognitive psychology tends to focus on the individual and his or her procedural memory, episodic memory, or semantic memory. History and sociology share an interest in collective
memory and social memory. Rhetorical scholars similarly focus on the collective, but often choose slightly different modifiers—public memory and cultural memory. Though Roediger and Wertsch (2008) recommend more developed interdisciplinary studies of memory, they maintain that “memory studies is too broad a field to have overarching theories to unify and attempt to explain the huge number of phenomena of interest” (p. 18), thus corroborating Olick and Robbins’s claim from ten years prior. Rather than overarching or unifying theories and methodologies, Roediger and Wertsch recommend developing appropriate perspectives that foreground interdisciplinary convergence and that seek to describe and explain “a rather modest and circumscribed set of facts and phenomena” (p. 19) related to particular issues of memory. In doing so, they argue that memory studies should seek not to resolve its amorphousness, but rather to more critically develop understandings of memory’s unique manifestations. The present study takes up this call by exploring the relationships, the intermediations, and the mutual motivations of rhetoric, memory, and digital media technologies.

Recent rhetorical scholarship has studied collective memory, cultural memory, and public memory to understand how social groups and cultures remember, forget, and make use of the past. Phillips (2004), in his introduction to Framing Public Memory, states, “Indeed, the study of memory is largely one of the rhetoric of memories. The ways memories attain meaning, compel others to accept them, and are themselves contested, subverted, and supplanted by other memories are essentially rhetorical” (p. 2-3). Memory and rhetoric, thus, share a dynamic, reciprocal relationship wherein memory practices aid the rhetorician and rhetoric shapes individual and collective memory practices (Struever, 2006). Blair (2006), in her review of the
field, explains that communication and rhetorical scholars “have understood memory as
significant to virtually all forms of communication practice” (p. 51). Aden et al. (2009),
presenting a refinement of rhetorical theory and methodology to account for memory, argue that
rhetoric can help “attend to two underdeveloped threads of collective memory research: (a) its
processural and dynamic nature and (b) its largely emplaced character” (p. 312). In identifying
“two underdeveloped threads of collective memory research,” Aden et al. create and respond to
an exigence in current rhetorical scholarship on memory; at the same time, these threads imply
that the field of memory studies has a common set of threads, or *topoi*, which may serve to guide
an investigation of memory. Indeed, these *topoi* help unify, however loosely, the
“nonparadigmatic, transdisciplinary, centerless enterprise” of memory studies. A rhetorical study
of memory, then, should begin with these *topoi* to better understand how a rhetorical approach
may contribute to memory studies.

Reviewing the literature in memory studies reveals a set of *topoi* that revolve around the
nature and representation of memory, its ontology and epistemology. For instance, in her review
article, “Reading the Past Against the Grain,” Zelizer (1995) identifies six premises of memory
studies, particularly collective memory research; she argues that each premise “suggests a range
of practices, much like vibrations, through which we accomplish memory work, rather than one
set template for practice” (p. 218). These premises, or *topoi*, define and produce lines of inquiry
relating to the field of memory studies, suggesting how the field, and memory itself, are being
conceptualized or enacted. According to Zelizer’s six premises, collective memory is (1)
processural, (2) unpredictable across time and space, (3) partial, (4) usable, (5) both particular
and universal, and (6) material. Zelizer begins by describing collective memory as *processural*, emphasizing that memory is less static product and more dynamic process, unfolding, changing, and transforming “in excess of our ability to anchor it in discourse” (p. 220). Memory of any particular event is never finished, always evading the discourse used to describe it. Zelizer suggests that scholarly inquiry, which often imposes “a certain static nature to understandings of memory, freezing our discussions to one point in time and place” (p. 220), has yet to sufficiently capture the centrality of memory’s process. Olick (2007) similarly identifies the processural nature of memory and recommends a process-relational methodology or critique that focuses on the dynamic transactions of memory as the primary unit of analysis. Memory, thus, is a network of relations among past, present, and future and between individuals and collectives. Although Olick provides a sociological framework for studying the process-relational nature of memory, this *topos* remains underdeveloped within rhetorical studies, as Aden et al. suggest. To attend to process, Aden et al. develop a rhetorical theory and methodology that explores “processes of remembering within places through the integrative unit of analysis persons-with/in-places” (p. 313), and they advance collective memory as an act of re-collection: “[W]e propose that re-collection is an ongoing process of organizing what we call discursive fragments of memory into coherent bodies of meaning” (p. 314). Here, they draw upon and expand McGee’s collapsing of *text* and *context* to articulate memory as an ongoing process of assembling and disassembling discursive fragments within places. Zelizer, Olick, and Aden et al., thus, suggest that the processural nature of memory offers a productive perspective from which to approach the rhetoric of memory. Indeed, in the present study, I seek to follow the trajectory of this *topos* by examining not only
the process of memory, but also the practices of memory within the processes, a level of inquiry that previous studies have not sufficiently addressed; as a result, this is less a critique of previous studies than an extension of that work.

Related to the processual nature of collective memory is its unpredictable nature. Zelizer (1995) explains that the processes of memory do not necessarily adhere to a linear, logical, or rational development, and as scholars, we are “unable to predict many of those circumstances in which memory takes on new footholds” (p. 221). Collective memory, because it includes social and cultural productions, tends to be constituted according to a nonsequential, nonlinear temporal patterning. The time of memory becomes “a social construction, the target of rearrangement” (p. 222). As with temporal patterning, the spatial dimension of collective memory remains unpredictable because the places of memory—artifacts, texts, monuments, and museums, for example—are open to diverse interpretations. Aden et al. (2009) and Dickinson, Blair, and Ott (2010) similarly emphasize the temporal and spatial unpredictability of collective memory. Not surprisingly, Zelizer’s (1995) assessment of scholarly work remains accurate: “In its own search for repeatable patterns that helps us make sense of how memory works, inquiry has focused more on memory’s predictable elements” (p. 224). Looking for spatiotemporal patterns, according to Zelizer, often entails a search for predictability and imposes an artificial, though frequently productive, control. Here again, this *topos* provides the basis for the present study, wherein I am less interested in patterns of memory than in the modality of memory—its necessity, contingency, actuality, and possibility. In other words, in this study I will not primarily
be concerned with where memory has been—spatiotemporal patterns—but rather where and when memory is and could be.

Along with its nature as processural and unpredictable across time and space, collective memory, according to Zelizer (1995), is also always partial and never resolved, only ever achieving relative cogency within scholarly inquiry. That is, as scholars, we can never provide a complete picture of any particular memory process, practice, site, or event. Similarly, Aden et al. (2009), drawing upon McGee, recommend that we accept memory as a mosaic. In addition to the incompleteness of memory, the partialness of memory refers to its partiality, its inherently biased and contested nature. Olick and Robbins (1998) explain that memory sites and memory practices “are central loci for ongoing struggles over identity” (p. 126). Dickinson et al. (2010) similarly stress the partiality of memory, noting that it tends to revolve around issues of identity that are always partisan and contested; therefore, partiality, contestation, and identity are mutually motivated within collective memory. Who creates collective or public memory? Who owns it and by what authority? As Browne (1995) argues, such questions point towards rhetoric’s unique contribution to memory studies because rhetoric has been concerned traditionally with public deliberation and action. Following the topos of partialness and partiality memory, I will neither offer a complete picture of collective or public memory nor a full understanding of its partiality and its un/represented publics. Put differently, rather than focusing on what Phillips (2004) calls “the memory of publics,” I intend to explore “the publicness of memory.” Although Phillips describes these two frames as interrelated, the former emphasizes the subjective aspects of memory—publics that have and contest memories—while
the latter highlights the nonsubjective aspects of memory appearing in public—the uncertainties, elusiveness, and mutability of memory. By focusing on the *publicness of memory*, how memory appears in public/s, I follow the inherent capacities of memory to move across time and space thereby passing through the represented publics of memory.

Because collective memory is partial and contested, it is also *usable*, that is, used by groups to serve particular functions and purposes and to respond to specific issues. Zelizer (1995) observes that collective memory often serves instrumental purposes, as a means to something else, as a political and social tool to legitimize and mobilize social action. In this way, collective memory responds to the exigencies—concerns, issues, anxieties—of the present (Dickinson et al., 2010). Olick (2007) refers to this as social memory’s *presentism*, which refers to “how groups use the past for present purposes, and that the past is a particularly useful resource for expressing interests” (p. 128). According to Olick, presentism refers to both an instrumental use of memory—“a manipulation of the past for particular purposes”—and a meaning-making process—“an inevitable consequence of the fact that we interpret the world—including the past—on the basis of our own experience and within cultural frameworks” (p. 128). From a rhetorical perspective and adapting Kenneth Burke, we may say that the partiality and presentism of memory is the process of selecting, reflecting, and deflecting any particular memory of the past to induce cooperation in others. Memory, then, is both usable and useful. However, these capacities of memory are currently an underexplored *topos* of rhetorical memory inquiry as it relates to the use and usefulness of digital media technologies to extend and reshape
individual, collective, and public memory, or more aptly, how digital media technologies extend and reshape the emergence of memory in public/s.

Along with its partiality and usability, collective memory, according to Zelizer (1995), is both particular and universal: “[T]he same memory can act as a particular representation of the past for certain groups while taking on a universal significance for others” (p. 230). In this way, collective memory often becomes divided along such lines as official memory and vernacular memory (Bodnar, 1992) or collective memory and popular memory (Kammen, 1993). Bodnar argues that public memory and forms of public commemoration are essentially political struggles for supremacy between advocates of vernacular and official cultures. As Zelizer explains and as Bodnar and Kammen show in their studies, the particular or vernacular memory, through time, may become subsumed within the official memory discourse. Nevertheless, Bodnar (1992) concludes his study by stating that vernacular interests never completely die away because they form the basis of official culture: “The real question was never whether vernacular interests would go away but which interests would predominate from time to time” (p. 248). Zelizer proposes that scholarship needs to continue to focus on both the particular and universal dimensions, illuminating the ways in which they are co-present and by which one contests the other. Savoie (2010), for example, updates this topos by addressing the relationship between collective and individual memory within a digital media context, showing how digital media may help create collective memory while also “providing room for the particular and individual experiences that create, contradict, or challenge the larger narrative” (p. 11). Thus, new digital media help create “new spaces, platforms, and activities for public memory,” often
democratizing access to both individual and collective memory and facilitating a balance between the two dimensions. I similarly traverse this *topos* by asking how the affordances and constraints of digital media technologies help, hinder, or heighten the appearance of memory along with individual, collective, or public participation in memory practices, forms, and discourses.

As the final *topos*, Zelizer (1995) explains that collective memory is *material*, relying upon texts and artifacts, monuments, memorials, and museums, and public commemorations and performances. Nora (1989), for example, asserts, “Modern memory is, above all, archival. It relies on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the images” (p. 13). Public discourses, forms, and practices, then, are a necessary part of memory work. Browne (1995) similarly explains that public memory relies upon discursive productions, thereby giving memory a material and discursive texture; analysis should “stress the conditions of production, placement, form and function, and public consumptions of these texts” (p. 244). Dickinson et al. (2010) also state that memory relies upon material and/or symbolic supports. Given the importance of material and symbolic instantiation, Huyssen (1995) notes that memory is always already both representation and *re-presentation* of the past in the present. Olick (2007) refers to this as the problematic of representation: There can be no directly mimetic, no pre-representational experience of memory. As such, media and their materiality are integral to the expressions of memory. Indeed, Olick stipulates that the media of memory “are everything, and even if there is some ultimate truth of events, representational media clearly shape its delivery to us” (p. 98). The media of memory are “definitive of and not merely secondary to the message”
Therefore, according to Olick, scholarly analysis needs to attend to both the *media of memory* and the *mediation of memory*:

Media of memory are thus not only relational mechanisms but are themselves also caught up in complex relational figurations of fields, themes, and contexts. Not only do the media of memory change with the ‘events’ they mediate, but memory as mediation—the demand or even hope for representation—also changes as well: The media of memory decisively shape not only specific memories but also memory’s mediating functions. (p. 104)

Olick’s interest, along with most recent rhetorical scholarship, has been in more traditional forms of media and mediation, such as political festivals and social and cultural celebrations, monuments, memorials, and museums, and photographs, films, and textual artifacts. Little scholarship has attended to digital technologies as the media and mediation of memory. One recent edited collection, *Save as . . . Digital Memories*, begins to address this expanding *topos of materiality* by arguing that digital media technologies oblige scholars to rethink memory by “changing what we consider to be the past” along with the acts of recall, of recollection, of remembering and forgetting (Garde-Hansen, Hoskins, & Reading, 2009, p. 1). Similarly, my interest will be in how digital media technologies help us think about the media and mediation of memory within and for contemporary cultural and rhetorical practices. One might argue, however, that focusing on the material media of memory succumbs to the predictable expressions and patterns of memory, which Zelizer warns against. However, by attending to both the *material media* and the *material mediation* of memory we begin to address more fully the
processural and unpredictable nature of memory. For example, digital media technologies afford new processes and practices of the remediation (Bolter & Grusin, 1999; Erll & Rigney, 2009; Hoskins, 2009) and intermediation (Hayles, 2008) of memory, both of which highlight the processural and often unpredictable interaction of media, mediation, and memory; nevertheless, few studies, because of the newness of the technology, have done so. Consequently, this topos of materiality, which, as I use it, focuses on the media and mediation of memory, will provide the movement for navigating the other topoi of memory. And by studying memory’s materiality, rhetorical scholars can make an important contribution not only to rhetoric particularly but also to memory studies generally.

Within the rhetorical tradition, technologies of memory have served as metaphors for the media and mediation of memory. In Plato’s Theaetetus, Socrates asks Theaetetus to imagine that memory is a wax tablet, thus positing memory as a form of inscription or writing in the mind. Plato further explores the relationship between memory and writing in the Phaedrus in which he describes the technology of writing as a threat to natural memory. Socrates relates to Phaedrus the story of the god Thamus and Theuth, the inventor of writing. Theuth believes that writing will aid memory, whereas Thamus argues that writing “will create forgetfulness in the learners’ souls, because they will not use their memories; they will trust to the external written characters and not remember of themselves.” Writing offers only the “semblance of truth” because it hinders dialogue, which thrives upon an immediate and intimate oral question-and-response process. Accordingly, the person who relies upon writing comes to know only that which is written, and this reliance diminishes her memory. Whitehead (2009) notes, “As a model
for thinking about memory, Plato has exerted a powerful influence over the Western tradition. His opposition to writing can be traced in a lasting and persistent distrust of the archive as constituted by written records, in contrast to living memory” (p. 22). Ulmer (1985) extends this distrust beyond the archive:

Plato is condemning writing not just as ‘writing-down’ but as a whole theory of the relation of memory to thought. Plato’s diatribe against the sophists condemns artificial memory (hypomnesia) in general, including mnemotechnics, the system of *topoi*, or commonplaces developed for rhetorical writing. (p. 69)

Indeed, Plato’s skepticism towards writing has been extended to many, if not all, new technologies until they typically become more assimilated into and accepted within social and cultural practices. Given the current qualitative and quantitative capabilities of digital storage, we now ostensibly distrust our living memories more than our technologies, thus reversing Plato’s attack on writing. With the popularity of digital media technologies, search engines, and archival applications, such as Evernote and social bookmarking, we seem to be embracing the externalization of memory, and in the process experiencing qualitatively and quantitatively different capacities of remembering and forgetting, as suggested by Saper (2010). Given these processes and practices of digital technologies and their users, we should reconsider the role of memory in digital discourses, forms, and practices of individual, collective, and public memory.

In considering mnemotechnics and *topoi*, we arrive again at the relationship among rhetoric, memory, and digital media technologies—the *topos* of *materiality*, the media and mediation of memory. As mentioned above, memory is a key capacity of rhetoric, and rhetoric
constitutes—organizes, designs, and presents—the key capacities of memory. If many current
digital media practices are fundamentally memorial and archival, we need to address the *topoi*
within the *topos* of media and mediation—inscription and storage. As the preceding rough
sketches of current digital technologies and Plato begin to indicate, inscription and storage
traditionally have been present in the discourse on memory. Memory as wax tablet inscribes and
thus stores in the mind that which has been perceived. Memory as hard drive inscribes and thus
stores in bits that which has been viewed, downloaded, or saved. Similarly, as a form of
inscription and storage, modern memory, as Nora argues, relies upon the archival trace.
Granting the link between memory and archive, individual memory and public memory must be
determined by—partially, but exigently—the material technologies of inscription and storage
that constitute contemporary archives. Indeed, Derrida (1998) argues that the archive “produces
as much as it records the event” (p. 17). The archive and archival technologies, acting as both
commencement and commandment, define the archivable event, thus producing the future’s
memory of the past. Like Derrida’s deconstruction of Plato’s *pharmakon*, digital media
technologies’ relationship to the archive and to memory may be both a poison and a cure.
Rather than focusing on the poisonous or curative qualities of digital technologies, however, we
should inquire into the new capacities, spatialities, and temporalities that such technologies help
to produce within the scene memory, such as new modes of mediating—inscribing, storing, and
archiving—personal and public, social and cultural memories. As users and scholars of these
new digital technologies, we need to search for and explore the constellation of forces these
technologies exert on mnemonic and rhetorical practices of memory, its production and
consumption. And in following these forces, we may begin to discover the relations between the medium-specificity of digital media and the poetics and politics of the archive, between digital images and public memory, between individual and collective identity and memory’s digital persistence and ephemerality—a rhetoric of digital memory for everyday life.

The *topos* of *materiality*—the media and mediation—of memory discloses the problematic of representation: How can any memory of the past be re-presented and represented? Implicitly tied into this problematic of representation is the problem of communication: How can any memory of the past be communicated to and understood by individuals and social groups? How can the past be made meaningful in the present? Most studies of memory, including rhetorical studies, have been most interested in these questions of representation, communication, understanding, and meaning. Indeed, such questions are fundamental to rhetoric. However, drawing upon the invention resources of Muckelbauer’s work, *The Future of Invention* (2008), I stress the persuasive functions of memory. Muckelbauer (2008) claims, “Rhetoric’s traditional emphasis on persuasion means that it is not identical to practices that emphasize the central role of understanding, practices that we might generally refer to as ‘communicative’” (p. 17). Most recent rhetorical studies attempt to reproduce and so communicate, as accurately as possible, memory of the past as primarily meaningful, as signified content (Dickinson et al., 2010). Although we cannot avoid doing so given memory’s problematic of representation, we can, I argue, promote a different style of engagement with memory, one that focuses on memory’s persuasive functions, those that are not identical to communication and understanding.
Muckelbauer explains that an act of persuasion is not primarily a signifying operation, but rather an *asignifying* one: “Rather than attempting to identically reproduce the proposition as a meaning in the mind of the audience, persuasive rhetoric attempts to make the proposition compelling, to give it a certain force” (p. 17). An act of persuasion, as asignifying, does not address a proposition’s meaning or content, but rather “to its capacity to exert compelling force, its ability to evoke particular responses in specific audiences (often in the interest of producing political or juridical actions)” (p. 17). That is, Muckelbauer argues that the act of persuasion is not primarily interested in *what the proposition is*, “nor with the entire communicative apparatus that follows from this: signification, identical reproduction, an emphasis on understanding” (p. 18). Instead, the act of persuasion stresses “*what the proposition does*, the responses it provokes and the effects it engenders” (p. 18). In other words, persuasion intends to evoke and provoke a certain array of responses and effects, independent of communication and understanding: “If I am trying to persuade the polis, I am primarily concerned with getting them to *do* something and not primarily interested in getting them to understand something” (p. 18). Thus, persuasion treats the proposition as a “constellation of forces” (p. 18). Similarly, if we engage with memory as a persuasive proposition, we will not be primarily interested in *what memory is* but rather *what memory does and can do*: What is the constellation of forces moving through any particular memory? And what array of responses and effects might these forces provoke? Consequently, memory is represented not as inherently meaningful; rather, meaning comes out of the connections and relations memory produces. This style of engagement with the persuasion of memory allows us to foreground the processural nature of memory rhetorically—contingency.
and modality, the rhetorical situation, audience, rhetorical circulation, *copia*, *kairos*, and *decorum*—while inhabiting the *topoi* of memory. In doing so, I offer less a corrective to current rhetorical study of memory and more an alternative style of engagement, what Muckelbauer would call engagement of a different rhythm, one that follows the rhythms of memory.

The *topoi* of collective and public memory—processural, unpredictable through time and space, partial, usable, particular and universal, and material—establish the scene of memory, providing the assumptions and themes for rhetorical theory and criticism of memory. Indeed, these *topoi* respond to and produce rhetorical memory studies, and as rhetorical scholars we must travel to these topical locations to find arguments about memory. However, following again Muckelbauer’s inventional style, rather than using the *topoi* to identify gaps in the literature that must be overcome by scholarly intervention, I will attempt to inhabit these *topoi*—taking the scenic route through memory—to see where they take and are taken by digital media technologies. In the words of Muckelbauer, I will engage a style of invention “less concerned with gaps and overcoming and more concerned with producing connections” (p. 127). In doing so, I will not seek to offer any definitive understanding of memory’s interaction with digital media technologies; rather, I will attempt to discover what comes out of the interaction between memory and digital media technologies. The *topoi*, then, will act as relays between memory and digital media technologies that will allow us to discover the capacities of memory within a digital media culture. Put differently, I am interested in what the intermediation of practices of memory and digital media technologies does and can do for us as scholars, practitioners, and participants and as individuals, collectives, and publics.
Memory has long been linked to techne; nevertheless, memory within rhetorical studies needs to be reanimated to better account for memory’s essential relationship to technology. In the present study, I argue that memory, within a contemporary culture defined by digital media technologies, has become, once again, newly and fundamentally the central capacity of rhetoric. By placing memory in the middle of digital rhetorical theory and practice, I seek to inhabit the topoi of memory described above, searching for and expanding the capacities and potentialities of digital memory practices. In so doing, I situate memory in the middle of rhetoric’s traditional concern for public deliberation and action. To participate effectively, individuals and publics will need to capably traverse the capacities of memory, its vectors, velocities, and valences—its directions and magnitudes, its speed, and its combinatory power. This study thus advances a mnemotechnics of memory—a digital ars memoria—that addresses memory by asking what memory does and can do within a digital media culture. In raising such issues, I am less concerned by representations of specific memories or memorable events and more interested in the constellation of forces or drives flowing through mnemonic and memorial practices and digital media technologies. This focus on the forces of memory and digital media rather than the representations of specific memories entails both advantages and limitations. This study is limited because I do not attempt to illuminate any particular public memory, as most rhetorical studies do. Furthermore, this study is limited by rapidly developing digital technologies that seemingly become outmoded ever more quickly. Nevertheless, these limitations can be leveraged as advantages. Although I do not necessarily analyze a particularly historic event or public memory, I do advance a rhetorical framework for studying the intermediation of practices of
memory and digital media technologies. In short, this study advances rhetorical theory and criticism of individual, collective, and public memory by looking at how memory moves within a digital media culture and how digital media technologies put memory on the move, placing the art of memory in the middle of digital rhetorical theory and practice—a capacity for being present in the world and making its future.

**Rhetoric, Memory, & Digital Media: Canvassing the Chapters**

As indicated above, the classical art of memory—essential to ancient rhetorical practice—provides a conceptual framework from which to begin thinking about digital media and memory practices, for example the role of visual images, spatiality and temporality, *topoi* and *loci*, accumulation and circulation, association and affect, and difference and repetition. Retheorizing the rhetorical canon of memory requires an examination of how individuals and publics use the practices, places, and networks of memory not only to annotate, archive, and organize the *copia*, the excess, of digital memories, but also to play with and participate in that excess. Often rhetoric is thought of as an art of beginning, especially when beginning seems impossible (Muckelbauer, 2008; Sellars, 2006); however, by situating memory in the middle of rhetoric and by rhetorically locating ourselves in the middle of memory, we begin to sense that beginning is another mode of remembering and forgetting anew, of beginning what we have already begun in another time and place.

In chapter two, “The Scene of Digital Memory: A Tropological Detour through the *Topoi* of Memory,” I continue to work through and inhabit the *topoi* of memory as outlined above. And to do so, I employ the *topoi* of memory, using Kenneth Burke’s four master
tropes—metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, and irony—as a relay for traversing and
transgressing the *topoi* of memory. Burke describes metaphor as perspective, synecdoche as representation, metonymy as reduction, and irony as dialectic. In so defining the tropes, Burke (1945/1969) notes that each shades into the other so that beginning with one leads necessarily to another. He suggests that these four master tropes play roles “in the discovery and description of ‘the truth’” (p. 503). In this chapter, I aim to discover the “the truth of memory” to conceptualize the *topoi* of memory, its processes and practices; the tropes will allow us to understand the rhetorical implications of the *topos* of materiality—the media and mediation of memory. I explore common metaphors of memory—for instance, a wax tablet—as perspectives upon memory. With metaphor as a way of seeing, I attempt to follow each metaphor to see where it takes memory. Metaphors bleed into representations of memory—synecdoche—which allows us, for instance, to move abductively between representations of the particular and the universal. Such representations often become manifested as reductions of memory—metonymy—which enable us to consider partiality and instrumentality of memory. Finally, irony recognizes the limitations of each by juxtaposing opposing metaphors, synecdoches, and metonymies, and so revealing “partial truths” and *partial memories*. Burke describes irony as a dialectic that puts perspectives into action. In this chapter, I put the master tropes into action to discover the actions of memory. Applying the tropes to memory helps to show us what we think about memory and what we think memory could be: They give us perspectives upon memory while also showing us the prospects for a digital memory rhetoric.
In chapter three, “The Monumentality of the Mundane: Public Memory and the Rhetorical Circulation of Digital Images,” I put to work the conceptual framework of *topoi* and *tropoi* to examine how digital imaging technologies affect the rhetorical circulation of visual images in digital media culture and how that affects the emergence and performance of public memory. The inquiry is framed by and advances two claims: 1) the psychosis of digital imaging technologies drives the rhetorical circulation of images in today’s digital culture and, as a result, 2) the nature of digital images and their rhetorical circulation necessarily alters the possibilities of their rhetorical function. Analysis of a digital medium, Microsoft Photosynth (a web application that concatenates digital images into one large image or synth), and the synth of President Barack Obama’s inauguration in 2008 illustrates how the rhetorical circulation of digital images within current digital media culture has shifted attention away from a permanent record of past and public events to the transient moment found in the monumentality of the mundane.

Chapter four, “Visual Practices of Digital Memory: Inventing and Remembering with Digital Images, Places, and Publics,” continues to explore the relationship between the transient moment and individual and public experience of memory by reevaluating how digital media technologies are simultaneously accelerating and flattening both chronic and spatial differentiation. The spatial arrangement and delivery of information produce new performances of the relations among past, present, and future. I seek to investigate how digital media technologies disrupt the linear flow of time by bringing together many flows, leading to an accumulation of times. And the accumulation of times within digital memory has the potential to foment an upheaval of events, thus acknowledging “the capacity of any future eruption, any
event, any reading, to rewrite, resignify, reframe the present, to accept the role of the accidental, chance, or the undetermined plays in the unfolding of time” (Grosz, 1999, p. 18). Thus, digital memory allows individuals and collectives to disrupt the flows of time to produce a past, present, and future at the same time: “What digital media brings to memory—and to thinking about and representing the past is the possibility of simultaneity, indeterminacy, and the continual eruption of the new” (Garde-Hansen et al., 2009, p. 7-8).

To study these disruptions of time and space, I consider again the accumulation and circulation of digital images. Specifically, a “Group Pool” on Flickr, the popular photo-sharing website, called, “Looking into the Past,” collects photographs that overlap a modern day space with an old photograph of that space so that past and present appear simultaneously. Similarly, a CNN iReport (2010c) “Weekend Assignment” asked readers to produce these kinds of photographs of their neighborhoods. Such photographic and memory practices produce a locus of social interaction, bringing into being possibilities of places through times. These digital memory spaces have the potential to create a confusion of spaces and times producing a public memory best envisioned as the accumulated layering of publics and memories. Individuals and collectives, then, must position and situate themselves within these individual, collective, and public layerings. Consequently, we must reevaluate how memory functions within the current digital media culture, and in so doing, we may begin to understand how we are emplaced within digital memory spaces and “digital network memory” (Hoskins, 2009) and digital ambient memory. What is important is that individuals and publics learn to situate themselves in the layerings of spaces and times of digital memory.
Chapter five, the conclusion, titled “Curating Copia: The Prospects of Digital–Memory–Rhetoric,” addresses the capaciousness and capacity of memory within current digital media culture, especially as memory relates to the other canons, or capacities, of rhetoric— invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. Rather than a storehouse or treasure-house, memory, within digital media culture, should be understood as the force or constellation of forces that animates and energizes invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. To highlight the animating force of memory, I emphasize one increasingly important practice of memory within digital media culture—curation. By considering one example of digital curation, I show how curation helps us rethink the relationship between memory and invention as a shift from genius to scenius, a shift from topos to chora. Arrangement becomes the practice connecting, linking, and sharing with individuals, collectives, and publics. As such, the focus of arrangement shifts from absence/presence to pattern randomness (Brooke, 2009) to where memory could go next. As such, arrangement becomes an ars combinatoria, an art of combining, selecting, and connecting. The relationship between memory and style emphasizes copia and amplification, thus acknowledging the connection between capacious and capacity. Furthermore, style has become, in postmodern culture, inextricably linked to identity, evoking an essential rhetorical question, Who am I? And who we are has become bound with the performance of identity, and performance is a mode of delivery. The conclusion reanimates the canon of memory as a capacity, as a techne, as an art, as ars memoria for the future of digital-memory-rhetoric.
CHAPTER TWO

The Scene of Digital Memory: A Tropological Detour through the *Topoi* of Memory

Memory is the matrix of all human temporal perception.
— Mary Carruthers (1990/2008, p. 238)

Memory is readily and dynamically configured through our digital practices and the connectivity of our networks. . . . The increasingly digital networking of memory not only functions in a continuous present but is also a distinctive shaper of a new mediatised age of memory.
— Andrew Hoskins (2009, p. 96)

Jasinski (2001) claims that rhetorical critics have shifted to developing critical procedures around conceptual issues rather than methodological ones, and he calls this shift “one of the most significant recent developments in rhetorical studies” (p. 254). Jasinski distinguishes between methodologically-driven and conceptually-driven criticism by suggesting that the former proceeds deductively—applying a method to a particular object—while the latter advances abductively. For Jasinski, abduction is a reflexive process among the objects and the rhetorical concepts under consideration: “Conceptually oriented criticism proceeds through the constant interaction of careful reading and rigorous conceptual reflection” (p. 256). This mode of inquiry advances through what Gaonkar has referred to as “the thickening [of] concepts through grounded critical readings” (as cited in Jasinski, 2001, p. 256). Conceptual thickening aptly characterizes recent rhetorical studies of memory that engage the concept as both an individual and collective phenomenon. Indeed, as the introduction outlines, reviewing the literature in memory studies reveals a set of *topoi* that revolve around the nature and
representation of memory, its ontology and epistemology. These *topoi* allow the critic to move abductively from the object of inquiry—memory as it appears in time and space—and the rhetorical concept of memory. In this way, the *topoi* of memory help invent and define the topic of inquiry, describing how rhetorical studies of memory and memory itself are being conceptualized and enacted in theory and practice. In the introductory chapter, I employed Zelizer’s (1995) article, “Reading the Past Against the Grain,” as an appropriate entry into the *topoi* of memory, specifically memory as a collective phenomenon. It is helpful to recall those *topoi* here: Collective memory is (1) processural, (2) unpredictable across time and space, (3) partial, (4) usable, (5) particular and universal, and (6) material. As discussed, these *topoi* are interdependent phenomena, existing in different ratios of influence according to the critic’s theoretical perspective and methodology along with the particular appearance of memory being studied.

In this chapter, I contribute to the conceptual thickening of rhetorical memory by providing a review of multiple literatures on memory. More specifically, this chapter inhabits and explores the *topoi* of memory by making a tropological detour through them via Burke’s (1945/1969) four master tropes—metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony. The four master tropes will act as a relay for traversing and transgressing the *topoi* of memory. For example, as the metaphors of memory change so do the metonymies of memory—that is, the material instantiations of memory—from wax tablets to iPads. We may ask, for example: How does the processural quality of memory change when memory is seen through the perspective of a digital network? Similar shifts occur to synecdoches of memory: Who is represented in a digital
network of memory—individual, collective, or public—and to what effect? With irony, we can put these perspectives in action by juxtaposing conceptualizations of memory, highlighting, for example, the connections between remembering and forgetting. By following the tropes through the *topoi*, I show the relationships among current rhetorical assumptions while also advancing new lines of inquiry that consider how practices of memory have become enabled by and embedded in digital media technologies.

The rapid development and proliferation of digital media technologies demand reevaluating concepts and practices of memory. Van House and Churchill (2008) state that both individual and collective memory practices rely, in part, on technologies of memory and sociotechnical practices: “The facility with which material can be digitized, replicated and distributed through and across socio-technical networks has resulted in profound shifts in how we conceptualize memory, our personal and collective archive practices, and even our view of persistence and permanence” (p. 296). Similarly, Garde-Hansen, Hoskins, and Reading (2009) argue that the models of memory based upon more traditional “broadcast era” media have become outmoded in, what they call, a “digital media ecology” that facilitates the “supreme accessibility, transferability and circulation of digital content” (p. 3). Both sets of authors are suggesting that with changes in materiality of memory—a particularly influential *topos*—come corresponding changes in the practices of memory that, in turn, change the nature of memory. For example, Garde-Hansen et al. (2009) advocate “a concept of digital memory as one that rethinks time as linear and moves toward a concept of time and memory as spatial and involving organic participation with inorganic structures” (p. 7). These authors are both identifying and
calling for a shift in the intermediation of memory—how technology and the concept of memory exist in feedforward and feedback loops. Therefore, we ought to consider the production of memory—both how memory is produced and how memory produces—so that we may begin to understand how we—as critics and as technology users—are situated and emplaced within digital memories.

I begin with a brief overview of Burke’s four master tropes. I then use the tropes, working from metaphor to metonymy to synecdoche to irony, to move through the *topoi* to show how memory is being conceptualized in contemporary rhetorical theory and memory studies. I use the four master tropes and the *topoi* of memory to do what Brown (2008) suggests all scholars working in memory studies should do: “To invent (and continuously re-invent) a set of concepts or models that articulate transversal relations between disciplines” (p. 266). I seek to produce transversal relations responsive to the intermediation of memory and digital technologies. By abductively tacking among and between the four master tropes and six *topoi*, I demonstrate how and to what extent these figures help us invent and understand the sociotechnical practices of memory that transform its nature. As figures of invention, the tropes provide perspectives upon digital memory while also disclosing the prospects of digital memory as a concept in rhetorical theory and practice.

**Turning in/to Tropes: The Conceptual Thickening of Memory**

In defining the four master tropes, Burke (1945/1969) notes that distinguishing figurative from literal usage is an “evanescent moment,” but he seeks to do so anyway because he is interested in how the tropes help “in the discovery and description of ‘the truth’” (p. 503).
To show the relationship between the two usages, Burke suggests that we could replace metaphor with *perspective*, metonymy with *reduction*, synecdoche with *representation*, and irony with *dialectic*. Because the four tropes necessarily shade into one another, moving through them allows the critic to more fully consider a topic or situation, to discover its “truth.” Put differently, with the four master tropes Burke demonstrates “how to ‘construct’ a dialectic: that is, on how to advance consideration of an issue” (Simons, 2006, p. 159). The four master tropes allow the critic to put ideas into action to explore the possibilities and limitations of an issue, and in so doing, to show that no “truth” is stable for long. Here, I employ the tropes to examine the “truths” of memory to create transversal relations that conceptualize theories and practices of memory relating to the intermediation of memory and digital media technologies. Doing so will allow us to see how far we can take any given theory or practice before we reach its theoretical, or ‘truthful,’ limits, and in this way, we can begin to engage lines of inquiry that will be pursued in subsequent chapters.

**Metaphors of Memory**

As a natural mental faculty, memory is allusive, elusive, and illusive; we must follow the whims of our natural ability or lack thereof to remember. Our memories, however, have long had help. Havelock (1963) and Ong (1982) explain, for example, how memory was vital to pre-literate oral cultures because a collective and social memory transmits from one generation to the next cultural traditions and experiences. Havelock argued that social memory had to be articulated in language “standardized . . . to achieve preservation outside of the daily whim of men” (p. 42). Because oral cultures relied upon living memories of individuals to transmit the
traditions of the group, those memories not only had to be articulated verbally, but also had to be relatively consistent from person to person, generation to generation. To achieve intergenerational consistency, social or collective memory was performed as poetry. Poetry was a *techne* of memory: “The only possible verbal technology available to guarantee the preservation and fixity of transmission was that of the rhythmic word organized cunningly in verbal and metrical patterns” (Havelock, 1963, p. 42-43). Natural memory was mediated by the lineation, syntax, rhymes and rhythms, and formulaic structures of poetry. As the poet depended upon poetry to remember, natural and artificial memory became inseparable, and the poet was lost to the poem (Havelock, 1963). The poet must submit with fidelity to poetic remembering to maintain consistency from one performance to the next. This is not to say the poet’s performance never varied, but rather that “bold invention is the prerogative of writers, in a bookish culture” (Havelock, 1963, p. 46). And like the poet, the audience was expected to submit to the poetic performance, “identify[ing] almost pathologically and certainly sympathetically with the content of what [the poet] is saying” (p. 45). A poetic social memory was the most important form of memory for oral cultures.

The advent and adoption of writing created a new culture of memory. Writing, as an aid to memory, introduced new subject-object relations; indeed, the individual became separate from the memory, the performance, and the collective. Writing allowed the individual to see herself as a subject, and as Derrida (1981) argues, to write the *self* as a subject. According to Havelock, the development of the subject or psyche paralleled the development of writing because writing psychically and physically reinforced the separation of the knower and the
known. Whereas poetic memory was inscribed internally, writing was externalized, allowing the individual to review and rearrange “what had now been written down, and of what could be seen as an object and not just heard and felt. You could as it were take a second look at it” (Havelock, 1963, p. 208). Writing as external inscription could foster the individual’s ability to break from poetic techne and memorization, thus permitting the individual to think of her self as a subject worthy of consideration, complete with an individual memory. Writing as technology changed the identity and the place of an individual in the world. One consequence of writing was that the individual’s experience could become more important than the collective’s. The transition from oral to literate cultures and the role of memory, natural and artificial, within that transition offers parallels to today’s culture of memory whereby digital media technologies allow for granular forms of personalization and customization, and so the individual’s experience may become, once again or to an even greater degree, more important than social or collective memory as individuals and individual memory are embedded in digital and social media. I explore this possibility along with its consequences not only in the following section on synecdoche but also in subsequent chapters that focus on practices of memory relating to digital imaging technologies.

From poetic performance to writing to architectural mnemonics to computers, metaphors of memory become more than metaphors because they enact the possibilities and define the limits of memory. Indeed, the mediated limitation of memory lies at the heart of Plato’s distrust of writing as an aid to memory. Plato distrusts writing because he distinguishes between natural and artificial memory, and clearly favors the former as offering a more direct
and authentic experience of that which is to be remembered. In distinguishing between natural
and artificial memory, Plato attempts to further his division of philosophy and rhetoric: Natural
memory belongs to philosophy, while artificial memory belongs to rhetoric. Nevertheless,
Brooke (2000) argues that “rhetoric does not claim to be anything but artificial; indeed, it is its
artificiality that renders it transferable and teachable” (p. 784). Rhetoric, as an art, has always
been linked to memory as an artificial extension of the mind; thus, rhetoric’s conceptualization
of memory cannot be separated from the media and mediation of memory. Acknowledging the
intermediation of memory and media allows us to move beyond Plato’s distrust of artificial
memory and artificial aids of memory—a distrust that accompanies the introduction of many, if
not most, new technologies until they become assimilated into sociotechnical practices.

In relation to memory, Plato’s skepticism centers on the presumption that natural
memory exists in a state of “original plenitude” and any mediation of that memory is
“subsequent loss.” Rigney (2005) posits this model of “original plenitude and subsequent loss”
to highlight how memory has been “conceptualized on the one hand in terms of an original
‘storehouse’ and, on the other hand, as something that is always imperfect and diminishing, a
matter of chronic frustration because always falling short of total recall” (p. 12). Within this
model, any form of media and mediation is necessarily a loss of the original plenitude of
memory. However, memory, as it has long been acknowledged, never exists in original plenitude.
Memory reconstructs. Memory mediates. Memory is always a reconstruction, a mediation of the
past in the present, a “product of representations not of direct experience” (p. 15). Therefore,
Rigney argues for
a social-constructivist model that takes as its starting point the idea that memories of a shared past are collectively constructed and reconstructed in the present rather than resurrected from the past. What if uses of “external” sources of information are no longer seen as regrettable manifestations of memory loss, but as the order of the day? (p. 14)

The external media and mediation of memory produce the meaning of memory “in an ongoing way through selection, representation and interpretation” (p. 16) as memory circulates through various discourses and material sociotechnical practices. Memory acquires value in its partiality, in its uses in and for the present for particular and universal purposes, as suggested by the topos of memory. Consequently, we should understand that the media and mediation of memory are not detriments to memory or memory work, but rather the means by which memory is produced and produces; media and mediation invent relations of and to memory that would not be possible without them. And metaphors of memory permit us some access to these relations, thus making memory visible in a new light.

Burke (1945/1969) describes metaphor as “a device for seeing something in terms of something else” (p. 503), considering A from the perspective of B. Metaphors permit us to understand an unfamiliar thing in terms of some more familiar thing without fully equating the two things. Incongruity always exists in the comparative perspective “because the seeing of something in terms of something else involves the ‘carrying-over’ of a term from one realm into another, a process that necessarily involves varying degrees of incongruity in that the two realms are never identical” (p. 504). At the same time, perspective by incongruity discloses the qualities
of the thing being considered while also illuminating the conditions for action. Metaphors of memory offer the most expansive, and often persistent, perspectives upon memory, perspectives which will be carried over into the metonymy, synecdoche, and irony of memory.

Given the “amorphous” qualities of memory (Le Goff, 1993), metaphors have long been used to understand what memory is and how it works. Draaisma (2000) notes that storage spaces, from wine cellars to treasure chests, as well as natural and constructed settings, from woods to fields to labyrinths to caves to buildings, have been used to provide perspectives upon memory. As such, each metaphor puts forward “different kinds of memory” (p. 4). Among the most common metaphors of memory have been technologies because technologies, Draaisma suggests, are the means of developing artificial memories. From poetry to writing to photography to cinematography to sound recorders to computers, technologies as artificial aids for memory “have not only supported, relieved and occasionally replaced natural memory, but they have also shaped our views of remembering and forgetting. Over the centuries memory aids provided the terms and concepts with which we have reflected on our own memory” (p. 3). Draaisma compares “the history of memory” to “a tour of the depositories of a technology museum” (p. 3). Similarly, Sack (2006) notes that “each generation of memory theorists tends to incorporate the latest media technology to explore its similarities with human memory” (p. 184-185). In this way, metaphors of memory reveal cultures of memory: “Metaphors as literary-scientific constructs are also reflection of an age, a culture, an ambience” (Draaisma, 2000, p. 4). Here, I suggest that digital media technologies have helped to create a culture of memory that is newly and fundamentally memorial and mnemonic, what I refer to, using the metaphors of
network and ambience, as digital network memory and digital ambient memory that find expression through the psychosis of digital imaging, monumentality of the mundane, algorithmic intervention, and practices of curation. Perspectives suggested by network and ambience show the capacities of digital media technologies to transform how memories emerge and appear in public and how individuals, collectives, and publics appear in and perform memories; indeed digital media technologies have rendered problematic the concepts of individual, collective, and public memory, as will be discussed below and in subsequent chapters.

With the advent of computer technologies, Sack (2006) argues that contemporary cognitive science, molecular biology, neuro-psychology, immunology, game theory, and economics have taken the computer as the best model of human memory. To explain the dominance of this metaphor, he notes that the first “computers” were women who worked in offices and processed information and statistics, hence the title of N. Katherine Hayles’s My Mother Was a Computer (2005). The earliest digital computers, in turn, were designed to do the work of these human computers:

Computer memory seems to be a good model of human memory because computer memory was modeled on human memory! . . . This situation would be like discovering a painted portrait of a specific man and then spending the rest of one’s professional life commenting on how uncanny it was that the portrait seemed to look like a human being. (Sack, 2006, p. 188)

Although Sack presents this model as absurd, Kittler (1999) would say that this model is exactly right because “media determine our situation” (p. xxxix). Metaphors of memory, especially those
of media technologies, are more than metaphors because they disclose what is already there, or what Peters (2004) calls “the new already” (p. 193). Examining the early history of sound technologies, Peters shows how in developing the resonator, which is used to identify frequencies and pitches in sound, Hermann von Helmholtz considered the ear to be an instrument. As Peters explains, “His metaphorizing of the ear as instrument invites the instrumentalization of the ear” (p. 185); that is, the mechanized ear made the human ear uncanny. The materiality of the human ear framed the materiality of the instrument, which, in turn, reconfigured the materiality of the human ear. As another example, Peters discusses how the phonograph revealed the quality of the human voice—its grain, its lack, its mortality. As the last two qualities imply, Peters claims that new media technologies uncover deficiencies in the human body: “The perfection of humanoid instruments invited the handicapping of our bodily organs. What had once been normal ears and voices are now revealed in all their deficiency” (p. 193). According to Peters, technology reveals what we had previously missed, “the new already”: “New emergences reveal what was always there—but was never there before” (p. 193). He argues, then, that new media as both metaphors and objects open up new relations with us as subjects, between our bodies and our environments, “introducing [us] to old modes of experience that we never recognized we had before and therefore seem new” (p. 195). I argue that the new already of digital memory reveals memory to be networked and ambient, monumental and mundane, copious and constricting.
As should be clear, I am not providing a history of metaphors of memory¹, but rather discussing how metaphors, in general, have been used to provide perspective upon memory. In the following review, I focus on the intermediation of memory and digital media technologies; specifically, I review and extend the work of Andrew Hoskins to understand how digital media technologies transform practices of memory. Through several articles and edited collections, Hoskins (Garde-Hansen et al., 2009; Hoskins, 2003; Hoskins, 2009; Hoskins, 2011a; Hoskins, 2011b; Hoskins, 2011c; Hoskins, 2011d) has shown how a “new media ecology” of digital technologies has created a “new memory ecology,” thus transforming discourses, forms, and practices of individual and collective memory. Hoskins (2009) argues that memory is always mediated so that “how the past is and is not recorded, archived, accessed, retrieved and represented is entangled with the nature, forms, and control of the technologies, media and institutions of the day” (p. 27). In this way, mediated memory is always new memory because the formation and representation of memory along with the value of remembering and forgetting is subject to the technologies and discourses of the contemporary age. Hoskins suggests that memory is currently undergoing a process of mediatization whereby memory has become so embedded in digital media technologies and sociotechnical practices that we need new concepts and theories of memory to understand how and what we remember and forget:

Today, however, the proliferation of new media technologies has ushered in mediatised regimes of memory that effect a new texture of the past that is driven, maintained and

¹ For a history of metaphors of memory, see Draaisma (2000).
replenished through its connections and aggregations. This is not merely about the voluminous accumulations of the archive but rather the ways in which the everyday and individual memory is ‘imbricated’ (to paraphrase Bowker, 2005/08) in recording technologies and media that afford memory its strength through our mediatised connections with others. (Hoskins, 2009, p. 31)

Through their connections and aggregations and voluminous accumulations, digital media technologies have introduced new values into the media-memory landscape and sociotechnical practices. For example, the immediate and instantaneous tend to be favored over the distant and delayed, leading to an “intensification of our experience of the present” that may, in turn, diminish the time and space for memory (p. 39). Here, Hoskins suggests that digital media technologies introduce new experiences of spatiality and temporality. The simultaneity of our experiences of people, places, and events may, on the one hand, “consume, fill, and smother, our temporal horizons” while on the other hand, introducing “greater intensive and extensive connectivity, between the forms and agents of discourses of memory” (p. 40). That is, the temporalities produced by digital media technologies favor the near-instantaneous present, a present that is ever-shrinking, while simultaneously creating greater memorial and mnemonic connections among individuals, collectives, and publics. As a result, the sociotechnical practices that accompany digital media technologies disrupt how “individuals locate their own pasts and those of their groups and societies through their immersion in emergent networks that blur if not transcend the personal and the public, the individual and the social and the particular and the collective” (p. 40). For Hoskins, the current dominant metaphor of memory is the digital
network, which contrasts previous metaphors relating to mass media. He identifies a conceptual corollary between mass media and collective memory: Both concepts rely on notions of institutionalized discourse and mass production, circulation, and consumption. Put simply, mass media have mass audiences that have mass memory, that is, collective memory. In contrast to mass media, Hoskins and other media scholars acknowledge that we have entered a post-broadcast digital age wherein none of the who, what, where, when, why, and how—or, I might suggest Burke’s hexad: agent, agency, act, scene, purpose, and attitude—“of remembering and forgetting are untouched by the advent of digital media” (p. 279). A new media ecology driven by the digital network complicates and unsettles the production, circulation, and consumption of memories as individual, collective, and public phenomena.

Hoskins (2009) uses the concept of the network to show how individual and collective memories are bound together in digital network technologies. Taking digital network as a metaphor of the media and mediation of memory in contemporary digital media culture makes visible the necessary shift in perspectives on the concept of memory—from mass media and collective memory to digital media and connective memory, or what Hoskins calls “digital network memory.” The concept of “digital network memory” emphasizes “the dynamics of mediated memory as something created when needed, driven by the connectivities of digital technologies and media, and inextricably forged through and constitutive of digital social networks” (p. 92). Hoskins argues that digital media technologies and their corresponding sociotechnical practices require a shift in understanding the capacities of remembering and forgetting—capacities shaped by the connectivities that emerge through a range of digital media technologies. Indeed, he
suggests that digital network memory emerges through an “on-the-fly” construction that establishes “the relationship between the now and the most recently connected moment” (p. 94). In the process, digital network memory temporally connects moments to moments, memories to memories, or what he refers to as “another next first time”: “a recognizable and sequentially located new moment, a patterned new moment that can be understood because of its similarity to previous moments and because of its place in the joint unfolding of biography and history” (p. 95). Such temporal connections enact a shift from media content to sociotechnical practices—not so much what individuals or groups are remembering, but rather how they are remembering and forgetting. And how individuals and groups remember and forget have become enabled by and embedded in sociotechnical practices that form a “technological unconscious” (p. 95). Technological unconscious, a concept coined by Nigel Thrift and modified by N. Katherine Hayles as “technological nonconscious,” refers to how “everyday habits” become “initiated, regulated, and disciplined by multiple strata of technological devices and inventions” (Hayles as cited in Hoskins, 2009, p. 96). Hoskins adds: “[C]ontemporary memory is thoroughly interpenetrated by a technological unconscious in that there occurs a ‘co-evolution’ of memory and technology. Memory is readily and dynamically configured through our digital practices and the connectivity of digital networks” (p. 96). The technological unconscious of digital network produces a culture of memory based upon practices that take advantage of the fluidity, reproducibility, and transferability of digital data to forge memory on-the-fly in an ongoing past and present.
Hoskins, therefore, suggests that we must conceive digital remembering and forgetting as “navigation in and through emergent and shifting complexities of connections in and through media” (p. 272). The moment of connection is the moment of memory:

Connectivity transforms memory as being radically strung out via a continuous present and past. Memory is not in this way a product of individual or collective remembrances, but is instead generated through the flux of contacts between people and digital technologies and media. (p. 272)

Remembering and forgetting become processes of temporal and spatial navigation, and navigation produces and enacts “interactional trajectories,” which refer to the experiences of individuals and groups connecting and disconnecting “to a melee of networks over time, in addition to their experiences of and orientations to non-networked objects, places, and people” (p. 272). According to Hoskins, connective memory is most visible in relation to nodal events, “those events that have acquired a substantial and recognizable memorial status in terms of the relative extent of their ongoing presence in media-public discourses as signifying a particular relevance and meaning in ‘memory’ to a given community of persons” (p. 270). As an example, Hoskins considers the interactional trajectories surrounding the 7/7 London bombing. In remembering, commemorating, and memorializing this event, individuals, collectives, and publics along with objects and places connect and disconnect in various ways through various media to produce new experiences and memories of the bombing: “Connective memory conceived in this way involves a continuation of a set of interactional trajectories of remembrances, that are differentially intersected, amplified and reduced through their
embeddedness in new contexts, testimony, evidence, objects and media” (p. 277). Memories and objects of memory have trajectories of their own that connect and disrupt how individuals, collectives, and publics remember and forget. Hoskins’s interrelated concepts of digital network memory, connective memory, and interactional trajectories emphasize a new media ecology that transforms the sociotechnical practices of memory and the nature of memory itself.

Hoskins’s concepts give us a metaphorical framework to understand how the topoi of memory change with the proliferation of digital media technologies. Taken together, the concepts of digital network memory, connective memory, and interactional trajectories demonstrate how digital media technologies “no longer only or occasionally amplify or cohere memory around or on events they make public and newsworthy. Rather, there is a radical diffusion of memory, through the digital networks of the early twenty-first century” (Hoskins, 2011b, p. 283). This radical diffusion of media and memory, however, does not mean the end of collective or public media events, as Hoskins’s (2011c) study of the 7/7 London bombing suggests. At the same time, this radical diffusion has consequences for memory that are not made visible by the metaphor of the digital network or connectivity. Rather than the metaphor of the digital network, I propose that we attend to digital ambience to suggest how digital memory becomes the environment, the atmosphere in which we live and practice our daily lives. Rickert (2004) argues that the network metaphor “signifies ‘overconnection,’ akin to ‘overdetermination,’ in which a multiplicity of connections are always ongoing and interactive, and none of which can be said to be primary” (p. 902). For Rickert, the network metaphor, though helpful, does not account for how language and thought—and I would add memory—are more than connection
or connective. Drawing upon Heidegger, Rickert argues that language and thought—and memory—are principles of Being in which we abide. Therefore, Rickert advances the concept of *ambience* “to push against the metaphors of connection to, first, metaphors of environment, place, surroundings, and second, metaphors of meshing, osmosis, blending” (p. 903). Following the metaphor of ambience, memory would be opened to “forms of ‘connection’ that are not solely link-driven” (p. 903). Ambience implies an enmeshing of memory with media technologies, places, and performances:

Like the metaphor of the network, ambience connotes distribution, co-adaption, and emergence, but it adds an emphasis to the constitutive role of the overall, blended environment that the network does not. The ambient is immersive in that it is post-conscious and aural, being keyed to various levels of attention that are nevertheless always in play at a given moment; and it is blended in that no element can be singled out as decisive, for they are all integral to its singular emergence. (p. 904)

An ambient rhetoric highlights how, for example, an environment produces its subject, such as music: “Music becomes ambient when the environs become part of the music—or, anticipating my argument a bit, when the environs ‘play’ the music” (p. 906). An ambient memory, similarly, emphasizes how memory is enmeshed in digital media technologies and sociotechnical practices, creating an environment or ecology that helps to produce memory, to make memories appear in public. A *digital ambient memory* better acknowledges the sociotechnical practices that produce, capture, store, and display the proliferation of digital memories. Sociologists argue that such
sociotechnical practices induce ambient awareness, a social proprioception, a form of peripheral social awareness.

Digital media technologies and accompanying sociotechnical practices provide the infrastructure for ambient awareness. For instance, Facebook’s News Feed automatically compiles and displays the status updates and activities of one’s friends, and in so doing, one receives a sense of one’s friends’ social activities. Similarly, Twitter and Tumblr allow individuals to quickly share the daily minutiae of their lives. As isolated snippets of life, status updates may not provide much information, but combined they form an ambient awareness: “Although status updates like that may sound mundane, people on Twitter have found that becoming aware of what friends, family and colleagues are doing leads to a lightweight but meaningful intimacy” (O’Reilly & Milstein, 2011, p. 9). In his *New York Times Magazine* article, Thompson (2008) also refers to this sense of ambient awareness, even intimacy:

Haley [a Twitter user] discovered that he was beginning to sense the rhythms of his friends’ lives in a way he never had before. When one friend got sick with a virulent fever, he could tell by her Twitter updates when she was getting worse and the instant she finally turned the corner. He could see when friends were heading into hellish days at work or when they’d scored a big success. Even the daily catalog of sandwiches became oddly mesmerizing, a sort of metronomic click that he grew accustomed to seeing pop up in the middle of each day. (para. 15).

Thompson notes that Haley’s experience suggests the paradox of ambient awareness: Each status update on its own is mundane, and perhaps, insignificant, but together they “coalesce into
a surprisingly sophisticated portrait of your friends’ and family members’ lives” (para. 16). Ambient awareness is an aggregate phenomenon by which individual users are continually finding themselves in the middle of a conversation, and I would add, in the middle of memory. A move from digital network memory to digital ambient memory moves us away from digital media technologies to sociotechnical practices. As Rickert (2004) suggests, “If the network metaphor captures the logic of the hardware of emerging network culture, ambience captures the ‘software’ logics of being and doing that arise from the network” (p. 904). Digital ambient memory better captures how sociotechnical practices create a technological nonconscious that, in turn, produces a monumentality of the mundane. Individuals and groups have become mentally oriented to capture and record, share and respond to digital ambient memory.

A digital ambient memory acknowledges that every digital memory leaves a trace which exists beyond the initial contact or connection. The media and communication scholar Andrejevic (2009) refers to this as the “digital enclosure,” which he defines as “the creation of an interactive realm wherein every action and transaction generates information about itself.” (p. 2). Lacey (2011) suggests that the digital enclosure allows digital memories to “both retain information about personally relevant events while at the same time adding to the existing body of knowledge by creating new information in which others will participate” (p. 164). The concept of digital ambient memory attunes us to the environment of digital media technologies wherein digital memories come and go, and the ambient presence of digital memories draws us in. Dean (2010) claims that “every little tweet or comment, every forwarded image or petition, accrues a tiny affective nugget, a little surplus enjoyment, a smidgen of attention that attaches to
it, making it stand out from the larger flow before it blends back in” (p. 21). In this way, status updates and tweets “mark the mundane by expressing it, by breaking it out of one flow of experience and introducing it into another” (Dean, 2010, p. 23). The marking of the mundane both contributes to and diverges from the presence and flow of digital ambient memory. As with Andrejevic’s digital enclosure, each tweet exceeds itself so that “one even gets accustomed to overlooking tweets in their singularity, enjoying instead getting swept into their flow” (p. 23). Each tweet or status updates merges with and emerges from the overall flow or ambience of tweets and updates—an immersive environment of digital memory. Rickert (2004) argues that ambient rhetoric creates “an informationally rich ambient environment for an embedded subject engaged at varying levels of attention” (p. 911). Digital ambient memory creates an environment, and “an environment,” as Rickert argues, “is always a situation, and that situation, in its absolute singularity calls a subject into being—or put differently, carves out the panoply of actions possible in real time engagement” (p. 911). An ambient rhetoric acknowledges how an environment creates a subject capable of acting in that environment in which things take place. In this way, ambience resonates with *kairos*.

Rickert moves beyond *kairos* as the right or opportune moment to argue that *kairos* is an experience or an encounter with an environment or situation that “folds—and in folding, dissolves—subjectivity within it” (p. 913). The subject is found in ambience. Whereas the metaphor of the network implies links and linking, nodes and connections, streams of information, the ambient implies a *muddle*, not a middle, that “continually scrambles middle and pole, interior and exterior, recursively refolding them one into the other” (p. 915). With a digital
ambient memory, individuals, collectives, and publics find themselves enclosed in and emerging from the muddle of memory.

Ambience is not so link driven, being suggestive of many other forms of connection besides contact between two or more points. The link is in its connotative scope, giving us little leeway with the more ephemeral, auratic modalities of everyday life. (p. 916)

The ambient suggests that subject and object mutually take place in a singular situation. A digital ambient memory proposes that memory and individuals, collective, and public emerge together. Digital media technologies and accompanying sociotechnical practices are more than technologies and practices, for they constitute new ways of being and doing. Bay and Rickert (2008) explain, “We want to emphasize that the digital place called Facebook is not a tool or means for digital sociality, but a part of digital sociality itself as a composition of human and nonhuman elements” (p. 229). And if individuals, collectives, and public want to flourish in the dwellings offered by digital media technologies, we must attune ourselves to digital ambient memory. Digital memories are more than connective. Memories are the environments, the cultures in which we dwell and flourish. If digital memories create the environments, then we ought to consider the materials with which we do our rhetorical building.

Metonymy of Memory

Burke (1945/1969) describes metonymy as reduction, specifically “to convey some incorporeal or intangible state in terms of the corporeal or tangible” (p. 506). He suggests that the corporeal quality of metonymy implies “that human relations require actions, which are *dramatizations*, and that the essential medium of drama is the posturing, tonalizing body placed in
a material scene” (p. 506-507). Metonymy, then, makes present material reductions or
instanciations of memory—particularly, the material reductions of the body in place. Indeed,
metonymies of memory have been closely aligned with performance as embodied practice and
with place as material manifestations of memory, for example, monuments and memorials. Place
and performance are often intertwined so that one engenders the other: The performances that
happen in a place are called forth by that place, and vice versa, and this relationship
acknowledges the import of an ambient rhetoric. Therefore, we should consider what happens
when performance and place become networked and connected, as well as ambient and
mundane. Digital memories are mobile memories, connected to intensive and extensive digital
networks. As Reading (2011) argues, digital memories enabled by mobile media technologies are
transmedial and exist within a “globital memory field.” As rhetorical scholars, we have only
begun to grasp the performance and place of mobile memories and how the mobility of digital
memories creates individual, collective, and public experiences of memory.

In his examination of social memory, Connerton (1989) argues that memory is a
performance enacted through commemorative ceremonies and incorporated and embodied
practices: “Commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are
performative: performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be
thought without a notion of bodily automations” (p. 5). For Connerton, memory as
incorporated performance entails a type of social habit-memory whereby habits become
meaningful social actions. As meaningful action, social habit-memory legitimates social
performances that, in turn, act as transfer points of remembering “located within the mental and
material spaces of the group” (p. 37). In other words, Connerton argues that embodied
dramatization and rituals produce memory which enacts the shared relations of a society.
Through ritualized performance, members know that they belong to the group.

Vivian (2004) similarly suggests that memory is a performance. Nevertheless, unlike
Connerton’s conceptualization of a social memory that allows members of the group “to go on
doing the same kind of thing” (p. 31), Vivian suggests that memory is performative
remembrance with difference, arguing that memory as performance “depends on the distortions of
repeated acts of recollection as much as any original or authentic perception” (p. 189). By
emphasizing repetition with difference as the mode of performative remembrance, Vivian seeks
to elucidate the nomadic experience of memory; that is, memories are experienced by wandering
through an ever-shifting terrain of collective memories: “Collective or public memory is
inherently nomadic because it encompasses a mnemonic landscape comprised not of stability
but ongoing redistribution or, better still, re-membering” (p. 190). As an example, Vivian explains
how gypsies adapt their essential narratives to meet the burdens of the present so that they are
continually remembering and re-membering as a social group. Foregrounding memory as
performative repetition with difference allows Vivian to suggest that collective memories rely
upon productive forms of forgetting. This interplay of remembering and forgetting foreshadows
the later section in which I discuss the ironic dialectic of memory whereby one necessarily
produces the other.

Although Connerton and Vivian emphasize different internal dynamics of the
incorporated practices and performances of memory, they share an interest in how such
performances take place. Connerton, for example, suggests that that social habit-memory occurs within shared mental and material spaces—bodies acting together in a common space. Vivian similarly refers to shared mental and material spaces of memory in describing memory as a “mnemonic landscape” that, figuratively and literally, must be wandered through mentally and physically. To understand place as a metonymy of memory entails certain rhetorical commitments regarding the epistemology and ontology of memory, as illustrated by Casey (2004). Casey argues that public memory acts as *stabilitas loci*, a place for further and future remembering. As such, public memory “serves as an encircling horizon” (p. 25), an active resource upon which the public draws to debate public issues. As an encircling horizon, public memory also engenders the conditions of knowing and acting available to individuals and groups of that public; that is, public memory constitutes a public in a particular place: “A memorial horizon not only engirdles its subject matter but actively subtends it, giving it its own identity and shape, its cast and character, its characteristic physiognomy” (p. 30). Indeed, Casey stresses that public memory must occur in place, happening “only when people meet and interact in a single scene of interaction” (p. 32). Public memory, materializing in and through place, draws out and gathers the memories of that public in that place. Here again, performance and place become entwined with memory so that place and memory help perform each other. As an example of this mutual motivation we will consider specific loci of public memory rather than Casey’s more general *stabilitas loci*.

Haskins and DeRose (2003) study three loci of commemoration following the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001—street memorials, museum
installations, and the permanent memorial at Ground Zero. Haskins and DeRose argue that street memorials appearing after the attacks, such as makeshift shrines, posters and graffiti, “signified a collective desire to participate in the memorial process,” and their ephemeral material existence interrupted the quotidian public space, allowing for a “less hurried contemplation of the tragedy” (p. 378). Street memorials served as material reductions—metonymies—of the grief and commemorative need flowing through New York City’s streets. When these street memorials were collected and placed within a museum space, they were reframed by this new place of display. Haskins and DeRose argue that preserving and presenting street memorials in traditional art galleries transformed them into historical artifacts that required the ordered memorialization and quiet contemplation of a civilized public. Placed into different places the same artifacts manifested different kinds of mnemonic and memorial experiences. Similarly, Haskins and DeRose explain how the permanent memorial at Ground Zero must serve a variety of functions not required by the either street memorials or museum installations. Specifically, the Ground Zero memorial must fulfill both commemorative and commercial interests; thus, the kinds of commemoration that could occur must meet the demands of the place it will occupy within New York City’s political and economic systems. Haskins and DeRose’s analysis of loci of memory demonstrate how place and performance become material manifestations of memory. Furthermore, the shift from street memorial to museum installation to permanent public memorial reveals the inseparability of place, performance, and memory because where memorial traces are placed changes their memorial expressions and, importantly, our attitudes to them.
The interarticulation of place and performance in memory has become one of the most common assumptions of rhetorical memory studies. Dickinson et al. (2010), for instance, note that the place of memory may refer to any material or symbolic support for memory: “language, ritual performances, communication technologies, objects, and places” (p. 13). The place of memory—its material manifestations and reductions—help ensure that memory is given presence in the present. Because the places and performances of memory rely upon symbolic and material supports, the character of its media and mediation—the metaphors—impact how memory appears to individuals, collectives, and publics. With the introduction of digital media technologies, rhetorical scholars must begin to examine what happens to memory when the metaphors used to take a perspective upon it include digital networks and digital ambience. The metonymies of memory—the performances and places of memory—necessarily change in response to digital networks. We may ask, then, what becomes of Casey’s *stabilitas loci* and *encircling horizon* when neither can be located within cohesive or singular mental or material performances or places. Does a dispersed and distributed digital network memory shrink or expand that encircling horizon? What happens when the artifacts and traces of memory are mobilized? With the adoption of mobile media technologies and real-time social networks, the moment of witnessing has collapsed into the moment of sharing, which has collapsed into the memory of archiving and memorializing. To follow through with these questions and their consequences, I turn to another common metonymy of memory—the archive.

The archive offers a material reduction and manifestation of what is to be stored and retrieved. Derrida (1998) argues that the archive assures “the possibility of memorization, of
repetition, of reproduction, or of reimpression” (p. 11). The archive, for Derrida, is both commencement and commandment, for it determines the archivable event. Differently put, the archive always has a material substrate that produces what it stores. The archive does not simply record and store the past; rather, the archive is a promissory note to the future. And the future slips away. Derrida draws upon Freud’s concept of repetition compulsion, which is “indissociable from the death drive” (p. 11), to link memorization with reproduction so that the archive initiates both remembering and forgetting: “Introducing, a priori, forgetfulness and the archiviolithic into the heart of the monument. Into the ‘by heart’ itself. The archive always works, and a priori, against itself” (p. 12). To learn by heart is to learn how to forget. To have archive fever, to be en mal d’archive, is to be forever searching for information “right where it slips away”: “It is to run after the archive, even if there’s too much of it” (p. 91). We archive for the sake of archiving, for the sake of the archive. With digital networks, digital hard drives, and digital databases ever-expanding their ease of use and storage capacity, every moment becomes archivable—must be archived. The media archaeologist Wolfgang Ernst (2006) writes, “There is no ending online. There’s no closure, no linear basis. It’s about bringing it in, checking it out, constantly evaluating” (p. 110). Hoskins (2011a; 2011c) suggests that the unending digital archive de-monumentalizes memory, or as I suggest, it monumentalizes differently, appearing as digital ambient memory and the monumentality of the mundane, finding expression, for example, through lifelogging practices best exemplified by Bell and Gemmell’s (2009) MyLifeBits project, Facebook status updates and timelines, and Twitter feeds. In this way, the digital archive has
become part of our technological nonconscious so that we are constantly archiving our experiences. But we are, as Derrida argues, forgetful archivers.

Drawing upon Derrida, Barnet (2001) argues that we are at once pack-rats and amnesiacs because we do more archiving than contemplating, which, in turn, encourages a short-term memory. Barnet begins by noting that when browsing the internet, individuals tend to scan and graze content. When individuals find something they like, they download it to their hard drives or clip it to a social bookmarking site or share it on a social network. Each of these archives grow more expansive and less useful because more unmanageable. Barnet explains that “what is published or archived and what is forgotten” may be beyond the user’s control because the software and code needed to execute digital archiving practices are beyond the typical user’s understanding and agency. Because the archive is a promise for the future, as both Derrida and Barnet argue, rhetorical scholars need to examine what happens to individual, collective, and public memory within the digital archive. When memories are dispersed and distributed throughout digital networks, how do or should individuals, collectives, and publics take advantage of these new memorial capacities? And because digital media and social networking blur the lines among individual, collective, and public, individual memory practices become indistinguishable from cultural practices. Consequently, who is represented in and by any particular memory becomes increasingly difficult to discern, as I will discuss in the next section.

The digital archive is a connected and ambient archive—a continually expanding digital enclosure, adding information to information and extending that information to new contexts. In this way, the digital archive is on the move, often quite literally. Reading (2009) examines how
mobile phones create a new form of wearable memory, a mobile archive that produces, what she calls, the **memobile**: “The world ‘memobile’ is a deliberate linguistic combination of me (individual/self) with mobile (on the move, mobilization) with phonic echoes of the word meme—a unit of cultural information that is repeatedly transmitted and can self-propagate rather like a virus” (p. 82). As Reading’s explanation implies, the **memobile** embodies the user while also incorporating her within digital networks that allow her to propagate her memories. Indeed, she suggests that because mobile phones are wearable, they become part of an individual’s identity and sense of self. And because mobile phones are integrated into personal and global information networks, information shared through mobile phones can take on its own trajectory, spreading quickly from the individual to the collective. Consequently, Reading argues that the **memobile** as a form of digital memory “is accelerating our ability to rapidly transform our personal impression into public memories independent of the individual” (p. 90-91). **Memobilia** transform the lived and embodied memories of the individual into cultural memory, which can then be transferred back to the individual. Therefore, users do not share a common time of memory; rather, mobile phones act as a mobile place of memory. Mobile phones and **memobilia** create interaction trajectories in which the context of memory continually changes. Understanding the rhetorical circulation—why, where, when, and how—memories travel becomes central to understanding the capacities of digital network memory and digital ambient memory. Connective and ambient memory dissolve the binaries of original/copy, past/present, organic/synthetic, real/virtual. Indeed, examining the rhetorical circulation of digital memories emphasizes the rhetorical velocity of memory, that is, how memory is
reproduced, reconstructed, and remixed beyond the moment and purpose of its inception.
Consequently, we need to reevaluate the me of memobilia, especially as memboilia are embedded in a digital network memory and digital ambient memory that enable new capacities of circulation and enmeshing.

Indeed, Reading (2011) proposes six coextensive dynamics of digital memory: transmediality, velocity, extensity, modality, valency, and viscosity. Transmediality and modality refer to how memory appears in assemblages of discursive formation and material practices that are not bound to one medium or one modality of experience. Velocity and extensity refer to how digital media networks transform the speed and reach of memory. For instance, Reading uses the example of mobile witnessing, in particular that of the death of Neda Agha-Soltan, to argue that the instant of witnessing and the subsequent memorialization are beginning to collapse into each other. Valency refers to how one memory assemblage connects with other memory assemblages, thus transforming one another in their interaction. At the same time, some memory assemblages demonstrate viscosity, whereby they resist processes of change, or what Reading, drawing upon Deleuze and Guattari, calls territorialization and deterritorialization. Using these six dynamics, Reading argues that memory could be plotted along two axes: an x-axis that makes visible the memory assemblage (its composition of material practices and discursive formations), and an y-axis that tracks processes of territorialization and deterritorialization. As we become emplaced within digital network memory and digital ambient memory, the compositions and decompositions of memory extend themselves beyond
representations of individuals, collectives, and publics. The *me* of *memobilia* is a distributed and enmeshed *we* occurring in the past, present, and future.

Metonymies of memory—performance, place, and archive—disclose the material reductions and local and global manifestations of digital memory. At the same, these metonymies of memory demonstrate how and to what extent lived memory does not exist outside or independent of its technological and material supports:

There is no lived memory, no originary, internal experience stored somewhere that corresponds to a certain event in our lives. Memory is entirely reconstructed by the machine of memory, by the process of writing; it retreats into a prosthetic experience, and this experience in turn retreats as we try to locate it. But the important point is this: our perception, and perception of the past, is merely an experience of the technical substrate. (Barnet, 2003, para. 15).

Media technologies completely inscribe the media and mediation of memory. Barnet (2001) draws upon Derrida to argue that memory is “a space of writing, space *as writing*” (p. 219), and as such, “memory is entirely mediated (and constructed) by the apparatus of memory itself, by the process of writing” (p. 220). Here, she considers hypertexts, digital networks, and digital archives as the most apt metaphors and metonymies for the inscription of memory, and so memory becomes a form of hypertextual writing stored in a digital archive and linked to other archives via networks. In this way, Barnet, like Derrida, claims that the archive acts as a factory for rather than a repository of memory. If memory finds material manifestation in and through digital archives, then the archive does not preserve memories, but rather reconstructs memories as
events, as material traces. Barnet explains, “I am arguing that hypertext is an archive in that it creates (or simulates) a space and place for inscription, and a method for accessing information stored in this space, a method which is itself modeled on associative memory” (p. 221). Here, we see signs of Peters’s new already. The associative nature of human memory shapes the technology of memory shapes human memory. Barnet suggests that the internet distributes memory across the network, while simultaneously situating the individual as a node within that network. As a node, the individual has the potential access to every memory within the network. With digital network memory and digital ambient memory, the new already appears in the confluence and confusion of places and times via the spatial arrangement and distributed delivery of memories across all times. As a result, we are obliged to consider to whom digital memories connect and through whom digital memories emerge. Whom do digital memories call forth?

**Synecdoche of Memory**

If archivable moments are both intensively and extensively connected to the moment of witnessing, we must ask who is represented in and by memory. According to Burke (1945/1969), metonymy is a special form of synecdoche, which he describes as a representation wherein an integral relationship exists between the act of perception and the thing perceived: “Some part of the social body is held to be ‘representative’ of the society as a whole” (p. 508). Synecdoche implies a “relationship or connectedness between two sides of an equation” (p. 509). Burke notes that synecdoche, as with metonymy, offers a representative reduction through embodiment: “But the aim of such embodiment is to produce in the observer a corresponding state of consciousness” (p. 509-510). In this way, synecdoche as representation induces Burkean
identification with that which is represented. Thus, synecdoche raises questions relating to who is or should be represented in memory—individuals, collectives, and publics. Even though the categories of individual, collective, and public memory have always been fraught with complications, digital media technologies introduce new values, tendencies, and capacities in memory that further unsettle these distinctions as the previous sections have begun to show.

Scholars of memory have relied on various adjectives to modify memory to emphasize different representations. Casey (2004), for example, distinguishes among four representations of memory—individual, social, collective, and public. Individual memory refers to the person engaged in memory. Social memory “is shared by those who are already related to each other,” presupposing and reaffirming social relationships (p. 21). Collective memory refers to “the circumstance in which different persons, not necessarily known to each other at all, nevertheless recall the same event—again, each in her own way” (p. 23). Casey argues that collective memory occurs as a plurality of remembering wherein what matters is not social relationships or shared temporal experience, but rather a “commonality of content.” That is, collective memory refers to “not the experience but the focus” of memory (p. 24). Public memory is a combination of the individual, social, and collective that helps to constitute the public that remembers. With these four categories of memory, Casey demonstrates how who and what is represented changes the nature of memory. Dickinson et al. (2010), though reluctant to adopt Casey’s categories, acknowledge that choosing a particular category of memory entails particular connotations and commitments. They choose public memory as their preferred concept because it helps elucidate what they consider to be rhetorical memory: “‘Public’ situates shared memory where it is often the most
salient to collectives, in constituted audiences, positioned in some kind of relationship of mutuality that implicates their common interests, investments, or destinies, with profound political implications” (p. 8). In other words, they opt to study public memory because it is representative of the relationships between publics and public issues that they seek to illuminate. However, when we adopt digital network and digital ambience as our metaphors of memory and consider distributed performances, places, and archives as metonymies of memory, we should question their explication of public as being “most salient to collectives, in constituted audiences.” As Hoskins (2011b) argues, the concepts of collective memory and public memory may be anachronistic in our digital media saturated culture. Whereas Dickinson et al. (2010) seem to assume a public prior to memory, digital media technologies illuminate how memory constitutes a collective or public. “Common interests, investments, and destinies” remain important, but they are not prior to the moment or emergence of memory. Memories, for example, appear in public and thereby constitute publics, and in so doing, memory becomes a resource for identity and agency.

As a resource for identity and agency, memory is always contested. Bodnar (1993) claims that public memory is essentially a political struggle between advocates of vernacular and official cultures. Bodnar defines vernacular memory as “an array of specialized interests” that is “diverse and changing and can be reformulated from time to time by the creation of new social units” (p. 14). In contrast, official memory emanates from cultural authorities who attempt to create an ideal or imagined community. Bodnar argues that public memory becomes a locus for discussing the struggles between official and vernacular memories—that is, a struggle for representation:
Whose interests are represented in public memory and why and how? Typically, official culture promotes and advances the privileged expressions of public memory because official cultural leadership wields the power of larger, longer-lasting social institutions and their influence. Consequently, official culture is able to incorporate vernacular interests into its representations of memory. Though vernacular interests are often subsumed within official interests, Bodnar concludes that vernacular interests never completely die away because they form the basis of official culture: “The real question was never whether vernacular interests would go away but which interests would predominate from time to time” (p. 248). The synecdoches of memory help identify a culture of memory.

As discussed previously, Hoskins (2011b) associates collective memory and mass media, and he proposes that this association has become anachronistic with the adoption of digital media technologies. Based upon the metaphor of the digital network, Hoskins (2011a) thus argues that digital media culture is a “culture of connectivity” and that digital network memory is a connective memory:

The connective turn is the massively increased abundance, pervasiveness and accessibility of digital technologies, devices and media, shaping an ongoing recalibration of time, space (and place) and memory by people as they connect with, inhabit and constitute increasingly both dense and diffused social networks. (p. 271)

A culture of connectivity is a post-scarcity culture, a culture of abundance wherein individuals and groups, relationships and objects, events and memories are “potentially perpetually in-motion” (p. 271). Hoskins argues that rather than collective memory, we have connective
memory—the shifting connections of memories in the present. With connective memory, individual and collectives “oscillate between forming more dense and more diffuse nodes in a multitude of mediatized networks” (p. 272). As a result of networked connectivity that brings together digital media technologies and memory, traditional binaries based on older, more traditional media, such as individual and collective, past and present, public and private, permanent and ephemeral, are transformed, blended, and remediated.

Similar to Hoskins’s work, van Dijck (2007), in her book Mediated Memories: Personal Cultural Memory in the Digital Age, explores the possibilities of individual and cultural memory enabled by, embedded with, and embodied in digital media technologies, and she introduces two related terms personal cultural memory and mediated memories to show how personal memories and objects of memory are facilitated by sociotechnical practices and new media technologies. Van Dijck begins by positing the concept of mediated memories, which she uses to refer to both a material artifact and a mental concept, thus attempting to overcome three main inadequacies of existing models relating memory and media. First, most models of media and memory, going back to Plato, distinguish between human memory as an internal faculty and media as external tools that outsource human memory. Related to this division is the second problem: the attempt to separate corporeal or natural memory from artificial and technological memory. Third, most models advance a division between private media used for personal memories and public media used for collective memories. In contrast, van Dijck argues that media and memory, natural and artificial, private and public, individual and collective cannot be easily separated: “Media and memory, however, are not separate entities—the first enhancing, corrupting, extending,
replacing the second—but media invariably and inherently shape our personal memories, warranting the term ‘mediation’” (p. 16). For van Dijck, media and memory are so intertwined that we must talk about mediated memories—how media mediate memory, referring to “the activities and objects we produce and appropriate by means of media technologies, for creating and re-creating a sense of past, present, and future of ourselves in relation to others” (p. 21). The products and acts of memory are mutually motivated by digital media technologies; thus, the materiality of memory is enabled, embedded, and embodied in the individual and collective along with various digital media technologies. To be clear, van Dijck does not locate memory within the materiality of technologies per se; rather, she situates “memory in the item’s agency, the way they interact with the mind” (p. 37). Memory and technology enable, embed, and embody each other so that some kinds of memory are better enabled, embedded, or embodied by certain technologies rather than others. Scenic vistas, for instance, are perhaps best remembered via painting or photography. In this way, media technologies delimit the kinds of memories that can be captured or recorded, and so most media technologies could be considered archival, in the Derridean sense. To better understand mediated memories, especially digitally mediated memories, van Dijck proposes the concept of personal cultural memory.

Personal cultural memory refers to “the acts and products of remembering in which individuals engage to make sense of their lives in relation to the lives of others and to their surroundings, situating themselves in time and place” (p. 6). Van Dijck defines personal cultural memory against existing theories of memory, specifically collective memory and social memory. She argues that theories of collective memory tend to consider memory and media as reservoirs
that collect the past; therefore, what is important is what the reservoirs collect. For van Dijck, collective memory becomes social memory when applied to historiographical explanation, which emphasizes the interface between individual and collective ordering of the past. Furthermore, both collective and social memory tend to move from the collective to the individual. In contrast, van Dijck defines personal cultural memory as the mutual interdependence between the individual and the collective: “Culture, like memory, is less interesting as something we have—hold or discount—than as something we create and through which we shape our personal and collective selves” (p. 12). Additionally, even though she foregrounds the interarticulation of the individual and collective, she begins with the individual to understand how individual memory becomes connected to and intertwined with cultural practices so that the threads of personal and cultural memory can never be disentangled completely. In other words, individual memory must be situated within cultural structures and practices and vice versa. Situated within the framework of personal cultural memory, mediated memories are not static objects, but rather “dynamic relationships that evolve along two axes: a horizontal axis expressing relational identity and a vertical axis articulating time” (p. 21). Mediated memories, then, are both personal cultural acts of memory and personal cultural products of memory that create relations between individuals and culture through time. For instance, in her chapter discussing digital diaries and lifelogging practices, van Dijck describes how these activities are shifting the bounds of the individual and of privacy typically associated with diaries. Indeed, she notes that “technologies of self are—even more so than before—technologies of sharing” (p. 48). Digital media technologies allow and encourage individuals to share their personal and private memories with their social
network. The notion of sharing is a metaphorical entailment of digital network memory; sharing implies a conscious activity, but we are obliged to consider how sharing as a sociotechnical practice has become part of a technological nonconscious. And so, we might consider capacities of sharing less reliant on the connective and more akin to the ambient.

Traditionally, sharing has presumed a conscious, human activity. However, in a culture of connectivity, the practice of sharing has become a core sociotechnical practice so that “the formation of memory is increasingly structured by digital networks, and memory’s constituting agency is both technological and human” (van Dijck, 2010, p. 2). Indeed, van Dijck suggests that with digital media technologies, such as social media platforms, sharing has become mostly an unconscious technological pursuit. What is often called ‘collective memory’ or ‘culture heritage’ in relation to digital photo sharing sites is largely the result of visual data and metadata linked up by means of computer code and institutional protocols. (p. 2)

Sharing has become a practice of digital ambient rhetoric, an ambient rhetoric that “operate[s] without the knowledge of those who use these environments and upon whom they are taking an affect” (p. 3). A digital ambient rhetoric highlights the difference between traditional notions of collective memory and digital network memory and digital ambient memory: “[C]ollective memory is the result of individual minds meeting one way or another. By contrast, networked memory requires a new understanding of agency where minds and technics are intertwined” (p. 3). Neither the individual nor the collective produces memory; rather, memory emerges from an ambient environment of connectivity so that who and what is or will be represented in memory
cannot be determined in advance of memory’s emergence. Consequently, the representational concepts, such as individual, collective, and public, along with memory itself may be reinvented in terms of connectivity and ambience. As we have considered in this chapter, the capacities of connectivity and ambience constitute the sociotechnical practices of and the very nature of memory.

A digital ambient rhetoric increasingly relies upon algorithmic intervention:

Sociotechnical practices of remembering and forgetting are being done for us automatically behind our screens. How we choose to connect to or how we become caught up in memory may not be up to us. Van Dijck (2010) writes, “The power of the algorithm defines how pictorial and other data are interpreted to yield patterns of judgment or shared perspectives, which may subsequently be used to steer the user” (p. 6). Algorithmic intervention shifts attention to how digital media technologies and software become active in shaping sociotechnical practices that constitute digital memory. In this way, algorithms, and software, and digital media technologies do more than mediate memory. They constitute memory by combining the knowing, making, and doing of memory. Beer (2009) calls this capacity the “power of the algorithm,” its ability “to shape social and cultural formations and impact directly on individual lives” (p. 994). Algorithms are generative procedures that generate digital memory. Thus, we need to consider the consequences when memories—as representations of identity and agency—are practiced on social media platforms and other digital media technologies. As an example, Garde-Hansen (2009) considers Facebook to be the “exteriorization of personal digital memory making and
archiving” (p. 136), and in so doing, Facebook users are expected to follow the social protocols and algorithmic intervention of Facebook:

Users of Facebook are implicitly expected to follow social norms (use realistic photographs, not to lie and to avoid pornographic content) as well as commercial imperatives (not to profit from friends, not to use copyright materials and to maintain the Facebook brand) and produce profiles that show very specifically who they are and who their friends are. (p. 139)

In other words, Facebook imposes upon its users a defined set of acceptable practices that determines the kinds of information that can appear on Facebook. Facebook creates Facebook moments. So although Facebook users are encouraged to customize their pages, all pages look more or less the same—lots of white space and clean blue lines, instilling an air of professionalism to complement its Ivy League roots. As an archive, Facebook follows a database logic relying upon a concept of spatial montage, or more precisely, “a pre-programmed logic of spatial montage that conjoins disjointed discussion postings in a multifaceted way and is only really meaningful to the user” (p. 143). In relation to Facebook, the algorithmic intervention produces a Facebook page that is both intensely personal and disinterestedly impersonal. My Facebook page looks like every other Facebook page. What can be included on Facebook, then, is ultimately not decided by its users. Thus, Garde-Hansen wonders “whose memories and whose mental architecture are being projected here: those of the users, the digital designer or the media corporation?” (p. 148). Memory making is neither an individual nor collective endeavor, but rather a complex intermediation of digital media technologies and sociotechnical practices.
As Garde-Hansen points out, Facebook has far more rights to its users’ information than users do. Although Facebook encourages users to constantly re-member by participating in its memory space, the practices of personal and collective archiving are often beyond the users’ control. Consequently, we might consider the ways in which Facebook and other digital media interpellates users as members rather than users who are choosing to re-member.

Here, it is useful to recall Manovich’s discussion of spatial wandering where he suggests that the spatial arrangement of databases encourages individuals to navigate rather than retrieve information. Although the individual seems to control her navigational choices, Manovich (2001) claims that hypertexts as databases encourage users to follow the links presented:

Before, we would read a sentence of a story or a line of a poem and think of other lines, images, memories. Now interactive media asks us to click on a highlighted sentence to go to another sentence. In short, we are asked to follow pre-programmed, objectively existing associations. Put differently, in what can be read as an updated version of French philosopher Louis Althusser’s concept of “interpellation,” we are asked to mistake the structure of somebody’s else mind for our own. (p. 61).

Manovich suggests that rather than thinking about past memories, individuals are forced more or less to interact with the hyperlinked information. As participants in this spatial wandering, individuals link at the speed of their thinking and think at the speed of their linking. However, such instantaneous linking and thinking impacts mental processes. Indeed, in her review of Nicholas Carr’s The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brain, Miller (2010) notes that “the microseconds of decision-making attention demanded by hyperlinks saps cognitive power from
the reading process, that multiple sensory inputs severely degrade memory retention, that
overloading the limited capacity of our short-term memory hampers our ability to lay down
long-term memories” (para. 5). Paradoxically, the spatial wandering encouraged by digital
memory spaces could negatively impact the formation and retention of memories. Furthermore,
the individual’s navigational choices may not be her own, and so we must ask whose mental
architecture and whose spatial memories are being represented.

Similar to Manovich, Elmer (2001) argues that the web’s path-ology presents a series of
default paths, thus what is represented is what is produced by search algorithms as highlighted
by Google’s search trends and auto-complete function and Twitter’s trending topics. Elmer
argues that this web epistemology produces a highly stratified and hierarchal information
architecture that incorporates “techniques to push, pull, or otherwise cajole users into following
certain paths” (p. 5). That is, the design and information architecture of the web controls the
experiences of its users, inducing a path-ology—searching the web by following pre-existing and
prescribed paths. In the process, Elmer claims that browsing becomes a much more passive
activity because users follow paths already well-trodden. The problem, he claims, is that “paths,
particularly personalized and customized ones, discourage experimentation” (p. 14). One
potential consequence: What is not displayed in search results or trending topics cannot be
found. What is prescribed determines what is proscribed. What is not easily retrievable is easily
forgotten. As a result, who controls the search engines has the power to display what is
remembered while simultaneously concealing what is forgotten.
Manovich and Elmer, however, may have an impoverished view of both digital networks and rhetoric, as Bogost (2007) would argue, because neither considers how hyperlinks may increase correlation between information and the document, nor do they consider the computational system that facilitates hypermedia, namely its procedurality. Bogost, thus, offers an interesting possibility for rhetoric and its relation to memory. We might, for example, productively explore how Bogost’s *procedural rhetoric* explains or elucidates memory processes and practices, at both the individual and collective levels. Bogost defines procedural rhetoric as “the practice of authoring arguments through processes” (p. 29) and entails both persuasion and expression. So we might ask how both personal and cultural archives make arguments “through the authorship of rules of behavior, the construction of dynamic models” (p. 29). Put differently, rhetorical scholars are positioned to productively investigate how procedural, algorithmic arguments facilitate remembering and forgetting at both the individual and collective levels. As I have argued, we should consider how procedural, algorithmic rhetoric produces both sociotechnical practices and memory itself, such that memory cannot be separated from its material assemblage, and how, in turn, memory emerges in and produces individuals, collectives, and publics. Given the affordances of digital network memory and digital ambient memory, the question of who is represented in memory cannot be determined in advance, nor will the representation remain static through place or time. What Hoskins calls the “another next time” of memory constitutes a representation and a representative appropriate to that time and place. And that constitutive act necessarily relies upon both remembering and forgetting to imagine a present that is synecdochal—both contiguous with and distinct from the past.
Ironies of Memory

Burke (1945/1969) describes irony as a dialectic that puts perspectives into action:

“Irony arises when one tries, by the interaction of terms upon one another, to produce a development which uses all the terms” (p. 512). Irony extends synecdoche by placing representation within a dialectical relationship:

Hence, reverting to our suggestion that we might extend the synecdochic pattern to include such reversible pairs as disease-cure, hero-villain, active-passive, we should ‘ironically’ note the function of the disease in ‘perfecting’ the cure, or the function of the cure in ‘perpetuating’ the influence of the disease. (p. 512)

To understand how the cure perfects the disease echoes Derrida’s concept of archive fever whereby we search for memory as it slips away. To remember by heart means to forget. Forgetting perfects remembering. Remembering perpetuates forgetting. Irony, for Burke, demonstrates how “what goes forth as A returns as non-A” (p. 517), and he refers to this ironic return as “‘peripety,’ the strategic moment of reversal” (p. 517) so that true irony is “a sense of fundamental kinship with the enemy, as one needs him, is indebted to him, is not merely outside him as an observant but contains him within, being consubstantial with him” (p. 514). Rather than being consubstantial, scholars of memory have treated remembering and forgetting as a strict dialectic wherein memory is the favored term and forgetting its negative. Memory and remembering are conceived as means of recording and preserving the past, as rich and vibrant resources for personal and cultural expression. In contrast, forgetting is treated as a lack or loss of memory or a failing to remember or as a form of commemorative passivity and neglect. If we
follow Burke, however, what is important is putting remembering and forgetting into action through an ironic dialectic whereby the one returns as the other.

As an example of how memory and forgetting are typically theorized, consider Augé’s concept of oblivion. Augé (2004) argues that memories “are the product of an erosion caused by oblivion. Memories are crafted by oblivion as the outlines of the shore are crafted by the sea” (p. 20). By eroding traces of the past, oblivion opens up new possibilities for the future. Augé describes three figures of oblivion: the return, suspension, and rebeginning. The return forgets the present or recent past to establish continuity with an ancient past. Suspension cuts off the present from both the past and future. By pausing time in an interregnum, suspense focuses attention on the present, on the here and now. Rebeginning “aspires to find the future again by forgetting the past to create the conditions for a new birth that, by definition, opens up into every possible future without favoring a single one” (p. 57). These figures provide individuals and collectives with ways of inhabiting specific temporal and historical periods. Nevertheless, Vivian (2009) criticizes Augé for defining oblivion as both a voluntary and involuntary mode of forgetting. Vivian explains that oblivion as a life force “implies that our understanding of the past—‘remembrance’ as such—is not the product of willful recollection or conscious rhetorical choice” (p. 101). Vivian argues that such a definition reinforces the notion that forgetting is involuntary. On the other hand, Augé describes oblivion as a willful selecting and pruning of the past. Vivian suggests that Augé reconciles these two modes of oblivion by defining it as negation: “To forget is to negate memory, to sacrifice awareness of one temporal expanse in favor of another” (p. 101). When Augé implores us “to not forget to forget in order to lose
neither memory nor curiosity” (p. 89), doing so requires, Vivian claims, a passive instance of forgetting. By not remembering, we activate oblivion. Thus, Vivian concludes that “Augé’s three figures of oblivion express not so much our agency over the past as the unavoidable force of oblivion even in our attempts to exercise that agency” (p. 101). Rather than rejecting the strict dialectic of memory and forgetting, Augé’s formulation retains it.

Vivian argues that even though Augé flips the dialectic of memory and forgetting so that forgetting is a positive term, doing so preserves the dialectic, which may “risk preserving a reductive understanding of both memory and forgetting as artificially separate, even antithetical, discursive and temporal phenomena” (p. 103). Vivian reserves a discursive space for a vocabulary pliant enough to accommodate remembering as forgetting and forgetting as remembering: “to account for the type of memory produced by appeals to forget and the type of forgetting induced by elaborate rituals of remembrance” (p. 103). For Vivian, memory and forgetting are not ontological opposites, but rather productive of each other. In particular, Vivian (2010) advances a concept of forgetting that could be deemed a desirable and affirmative dimension of politics and ethics. Rather than a form of amnesia, erasure, or memory loss, Vivian suggests that forgetting could be a productive trope of public deliberation, thus playing “a positive, formative role in works of public memory” (p. 6). Consequently, Vivian argues that memory and forgetting should not be opposed as discursive or temporal phenomena, but rather two expressions of interrelated and mutually creative processes. Put simply, public forgetting can often be a judicious response to the past: “The value of public forgetting so conceived lies . . . in the strategically invoked ideal of beginning again—an inauguration accompanied neither by
naïve negation of the past nor by utopian anticipation of an untroubled future” (p. 171). The person who remembers is consubstantial with the person who forgets. Because Vivian is most interested in traditional modes of public memory and public deliberation, he does not address the consequences of digital media technologies on the processes of remembering and forgetting.

The commonplace of digital culture is that ours is an age of abundant information. Given the expanding capabilities and declining costs of digital storage, Mayer-Schönberger (2009) undertakes the problem of a present with too much past. Although not stated in these terms, he argues that we have reached a peripety, a strategic moment in which our practices of remembering and forgetting have been reversed:

Since the beginning of time, for us humans, forgetting has been the norm and remembering the exception. Because of digital technologies and global networks, however, this balance has shifted. Today, with the help of widespread technology, forgetting has become the exception, and remembering the default. (p. 2)

Mayer-Schönberger explores the personal, emotional, and social consequences of this shift from a default of forgetting to one of remembering. A default of remembering may cause us to lose control over our digital memories because we may not know how much information is being remembered or disclosed about us. In addition, a default of remembering may make us unforgiving to others and ourselves. Mayer-Schönberger admits that a default of remembering may be beneficial in many circumstances and points to Bell’s MyLifeBits project as an example; however, he worries that such remembering represents “an even more pernicious version of the digital panopticon. . . . The panopticon surveys us not just in every corner but also across time”
A default of remembering may cause the demise of forgetting and its individual and social benefits. Here, Mayer-Schönberger’s study resonates with the work of Connerton (2008; 2009) and Vivian (2009; 2010) who argue that forgetting could be a productive process of individual and public deliberation. To reintroduce forgetting into digital memory, Mayer-Schönberger proposes that expiration dates should be added to digital files to give them a limited lifespan: “[M]y aim is to help us take steps to ensure we’ll remember how to forget in the digital age” (p. 15). This form of digitally programmed forgetting enacts the irony of memory. We intentionally program the moment of forgetting into the act of saving (remembering) digital memory. Similar to digital expiration dates, Connerton (2008) suggests that the concept of discarding may play a central role in the lives and culture of the twenty-first century. For Connerton, discarding implies a voluntary, conscious decision to throw away, remove, delete, or erase—requiring the individual or group to remember why information was stored in order to know whether to discard it in the present. Digital expiration dates and discarding would allow individuals and groups to proactively and productively forget the past.

Mayer-Schönberger argues that such remembering and forgetting will enable individuals to act in time. Traditionally, by forgetting most of what we experience and by remembering best what we remember often, Mayer-Schönberger argues that we are able to make decisions based upon generalizations that resonate with the immediate context; that is, we act in time, with temporal perspective. However, total recall may hinder our ability to act in time by decontextualizing information. Any memory becomes as important as every memory, and we may lose trust in our own remembering: “As digital remembering relentlessly exposes
discrepancies between factual bits and our very own human recall, what we may lose in the process is the trust in the past as we remember it” (p. 119). We may not be able to construct the present that is needed if we are confronted by the past as stored in digital memory. By denying us the ability to reconstruct memories, to evolve, to develop, and to learn, digital remembering “leav[es] us helplessly oscillating between two equally troubling options: a permanent past and an ignorant present” (p. 127). To counteract this troubling oscillation, digital forgetting would give individuals the temporal perspective from which to assess the spatial flow of constantly remixed memories, fostering the ability to arrest and synthesize that flow and thereby giving it meaning and explanatory power in and for the present. By forgetting, we ensure that the present always has a past and future.

Brooke (2009) offers another possibility by introducing Hayles’s *semiotics of virtuality* into his discussion of memory. Doing so shifts the focus from absence/presence to persistence, thus reintroducing an element of time into memory—an element that has been lost, in part, through the increased digital mediation of memory. Indeed, I would argue that rhetorical scholars need to continue to reconceptualize the mediation of memory through its mediated temporality—not only the simultaneity offered by digital media, but also the lags and gaps, as suggested by Munster (2006). Brooke (2009) explains that “the binary of presence/absence reduces memory to a question of storage, with little thought given to the effects that various media might have on what is being remembered” (p. 147). A focus on storage spatializes memory; thus, what is important is whether some thing is remembered. Brooke, however, attempts to reintroduce a temporal dimension along an axis of pattern/randomness. Examining the Challenger disaster,
Brooke suggests that “the lack of pattern preceding the Challenger’s explosion only serves to heighten the sense of tragic randomness with which the event is viewed historically” (p. 150). Memory as pattern/randomness introduces a *kairotic* encounter in memory. Memories are recognized at particular times for particular situations. When patterns are formed, memories become persistent: “Persistence as a memory practice is the ability to build and maintain patterns, although those patterns may be tentative and ultimately fade into the background” (p. 157). Brooke’s shift from absence/presence to pattern/randomness attends to memory as persistence, as that past which finds recourse in the present.

Memory allows us to see patterns in a world of ongoing change. However, Bowker (2005) and Chun (2011) warn that the practice of seeking patterns may annihilate memory by substituting generalized patterns for particular memories. This does not simply erase human agency, however, but rather fosters new dreams of human intervention, action, and incantation. It does not absolve us of responsibility, but instead calls on us to respond constantly, to save actively, if we are to save at all. (Chun, 2011, p. 140)

Chun suggest that digital media technologies have created a “programmed vision” of what she calls the “enduring ephemeral.” Blog posts, for example, can always be “discovered” and “rediscovered” while at the same time, a new blog post is already old, resulting in a layering of chronologies. Text messages can always be forwarded. Tweets can always be retweeted. YouTube never stops playing. Chun notes that “the new is sustained by this constant demand to respond to what we do not yet know . . . to continually desire for what one has not yet
experienced” (p. 172). In this way, digital media technologies do not rely on obsolescence, but rather the resuscibility of undead information. Consequently, Chun concludes, “Rather than getting caught up in speed then, what we must analyze, as we try to grasp a present that is always degenerating, are the ways in which ephemerality is made to endure” (p. 173). How does the ephemeral find recourse in the enduring; how does the enduring find recourse in the ephemeral? As memory becomes enabled, embedded, and embodied in software, memory becomes programmable. Software and algorithms will increasingly establish the conditions for seeing, for rendering phenomena visible while withdrawing others from view.

Returning to a New Memory

Media theorists, historians, psychologists, and rhetoricians along with many other academic disciplines have long used the newest media technologies as analogues for understanding memory. What is important is not which media technologies to use as metaphors per se, but rather what are the consequences of adopting any particular technology as a metaphor for memory, thus asking what does this or that technology reveal to be the new already. Taking digital network memory and digital ambient memory as metaphors reveals to us the capacities of digital memories, especially how memory finds new avenues for spatial and temporal wandering. “Topology and navigation, in addition to retrievability, make,” van Dijck (2007) suggests, “the memory process a more intriguing effort than ever before; the networked computer is a performative agent in the act of remembering” (p. 167). Digital network memory and digital ambient memory as metaphors for lived memory reconfigure lived memory. That is, the materiality of digital media technologies and their corresponding sociotechnical practices
become the modes through which memory finds recourse in the present. Spatial arrangement, rather than explicitly chronological ordering, produces new performances of the past, present and future which, in turn, evoke new relationships between private and public, individual and collective. Spatially experiencing memory “may become less a process of recalling than a topological skill, the ability to locate pieces of culture that identify the place of self in relation to other” (van Dijck, 2007, p. 50). Spatializing memories foregrounds the process of layering whereby individuals, collectives, and publics must situate themselves within temporal frames. Digital network memory and digital ambient move beyond the timeline by foregrounding time frames—how time frames memory. In so doing, what matters is not so much the content of memory, but rather what Pruchnic and Lacey (2011) call the program of current ecologies of memory: “The broad systems in which past experiences and associations are captured and/or strategically leveraged for persuasive effects” (p. 475). Digital media technologies and sociotechnical practices provide the very capacitation of memory.

All memory is always already a re-presentation, and so it is always contingent and mutable (Huyssen, 1995). Moreover, the representational practices of memory change with the times, as Bodnar also suggests. Huyssen claims, for instance, that a postmodern consumer culture expects postmodern consumer commemorations: “Spectators in ever larger numbers seem to be looking for emphatic experiences, instant illuminations, stellar events, and blockbuster shows rather than serious and meticulous appropriation of cultural knowledge” (p. 12). The museum has become a spectacle, a hybrid space integrating both the carnival and the department store, complete with banners and billboards—mass entertainment. The museum, as mass media, juxtaposes the
historical and the popular: “The quality argument collapses once the documentation of everyday life and of regional cultures, the collecting of industrial and technological artifacts, furniture, toys, cloths, and so forth becomes an ever more legitimate museal project” (p. 22). Because everything represents, everything must be musealized or archived.

Huyssen argues that the postmodern turn in memorial representations is engendered by media technologies that change our experience of temporality with their instant entertainment and frenetic pace. Technological innovation restructures our sense of temporality by quickening the pace of material life, in particular, through the acceleration and inundation of digital information: “Speed destroys space, and it erases temporal distances” (p. 253). As we store more digital information, or digital memories, in digital databases, “the more the past is sucked into the orbit of the present, ready to be called up on the screen” (p. 253). Historical discontinuity gives way to the simultaneity of all times and places accessible in the present—a present that is constantly shrinking. As a result, Huyssen notes that it seems as if “the more memory stored on the data banks and image tracks, the less our culture’s willingness and ability to engage in active remembrance” (p. 249). However, ours is a culture obsessed with memory. Huyssen claims that our current cultural obsession with memory represents a “reaction formation” against accelerating media technologies and temporal experiences. An obsession with memory is an “attempt to slow down information processing” and “to claim some anchoring space” in more extended experiences of temporality. Thus, Huyssen speculates that the current memory obsession could be a “potentially healthy sign of contestation” against a waning historical consciousness (p. 9). Put differently, even though the temporal shrinking of the present spurs a
collective amnesia, Huyssen suggests that this amnesia sparks the museal desire: Collective amnesia could be a form of productive forgetting that allows the past to meet the demands of the present—a Burkean ironic dialectic where what goes forth as remembering returns as forgetting.

Burke’s four master tropes—metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony—have permitted us insight into the “truths” of digital memory—“truths” because the tropes themselves rely on modes of remembering and forgetting as turnings away from and returns to discourse, to rhetoric. As the “turnings” and “returnings” of rhetoric, tropes do not rely on content for their effectiveness; rather, tropes offer a program, a figure, a scheme for rhetorical effect. In this way, tropes provide insight into the capacitation of discourse, and I have used the master tropes as relay to transverse the capacitation of digital memory, that is, those capacities that motivate instances of digital memory. And here, I have expanded upon Hoskin’s concepts of digital network memory and connective memory and have added my own, digital ambient memory, in an effort to continue the conceptual thickening of memory in rhetorical studies. These concepts attempt to understand the non-representational capacities of memory, its ability to gather objects and technologies along with individuals, collectives, and publics into material, sociotechnical assemblages. In other words, I have not been interested in any particular memory or object of memory, such as monuments and memorials and other commemorative activities. Rather, I have looked at how memory finds and is given a place in the present, how remembering and forgetting are enabled, embedded, and embodied in digital media technologies and expressed through sociotechnical practices. In so doing, I have attempted to limn a material rhetoric of
digital memory in order to understand memory as both a thing and a process—a thing-in-process—working at multiple scales, granularities, and magnitudes of individual and social life. Material rhetoric considers the agential force of objects in themselves, as the very condition of rhetoric.

To help further illuminate the conceptual thickening of memory and the material rhetoric necessary to study it, I discuss two case studies in the following chapters. Chapter 3 focuses on the performance of memory as enabled by digital imaging technologies, while chapter 4 attends to how the past finds a place in the present, as expressed, again, through digital imaging technologies. As I did in this chapter, I do not focus on any particular memory or memory event; rather, I use the examples presented to discuss how remembering and forgetting find recourse in the past to make a place for memory in the present and for the future. To do so, I rely upon the tropological concepts presented here, such as digital network memory and digital ambient memory, while delving further into their productions and enactments, especially the monumentality of the mundane and the persistence of the past in the present. Together, these two chapters move rhetorical scholars to consider the non-representational capacities of digital memory as persuasive forces that invent new practices and modalities of remembering and forgetting, that allow us to understand memory as a mobile object with its own social life and history. At the same time, as scholars of material rhetoric, we must attend to what is done with these objects as they manifest our memories as resources of and for agency—not only how memory intervenes in the world, but also how memory allows us to intervene in the world.
CHAPTER THREE

The Monumentality of the Mundane: Public Memory and the Rhetorical Circulation of Digital Images

The crucial question of the image is not merely what phenomena it presents (or re-presents) but how it does so: how it establishes conditions for seeing that render some phenomena visible, though always in partial perspective or illumination, while withholding others from view. — Bradford Vivian (2007, p. 480)

As the materiality of memory changes so do the material, sociotechnical practices of memory. Our use of digital media technologies, both hardware devices and software applications, in everyday life changes both how we practice memory and what we remember. This chapter contributes to the emerging focus in the scholarly literature on how memory matters (Hoskins, 2011d). It examines the matter of memory—its materiality, its media and mediations to determine how memory matters within digital media culture. Rather than continuing with the traditional rhetorical concern with representation, I follow Blair (1999) and Vivian (2007) in advancing non-representational visual and material rhetorics. Although representational approaches have contributed much to rhetorical understandings of memory, a non-representational style of engagement is better suited for investigating the productive capacities of digital media to transform the practices of memory and vice versa. Rather than focusing on the traditional categories of representational rhetoric, such as signification, meaning, presence, resemblance, identities, and intentionality, a non-representational rhetoric addresses how memory practices produce and enact relations beyond the moment and intentionality of their inception. Indeed, Vivian (2007), in his article “In the Regard of the Image,” proffers materiality,
production, enactment, and futurity as initial categories of non-representational visual rhetoric. With these dimensions serving as a conceptual framework, this chapter employs a non-representational rhetoric to understand how memory matters, specifically elucidating how digital images rhetorically circulate in digital media culture and how that transforms the practice and performance of memory.

This inquiry is framed by and advances two claims: (1) the psychosis of digital imaging drives the rhetorical circulation of digital images, and as a result, (2) the circulation of digital images necessarily alters their capacities to produce, enact, or perform memory through time. The psychosis of digital imaging refers to technologies that not only encourage users to engage in making digital images, but also to generate more of these images than ever before. Here, I use psychosis as Kenneth Burke (1935/1984) does when he draws upon John Dewey’s definition—“a pronounced character of the mind” (p. 40). This pronounced character of the mind, or orientation as Burke also refers to it, is produced in part by the materiality of media, for example digital cameras, camera phones, and the software applications used to manipulate, display, and circulate images. Additionally, the concept of rhetorical circulation, as articulated by Finnegan (2003), seeks to situate images in the print and visual culture in which they move by studying the fluidity of images as material traces of history, thus asking not only where but also how and why specific images circulate. Putting these concepts together as I do helps us to examine how digital imaging technologies mediate memory practices of individuals, collectives, and publics. Indeed, they focus attention on how practices of remembering and forgetting are conditioned, in part, by the capacities of digital imaging technologies and the rhetorical circulation of digital images. In this
chapter, I employ these concepts to explore how digital imaging technologies are transforming the rhetorical concept of memory. This exploration focuses on what Vivian (2007) calls the *virtual* properties of the image, specifically using Microsoft Live Labs’s Photosynth as an exemplar of the practices of digital memory.

Photosynth, an application that runs within a web browser, stitches together user-submitted images into a spatial, or three-dimensional photograph, called a *synth*. Synths digitally reconstruct the space shared by all the images; the more images submitted from various angles of the same contiguous space the more complete the synth becomes. Viewers, then, navigate this spatial photograph as if they visually occupied the physical space and perspective from which the original images were taken. By combining user-submitted digital images, Photosynth creates a kind of social photograph, which suggests that it might also provide a means through which citizens could engage in the construction of public memory. If, as Hariman and Lucaites (2007) argue, public memory is constructed by “individual auditors [who] see themselves in the collective representations that are the materials of public culture” (p. 42), then it seems that digital images and technologies, like Photosynth, might allow users to not only see themselves in the resulting collage of images, but also enable them to actively construct public memory.

However, rather than limiting my analysis to this line of inquiry, which remains in the realm of representational rhetoric, I am interested in how non-representational processes contribute to representational practices; thus, the focus here is on how memory practices produce relations that, as Vivian might say, are not yet actual. For instance, the proliferation of social media that emphasize connecting and sharing encourages users to come together, to contribute personal
digital images, and to create memory in ways not previously possible, thereby creating subject positions that are not yet fully realized. What becomes important are the capacities, the modalities, or what Vivian calls the *illuminative conditions*, of and for performing memory in digital media culture. Through this analysis, I demonstrate how and to what extent these illuminative conditions signal a shift away from past and public events to the transience of the present moment and individualized experience, thereby transforming the tendencies of public memory from a *stabilitas loci* (Casey, 2004) to an *enduring ephemeral* (Chun, 2011).

The chapter begins with a review of the literature on visual and material rhetoric that provides the framework for the descriptive and critical analysis. I then employ the concepts of *materiality, production, enactment,* and *futurity* as rhetorical capacities to explore the mnemonic practices, the *techne,* of Photosynth as used during and after President Obama’s inauguration. The results of this analysis demonstrate how digital imaging technologies embedded in digital media culture produce and enable new subject-object relations in the practices of memory. As a result, I demonstrate how the media of memory, such as Photosynth, inform these practices that, in turn, transform the nature of memory—from the monumental to the mundane, an ambient memory of the everyday.

**Visual and Material Rhetorics: A Non-Representational Approach to Memory**

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it has become commonplace to observe that we are living in a visual culture, inundated with visual representations, images, and displays. In a comparison with the *linguistic turn,* Mitchell (1994) has called the present dominance of images and critical interest in images a *pictorial turn,* thus recognizing the importance of images in the
production, articulation, and circulation of information and knowledge, politics and opinions. And rhetorical scholars have done much to bring the visual into the realm of rhetoric. For example, Hill and Helmers (2004) note a shift in rhetoric’s attention to visual culture and on the visual nature of rhetorical processes. Similarly, Fleckenstein, Hum, and Calendrillo (2007) propose a rhetoric that attends to “the dynamic of word, image, and shared ways of seeing that constitute our experience” (p. 6). To this end, Foss (2004) identifies three exigences for the development of visual rhetoric: (1) to understand the pervasiveness of the visual symbol, (2) to understand how visual symbols persuade and provide access to experience not available through discourse, and (3) to develop rhetorical theories that are more comprehensive, inclusive, and responsive to cultural developments and situations. Visual rhetoric, thus, refers to both visual artifacts that individuals and groups create to communicate with others and to the rhetorical perspectives used to interpret the symbolic processes of visual communication. Foss (2004) explains, “A rhetorical perspective on visual artifacts constitutes a particular way of viewing images—a set of conceptual lenses through which visual symbols become knowable as communicative or rhetorical phenomena” (p. 306). Through these approaches, visual rhetoric has expanded rhetorical theories and practices to include symbolic activity other than discourse. Nevertheless, visual rhetoric as a field, along with rhetoric itself, remain grounded in notions of symbolic activity and representation, thereby often eliding the material and non-representational dimensions of rhetorical practices.

Selzer (1999) notes that “language and rhetoric have a persistent material aspect that demands acknowledgement, and material realities often (if not always) contain a rhetorical
dimension that deserves attention” (p. 8). Selzer defines material rhetoric as the material aspects of language and as the rhetorical nature of material realities, which “takes seriously the material conditions that sustain the production, circulation, and consumption of rhetorical power” (p. 9). Material rhetoric insists that non-verbal, non-discursive, and non-representational practices and realities function rhetorically and should be studied as such. In her seminal article, “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” Blair (1999) argues that rhetorical scholars need to rethink rhetoric itself as material, thus situating materiality as primary. Blair argues that rhetorical scholars often treat “the material articulation of the symbol” as “no more than vehicular interest, as a means of transport to its telos—its meaning” (p. 19). In treating the symbol as primary, Blair argues that scholars reach outside of the symbol “for its meaning and to treat that meaning as if it were the real dimension of rhetoric, or at least the most important one” (p. 19). Like Blair, Vivian (2007) notes that studies in visual rhetoric tend to approach visual phenomena according to representational thought and language, positing that images represent (in visual form) decipherable arguments, experiences, or ideas. This orientation naturally emphasizes explanatory principles such as meaning, consciousness, and presence. Models of reasoned argument, strategic persuasion, or purposeful communication provide logical categories with which to designate visual artifacts as appropriate objects of rhetorical inquiry. (p. 472)

According to Vivian, representational approaches ascribe to visual artifacts a priori significance and meaning; the aim of rhetorical inquiry, then, is to interpret that meaning to show how it
connects to prior and extrinsic discursive arguments. Although representational approaches to visual rhetoric have made important contributions to the field, Vivian expands the study of visual rhetoric beyond representational paradigms “by demonstrating that non-representational events are integral elements of representational processes” (p. 473). Thus, rhetoric ought to begin with the material, indeed, with its material. Part of the problem, according to Blair and Vivian, is that rhetorical scholars lack an idiom to discuss the materiality of rhetoric, and this lack, bolstered by the residual effects of liberal humanism, focuses rhetorical scholarship on symbolic activity and representational modes of inquiry.

To counteract rhetoric’s focus on symbolicity and representation, Blair attends to the consequential and partisan dimensions of rhetoric to understand what rhetoric does:

If rhetoric’s materiality is not a function of its symbolic constructions of meaning, then we must look elsewhere: we must ask not just what a text means but more generally, what it does; and we must not understand what it does as adhering strictly to what it was supposed to do. (p. 23)

Material rhetoric begins, not with representation—symbols and meanings—but rather with the “assiduous materiality” and the “recalcitrant ‘presentness’” of material and visual phenomena (Blair, 1999, p. 17). To initiate an idiom for material rhetoric, Blair proposes five framing question: (1) What is the significance of the text’s material existence? (2) What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the text? (3) What are the text’s modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation? (4) What does the text do to (or with, or against) other texts? (5) How does the text act on person(s)? Rather than presupposing intentional
representation and the accompanying symbols and meanings it ostensibly communicates, these questions consider the non-representational capacities of rhetoric. Put differently, Blair encourages us to treat texts as material artifacts, or more precisely, material actors. Consequently, texts, such as monuments and memorials, are not only about something, but also, and more important, are something. They are referential and material. They are both constituted by and constitutive of material realities, of material memories and memory practices. Therefore, Blair is interested in how the “assiduous materiality” of monuments and memorials produces and enacts consequences that are always partial and partisan. And so, as Blair’s five framing questions show, what is primary is not what the artifact is but rather what it does or is capable of doing.

Again, similar to Blair’s project, Vivian (2007) attempts to provide an idiom for the materiality of visual rhetoric that moves beyond traditional rhetorical interests in representation. To study the non-representational capacities of visual phenomena, Vivian, citing Mitchell, distinguishes between picture and image. A picture refers to a constructed object, whereas an image conveys the virtual. Drawing upon Deleuze, Vivian argues that the virtual refers to the capacity of images “for producing visual realities that are not yet actual, and therefore cannot be represented as such, but are no less real in the sense that their potentiality affects existing states of affairs” (p. 473). Here, image acts as a verb rather than a noun. The virtual capacities of images refer to their ability to “produce and enact modes of spectatorship, subject-object relations, forms of affect, or grounds for competing attributions of sense and value in ways that cannot be explained in full by representational categories such as consciousness, meaning or presence” (p. 474). In this way, Vivian suggests that images operate similar to Latour’s concept of actant or
Heidegger’s notion of *thing*, whereby images exert influence and “disseminate sense and value of their own accord, and not only as instruments of conscious design or reasoned interpretation” (p. 474). Again, images not only are about something, but also are something. Vivian identifies four possible virtual capacities of visual phenomena, of rhetoric itself: *materiality, production, enactment,* and *futurity*. He argues that these virtual capacities must be explored as *illuminative conditions*, thus treating the image as a virtual event that “establishes conditions for seeing that render some phenomena visible, though always in partial perspective or illumination, while withholding others from view” (p. 480). The image as virtual event establishes certain conditions and relations through “a particular gaze produced by social, political, and ethical exigences” (p. 481). For example, Vivian offers the different styles of Romantic and Renaissance painting as producing and enacting “strikingly different gaze[s], a different basis for perception, knowledge, and judgment” (p. 483). He explains,

> The image, as described here, is distinct from a specific painting or photograph; it refers instead to a reproducible and historically characteristic *techne* of casting phenomena in a certain light, of endowing them with a distinctive manner of appearance, that a single painting or photograph merely exemplifies. In virtual terms, the image enacts such material *practices*. (p. 483)

An image produces and enacts material relations between subject and object, thereby conditioning the kinds of meanings that can be ascribed to the image. The image “informs the viewer’s resources for interpretation and judgment concerning its apparent contents or referents” (p. 484). In so doing, the image is capable of producing novel visual practices and
viewing subjects. Nevertheless, the novel practices, subjects, and objects produced by the image do not exhaust the possibilities of the image.

Vivian argues that even as we assign meaning to an image, the image withdraws its meaning from us, and “in doing so, its regard—its field of vision or mode of perception—incessantly makes possible the attribution of different meanings according to potentially incommensurable social and political interests” (p. 489). An image, with its continued circulation and with every appropriation, renews and discloses additional meanings. Vivian affirms, rather than laments, this “radical indeterminacy of an image” (p. 493). Studying images as virtual events “illuminates their capacity to produce or enact a multiplicity of visual realities in both the present and future instead of a priori or exclusively representing immaterial meaning, referents, or presence” (p. 494). Because an image continually withdraws its regard or perspective from viewers, rhetorical scholars should study an image as object or attractor “that partially determines the actualization of the virtual” (Bollmer, 2011), as things-in-arrangement (Fuller, 2007).

**In Regard of the Digital Image: The Psychosis of Digital Imaging**

Digital cameras and camcorders. Camera phones and smartphones. Flickr and Facebook. Twitter and Tumblr. Photoshop and Photosynth. To study the circulation of digital images requires putting images in circulation, and image are put into circulation via digital imaging technologies. With digital imaging hardware and software, like those listed above, we are confronted with an assemblage of digital media technologies that promotes the proliferation of digital images. This assemblage of digital imaging exhibits what Matthew Fuller (2007) calls *medial will to power*, which recognizes the capacities of media to invent new combinations of
material, physical, and psychical compositions. Like Vivian’s concept of the image’s regard, medial will to power accepts the knowledge and perception “embedded and implicit in particular dynamics and affordances of media systems and their parts” (Fuller, 2007, p. 8). Medial will to power is not an intention, but a force or drive “composed by the mutual intermeshing of various other forces that might be technical, aesthetic, economic, chemical—that might have to do with capacities of human bodies as affordances—and which pass between all such bodies and are composed through and among them” (p. 56). Medial will to power emerges with the intermediation of technologies and bodies so that it becomes the force “which moves things across thresholds” (p. 63). As Fuller might say, the media ecology of digital imaging—the camera in particular—invents the subject and object of digital images: “The subject is a case of perspectival position rather than a categorical a priori condition of knowledge” (p. 63). To use Vivian’s terms, an image brings forth a subject, or brings a subject into alignment with its regard or perspective. A subject, then, “will be what comes to the point of view, or rather what remains in the point of view” (Deleuze, 1993, p. 19) of the image itself. The image produces the subject capable of interpreting its representational rhetoric. In a sense, then, we do not push the camera’s buttons; the camera pushes our buttons, pushing us into its regard. And by extension, the assemblage of digital imaging technologies pushes us, too.

Fuller (2007) writes that the camera’s will is composed of its intensive and extensive properties—its inbuilt capacities to capture light and its external conjunction with all available patterns of light: “This is the camera, its hunger, and what compels the user, as Flusser suggests, to bring it into alliance with his or her own: a new, medial appetite” (p. 82). To the camera’s
intensive qualities, such as aperture, speed, depth of field, and focus, we must add the digital camera’s reduced material dimensions, lack of film stock, increased storage capacity, and the instantaneous display of LCD screens. To the camera’s extensive qualities, such as its relation to patterns of light, we must add the digital camera’s ability to connect to external hardware and software—personal computers, mobile phones, the internet, and social networks. The arrangement or assemblage of the digital camera with other digital imaging technologies produces a medial will to power that crosses thresholds of current photographic practices, producing new subjects that seek to align this power with their own appetites. In other words, the assemblage of digital imaging technologies changes the desires of those subjects who come into its alignment, thereby engendering the psychosis of digital imaging.

Burke’s (1935/1984) notion of psychosis or orientation acknowledges that humans seek to orient themselves to situations already in progress—perhaps best exemplified by his extended metaphor of the parlor. Because we are unsure of ourselves, we first must listen to the parlor’s conversations to know which specific conversation to enter and how to do so. Burke describes an orientation as “a bundle of judgments as to how things were, how they are, and how they may be” (p. 14). Orientations point to “contingencies by shaping our anticipation of what will occur,”

2 Burke (1941/1973) writes, “Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally’s assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.” (The Philosophy of Literary Form, pp. 110-111)
forming the basis of expectancy (p. 18). In the process, orientations may blind us to all the other conversations going on in the parlor; that is, we focus on the particular conversation we have entered, the particular orientation we have established. Burke, drawing upon Veblen, notes that this orientation may become a “trained incapacity,” whereby a previously advantageous orientation becomes a disadvantage to presently changing situations. Burke relates trained incapacity to Dewey’s occupational psychosis to suggest further both their inventive and normalizing powers. Orientations or psychoses cause us to alter our responses to situations, thus developing our critical sensibilities, while simultaneously normalizing and regulating the possible responses. In this way, orientations or psychoses help produce motives. According to Burke, motives to do not possess an absolute meaning, but rather emerge in relation to orientations and situations. A motive is a “term of interpretation” (p. 25). As Wolin (2001) explains, “Motives, in [Burke’s] view, are not purely internal emotions, desires, needs, or similar impulses that incite action, though these do figure into motives; rather, motives are fluid, reflexive mental states that simultaneously reflect situations and order our interpretations of them” (p. 102). Applying Burke’s concepts, we begin to understand that the psychosis of digital imaging motivates individuals to capture and share their experiences with others. As the concept of psychosis suggests, individuals may not be the primary instigators of digital imaging; rather, the psychosis which motivates individuals to capture and share is engendered, at least in part, by digital imaging technologies so that to make and share digital images is to enter into a relation in which individuals may not be the only or most influential agents.
Digital imaging technologies have a medial will to power that produces individuals as subjects of digital imaging, as continual capturers, as psychotic photographers. As an example of psychotic photography consider the photograph below of President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama at the inaugural ball (see Figure 1). Here, the LCD screen with its medial will to power motivates the capture, the image. Kim (2009) argues, “This LCD frame is positioned behind the camera and it provides the photographer with an instant relay, or feedback, of what unfolds in front of her” (para. 1).

Figure 1: Psychotic Photographers & the Obamas (Photograph by Elliott Erwitt/Magnum)

This digital image enlightens us to the psychosis of digital imaging, whereby the digital camera literally brings us as subjects into its alignment, perspective, and regard. By viewing this image as
evidence of the psychosis of digital imaging, we begin to understand how digital imaging technologies condition the resources available to individuals, collectives, and publics for capturing the present. By combining the concepts of orientation, psychosis, and motivation with non-representational visual and material rhetoric, we begin to understand that the psychosis of digital imaging is also a *techne* of digital imaging, a practice, a productive art—abundantly generative of new modalities of individual, collective, and public memory. The production of digital imaging—referring both to how images are produced and how images produce—allows us to understand the transcoding of a computational logic into a cultural logic (Manovich, 2001). That is, we can begin to understand how material assemblages of digital media technologies help produce sociotechnical practices, such as the psychosis of digital imaging, that, in turn, generate digital network memory and digital ambient memory. Indeed, the material affordances of digital imaging technologies give rise to a digital network memory, while the sociotechnical practice contributes to digital ambient memory. And as Kim begins to suggest, rhetorical scholars must ask how the productive psychosis of digital imaging rearticulates concepts of community and democracy, of rhetorical power and agency, of individual, collective, and public memory. In the following sections, I take up this task, first by describing Photosynth as medium of and for the circulation of digital images, and second by analyzing how and to what extent Photosynth points toward modalities and practices of spectatorship, of subject-object relations, and of competing attributions of value that change our relationship to memory, thereby altering the nature of memory.
Photosynth: Creating and Exploring Synths

Microsoft Live Labs describes Photosynth as an application that recreates a scene from a set of flat photographs:

Using techniques from the field of computer vision, Photosynth examines images for similarities to each other and uses that information to estimate the shape of the subject and the vantage point each photo was taken from. With this information, we recreate the space and use it as a canvas to display and navigate through the photos. (Photosynth “About”, 2009)

Photosynth is both the process and the product of reconstructing and experiencing photographs of the same scene. A user submits to Photosynth her digital images of some scene, for instance, President Obama’s inauguration, and Photosynth concatenates those photos to create a sutured digital image called a synth. What emerges is not a slideshow of still photographs, but rather a three-dimensional environment, or viewing experience, ready to be explored. Because a synth is a collection of overlapping photos from various angles and viewpoints, users can navigate spatially by clicking directional arrows and zoom buttons located along the screen’s bottom (see Figure 2).
From the vantage displayed in the above screenshot, a user could zoom in on the crowd, point to a similar view from a different angle (as indicated by the white outlines of images), or move all the way to the U.S. Capitol Building for a close-up of President Obama taking the oath of office (see Figure 3). With each click, one image comes into focus while simultaneously other photos, slightly shaded, are constructed around it to form the scene’s navigable space. A full-screen mode contributes to its interactive and immersive experience. As users spatially navigate the synth, they virtually recreate the experience of being there in the space and of taking the photographs.

Photosynth’s social potential—its potential for individual, collective, and public memory—emerges through user-submitted digital images. The more users who submit images
of a particular scene the more complete and seamless the synth’s three-dimensional recreation or representation becomes and the richer and more immediate the experience of navigating, therein offering layers of breadth and depth. Whereas a single still photograph captures the scene as one person saw it, Photosynth reconstructs the scene as seen by many persons and many images—each offering a unique perspective—a digital network memory. In a review of Photosynth, Manjoo (2009) states, “The software collects similar pictures that, by themselves, aren’t very interesting and builds an entirely new kind of image, what you might call a social photograph” (para. 6). Photosynth’s technical and social force resides in its ability to allow users to combine and share photographs of their experience. Blaise Aguera y Arcas (2007), the co-creator of Photosynth, explains:

What the point here really is is that we can do things with the social environment. This is now taking data from everybody, from the entire collective memory, of visually what the Earth looks like and link all that together. All those photos become linked together, and they make something emergent that is greater than the sum of its parts. You have a model that emerges of the entire Earth. . . . This is something that grows in complexity as people use it, and whose benefits become greater to the users as they use it.

Here, Aguera y Arcas touches upon both digital ambient memory and digital network memory. The former refers to “taking data from everybody, from the entire collective memory,” while the latter refers to the ability to link and connect that data, those memories in a meaningful way.

Although the makers and users of Photosynth have not yet completed a visual map of the entire Earth, Microsoft has incorporated Photosynth technology into its mapping software, Bing Maps,
thus altering how users engage with spatiotemporal representations of place (a theme that I will address in the next chapter). As more users contribute to a particular synth, the rendering of the spatial environment becomes more and more complete to the extent that the synth becomes a social, collective record of the images taken of that scene.

Although Photosynth has been available online since 2007, it enjoyed its most widespread popular media exposure with the inauguration of President Barack Obama. Drawing upon several sources, The Washington Post (Ruane & Davis, 2009) reported that anywhere between 750,000 and 1.8 million people attended President Obama’s inauguration ceremony on the Mall. No matter how many people actually attended one fact can be safely assumed: The number of people who attended is dwarfed by the number of digital images produced that day. Because of the ubiquity of digital cameras and camera-equipped mobile phones that has helped to produce the psychosis of digital imaging, we may imagine attendees took over ten million digital images that day. The number is impossible to calculate, and that is the point. We may not have an iconic photograph from that day, but we have a virtual photo album of that day—a digital ambient memory. That is, like many photo albums, many of these images are insignificant—or more delicately, less than iconic (Hariman & Lucaites, 2007), not up to the task of capturing, in a compelling way, the spectacle of the inauguration. As a synth, however, these photographs combine to become a digital image—a virtual attractor of memory—to become, as Aguera y Arcas might say, “something emergent that is greater than the sum of its parts . . . that grows in complexity as people use it.” For example, CNN.com requested attendees to send in their images of the inauguration, which were then submitted to Photosynth. The current synth
of the inauguration, titled “The Moment” (final version) and created and uploaded on January 22, 2009, has 613 images, allowing users to move from the farthest reaches of the Mall (see Figure 2) to a close-up of President Obama, thus providing users a detailed, encompassing picture of the event (see Figure 3). Manjoo (2009) exclaims, “Looking at the synth is even better than having been there live—this way you can see everything” (para. 6).

Figure 3: A view of President Obama's Oath, "The Moment" (CNN Martin)

Although Manjoo may overstate the experience of using Photosynth, his comment suggests that the Photosynth experience creates a new subject-object relation, and in so doing, a new relation to memory: A viewer who feels that she sees, and thus remembers, an event in total. Nevertheless, Photosynth reveals that such “total recall” is a total fiction. What Photosynth
does, then, is participate in the psychosis of digital imaging, which, in turn, expands the rhetorical circulation and function of once static, limited images by creating a digital composite and social image. Indeed, in the ensuing analysis, I explore how Photosynth, as a composite, captures the inauguration in a way no single individual or individual image could. With this synth, individuals have created a social and collective memory of the inauguration.

Simultaneously, however, using Photosynth may encourage individuals to experience the synth itself and not necessarily the inauguration, thus diminishing the opportunity to produce or enact a collective or public memory. The inauguration synth, therefore, exemplifies the *illuminative conditions* of the psychosis of digital imaging and the rhetorical circulation of digital images. “The Moment” as a *virtual event* enlightens our current conceptions of the rhetorical concept of memory by both creating and conditioning the limits of novel subject-object relations of individual, collective, and public memory.

**The Practices of Digital Memory: Materiality, Production, Enactment, and Futurity**

Taking a non-representational approach to the synth of President Obama’s inauguration, we may follow Blair and ask, “What is the significance of the text’s material existence?” With this question, Blair attends to a monument’s “assiduous materiality” that acts and so has consequences in and for a material reality. Similarly, if we follow Vivian, we may ask what material realities the synth makes visible. Together Blair and Vivian urge us to consider how “assiduous materiality” produces and enacts material realities through *time*. For the present analysis, we must understand how the materiality of Photosynth produces and enacts not only new practices of memory but also new subject-object relations among memory and individuals,
collectives, and publics. The materiality of Photosynth begins with the material assemblage of digital imaging technologies that in turn has helped produce the psychosis of digital imaging. As entry into the material assemblage of digital imaging technologies, let’s consider again the LCD screen.

As described above, the digital camera and its LCD screen encourages individuals to look through its screen to view the world; that is, individuals are brought into the camera’s regard, its frame/ing, as we see in Figure 2 where most attendees are attempting to photograph the event. The instantaneous viewing of that which was just imaged compels individuals to take more images, and these images, with the help of other digital imaging technologies, come together in Photosynth. The LCD screen, thus, provides the initial frame while the materiality of Photosynth offers a reframing of the event. Sontag (1977) suggested that “photographs, which package the world, seem to invite packaging. They are stuck in albums, framed and set on tables, tacked on walls, projected as slides” (p. 4). Photosynth frames—produces and packages—these images, but in so doing, it reveals that the event exceeds the frames imposed upon it, from the LCD screen to the computer monitor to Photosynth’s software. In describing Photosynth as a photographic medium, Uricchio (2011) notes, “Indeed, the frame (of the computer screen) is rendered arbitrary . . .” and thereby “restor[es] an experience of movement to the image and the depiction process, vividly illustrating the arbitrary constraints of any one image within a larger reality” (p. 29). By displaying the inauguration as a navigable event, Photosynth subordinates “any particular point of view, in the process disrupting the modern configuration of the subject-object relations” (p. 29). The subject no longer participates in a stable experience of the event. As a
result, Photosynth makes visible the impossibility of capturing “The Moment.” Indeed, the title, “The Moment,” is inaccurate because the synth captures many moments: Each image was taken at slightly different moments so that the synth reflects not a single static moment in time but a flowing stream of temporalities, or better still, an ambient awareness of temporalities whereby the subject can never quite find herself in a fixed moment of the event.

Yet, the inauguration synth remains relatively stable because it collapses temporalities within the visual field of the synth. In this way, the materiality of Photosynth places material constraints on the reality depicted. As Uricchio (2011) explains, “[Photosynth] is predicated upon the visual contours of place. If [an image’s] pattern is distinctive, allowing it to fit uniquely within other shots of the same area, then it will probably be accepted” (p. 29). Uricchio notes that “temporal slippages” are revealed by “changes in bodily position, different configurations of the flags in the wind and so on” (p. 29). In other words, each image is distinctive but similar enough to have its place in the synth. Consequently, each image can be different but only so different until it is rejected by Photosynth’s algorithm. Through its algorithmic constraints, Photosynth produces and enacts a monumentality. Here, monumentality refers to an emergent sensibility of digital memory. That is, individuals must remember the event in similar ways lest their images—their memories of the event—be rejected and forgotten, forgotten because they cannot be connected and circulated with other images. In the process, the synth of Obama’s inauguration makes visible the psychosis of digital imaging that, in turn, motivates the mentality of remembering whereby the mundane becomes the monumental and the monumental mundane. The material assemblage of digital imaging, including Photosynth, encourages
individuals to remember an event, like the inauguration, through their medial will to power—their inscribed practices of production. The assemblage helps to compel individuals to remember the inauguration by recording and capturing the event as it happens. Photosynth’s algorithms reproduce this phenomenon, encouraging its users to view *the* moment, *a* moment, *any* moment. In effect, the assemblage of digital imaging technologies prompts individuals to hold their cameras at arm’s length and to point them in the same direction as everyone else to capture the moment, a moment, any moment, thus producing the *monumentality* of the mundane.

This phenomenon is demonstrated not only by Photosynth’s primary 3D viewing mode as in seen in Figures 2 and 3, but also by its alternative displays. Along with the 3D viewing mode, Photosynth provides three additional views: overhead, 2D view, and point cloud. Both the 2D view (see Figure 4) and the point cloud (see Figure 5) show that many individuals pointed their cameras at either the Capitol building or the crowd.
Figure 4: A 2D view displaying each image in the synth

Figure 5: A point cloud displaying outline of Capitol building
The similarities in images is the result of several factors: the desire to capture the moment of Obama’s inauguration which took place at the Capitol building, and the desire to capture the monumentality of the crowd and occasion, and, importantly, the result of the algorithmic constraints of the Photosynth software. For viewers visiting the synth on the web, the last plays the most important role because “the organizational logic of the synth . . . depends on an algorithmic intervention”:

In Photosynth’s case, while we are aware of seeing through many complementary sets of eyes, the enabler of those viewpoints and of the larger composite remains unseen and out of reach. It is a program layer that changes, that is redefined, that offers different affordances—in addition to being the single conduit through which we can access the image—while being completely outside the control of the user. (Uricchio, 2011, p. 31)

The inauguration synth depends upon Photosynth and its algorithmic invention to completely mediate the experience. Uricchio suggests that such algorithmic invention complicates traditional subject-object relationships, for example, among the photographer, the viewer, and the photo. An algorithmic reconstruction stands between the subject and object, between the event and the memory of the event—an algorithmic rhetoric. This algorithmic rhetoric contributes to the monumentality of the mundane, thereby enacting the form of mediation that informs and enforces a sameness of experience. As Uricchio points out, the algorithm enacts our viewing position by both producing and stabilizing the disjunctures of the composite image.

Photosynth’s algorithm both invents and normalizes the experience of memory—individual,
collective, and public—of its viewers. Therefore, although Photosynth affords viewers the ability to generate individualized experiences of the inauguration synth, those experiences will be marginally different—unique, but just so.

When individuals interact with the inauguration, they “must take a more active role in making sense of the ensuing composite of anonymous voices, in assessing it, in moving across its links to pursue additional information” (Uricchio, 2011, p. 30). Similar to Photosynth’s algorithm, individuals, too, must reconstruct the experience of the inauguration. And they must do so without the intentionality of a single image. Here, we may recall Blair’s comment that texts act on, with, and against other texts. To illuminate how Photosynth produces a text that acts on other texts, we may look to Barthes’s (1982) notion of the text, which he describes as “entirely woven of quotations, references, echoes” (p. 60). Every text quotes, reacts to, and interacts with other texts. Whereas the work has a limited meaning that closes upon a signified, “the Text is dilatory; its field is that of the signifier” (p. 59). Unlike the work, the text resists easy classification according to traditional categories and hierarchies of signification, thus pushing the limits of readability. Indeed, for Barthes, reading the text is best achieved by playing the text—to revel in the play of signifiers. Put differently, the text demands engagement, not a glance; the reader must actively look at and read through its construction and recreation without reducing the text to a closed reading. Importantly, Barthes claims that the play of the text—both the text itself and the act of reading—displaces the author and authorial intent so that the text does not have a single source but rather reiterates and weaves together many sources. Applying Barthes’s concept of the text to Photosynth, we see that the inauguration synth produces an intertextual
space of stitched together digital images. Given the algorithmic constraints of Photosynth, each image necessarily quotes and interacts with all the other images immediately surrounding it. And viewers must engage with, rather than glance at, the synth to experience it; thus, the synth interpellates viewers as interactants. The white frames indicating adjacent images, the “Highlights” located along the left side, and navigational buttons hail the viewer and call for a response—a click here, a zoom there. As a social text that displaces authorial intent and demands engagement, the synth opens itself to multiple and contradictory readings: If each interactant has a different trajectory through the synth, then each interactant will construct a different response. In this way, individuals interacting with Photosynth reproduce and remember the inauguration differently.

What is interesting, however, is that the algorithmic intervention remains between the subject and object so that interactants are limited by the affordances and constraints of Photosynth. The synth, then, silences not only images by choosing those that are included but also interactants by structuring how they engage with the synth. If interactants do not like what they see or if the application does not run smoothly, their only option may be to move on to another image, or to another synth, or to another website. Photosynth produces a disconnect between what the inauguration synth is and what it does. The synth is a collection of images of the inauguration, but what it does cannot be determined completely in advance of each interaction. Each interactant will have her own “interactional trajectory” (Hoskins, 2011c). Hoskins (2011c) refers to interactional trajectories as “a useful way of conceiving of experiences as being extended as individuals/groups encounter and interact with objects, interfaces and
others, which in an ongoing fashion shape remembering interactively in the present” (p. 277). Every interaction with the synth—from clicking on images to zooming out to changing the viewing mode—conditions the experience of every subsequent interaction. The synth makes visible the inability to remember the same way twice. In the process, interactants participate in, rather than consume, the practices and processes of remembering. Those practices and processes, however, will be relatively the same for each interactant, for each interactant must select from the pre-given options. In this way, Photosynth synthesizes the experience of individuals who must remember according to its inscribed practices.

Consequently, we should consider the limits of this interaction and participation. For example, Haskins (2007) suggests that even though people can participate actively in commemoration, this does not mean they do: “When technology offers the ability of instant recall, individual impulse to remember withers away. If archival preservation and retrieval are not balanced by mechanisms that stimulate participatory engagement, electronic memory may lead to self-congratulatory amnesia” (p. 407). In other words, preservation must mean more than to conserve or to save; it must mean to keep fresh, to prolong a ripening—an intensity of flavoring and experience—a readiness to participate in the present moment. According to Haskins, if digital archives, like Photosynth, are to be successful, they must stimulate not only spectatorship, but also meaningful participation. She especially worries that digital archives, though easily accessible, “shift the burden of active remembrance to individuals and groups, effectively disavowing the public nature of the enterprise” (p. 419). For Haskins, a digital archive threatens to become a collective, and more important, willful amnesia. And as Haskins implies, this
collective amnesia corresponds to the increased attention to individualized, customized experience. Photosynth, if it limits participation to the synth itself, shifts attention to an individualized rather than communal experience.

This individualized rather than communal experience is revealed in the comments to the synth. Visitors do not engage with each other about the inauguration, but rather post their experiences of the synth itself. For example, Midov writes, “eOOL [sic],” and zerati writes, “Excelen[t] [sic]!” Magoooo comments, “a little faster and it’s a movie..nice experience…where is [sic] the washrooms???” And Michaelyias observes, “There are some really wacky point cloud deviations going on inside this synth.” The last two comments, particularly, demonstrate that users engage the synth more than the inauguration. Let’s recall Manjoo’s (2009) comment regarding the inauguration synth: “Looking at the synth is even better than having been there live—this way you see everything” (para. 6). Here, Manjoo expresses his individual experience of the synth. What is important for Manjoo is not the inauguration, but rather his experience of the inauguration as enacted by interacting with the synth. Manjoo’s sentiments echo Slater’s (1995) characterization of the circulation of digital images: Images that circulate “are those which are bound up with forms of practice rather than memory or commemoration, which are part of the instantaneous time of the consumerist present rather than a historical time marked by the family album” (p. 139). The synth, then, becomes a material practice that calls the interactant’s attention to what is happening now in the synth and to making it happen. The reconstruction of

3 All comments may be found on the main page of Photosynth for “The Moment” final version (CNN, 2012).
the inauguration fades into the background, and along with it, possibly, its potential as a resource for individual, collective, or public memory.

This difference between the experience of the synth and the memory of the event is also reproduced by the differences between bodies moving in a particular time and place and bodies viewing images dispersed across times and places. These bodies perform memory differently. In making this distinction, I am not suggesting that the former—bodies moving—implies a lack in the latter—bodies viewing. Rather, I am interested in how Photosynth, as a material and local manifestation of the psychosis of digital imaging, produces styles of knowing and being in a world that mediates new practice and modality of memory. As Blair suggests, rhetorical texts act on the whole person—mind and body—so that any memorial text incorporates, literally and figuratively, the body. Such incorporation is apparent in the inauguration synth’s images. Citizens traveled to the Nation Mall in Washington, D.C. to participate in the inauguration, to be part of the history and memory of the event. And we see how their movement to, in, and through that space acted on their bodies—bodies wrapped in hats, scarves, and gloves; bodies smiling, waving, and celebrating; bodies making pictures. These individuals are the immediate collective of the event. Indeed, these individuals appear to act less as a collective than as an individual-collective, a concept Bollmer (2011) articulates to designate how “collectives are individuals produced through the actualization of memory as shared embodied movement” (p. 2). Collective memory, then, refers to “the direct formation of assemblages out of humans and the technological in the practice of memory as movements” (p. 3). Bollmer claims that collectives are produced through the practices of memory, principally the enactment of embodied ritual.
movement: “Thus, the rituals themselves not only produce the individual actor as part of the collective, but produce the collective itself, as collective-individual” (p. 11). Attending the inauguration is a ritual enacted through embodied movement, and this movement creates the collective and collective memory of the event. But the inauguration collective is more than a collective. It is a public. Warner (2002) notes that a public can be described as “a concrete audience, a crowd witnessing itself in visible space. . . . A crowd . . . knows itself by knowing where and when it is assembled in common visibility and common action” (p. 66). Given this collection of images, there is no doubt that this crowd is witnessing itself. Indeed, each image enacts the perspective of a witness, like graffiti, announcing, “I was here.” These bodies in the inauguration’s space and time are participating, actively uptaking the event, as Warner might suggest. They are a public forming the collective memory of the inauguration, indeed, we may say, a public memory. Warner, however, does not limit a public to a concrete audience.

Warner argues that publics exist in and through the circulation of texts. Circulating texts address publics as such. In other words, texts bring subjects into their regard or perspective to enact publics. What is required, Warner claims, is “mere attention” to the text and its circulation. Thus, Photosynth, as a text circulating through digital networks, addresses a public every time a web browser visits the site, making the synth itself a memorial destination. The public of the inauguration synth is whoever actively attends to the synth itself. However, the experience of this public is different than the public of the inauguration. No hats, gloves, or scarves are needed to participate—no embodied ritual movement. But Photosynth does act on the viewing body. As mentioned previously, viewers must become interactants if they are to experience both the
synth and the inauguration. The white frames indicating adjacent images act like pathways and sightlines, encouraging interactants to move their gaze in certain directions. Similarly, as Figures 2 and 3 show, Photosynth has included a feature, on the right-hand side of the screen, called “Highlights.” The Photosynth team explains this feature: “With our new highlights feature you not only can find some of the best spots in a synth . . . you can take a smooth journey through the synth from highlight to highlight.” For the inauguration synth, who selected the highlights and by what criteria is not stated, but the highlights act as a filter for the synth that prompts users to remember those moments and not others. As a resource for enacting memory, Photosynth affects the agency of its viewers by mediating the acts of remembering and forgetting. Photosynth interestingly attempts to reproduce the experience of the individual by using the resources of the collective. Photosynth’s mediation remediates the experience of those people who attended the inauguration, who, in turn, mediated their experience through the psychosis of digital imaging. That is, for many, if not most, in attendance it was not enough to attend the event. They had to capture the moment. In so doing, these psychotic photographers mediated their experience, separating and distancing themselves from the live event through their digital screens. Photosynth remediates this experience by further distancing interactants from the event through algorithmic constraints so that the experience of both attendees and interactants is more similar than previously suggested. The psychosis of digital imaging and the rhetorical circulation of digital images produce a collective response to the inauguration—a collective monumentality that favors the mundane and the similar: Let us remember the event through our digital imaging technologies. Nevertheless, the subsequent remembering of that
event, as enacted by Photosynth, is less collective and more individual for two primary reasons. First, Photosynth’s algorithm mediates and informs the experience, thus distancing the individual from the collective, and second, individuals typically interact with the synth alone and engage Photosynth as a medium and as mediation rather than remembering the event itself.

Such a claim, however, may disregard the agency of the viewer to interact with the synth and to actively remember the inauguration as a memorable public event. As a performance, the inauguration synth fulfills an epideictic function. Like the inauguration, the synth becomes a locus of celebration. Browne (1993) suggests that epideictic rhetoric exemplifies the performance of public memory. Because it is oriented toward the spectator, the present moment, and the amplification of praise and blame, epideictic rhetoric works to persuade the audience to remember certain experiences and memories and to forget others, thus illuminating a shared identity and meaning for the audience. Every time a user views the synth—302,426 views and counting, making it the most viewed synth in Photosynth’s archive (April 14, 2012)—she recalls, or better, performs anew the inauguration’s public significance and values.

Photosynth, thus, offers a different style of embodiment, of sociability and solidarity, of remembering and forgetting. In his discussion of publics, Warner (2002) argues that “publics act historically according to the temporality of their circulation” (p. 97). For Warner, publics exist punctually so that, for example, the newspaper creates a public with its delivery every morning. Warner notes, however, that “web discourse has very little of the citational field that would allow us to speak of it as discourse unfolding through time” (p. 97). Web discourse, according to Warner, may not offer the necessary punctuality of circulation needed to form publics:
If the change of infrastructure continues at this pace, and if modes of apprehension change accordingly, the absence of punctual rhythms may make it very difficult to connect localized acts of reading to the modes of agency in the social imaginary of modernity. (p. 98)

Warner suggests that individual experience does not necessarily create a public. Similarly, individuals who use Photosynth may not recognize themselves as part of the public of the event. Nevertheless, the inauguration synth, even though it does not circulate punctually, circulates through time and space chronically in futurity, that is, continually, and circulation creates the possibility of addressing individuals and publics. The synth of Obama’s inauguration always arrives on time for those who attend to it. Each new visitor makes the memory anew. By interacting with the synth, the viewer fosters a memory of the event even as it constrains that memory through its inscribed practices—its algorithmic monumentality. And so in the final section, I address how these practices of digital memory transform the nature of memory itself.

**The Monumentality of Digital Memory**

I have analyzed Photosynth and in particular a synth of President Barack Obama’s inauguration as virtual events to exemplify the practices and performances of memory as they operate within current digital media culture. Shifting from a representational to non-representational rhetoric allows us to understand how memory moves through digital media technologies and sociotechnical practices to produce and enact digital memory that exists beyond the moment of representation. The psychosis of digital imaging and the rhetorical circulation of digital images ensure that digital memory lives in the present and for the future;
nevertheless, I have also suggested that we may wonder whether we are simultaneously withdrawing from explicitly public performances of memory, of public memory itself.

The inauguration synth works towards a rearticulation of subject-object relations wherein what is important is less the experience of the event than the mediation of the event. As a mediation of the inauguration, Photosynth allows for individual, social, and collective memory; however, the public nature of that memory is less certain. Casey (2004), in particular, distinguishes between these four modes of memory, as discussed in the previous chapter. Casey argues that collective memory occurs “severally,” a plurality of remembering, wherein what matters is not social relationships or a common time, but rather a “commonality of content”: “Not the experience but the focus—amounting to a monothetic obsession—is what is shared in collective memory” (p. 24). Certainly, attending the inauguration produced a locus of individual and social memory. Similarly, attending to the inauguration synth produces individual and collective memory as the focus of remembering is not on relationships but rather the images. We may wonder, then, whether this collective memory helps constitute a public memory when mediated by digital imaging technologies.

Casey defines public memory as a combination of individual, social, and collective memory that “serves as an encircling horizon” (p. 25). Public memory becomes an active resource upon which members draw, “sanctioning and protecting, legitimating and supporting” various public concerns (p. 26). In this way, public memory becomes what Casey calls *stabilitas loci*, a place for further and future remembering, thus constituting the public: “A memorial horizon not only engirdles its subject matter but actively subtends its, giving it its own identity
and shape, its cast and character, its characteristic physiognomy” (p. 30). As such, public memory defines the conditions of public dialogue. Casey stresses, however, that public memory must occur in some particular place, happening “only when people meet and interact in a single scene of interaction” (p. 32). The place comes to embody the memory, acting as a “material inducement . . . drawing out the appropriate memories in that location” (p. 32). Attending the inauguration, gathering in the National Mall acts as a place of public memory, inducing the appropriate memories in that location. Casey’s definition of public memory corresponds well with Bollmer’s (2011) notion of the individual-collective wherein collective memory is produced through ritualistic embodied movement, such as gathering in the National Mall every four years for the presidential inauguration. Photosynth, in contrast, offers a material inducement to remember individually and as individuals dispersed across time and place, thus unsettling the collective and public nature of the memory. However, and importantly, Photosynth gives the act of remembering the time to take place by putting individual images into circulation together. The practice of remembering, thus, becomes enabled, embodied, and embedded within digital imaging technologies.

To account for these practices of remembering, van Dijck (2007) advances the concepts of mediated memories, which refers to both material memory artifacts and a mental concept, and personal cultural memory, which refers to how cultural practices become individual practices. Mediated memories denote “the activities and objects we produce and appropriate by means of media technologies, for creating and re-creating a sense of past, present, and future of ourselves in relation to others” (p. 21). To study mediated memories in this way, she proposes a related
concept—personal cultural memory—to show how personal memories and artifacts are facilitated and framed by cultural forms and social practices that are increasingly remediated by digital technologies. As a result, the performative nature of memory is re-invented: The digitization, multimediatization, Googlization, and Photosynthization of memory create a new temporal experience that arranges memories spatially. Indeed, van Dijck suggests that practices of remembering will become akin to imaginative navigation. And this imaginative navigation, as demonstrated by Photosynth, will enact both an individualized experience and a sameness of experience. Photosynth compels each individual to become an interactant with an individualized “interactional trajectory” (Hoskins, 2011c) while simultaneously informing—affording and constraining—the possible interactional trajectories. Similarly, individuals create individualized experiences within a common practice and sensibility of memory—what I called the monumentality of the mundane.

The psychosis of digital imaging helps to enact the monumentality of the mundane, a monumentality that corresponds to the present rather than the past. Whereas photographs have long been recognized as serving an evidentiary function, the psychosis of digital imaging compels an interest in the present. Regarding the former, Barthes (1981), for example, refers to the evidentiary quality of photographs as their ability to distill a moment “that-has-been” (p. 76). Hariman and Lucaites (2007) similarly discuss how iconic photographs attain special significance in relation to an historical event: “Iconic images rise above many other images and the vast background of print journalism to shape understanding of specific events and periods, both at the time of their original publication and subsequently” (p. 11). In the process, Hariman and
Lucaites argue that iconic images can negotiate public memory, becoming idealized representations of who we are and who we want to be. Like iconic images that articulate public memory, the family photo album traditionally has been used to capture special occasions. For example, Gye (2007) claims that the rise in personal photography engendered a commensurate desire for private memorialization, noting that Kodak advertised its cameras as devices that recorded special family moments. Like iconic photographs, the family photo album is an idealized representation of the family and who it wants to be. Now, however, the psychosis of digital imaging and digital media culture are shifting the focus from past to present, from the special to the everyday.

Digital images circulate within a digital media culture that enables and exalts immediate, instantaneous communication and individualized experience. Both of these characteristics generate an intense interest in what is happening in the present rather than what has happened in the past. This intense focus on the present entails a corresponding interest in the private and personal: Whereas photojournalism documented public events, individuals, compelled by the psychosis of digital imaging, are using digital imaging technologies to capture personal experiences as they happen. Rather than restricting its use to special occasions, individuals are increasingly using digital imaging technologies to reproduce moments of everyday life.

Given the popularity of online social networking, more people than ever before are connecting with others to form social relationships. Nevertheless, the function of digital images within this context changes the nature of social relationships. Both online digital imaging and
social relationships have become focused on transitory individual experiences. In digital media culture, Facebook has replaced the photo album. Indeed, rather than the photo album, Slater (1995) presciently offers

an alternative metaphor which might capture the active relation of domestic images to contemporary everyday life: ‘the pinboard,’ or even, ‘the wall.’ Instead of gluing photos into albums (arranged narratively in books, or as icons on the shrine of the mantelpiece) and therefore into a history, we rather pin and blu-tack them haphazardly onto surfaces and therefore into the moment, into the display and self-presentation of the present. (p. 139)

Photosynth and Facebook and similar services have become “the pinboards,” “the walls” of digital media culture on and through which users project images of self-presentation. Images are placed within an ever-shifting collage and flow of other images “produced by and within the activities of the present” (p. 139). This practice is digital imaging’s interarticulation of psychosis and circulation restated. By helping to construct the present moment, digital images are “acts of practical communication rather than reflective representation” (Slater, 1995, p. 139). Gye (2007) finds an analogous trend: “The transitory nature of camera phone images means that self expression is shifting from ‘this is what I saw then’ to ‘this is what I see now’” (p. 285). Digital images as they circulate in current digital media culture embody a relationship to the present, not the past. The value of digital images, as demonstrated in Photosynth, is in their practice of the everyday, in their performance of the mundane.
Whereas photojournalism and traditional personal photography function to record special occasions to aid public or familial memory, digital imaging technologies within digital media culture converges on the individual’s experience of the present moment. Twitter asks not “What have you done?” but rather “What’s happening?” What is important is not what has happened, but what is happening and about to happen. Digital images, then, are used not to represent a collective past, but rather to show off an individual’s present. Thus, to understand the rhetorical potential of digital images, specifically Photosynth, to become resources for individual, collective, and public memory, the images and the practice of public memory must be situated within digital media culture. And as we have seen, the practices of digital memory begin to transform the nature of memory, thereby changing how memory matters.

A non-representational rhetoric compels us to engage how memory matters because it asks us, as rhetorical scholars, to treat digital memory both as an object or thing in itself and as an object in arrangement with other objects, formed and formed by certain capacities, such as the psychosis of digital imaging. As Brown (2001) notes, “The story of objects asserting themselves as things, then, is the story of a changed relation to human subject and thus the story of how the thing really names less an object than a particular subject-object relation” (p. 4). In effect, treating digital memory and Photosynth and other digital imaging technologies as things or forces obliges us to consider what they make possible, specifically the subjects and objects they bring into being. The psychosis of digital imaging and the circulation of digital images, exemplified by Photosynth, introduce a monumentality of the mundane. Every moment is fit for memory. Every moment is ephemeral and so must be made to endure—momentary memories, a
digital ambient memory. We become emplaced within a digital memorial environment. And as
Photosynth suggests, software applications and algorithms will increasingly establish the
conditions for seeing, for rendering phenomena visible while withdrawing others from view—a
digital network memory made possible by algorithmic in(ter)ventions. The software regenerates
the experience of the inauguration with every viewing, but in so doing, it makes the inauguration
and the public memory of the event obsolescent. Chun (2011) argues that this dynamic between
the ephemeral and the enduring exists within software itself and has become transcoded into
cultural practices: “Through a process of constant regeneration, of constant ‘reading,’ it creates
an enduring ephemeral that promises to last forever” (p. 137). Chun suggests that the enduring
ephemeral marks both the fleeting and the repetitive processes of digital media culture: “Internet
content may be available 24/7, but 24/7 on what day?” (p. 170). And we may add, “To whom?”
Here, Chun’s question recalls Warner’s (2002) concern that publics require punctuality in order
to exist as such. Rather than punctuality, the enduring ephemeral introduces chronic
differentiation to memory, thereby creating a “nonsimultaneous new” that demands a response
over and over again: “This new is sustained by this constant demand to respond to what we do
not yet know, by the goal of new media czars to continually desire for what one has not yet
experienced” (p. 172). The psychosis of digital imaging compels individuals to become psychotic
photographers, constantly responding to what is happening and to what is about to happen so
that the ephemeral can be made to endure.

Memory becomes the mundane, the ambient capturing of the everyday. The psychosis of
digital imaging does not link us to memory, but enmeshes us in it. Consequently, memory
cannot be that which links or connects us to the past, present, and future, but rather is the environment in which we live and from which we construct the past, present, and future.

Indeed, as Rickert (2004) writes, “[A]n environment is always a situation, and that situation, in its absolute singularity, calls a subject into being—or, put differently, carries out the panoply of actions possible in real time engagement” (p. 911). We dwell with memory as it brings us into being, and in so doing, offers new possibilities for inventing experiences of the present and for the future. When enmeshed in memory every moment of memory produces a potentially kairotic encounter with another time and place so that past, present, and future come to exist both simultaneously and differentially. What matters is what persists.
CHAPTER FOUR


What I have specified as being done with regard to a dwelling house may also be done with regard to public buildings, or a long road, or the walls of a city, or pictures, or we may even conceive imaginary places for ourselves.
— Quintilian (Institutes of Oratory, 11.2.21)

The past is never dead. It’s not even past.
— William Faulkner (1950)

The meaning of any particular memory emerges out of its relations and connections and ambience—not only what the memory is connected to, but also how the memory is connected. Indeed, the classical art of memory trains the capacity of memory to connect ideas that are to be remembered to vivid images of those ideas to places that store those images to rhetorical occasions when those places are visited to retrieve the corresponding ideas. Quintilian, in the epigraph above, refers to this method of loci that relies upon an architectural mnemonic. Using the architecture of some familiar building as an organizing structure, the rhetor would imprint distinctive images of what is to be remembered in specific places. After repeatedly memorizing the connection between the image and place, the rhetor would be able to walk mentally through the architectural space to recall pertinent information as needed to deliver the most suitable speech for the occasion. Typically, rhetors would use a familiar place, such as their homes, for this purpose, but as Quintilian suggests, any architectural structure would suffice, real or imaginary, as long as it was amply detailed and fully inhabited, mentally and visually, by the
rhetor. In her history of the art of memory, Yates (1966) describes the imaginary memory palaces and theaters of Renaissance scholars, such as Giulio Camillo and Giordano Bruno, that attempted to organize—to create an ambient environment of and connections among—the world’s knowledge. Such mnemotechnics, as Quintilian implies, connect the capacities of memory to those of invention. Rhetors would invent both the mnemonic images and mnemonic places, and these images and places would allow rhetors to invent and declaim a speech for any occasion by walking through the space along different paths. Thus, if we are to learn from Quintilian, we must invent memory images and places for ourselves.

To explore the inventions of a digital network memory, we can begin again with the classical art of memory by noting that the art not only provided the rhetor with an idiosyncratic constellation of memories, but also functioned as a social protocol for maintaining and recalling those memories. Uricchio (2008) observes how the memory palace, in particular, “offers evidence of a particular way of seeing or being in the world” (p. 104). For example, the method of loci is visual in its reference, thus creating “a visual and perceptual order,” a shared practice for remembering and recalling knowledge. As such, what is important, for Uricchio, is not what visual information the loci held, but rather how rhetors related to the larger world, for instance, visually and architecturally. Put differently, Renaissance scholars acted as if the world’s knowledge could be contained and organized within an imaginary theater. According to Uricchio, the art of memory functions as a social protocol for inventing and remembering images and places, for “manipulate[ing] and understand[ing] an accreted visual history and evolving present” (p. 110). Employing Uricchio’s method of asking not what memory is
represented but how it is represented, my task in this chapter will be to investigate a style of engagement with memory afforded by digital media technologies, particularly social media, to understand better the visual and material practices for making memories appear in public.

As in the previous chapter, I explore here visual practices of remembering as they relate to digital social media by examining how digital images circulate in digital media culture. Social media afford modes of interacting with memory images and places that enable new practices of everyday life. In particular, this study looks at Flickr, the popular photo-sharing website, and a specific group pool called, “Looking into the Past.” This group pool collects photographs that overlap a modern day place with an old photograph of that place so that past and present appear simultaneously; this style of photography has been referred to as rephotography. The visual and social practices of Flickr combined with rephotography produce a locus of social interaction, bringing into being multiple possibilities of places and times. I examine how this style of photography has become a mnemonic practice—a socially accepted protocol for engaging with memories. And as a mnemonic practice, it has the potential to create a con/fusion of places and times producing a memory best envisioned as the circulating and accumulating layers of things, places, and memories. Consequently, we must reevaluate how visual practices produce memory within current digital media culture, and in so doing, we may begin to understand how we are emplaced within digital network memory and digital ambient memory. What is important, I contend, is that individuals and publics learn to situate themselves in the layers and seams of digital memory to invent for themselves meaningful public images and memories. Within and through digital memory there is never a last image, last time, or a last memory, but rather only a
Social Media and the Circulation of Digital Images

Hariman and Lucaites (2007) discuss how iconic photographs attain special significance in relation to a historical event: “Iconic images rise above many other images and the vast background of print journalism to shape understanding of specific events and periods, both at the time of their original publication and subsequently” (p. 11). In the process, Hariman and Lucaites argue that iconic images can negotiate public memory, becoming epideictic representations, thereby exerting rhetorical and cultural power. For example, they discuss how the “Accidental Napalm” photograph taken during the Vietnam War has been appropriated by various groups at different times, from the 1960s to today, to construct discourses of war and peace, of U.S. conquest and violence. In this way, “Accidental Napalm” and iconic images generally become resources for the performance of public memory. As Hariman and Lucaites suggest, the discourse connecting photography to public memory tends to revolve around the concept of iconic—those images that “rise above many other images and the vast background of print journalism.” Thus, iconicity relies upon exclusivity because only certain photographs are capable of supporting public memory. Such a theoretical and conceptual stance, however, risks ignoring the excess of the “many other images and the vast background of print journalism” in helping to shape public memory. Put differently, less iconic or less monumental photographs can also serve as resources for the performance of a public memory, especially as we consider their rhetorical circulation within the visual practices of digital media culture. The concept of
rhetorical circulation, articulated by Finnegan (2003), situates photographs in the print and visual cultures in which they move by studying the fluidity of images as material traces of history, thus asking not only where but also how and why specific images are used. Photographs are not autonomous, freestanding artifacts existing outside of the context in which they circulate; rather, they acquire social meaning and significance through their material, rhetorical circulation. If we are to talk about the rhetorical circulation of photographs in contemporary digital media culture, we must consider where many images circulate—Photosynth, Flickr, Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter—and how and why—both the psychosis of digital imaging and the monumentality of the mundane, both digital network memory and digital ambient memory.

As I argued in the previous chapter, with the proliferation of social media, the interarticulation of the psychosis of digital imaging and the monumentality of the mundane—the desire to capture real life, everyday experiences and to share those experiences with family, friends, and whoever else may be looking—is increasingly becoming a cultural commonplace. Users of these technologies are constantly confronted by and participating in the unending multivoiced and multivalent conversations of multiple communities. Facebook and Twitter promote regular updates and the continuous monitoring of updates. Each month on Facebook, over 845 million users interact with 900 million objects (Facebook, 2012). Twitter asks, “What’s happening?” and users respond with their immediate experiences, from making a ham sandwich to writing a novel. The present analysis will focus on the popular photo-sharing service, Flickr, which in September 2010 reported that members uploaded more than 3,000 images every minute and had contributed more than 5 billion images overall (Flickr Blog, 2010). The desire to
capture experiences as they happen and to share them with others constitutes the print and visual cultures, and thus the rhetorical circulation, of digital images.

The practices of digital photography, with users uploading 3,000 images every minute on Flickr alone, shape our relationship with both photography and memory. In her study of Flickr, Murray (2008) explains that the social uses of digital photography “signal a shift in the engagement with the everyday image that has to do with a move towards transience and the development of a communal aesthetic” that privileges, not special moments, but rather “an immediate, rather fleeting display of one’s discovery of the small and mundane” (p. 151). Murray suggests that these visual and social practices of digital photography inaugurate “a definitive shift in our temporal relationship with the everyday image,” a shift away from the photograph as an “embalmer of time” towards “a more alive, immediate, and often transitory, practice/form” (p. 151). Thus, digital photography, as displayed on Flickr, represents a style of visual and social practice that reorients the temporality of the photograph from that-has-been to that-which-is. Given this reorientation of digital photography’s temporality along with the accompanying communal aesthetic that favors the mundane, we may assume that most images on Flickr are insignificant as isolated artifacts and that many images will never be viewed by the large community of Flickr members. In other words, most images will never “rise above” to become iconic because they are situated within overwhelming visual and digital cultures that favor the transient, fleeting moment and the incessant replacement of one photograph with the next one. Nevertheless, the visual practices of digital photography, which includes these less than iconic images circulating through digital social media, create a pervasive digital ambient memory and an emergent digital
network memory of meaningful connections—connections that help engender new practices of remembering and forgetting.

With more than 5 billion digital images, Flickr members have much photographic memory in which to find themselves. Flickr, as a photo-sharing network, remediates the traditional photo album and archive. As Mauer (2001) points out, photo albums are organizing systems, traditionally used by families to construct “a family history around themes, events, chronology, narratives, and visual likeness. The album creates a context for the photographs that affects the ways they are perceived and understood; change the context and you change the meaning of the photographs” (p. 2). The traditional family photo album, however, rarely changes its principal context—private family viewing. In contrast, Flickr connects images and users to each other so that the context of digital images continually changes, making them mutable in form and practice. By allowing others to access images, Flickr disrupts notions of a strictly personal or private memory. The same digital image can appear on one’s camera or smartphone and Flickr and Facebook accounts and then be distributed across the Web. Manovich (2001) argues, for example, that digital images can be endlessly manipulated and recontextualized to serve multiple ends and can be viewed by various, often unintended, groups. Unlike the traditional photo album, digital images can be distributed and circulated so that they enter into multiple contexts, thus affecting their presentation and representation, which necessarily alters their meaning and how that meaning connects to other meanings and images within the network. Consequently, the rhetorical circulation of digital images, which can be instantly networked and distributed, can make it easier for the private to become public, thereby
challenging more traditional boundaries of public-private and personal-social. Furthermore, the psychosis of digital imaging technologies may render a trained incapacity whereby users “forget” they have an option of privacy.

To understand further the disruption of traditional categories, we should consider digital social media through Derrida’s concept of archive fever. For Derrida (1998), archive fever refers to the simultaneous inscription and erasing of memory. Applied to digital social media, archive fever suggests that we have an appetite for more digital images, more information, more storage that can be called up in an instant and forgotten just as quickly. Five billion images have been uploaded to Flickr. Each image inundated by all the others. Given the flood of photographs, Flickr appropriately refers to photo collections as photostreams, wherein individual images ostensibly slip away into the stream to sink and be forgotten.

Although to be en mal d’archive introduces forgetting into memory itself, the act of archiving, of uploading photos to Flickr, like the classical art of memory, becomes a social protocol for collecting and remembering. When considered within digital social media, archive fever suggests not the death of memory, but rather new practices and forms of remembering and forgetting. Indeed, as I explained in chapter two, the materiality of the archive—its media and mediation—changes the archivable artifact. In short, the matter of the archive matters. Derrida argues that the archive is inventive or productive because the archive acts as both commencement and commandment: The archive brings into existence the archivable event by determining the structure and form of that event. The archivable event is always mediated by the archive itself; consequently, the archivable event, and memory in general, are not preserved, but
reconstructed. Like the manner in which Uricchio discusses the classical art of memory, what is important is not necessarily what is stored, but rather how it is stored—how the archive, in this case, Flickr, invents a social protocol for remembering—thereby altering how individuals and groups engage with the past, present, and future. With this process, we must acknowledge, according to Derrida, that the archive is more factory than repository of and for memory, which entails that “we can no longer ask the question of the archive ‘in a temporal or historical modality dominated by the present or the past’” (Barnet, 2001, p. 223). The archive is a promise for the future.

The future of memory resides in the social and technological practices that mediate memory. As detailed in chapter two, Hoskins (2009) proposes the concept of digital network memory to emphasize how contemporary memory is constituted by, embedded in, and distributed through digital media and sociotechnical practices. He suggests that the use of digital media “contributes to a new memory—an emergent digital network memory—in that communications in themselves add to, alter, and erase, a kind of living archival memory” (p. 92). Hoskins advances digital network memory to highlight “the dynamics of mediated memory as something created when needed, driven by the connectivities of digital technologies and media, and inextricably forged through and constitutive of digital social networks” (p. 92). Contemporary memory, then, is digital and networked, blurring the boundaries “between the totalizing and the contextual, the permanent and the ephemeral, the archive and narrative” (p. 93). Digital network memory reorients the temporality of memory, emphasizing “the relationship between the now and the most recently connected moment” (p. 94). Hoskins’s
digital network memory echoes Murray’s (2008) observations regarding digital photography as practiced on Flickr—a temporal orientation to the fleeting present moment—and the classical art of memory as practiced by orators—a kairotic orientation to changing rhetorical situations. A prepared camera, well-stocked with a digital memory card, or a prepared mind, well-stocked with mnemonic images and places, prepares one to capture and to respond to the opportunities of the present. Similarly, digital network memory helps to illuminate the visual practices and the rhetorical circulation of digital images by foregrounding how images connect the ephemeral to the permanent, the private to the public, the past to the present to the future. Furthermore, when considering the rhetorical circulation of digital images within digital social media, the importance of any single digital image rests not necessarily in what it is representing, but rather in why and how it circulates and accumulates within a distributed network and ambience (of memory).

As we store, and more importantly, circulate our memories within digital social media, we must consider what practices and forms of memories they allow us to re/store and re/produce. That is, we should ask of these digital images not what they are, but rather what they do as material artifacts and traces of history. And what they do is invent and affirm connections among users who share their private and public experiences through digital images. They are important because together, in their plenitude, they have a persuasive force that moves users to contribute and participate within a network of other users. Therefore, as digital images continue to proliferate and digital media culture increasingly dominates the social scene, the rhetorical circulation of photographs necessarily changes, and along with this comes a
subsequent change in their rhetorical function, as it relates, specifically, to their memorial power, their ability to perform memory. The questions concerning digital media technologies and memory must focus upon the persuasive, social forces of contribution and circulation rather than the signifying communication, the memorial representation as often studied in iconic photographs. To investigate this line of inquiry, I turn to a specific Flickr group called, “Looking into the Past.” The images in this group pool share a common aesthetic in which the past and present are layered into a single scene of memory. Looking at the style of these group pool images along with their rhetorical circulation emphasizes how digital network memory affords new visual and social practices of remembering and forgetting. The rhetorical circulation of digital images shows how the persuasive forces of photographic style and social participation help invent images and places in which public memory may appear. As memory appears in public, a public appears in memory. Or, as we invent our memory images and places, we invent ourselves.

**Looking into the Past, Making Memories Appear**

As digital images accumulate and circulate on Flickr, users are forced to find ways to locate themselves in the circulation and to organize their accumulation. One mode in which Flickr members position themselves is by forming groups based upon a shared theme, event, or visual style. Flickr describes groups as “a fabulous way to share content and conversation, either privately or with the world” (Flickr, 2010). Flickr groups promote user interaction, allowing users to share in collective curiosity and communal aesthetic while also participating in conversations with others. Although some groups are private, by invitation only, most are
public, open to anyone to view and to contribute to if the user has a Flickr account. In bringing users together, Flickr groups operate according to a networked logic of association, circulation, and recollection in which individual members contribute to a collective production. Flickr refers to the images collected into and by groups as *pools*—a calming ambience—thus giving contributors a momentary respite from the rushing stream of images uploaded to Flickr and encouraging them to wade through group pools in a more thoughtful and engaged manner.

A popular Flickr Group, with 4,087 members and 1,937 photographs as of this writing (April 14, 2012), called, “Looking into the Past,” features images that visually place an existing photograph within the frame of the new photograph. The group’s description reads: “This group is for images you make where some part of a modern day scene is overlapped by an old photograph. For example, you hold up an old photo so that you can see its place in the modern context” (Flickr, “Looking”). The digital images typically feature a black-and-white photograph whose scene is aligned with the present day place. Many photographers hold the old photograph in their hand as they take the picture (see Figure 6). Other contributors create a digital composite by seamlessly blending the two photographs of the past and present (see Figure 7). This style of photography has been referred to as *rephotography*. 
Figure 6: The Prickly Pear Oil for Women

Figure 7: Argyle St - Then In Now
As a mnemonic practice, rephotography, by layering the old and the new, expresses a style of engagement with the past, a visual style and aesthetic, that reorients the time and place of memory. Past and present no longer appear as separate, distinct occurrences; rather, past and present appear simultaneously so that, as the title of Figure 6 suggests, “the then is in the now.” Indeed, this representational style as mnemonic practice invents a composite time and place that opens up the possibility for a new modality of memory, a new style of inhabiting the past, present, and future—an additive rather than analytic engagement with memory. As a mnemonic practice, these digital images introduce a social protocol for remembering a time and place, which, in turn, affects how individuals and publics engage with their physical environments and their public memories. Similarly, and in relation to Derrida’s notion of the archive, these digital images are both a commencement and a commandment: The technical affordances of digital social media enable a new archiving, or mnemonic, practice. To understand the rhetorical and memorial power of these digital images, we should consider further the material and technical practices of their creation.

Rephotography, whether manifested physically via the photographer’s hand or virtually via computer software, produces a composite image. Manovich (2001) identifies compositing as one of the principal operations of new media. Manovich defines digital compositing as “the process of combining a number of moving image sequences, and possibly stills, into a single sequence with the help of special compositing software” (p. 136-137). With digital composites, the various elements or objects forming the finished composite “are aligned in perspective” (p. 137). Manovich argues that digital compositing primarily is used to construct seamless 3-D virtual
spaces from different elements. In other words, digital composites are composed of layers that are blended together seamlessly. Unlike “the postmodern practice of pastiche and quotation” (p. 141), digital compositing, claims Manovich, produces a different aesthetic. Postmodern pastiche operates according to an aesthetic of montage that foregrounds the distinct elements and layers. In contrast, digital compositing supports an aesthetic of smoothness and continuity: “Elements are now blended together, and boundaries erased rather than emphasized” (p. 142). An additive aesthetic of continuity lacks montage in the traditional sense, such as hard-edge cuts between shots of film. Of the difference between montage and compositing Manovich states, “Montage aims to create visual, stylistic, semantic, and emotional dissonance between different elements. In contrast, compositing aims to blend them into a seamless whole, a single gestalt” (p. 144). With rephotography, aligning the image according to perspective, assembles past and present into a single scene of memory, but one that is both layered and seamless.

Although the rephotography examples presented above have similar visual styles, they manifest slightly different techniques. Figure 6, for example, appears more similar to traditional montage that affirms separate elements and layers, whereas Figure 7 operates within a digital composite aesthetic of continuity, blending the layers into a seamless image. Rather than focusing on these subtle distinctions, rephotography, as a mnemonic practice, is most aptly described as a form of ontological montage wherein ontologically incompatible elements coexist within the same time and space. Manovich situates ontological montage within the broader category of spatial montage, the placing of two images side by side within a single frame. Spatial montage displaces traditional temporal montage that sequences images across frames. According to
Manovich, spatial montage is form of compositing that retains an aesthetic of montage—both seamless and layered. As viewers we are forced to consider both the layers of memory and the seamlessness of memory—how past secretes (secrets) the present, and how the present accretes the past. In the process, the past and present are not so much reproduced as produced at the same time. The combination of both seamlessness and layering provokes a response from viewers wherein the seamless continuity of the past to the present becomes complicated by the presence of layers: We see what has been, what is, and what could be simultaneously.

The “Looking into the Past” Flickr Group was founded by user, jasonepowell, in February 2009 (jasonepowell, 2010). Its visual style has proven to be influential outside of the Flickr group, becoming a mnemonic practice that offers a social protocol for engaging past and present. CNN, for example, used rephotography for two iReport “Weekend Assignments.” Similarly, recent initiatives by the National Archives, “History Happens Here,” and BBC, “Turn Back Time,” employ this visual and mnemonic practice while also creating their own respective Flickr group pools. Furthermore, a popular Tumblr blog called “Dear Photograph” collects this style of photography and has been turned into a book of the same title. To expand upon one example, CNN’s iReport (2010b) community allows online readers to contribute to the news by giving readers the digital tools and social impetus to “share stories that are happening where [they] are and discuss the issues that are important to [them].” iReport allows online readers to bring local news to public awareness. In assigning the “Looking into the Past” rephotographic style, iReport (2010c) writes, “Walking down the street, you can sometimes see remnants of times long gone. Ever wonder how long that old house has been there or what was there before
the gas station on the corner? Linking past to the present could be a fascinating exploration into your own neighborhood’s history.” The accompanying story, titled “Connecting the past to present tougher than it looks,” describes the difficulty of aligning the past and present, of finding the exact spot where the original photograph was taken (Zdanowicz, 2010). Though referring to the physical practice of aligning the past in the present, this technique of alignment, similar to a digital compositing aesthetic of continuity, could be extended to our understanding of rephotography as ontological montage, and more importantly, rephotography as mnemonic practice. How do we align the past and the present? How does the image bring us into its regard? Put within the conceptual framework of ontological montage, we are persuaded to look through seamless digital composites, while simultaneously looking at the layers of past and present. As immediate images, rephotography offers a single window onto a place. As hypermediate images, rephotography evokes windows within windows. By placing the past in the present, rephotography gives us a glimpse into the potentialities of the past to make the present—a process of differential becoming. Depending upon the viewer’s perspective, rephotography may function to emphasize how little or how much has changed.

Rephotography, thus, forces us to oscillate between the perspectives from which we look upon these images. Brooke (2009) introduces looking from into Lanham’s (2006) bistable oscillation (looking at/looking through) to foreground the dynamic rather than static nature of digital media. Brooke employs the concept of looking from “to help us move from the abstracted, single perspective of the reader of a static text or the viewer of a painting to the multiple and partial perspectives necessary for many forms of new media” (p. 114). Although Brooke refers
to the multiple, shifting perspectives offered by videogames, the concept of *looking from*
highlights the need to consider the position from which the image looks—its regard—as well as
how we look upon these images. The image may look from a position of the past, present, or
future, and we may look from each of these positions as well. And each position provides a
different perspective, a different meaning for the times and places depicted. Brooke, citing
Moxey’s paradox of perspective, notes that perspective may refer to “either one point of view
among many, or the point which organizes all the others” (Moxey as cited in Brooke, p. 114). By
aligning the perspectives of the past and present within a single scene, these images visually
manifest the paradox of perspective, and as viewers we must consider our own perspectives
upon and position within the invented times and places. In this way, these images are more
additive or cumulative than analytic—an additivity that is at once layered and seamless, thus
engendering additional memorial and mnemonic forces characterized by curiosity and ambiguity
that viewers must negotiate. In short, rephotography asks us to live in the seams of uncertainty,
where the layers of past, present, and future overlap. Of the 100 iReports, 50 to 60 of them
subsequently joined the “Looking into the Past” Flickr Group, thus demonstrating, albeit in a
small way, a willingness to live in the seams and layers offered by rephotography as mnemonic
practice, as a social protocol for remembering.

The persuasive force of memory appearing in public creates a public for memory.
Because public memory helps define the conditions of public discourse and action, it operates
similarly to Derrida’s notion of the archive as both commencement and commandment. By
becoming an active resource from which a public draws, public memory becomes a place for
further and future remembering. Additionally, Casey (2004) claims that public memory must occur in some particular place, happening “only when people meet and interact in a single scene of interaction” (p. 32). The place comes to embody the memory, acting as a “material inducement . . . drawing out the appropriate memories in that location” (p. 32). That is, public place provides a public presence that guides public discussion around common topics that induce commemoration in place. In the case of rephotography, the Flickr group, “Looking into the Past,” along with CNN’s iReport and The National Archives’s and BBC’s programs, by offering pools of visually similar images, become an encircling horizon—an ambient environment—that act as places in which this particular visual mnemonic style and practice may appear, and in turn this style and practice help define the public discussion, the common topics, the commemoration in and of place. Unlike Casey who envisions public memory as stabilitas loci, a more or less stable place, the digital network memory of Flickr destabilizes places of memory by assuring that the mnemonic practices of rephotography accumulate and circulate beyond the immediate context. Indeed, both digital network memory and the sociotechnical practice of rephotography work to reinforce the nature of memory as distributed rather than localized phenomenon. De Certeau (1984) argues that a memory always “comes from somewhere else, it is outside of itself, it moves things about” (p. 87): “[M]emory derives its interventionary force from its very capacity to be altered—unmoored, mobile, lacking any fixed position. . . . Memory is in decay when it is no longer capable of this alteration” (p. 86-87). The traditional archive along with traditional notions of memory attempt to stabilize memory, thereby leading to the death of memory. Digital ambient
memory and digital network memory help to ensure that memory is always on the move, awaiting its next appearance.

One featured contribution to the iReport assignment posted by Conrad1906, titled “Laurel & Hardy’s Music Box,” tells his story: “I have lived in Los Angeles for 30 years but didn’t [sic] visit this location until a few weeks ago. You’ll notice that although the location has changed in many ways, the cracks on the sidewalk are still there” (Conrad1906, 2009).

Rephotography as mnemonic practice, along with iReport and Flickr, induces Conrad1960 to do something with his memory of place. He puts his memory on the move by putting it into action, and as a result, he finds himself in the middle of memory—“the cracks on the sidewalk are still there.” He invents for himself a new memory image and place of memory. To reflect upon how rephotography may engender not only memorialization but also transformation, we can learn from another CNN iReport story that documented the five-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. CNN’s iReport (2010a) producers worked with citizen-reporters “to show how much—or little—has changed in the areas affected by Katrina.” One contributor, Lauren DiMaggio says, “It was only five years ago, but these are definitely pictures back in time. Looking at them brought back the feelings of being helpless and out of town, wondering if we could ever come home” (iReport, 2010d). Conrad Wyre III, again, states:

As my wife and I took these photos we really noticed that nothing really has changed in New Orleans since the storm hit five years ago. . . . It was extremely emotional to revisit the neighborhood in which I grew up in—to think back how the city was, and the way it is now. (iReport, 2010d)
By bringing the viewer back into the perspective of the past within the present, rephotography both arrests and mobilizes memory, combining \textit{that-has-been} with \textit{that-which-is}. As a social protocol for remembering, memories of Hurricane Katrina becomes tied to these images of these times and these places—showing us how far the city has come and how far it still needs to go. Although admittedly brief examples, they show how memory becomes an interventionary, and inventional, force when it becomes mobilized. De Certeau (1984) writes, “[A]n ‘art’ of memory develops an aptitude for always being in the other’s place without possessing it, and for profiting from this alteration without destroying itself through it” (p. 87). Rephotography, as an art of memory, allows us to be in two places at two times and encourages us to profit from this alteration. The past, as Conrad1960 implies, cracks through into the future. The layers and seams of memory function to bring the past and present into new relations that destabilize and reinflect the past in the present and vice versa, thereby transforming both into resources for the future—that is, they allow us to reimagine a future different from both the past and present.

\textbf{The Persistence of Digital Memory}

Both rephotography and the photo-sharing that occurs via Flickr, as mnemonic practices, help establish a style of engagement with memory that takes advantage of the affordances of digital media technologies. Indeed, these mnemonic practices produce memory as a mobilized interventionary force that invents images and places for memorializing and transforming the past into resources for the present and future. By re/inventing place, these mnemonic practices evoke de Certeau’s rhetoric of walking. De Certeau (1984) begins his seminal essay, “Walking in the City,” by looking down from the 110th floor of the World Trade
Center. For de Certeau, the bird’s eye view obscures rather than reveals the city because it does not account for actual spatial practices, such as walking—the elementary form of city experience. Walkers, with their intertwining paths, give shape to space, and thus write the text of the city: “Their story begins on ground level, with footsteps” (p. 97). To write a text of the city, walkers must articulate space. De Certeau limns a “rhetoric of walking” in which “styles of action” function as “ways of operating” that “constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production” (p. xiv). That is, de Certeau considers walking as a rhetorical act: Rather than using language, walkers use space to articulate utterances. As a speech act, walking performs three “enunciative” functions: walking appropriates space, turns that space into place, and presumes social interaction with others (p. 97-98). In this way, walkers produce “turns of phrases” that turn “space” into “practiced place”—a locus of social interaction. De Certeau notes that although “spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities,” the walker “actualizes some of these possibilities” (p. 98). Though a wall may block the walker from going farther, she invents new paths, new turns of phrases that transform or abandon spatial elements. Walking turns a space into an argumentative performance and interaction that “affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc. the trajectories it ‘speaks’” (p. 99). Because walking privileges improvisation, the feeling out of space, de Certeau argues that walking as a rhetorical act is of an unlimited diversity and cannot be reduced to a graphic trail.

Walking cannot be reduced to graphic trails because walking relies upon *style*, “an individual’s fundamental way of being in the world” (de Certeau, 1984, p. 100). Similarly, style
produces a way of operating in and relating to memory. The style of rephotography recalls the necessary practice of walking through memory places in search of the corresponding and appropriate images. Rephotography encourages individuals to follow in the footsteps of previous walkers while simultaneously making that walk their own, thus producing a collective text, a collective, public memory of place that responds to past, present, and future. Walkers bring places to life by writing stories and memories onto the place: “Here, there used to be a bakery,” and “That’s where old lady Dupuis used to live,” and “You see, here there used to be” (de Certeau, 1984, p. 108). Whereas the bakery or the home can no longer be seen physically, rephotography, especially when linked with Flickr, helps to bring these places into being, opening up relations to the past by moving them from the personal to the public. Rephotography as a visual mnemonic practice allows individuals to walk differently through physical place and to walk along different paths in their memories of those places. Rephotography helps show how the old haunts of walkers come to haunt memory places and images: “There is no place that is not haunted by many different spirits hidden there in silence…. Haunted places are the only ones people can live in” (de Certeau, 1984, p. 108). Perhaps, rephotography is best understood as hauntography to emphasize how any perspective upon the present is haunted by its own past. Hauntography—hauntological montage—invents memory images and places that mobilize perspectives and bodies to perform acts of personal and public remembrance.

Hauntography, a play upon Derrida’s hauntology, which itself is a play upon ontology, shifts attention away from questions of presence and absence to persistence. As noted earlier,
photography has long been considered to be evidentiary. Similarly, traditional approaches to
memory in rhetorical studies have relied on the assumption that technologies and media simply
inscribe and store memory. Brooke (2009) refers to this as the Platonic legacy that fears the
relationship between writing and memory. The problem with the Platonic legacy, argues Brooke,
is that it renders memory as storage, thus considering memory only in its spatial terms of
absence and presence. Attempting to re-temporalize memory, Brooke adopts N. Katherine
Hayles’s “semiotics of virtuality” to add a temporal axis of pattern/randomness to memory so
that we may understand memory as coalescing into patterns and dispersing towards randomness
over time. Rephotography, or hauntography, foregrounds patterns of memory rather than the
direct presence or absence. Because past and present are both there and not there, what
becomes important is what persists, what patterns can be identified to make the place
recognizable so that we can say, “Here, there used to be.” Rephotography spatializes time and
temporalizes space through the hauntological concern with persistence. A logic of replacement
gives way to a logic of addition and coexistence—images and places of the past, present, and
future at the same time. As viewers we are forced to position ourselves within our memory
images and places to select and situate a memory for the times.

In a recent talk, Bogost argues that critics should treat the rephotograph’s ontology as
flat—to see rephotography as something more than evidentiary. Bogost (2011) writes, “Look at
the image: what’s in it? What else?” Bogost, thus, calls for a cataloguing of things that “ruptures
the sentimentalism that it also produces. He claims, “All the human memory and vulnerability
and experience is still there, but with a strange loop that pulls inanimate things up to the level of
human surfaces.” Thumbs holding photographs. Indifferent asphalt. A sign hangs unresponsive. Bricks unsusceptible to sorrow. A rider-less pink plastic bike. For Bogost, rephotography allows us orient to things, and I would add, to memories: To see the world of memories as memories in a world.

The future of memory emerges from the interarticulation of social and technological practices. As digital photography becomes enabled by and embedded in digital social media the rhetorical function of photographs, specifically how they perform memory, necessarily changes. As digital photographs rhetorically circulate in digital networks the memory produced by photographs becomes a digital network memory, as Hoskins (2009) proposes, that blurs the boundaries between personal-public, ephemeral-permanent, and past-present-future. This chapter, thus, extends Hoskins’s digital network memory by examining the specific practices of digital photography as they relate to Flickr and digital social media more generally. With digital social media, visual mnemonic practices move away from the iconic to the everyday moment. Hariman and Lucaites (2007) argue that photojournalism is “an important technology of liberal-democratic citizenship” (p. 18) because it serves as a repository for democratic social knowledge. Specifically, they claim that iconic photographs fuse social knowledge with a paradigmatic scene, such as poverty or war, “to create a web of social connections that lead to and from the historical event and provide multiple paths for both identification and criticism” (p. 10). In this way, iconic images become resources for the performance of public memory. The practices of digital social media, however, suggest that what matters in digital media culture are not paradigmatic scenes of memory, but rather syntagmatic scenes that we invent for ourselves.
Digital media technologies, such as the coupling of digital cameras with the digital image repository of Flickr, have helped to create a digital media culture that not only encourages individuals to take photographs, but also to take more of them than ever before—the psychosis of digital imaging. The tendency to take an excess of photographs and then upload those photographs to Flickr and similar social media websites generates the print and visual cultures in which digital images rhetorically circulate. Rhetorical circulation helps to account for the sharing of digital images within digital media culture: As more people take more photographs, they have more digital repositories, or perhaps more appropriately, photostreams, to which to upload their photos. And as more people share more images, it seems the more they feel they need to share. These practices of digital photography alter the rhetorical function of photographs, namely the way in which photographs perform memory.

By examining the practices of a specific Flickr group pool, this study shows how digital ambient memory and digital network memory function to create memories and publics. Indeed, rephotography, as studied here, becomes a visual representation, a synecdoche, of digital memory. Rephotography as spatial montage, as hauntography, connects to a logic of addition and coexistence in which what is important is not so much what memory is represented, but rather how memory is represented—in what style do we engage memory? Memory in this style is less about retrieval than access—of inventing and granting access to a past, present, and future. Rephotography as mnemonic practice produces a different style of engagement with memory that disrupts the linear flow of time by bringing together many flows that generate the circulation and accumulation of many times and places. The circulation and accumulation of
invented digital memories has the potential to foment an upheaval of events, thus
acknowledging “the capacity of any future eruption, any event, any reading, to rewrite, resignify,
reframe the present, to accept the role of the accidental, chance, or the undetermined plays in
the unfolding of time” (Grosz, 1999, p. 18). Digital memory images and places thus invented
allow individuals and publics to disrupt the flows of time to produce a past, present, and future
at the same time: “What digital media brings to memory—and to thinking about and
representing the past is the possibility of simultaneity, indeterminacy, and the continual eruption
of the new” (Garde-Hansen et al., 2009, p. 7-8). Rephotography as hauntography engenders
techniques for and styles of memory best characterized as a loosely conjoined heap—memories
as hypotactic layers, memories as paratactic seams of spaces and times, of images and places—
enfolding and unfolding—a running style of memory. Memories always on the run.
CHAPTER FIVE

Curating Copia: The Prospects of Digital-Rhetoric-Memory

The energy of memory [virtus memoriae] thrives most fertilely: it alone makes the past present, binds together things, recalls divine wisdom [sapientia], gazes upon the future.

Copiose loquens sapientia. [Wisdom speaking copiously.]
— Cicero (De Partitio Oratoria, 13.79, as cited in Sloane, 1997, p. 46)

To conclude is to find a place for the past in the present. And so, as I once began, I begin once again: From Plato to the present, memory has been linked to techne. And memory and techne have coevolved to a present time and place when and where we are told to “Remember everything.” Techne, as a skill, a craft, an art, a practice, is both the capacity and ability—the capability—to shape things, the capability to make the world be a certain way. Memory as capacity refers to its power to receive and to hold the past. Memory as ability refers to its power of doing, of bringing forth the past to produce the present. As a capacity, memory informs—gives form to—the past, and in so doing, shapes the ability for placing the past in the present.
Memory, then, is both a thing and a process—a thing-in-process—working at multiple scales, granularities, and magnitudes of individual and social life. To understand memory in its micro and macro manifestations and processes, researchers and theorists in rhetoric and memory studies, across academic disciplines, have various taxonomies, each with its own definitions and commitments: individual memory, collective memory, cultural memory, social memory, and
public memory (Bednar, 2011). And here, I have expanded upon Hoskins’s concepts of *digital network memory* and have added my own, *digital ambient memory*, in an effort to continue the conceptual thickening of memory. Both concepts identify and frame practices of memory as they are enabled by, embedded in, and embodied by digital media technologies; these concepts emphasize memory’s capability to gather objects and technologies along with individuals, collectives, and publics into material, sociotechnical assemblages. Consequently, both concepts suggest a change in the terms we use for memory; instead of using the term *individual memory*, we speak of memory *individuating*. Instead of *collective memory*, we speak of memory *collecting*. Instead of *public memory*, we speak of memory *making public/s*. That is, as a thing-in-process, memory is less a noun than a verb. And as a verb, memory is always beyond our control even as our practices seek to harness memory’s powers. From the classical art of memory to present-day Evernote, memory as *techne* indicates how we may use memory to shape our world. Nevertheless, we must also acknowledge how memory uses us in shaping that world. With this intermediation, the dynamic abilities and capacities of memory animate and energize rhetoric itself; that is, memory becomes the very *capacitation* of rhetoric. Conceptualizing memory as the capacity to take in the past and the ability to bring forth the past in the present undergirds the notion that rhetoric requires “recourse to ‘before’ to have an intelligible ‘here and now’ to speak from” (Stormer, p. 4). If rhetoric is the art of beginning, memory provides the capability to begin at all. Memory makes rhetoric possible. Rather than an inert container, storehouse, or treasury, the previous chapters demonstrate memory as a thing-in-process that is best understood, particularly in a digital age, as the force that animates and energizes rhetoric itself.
The goal of this study has been to examine the intermediation of memory and digital media technologies and the productive practices of memory that come out of that intermediation. Chapter one introduced a topical framework for understanding how memory has been investigated in rhetorical theory and criticism along with the field of memory studies. Beginning with Zelizer’s (1995) six premises of collective memory research, I showed how these premises act as the *topoi* of memory, in general—the places where scholars go to begin to understand how memory functions rhetorically in discourse and culture. Recall that the *topoi* of memory define collective memory as (1) processural, (2) unpredictable across time and space, (3) partial, (4) usable, (5) particular and universal, and (6) material. Although each *topos* offers a distinct place from which to think about memory, the *topoi* are interdependent and mutually motivating so that to inhabit one *topos* necessarily results in traveling to another and then to another and so on. Given the interrelations among *topoi*, materiality is particularly influential because it establishes the conditions of possibility for the others. Here, materiality refers to both the media of memory and the mediation of memory: “The media of memory decisively shape not only specific memories but also memory’s mediating functions” (Olick, 2007, p. 104). The materiality of memory shapes the capability of memory; that is, the media of memory, which we might think of as capacities, *inform* the mediation of memory, its ability to bring forth the past in

---

4 Theory and travel have long been linked. Ulmer (2005) explains, “The exemplar is Solon, one of the wisest of the Ancient Greeks, who is said to be both the first theorist and the first tourist, with the institution combining these practices known as ‘theoria.’ Travel was an essential element of archaic theoría. . . . ‘Originally theoría meant seeing the sights, seeing for yourself, and getting a world view,’ E. V. Walter commented” (p. 5). The link between theory and travel becomes especially important when we consider the materiality of monuments and memorials as destination sites/sights, and the “active observation” and “open reception” necessary to study these sites/sights.
the present. To investigate further the materiality of memory, I turned, in chapters three and four, to digital media technologies and their corresponding sociotechnical practices. The results of this investigation show how rhetorical scholars might update the rhetorical canon of memory for a digital rhetoric.

Specifically, the materiality of memory—its media and mediation—discloses the problematic of representation: How is memory made present and represented? Must memory be represented and interpreted so that memory may mean something? While there are studies that take this representational approach to memory, the preceding chapters demonstrate how studying the practices of memory help us to develop an ontology of memory. Rather than focusing on communication and meaning making, I looked to persuasion to show how practices of memory prompt individual, collectives, and publics to act in specific ways. Here, persuasion is not communication, but rather an asignifying force that makes some thing—memory—compelling to a particular audience (Muckelbauer, 2008). Unlike current rhetorical approaches to memory that treat it as something discourse produces, I have shown how memory itself is performative of and embodied through unending enactments. Indeed, Stormer suggests that to study memory as enactment one must turn to action: “To study enactment one must apprehend the action, so I choose ‘recursion,’ a Latinate of ‘recurs’ or ‘return’ to capture the performative capacity of remembering and forgetting in discourse” (p. 3).  

5 This quotation comes from a currently unpublished, but under review, article titled, “Recourse: A Working Paper on Rhetoric and Mnésis.” Stormer’s research develops rhetorical theory and material rhetoric by addressing the intersections of cultural memory, social space, and performativity. This article forms part of a larger project that
fundamental process of recursion, I have examined how memory finds recourse to the past in the present through the sociotechnical practices of digital media technologies, in other words, how the practices of memory are producing and enacting the very conditions of a digital rhetoric.

To better understand practices of memory, chapter two added complexity to the topoi of memory, particularly the topos of materiality, by offering a tropological detour through them using Burke’s four master tropes—metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony—as turning points between the concept of memory and digital media technologies. Metaphor, as a way of seeing A from the perspective of B, allowed us to see how technologies have been used to gain a perspective upon memory—how new media technologies reveal some new aspect or quality of memory. Writing, for example, separated the knower from the known, and so memory could be seen as existing outside of the self for the first time. Individual memory had always been there but had not been there before in this way. Peters (2004) refers to this act of disclosure as “the new already.” Technology revealed what we had previously missed— the artificiality of memory. Memory as writing became memory is writing. The task, then, was to use metaphors to discover “the new already” of memory when we see it from the perspective of digital media technologies and their sociotechnical practices. And what we see is that memory is networked and ambient, monumental and mundane.

translates the canons of rhetoric into historical formations of rhetorical practice (see his personal website for more information: http://web.mac.com/stormer/FacultyPage/Research_%26_CV.html). Stormer’s approach and my research here correspond well in retheorizing memory.
I elaborated upon Hoskins’s digital network memory to indicate how memory is embedded in digital media technologies. Hoskins argues that we have moved into a post-broadcast, post-mass-media era, what he refers to as a “new media ecology” that brings forth a “new memory ecology.” Within this new media ecology, memory exists as a network; memory is a network. Through always-on and distributed connections, digital media technologies have introduced new values into the materiality—the media and mediation—of memory, and these values correspond to new sociotechnical practices. For example, digital media technologies value the immediate and instantaneous, and these values correspond to sociotechnical practices, such as the continual sharing of moments from everyday life. Memory becomes something that is created on-the-fly, as needed within a connective network of sharing. Taking digital network as a metaphor makes visible the necessary shift in perspective on memory—from mass media to digital network memory. Indeed, memory is what connects past to present, individuals to individuals, individuals to groups. Hoskin’s metaphors give us a perspective to understand “the new already” of digital media memory—the radical diffusion of memory through digital networks, and this radical diffusion indicates another necessary shift in perspective—from the network to the ambient.

Ambience does not rely upon connections or links, but rather offers an enveloping atmosphere and environment wherein memory cultivates and is cultivated. That is, memory is more than connective; memory is an environment in which to dwell. An ambient rhetoric takes seriously the capability of an environment to bring forth a subject suitable to its conditions (Rickert, 2004). In relation to digital media technologies, ambience refers to how these
technologies continually and automatically store, capture, and produce memory. Ambience offers a glimpse into the rhythm of everyday life whereby we are continually recording and documenting our lives—whether we want to or not, intentionally or not. The metaphor of ambience captures the logic of software and sociotechnical practices—what chapter three referred to as the psychosis of digital imaging technologies and the monumentality of the mundane. Together, digital network memory and digital ambient memory, as metaphors, alter our perspective upon the metonymies of memory.

Metonymy in relation to memory refers to the material reductions and manifestations of memory, and I identified three main metonymies—performance, place, and the archive. Performance and place suggest the ways in which memory is embodied and enacted and how those embodiments and enactments are appropriate to particular places. Similarly, the materiality of the archive helps determine what can be archived (Derrida, 1998). Digital archives, such as hard drives and databases, offer seemingly unlimited storage capacity, the very storage capacity needed to sustain digital network memory and digital ambient memory. Digital archives help ensure that the performances and places of memory are mobile and always on the move so that digital memory exhibits such medial dynamics as transmediality and velocity—the ability to move from one medium to the next at greater speeds. With digital media technologies, “the new already” appears in the confluence of performance, place, and archive that disrupt traditional experiences of spatiality and temporality, and these fluid dynamics transform who is and can be represented in or through memory.
Synecdoche, as representation, indicated how the mediation of memory—how and who memory represents—changes as the materiality of memory changes. Digital network memory and digital ambient memory break down traditional boundaries of representation, such as individual, collective, and public. In particular, digital network memory and digital ambient memory increasingly rely upon software’s algorithmic interventions to produce memorial and mnemonic representations so that how we are connected to and enmeshed in memory may not be up to us. Algorithmic interventions oblige us to attend to how digital media technologies become active in shaping the mediating functions of digital memory because they come to execute the very representations we seek to experience or use. Put differently, algorithms are increasingly becoming the techne of memory—its capacity and ability—to receive the past and to bring forth the past in the present. Algorithms are digital rhetoric’s recourse to remembering and forgetting as such.

Finally, I used Burke’s notion of irony, as peripetic action, to argue that remembering and forgetting are mutually inventive processes. As Stormer explains, remembering and forgetting occur as the very condition of memory: “Recollection assumes the return of something, not everything, of another time and place” (p. 5). Stormer proposes the concept of mnesis to mark the “dynamic simultaneity of memory and its loss with no precedence for one state or another, of having remembered or having forgotten” (p. 6). Any occurrence of remembering necessarily requires an act of forgetting and vice versa. This ironic dialectic moves the discussion of memory—of remembering and forgetting—away from appeals to presence/absence to those of persistence, thus reintroducing both space and time into memory.
Persistence attunes us to *kairotic* encounters with memory. Indeed, Hawhee (2002) explains “kairotic encounters” as a way to articulate and experience invention as “movement” and “in-betweeness”:

> Between things does not designate the localizable relation going from one thing to the other and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other way, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle. (Deleuze & Guattari, as cited in Hawhee, 2002, p. 27)

To remember and to forget is to find ourselves in-between the past and present without giving preference to one or the other. To remember and to forget is to encounter the persistence of the past in the present, what in chapter four I refer to as *hauntography*. Taken together the metaphors (network and ambience), the metonymies (performance, place, and the archive), the synecdoches (algorithmic intervention), and the irony (persistence) provide a conceptual framework for abductively moving from the *topoi* of memory to practices of memory to enhance our understanding of how digital media technologies transform the nature of memory itself and how that animates and energizes a digital rhetoric for digital culture.

In chapter three, I put to work this conceptual framework to examine how digital imaging technologies affect the rhetorical circulation of images in digital culture and how that, in turn, affects their mediating functions. I advanced two interrelated claims: (1) the psychosis of digital imaging technologies drives the rhetorical circulation of digital images, and (2) digital images function to magnify the minutiae of everyday life, to monumentalize the mundane. To demonstrate these claims, I examined how digital network memory and digital ambient memory
blur and unsettle the performance of public memory as an explicitly public phenomenon. Although digital imaging technologies—as agents within the assemblage of digital network memory—help ensure that digital images accumulate and circulate in public, they simultaneously inhibit the explicit making of or coalescing of a public.

Chapter four explored the issue of persistence as experienced in place and through digital imaging technologies. Looking at the practice of rephotography attunes us to how the past haunts the present and how practices of memory receive the past and call it forth in the present. Much like the art of memory, rephotography offers a way to harness the power of memory by creating and responding to a kairotic encounter with the past. Remembering and forgetting allow the past to erupt into the present, and individuals, collectives, and publics find themselves in the middle of memory. Hauntography, or rephotography, creates a frame that gives depth to the present, a frame that arranges the things and places of the past on an otherwise flat surface. Just as important, digital media technologies have helped to move rephotography from an isolated practice to a social protocol for remembering and forgetting, appearing in institutional efforts from the National Archives and BBC as well as television commercials for Chevy⁶ and TNT’s National Basketball Association programs⁷. Rephotography suggests that a digital rhetoric (culture) is a haunted rhetoric (culture) because the past is easily returned to and revived and rediscovered and then just as easily forgotten again.

⁶ See Chevy’s commercial: “Then & Now | 100 Years of Chevrolet | Chevy Commercial.” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HD8zAJyWRA
⁷ See “NBA on TNT: Season Intro (NBA Forever).” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K5DnCzzKCzg
If practices of remembering and forgetting find a place for the past in the present, thus making possible rhetorical action, the challenge, for us, is to articulate a place for memory in digital rhetoric. Rather than an inert container, storehouse, or treasury, memory as a thing-in-process should be understood as the force that animates and energizes rhetoric itself, which includes the other canons of invention, arrangement, style, and delivery. For example, in placing memory in the middle of a digital rhetoric, or a rhetoric for a digital age, we may begin to rethink the relationship between memory and invention as a shift from *genius* to *scenius*, a shift from *topoi* to *chora*. The relationship between memory and arrangement, as I have argued already, shifts from absence/presence to pattern/randomness, that is, to what persists through time and place. Rhetorical arrangement, then, becomes the practice of gathering, designing, and assembling objects and things in a memorial array that evokes both an effective and an affective response—not only driven by goal-oriented communication but also an asignifying persuasive force. The relationship between style and memory emphasizes *copia* and *brevitas*, amplification and contraction, thus acknowledging the connections between capaciousness and capacity. The delivery of memory becomes bound up with performance and enactment. To highlight these animating relationships among memory and the canons of rhetoric, in what follows, I provide one example of a recursive praxis suitable as a model of this digital rhetoric—curation. Curation is a practice of recourse for placing the present through the sociotechnical practices of digital media technologies. Though not a new concept in relation to memory, I suggest that curation is becoming a principal practice of digital rhetoric, writing, and research. By studying the practices of digital curation, we can further establish an understanding of memory, not as a static product,
but as a pollinating and flourishing thing-in-process through which the past finds a place in the present and anticipates the future. The curation of memory is a public rhetoric for a digital culture, a rhetoric that draws on the past to build a different present for the future.

**Curating Copia: Amplifying Practices of Digital Memory**

That we are inundated with information has become the commonplace of digital culture. And with digital media technologies we must now confront the exhortation to “remember everything.” Following this exhortation presumes that remembering, saving, and archiving have become automatic, have become the defaults of memory rather than forgetting, deleting, and disregarding. However, we need to move beyond these defaults to acknowledge the ironic peripety of memory: Remembering motivates forgetting; forgetting motivates remembering. And despite our best efforts, both remain outside our control. Therefore, if we are to develop a mnemonic practice that is responsive to digital network memory and digital ambient memory, we should seek the performative conditions that make remembering and forgetting happen. In other words, because we are inundated with information, we are obliged to develop practices that enable us to cope with and find recourse in that inundation. Clay Shirky offers one possibility by arguing that the internet, rather than exacerbating the problem of information overload, introduces the critical need for information filtering:

> What we’re dealing with now is not the problem of information overload, because we’re always dealing (and always have been dealing) with information overload. . . . Thinking about information overload isn’t accurately describing the problem; thinking about filter failure is. (as cited in Asay, 2009, para. 5)
Shirky, thus, argues that we need to develop better ways to organize and filter information and suggests that folksonomy—the practice of social bookmarking or tagging—moves beyond the ontological problems of taxonomy. Shirky’s claims correspond well with Lanham’s (2006) assertion that we are living in an attention economy, wherein the scarce resource is not information, but rather the attention needed to filter and process information. Indeed, Lanham argues that a rhetoric attuned to the current economics of attention must persuade by allowing individuals “to share a beautiful attention structure. To cherish eloquence” (p. 58). Eloquence is the arrangement, style, and delivery of an attention structure. If filters and attention structures are to be eloquent, they must manage and embrace both the quantity and quality of information.

Digital media technologies, including the connectivity of the internet, by making publishing available to many more individuals and groups, allows more information to be published, distributed, and circulated; nevertheless, the quality of that information may not be immediately discernible or appreciable. Shirky (2010) suggests that there are now fewer and less standardized ways to filter for quality in advance, and so “the definition of quality becomes more variable, from one community to the next, than when there was broad consensus about mainstream writing (and music, and film, and so on)” (p. 49). Quality is no longer limited to a presumed authority or institution, such as The New York Times, but rather emerges over time. Quality is what persists, yet there is no certainty that what persists is of quality. Because we have an abundance of information and because that information circulates from and through an abundance of places, what becomes important is how information, or in the present case, digital memory, finds recourse in the present; that is, we need to ask how discourse or memory finds a
place from which to speak from the past, in the present, and for the future. How does memory connect (network) and effervesce (ambient) with other information, memories, and internet users and groups? Understanding this process requires shifting from a model of scarcity to one of abundance:

Scarcity is easier to deal with than abundance, because when something becomes rare, we simply think it more valuable than it was before, a conceptually easy change. Abundance is different: its advent means we can start treating previously valuable things as if they were cheap enough to waste, which is to say cheap enough to experiment with. Because abundance can remove the trade-offs we’re used to, it can be disorienting to the people who’ve grown up with scarcity. When a resource is scarce, the people who manage it often regard it as valuable itself, without stopping to consider how much of the value is tied to its scarcity. (Shirky, 2010, p. 49-50)

To use Mayer-Schönberger’s (2009) terms: When forgetting was the default, memory was scarce, and thus valuable. With digital media technologies and corresponding sociotechnical practices, remembering has become the default, that is, abundant, and so forgetting has become scarce and newly valuable. But as Saper (2010) suggests, neither remembering nor forgetting in digital culture is scarce: Both are occurring at unprecedented rates. Thus, rhetorical theories of memory need to respond to and engage the abundance of remembering and forgetting as the performative conditions of digital memory itself. With abundance, much like the quality of digital information, what memory is and could be is a much more flexible concept in digital culture. Indeed, Shirky suggests that what becomes important is not what information, or
memory, *is* but what it *does* and what we can do with it—how and to what extent we can experiment with it. Curation provides a mnemonic practice that experiments with digital memory.

To better understand how the abundance of digital memory affords the experimental dimensions of digital curation, we may turn to the rhetorical concepts of *copia* and *amplification*. Ancient and classical rhetors were expected to develop *copia* so that they could respond to whatever argument or audience they encountered. The art of memory, in particular, was a structured mode of cultivating *copia* so that rhetors could find themselves a place in memory from which to speak. As a rhetorical pedagogy and compositional technique, *copia* refers to the rhetor’s ability to draw upon an abundance of memory to produce a discourse appropriate to the situation. Rhetors were expected to furnish and expand their memories with images and topics, which we might call the ancient practice of “Remember everything. Capture anything. Access everywhere.” Indeed, in *The Craft of Thought*, Carruthers (1998) explains that memory is an unleashing of rhetorical inventiveness, and its force exists in the abundance or copiousness which it gathers together: “An essential first step of invention is thus recollective cogitation. For the process of meaning-making to begin at all, one’s memory must be ‘hooked up’ and ‘hooked in’ to the associational play of the mind at work” (p. 117). Carruthers expands upon the relationship between memory and *copia* by introducing the importance of ornamentation:

[Associational play] is the basic function of any ornament, and it explains why many of the basic features of the ornaments are also elementary principles of mnemonics: surprise and strangeness (for example, *metaphora*, metonymy, *allegoria*, oxymoron, and in
art, grotesquely), exaggeration (hyperbole and litotes), orderliness and pattern (chiasmus, tropes of repetition, various rhythmic and rhyming patterns), brevity (ellipsis, epitome, synecdoche, and other tropes of abbreviation) and copiousness (all the tropes of amplification), similarity (similitude), opposition (paradox and antithesis) and contrast (tropes of irony). All of these characteristics are essential for making mnemonically powerful associations. (p. 117)

The past must find recourse—hook up with and hook in to—the present and the present must find recourse in the past, if discourse is to occur at all in the present. Mnemonic ornamentation allows the past and present to find recourse in each other, to fold into each other. As Stormer notes, tropes rely upon a before and after, a turn and returning to for their rhetorical effect and affect. Furthermore, Carruthers repeats throughout her study that the goal of rhetorical mnemotechnics “was not to give students a prodigious memory for all the information they might be asked to repeat in an examination, but to give an orator the means and wherewithal to invent his material, both beforehand and—crucially—on the spot” (p. 9). The art of memory played and composed with the abundance of available information and allowed the rhetor to find a place from which to speak in the middle of memory. As such, rhetoric, grounded in the copia of memory, consisted of techniques of composition and persuasion. And copia itself could be persuasive.

To build copia, rhetors were encouraged to collect and copy florilegia—the flowers of reading—into commonplace books so that they could imitate the selected passages and commit them to memory. Creating commonplace books was an important practice for students of
rhetoric, and this rhetorical practice finds its digital analog in digital media technologies and applications, such as Twitter, Evernote, Diigo, Pinboard, Pinterest, and Tumblr. McNely (2010), for example, discusses how Twitter functions as a digital commonplace book by allowing users to search for and stockpile tweets. McNely’s article offers a valuable updating of the commonplace book for digital culture; however, he does not sufficiently address the second step in developing copia—declamation. Collecting commonplaces was only the initial part of the process. Crowley (1994) notes that copia allowed students to declaim, to discourse with inventiveness and style: “[Rhetors] simply retrieved any relevant topics or commentary from their ordered place within memory, reorganized and expanded upon them, and added their own interpretations of the traditional material” (p. 222). Again, memory and copia gather together an inventive composition. Here, I connect declamation and composition to digital curation—the mnemonic and mnestic practice of reinventing, rearranging, restyling, and redelivering commonplaces and topics of memory to give them force in the present. In other words, digital curation—as a declamatory and discursive practice, as a digital rhetoric—takes advantage of the copiousness of digital memory.

Curation, then, offers a way to cope with copia. Indeed, there is no curation without copia, an interestingly, there is no copia without curation. In discussing Cotton Mather’s copious writing style, Stievermann (2004) identifies the quandary of copia. The writer “needs to have a cornucopia of learning at his disposal to fulfill his task; he must, however, also be capable of keeping the growing mass of accumulated materials under control in order to force it into a whole” (p. 276). Copious writing is abundant, but well-ordered intertextuality. And as such, copia carries within
itself its own negation, “reflected in the fact that the term *copia* can also mean an inferior copy” (p. 277). Stievermann points out that copious writing often becomes reduced to wordplay that betrays an anxiety or fear: “This fear . . . is the fear of the primacy of *verba* [words] that are in constant danger of becoming severed from their respective *res* [things] through the dense texture of cross references produced by these writers” (p. 277). The work, it is feared, becomes reduced to incoherent verbosity, *garrulitas*. Similarly, Carruthers (1998) notes that “the great vice of *memoria* is not forgetting but disorder” (p. 82). That is to say, copious writing has a “centrifugal force’ released by the plethora of source texts that [the writer] calls up” (p. 278). Rather than a problem to overcome, I argue that the centrifugal forces of *copia* developed through digital curation allows us to take advantage of memory’s capacity to put matters in relationships and to make thinking possible. *Copia* emphasizes the capaciousness of memory, and capaciousness marks capacities, such as amplification.

The tropes of amplification allow us to understand the practices of digital curation. Amplification, referring to tropes of style and invention, emphasizes the enlargement and extension of a topic to maximize its rhetorical effect and affect. Amplification magnifies the topic under discussion through addition and multiplication, repetition and variation that allow details to be expanded and diversified. Burke calls amplification “the most thoroughgoing of all rhetorical devices” (as cited in Kennedy, 1971, p. 60). Amplification invents and intensifies, expands and extends a topic (Kennedy, 1968; Kennedy, 1971; Killingsworth, Gilbertson, & Chew, 1989). The tropes of amplification do not merely make an argument longer, but rather add force to an argument to make it persuasive, to make it do more to and for an audience.
Moreover, when combined with *copia*, amplification may not make an argument at all, but rather make a suggestion, a display, a performance of capaciousness and virtuosity. In this way, amplification is both an intensive and extensive practice of invention and style; amplification develops the intensive qualities of an argument while also extending it to more situations and audiences. Drawing upon the tropes of amplification, such as *auxēsis*, *comparatio*, *ratiocinatio*, and *congeries*, I suggest that curation could be best understood as the rhetorical practice of amplifying memory. *Auxēsis*, or augmentation, refers to the use of superlatives to generate vivid descriptions to produce a rhetorical climax. *Comparatio*, or comparison, seeks to raise the lesser to the greater. *Ratiocinatio*, or reasoning, builds an argument through syllogism or enthymeme. *Congeries*, or accumulation, piles up synonyms for emphasis—a compiling of words to suggest greater importance or nuance.\(^8\) *Copia* as a capacity of the rhetor and a result in a text along with amplification as a suite of techniques for achieving *copia* help us understand how digital curation establishes and illuminates the performative conditions of memory and rhetoric in digital culture.

**To Memory: Storify and the Practice of Digital Curation**

The possibilities for digital curation abound, and many applications exist to encourage these possibilities: Storify, Curated.by, Keepstream, Bag the Web, Storyful, Montage, Memolane, Paper.li, DataSift, Qwiki, Trailmeme, Dipity, Pearltrees, Delicious, Diigo, Digg, Reddit,

\(^8\) Recognizing that these concepts, which often shade into one another, have a rich history in rhetorical studies, I take these brief descriptions from Kennedy (1971) and Killingsworth et al. (1989), who both cite Quintilian’s discussion in *Institutes of Oratory* (8.4).
Pinboard, Pinterest, Path. And the list goes on. In the following, I discuss one application of digital curation, Storify, to show how it functions to curate *copia* and to amplify memory. By connecting to Twitter accounts and other social media applications, Storify allows users to search for tweets, links, photos, and videos around a topic. The creators of Storify define it as a verb, meaning “to form or tell stories of” to make stories using social media” (Storify, 2011). Storify enables users to collect, curate, and share their collection by gathering, rearranging, adding to, and recirculating digital content to give them new contexts: “With Storify, you can put together the best Tweets, photos, and videos to make stories that will be remembered” (Storify, 2011). Storify, therefore, encourages users to curate *copia*, to make social stories. Indeed, *to storify* means to invent and to amplify a topic, what I refer to here as *to memory*. As a thing-in-process, memory is less a noun than a verb, and as a verb, memory works through the infinitive, *to memory*. *To memory* transcends or exceeds moods—indicative, imperative, subjunctive—and tenses—past, present, and future. *To memory* emphasizes the amplification and accumulation rather than the displacement of mood and tense, thus allowing moods and tenses to coexist and cocirculate as memory moves. Similarly, *to storify* allows us to move through and extend a topic and its memory as it develops through time. In the following, I will discuss one Storify example: the shooting of Representative Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ). Andy Carvin, senior strategist and journalist at NPR, used Storify to curate news surrounding the shooting of Rep. Giffords. Each curated text amplifies the topic by multiplying, repeating, and varying details to give greater nuance and rhetorical force to the story(ies). Beginning with Giffords’s last tweet before the
shooting and then expanding to include news coverage, Carvin’s Storify amplifies and thus performs the memory and rhetoric of the event.

By including Rep. Giffords’s last tweet, Carvin begins the process of carving out a space from which and in which the discourse can take place. By juxtaposing that tweet with an image from the hospital room, Carvin continues the process of creating the recursive folds that endow the present with a past and anticipate a future (see Figure 8). Stormer employs the metaphor of *folding* to illuminate how “remembering and forgetting bend one time and place into another virtually” (p. 28). The juxtaposition, a compositional technique achieved through curation, folds the past into the present. Together, these two artifacts generate the emplacement necessary to hook up with and hook in to the event. As Stormer writes, “The need for emplacement is twofold: inwardly, a discourse continually reconstitutes its conditions of possibility, its own present, as outwardly, it reconstitutes the worldly present it seeks to affect” (p. 22). Here, Carvin helps to emplace the discourse to allow it to take hold with and to constitute a public that it seeks to inform and to affect.
Carvin continues his curation by drawing upon the *copia* of social media and then amplifying the topic. Figure 9 shows the first four tweets that Carvin included under the subheading, “First tweets from the scene.” Carvin’s curation employs tropes of amplification, such as *auxēsis* and *congeries*. The former refers to generating vivid descriptions to produce a rhetorical climax, and the latter refers to a piling up of words to impart importance or nuance. Although we do not reach a rhetorical climax, each tweet provides a vivid description of the scene while also piling on and filling in details and nuance. Again, such curation is not following a line of argument, but rather extending and amplifying a topic of discourse, of memory. Indeed,
together, the tweets create the space necessary for discourse and memory to appear in public. Nevertheless, the discourse, or memory, is not simply the sum of the tweets. Rather, each tweet is unique—individual and individuating—that folds and unfolds and exfoliates the possibility of memory. The tweets exist in a paratactic list that opens up to excess across multiple scales. As such, these tweets do not hold memory per se, but rather through interaction with them, they enfold us in the process of remembering and forgetting.

First tweets from the scene:

1. "#Tucson AZ some kind of emergency at the safeway, corner of Ina and Oracle, police fire even some vehicle listed as emergency environmental"
   - 1 year ago
   - "R.e.v.a.n.c.h.e"

2. "#Tucson just watched a large number of ambulances arrive. They aren’t allowing any traffic northbound up oracle atm, helicopters passing"
   - 1 year ago
   - "R.e.v.a.n.c.h.e"

3. "Damn we in the barber shop n heard gunshots like whaa?nahhh. And now there’s ambulances cops n helicopters all over blockin oracle n ina"
   - 1 year ago
   - "Yungdre13"

4. "#tucson mass shooting, going off phone toddler is getting scared 6 ambulances 3 medicav"
   - 1 year ago
   - "Reply to" "Retweeted"
   - "R.e.v.a.n.c.h.e"

Figure 9: First tweets from the scene
Stormer argues that “the recurrent interaction” with “things” of memory allows the present to find its place. Looking at the Carvin’s curation from this perspective does not produce a reading into, which would be a turn to hermeneutics or interpretation, but rather a reading out from, that is, what can be read from—remembered and forgotten—from this place. Reading out from marks a move from the excavation of meaning to an exploration of construction, of what is built from the relations into which the things of memory enter; it is a mode of rhetorical building or dwelling that seeks to understand the relations, correspondences, foldings, and translations among things and the world of discourse and publics created.

As everyone scrambled to report on the situation, a lot of information made its way on air and online. And reports that the congresswoman had died quickly proved to be incorrect:

“BREAKING: Rep. Giffords (D-AZ), 6 others killed by gunman in Tucson n.pr/jmzZW5
a year ago
nprnews

“UPDATE: There are conflicting reports about whether she was killed.
 a year ago
nprnews

“FLASH: Congresswoman Giffords still alive, in surgery, nine other patients brought in from shooting: hospital spokeswoman
 a year ago
Reuters

“One Democratic source tells me shooter called out names of people as aiming at targets.
 a year ago Reply t3 Retweet
EdEspinoza

Figure 10: Tweets extending the topic
Carvin’s curation relies upon the tweets of others to invent and amplify the topic. In this way, digital curation, as exemplified with Storify, shifts the inventive process from the curator to the community—a shift I have previously referred as one from genius to scenius, suggesting how a genius becomes embedded in a scene and how the scene itself can generate creativity: “Scenius stands for the intelligence and the intuition of a whole cultural scene. It is the communal form of the concept of the genius” (as cited in Kelly, 2008). Scenius identifies an invention mode of networked and ambient rhetoric. Carvin relies upon the entire network of social media and the ambient environment they create to provide the copia necessary for his curation so that the curation becomes an invention of the topic. Here, scenius requires a shift from topoi to chora.

Whereas the Aristotelian concept of topoi draws upon expected reactions and anticipated responses, chora refers to unstable sites of meaning. Ulmer (1994) updates the concept of chora as a mode of digital invention: “Do not choose between the different meanings of key terms, but compose by using all the meanings” (p.48). Similarly, Rice (2011) explains that chora “is more fluid, flexible, and often associative; its application is not preimagined, but rather is one that emerges out of how one refigures words, images, and concepts in order to invent” (p. 119).

Figure 10 reveals how Storify acts as an unstable site of meaning; indeed, it is a site composed of meanings that are continually “breaking,” “updating,” and “flashing.” Here, memory unfolds as an event of figuration through which the present moment is continually refigured. Each tweet creates and responds to a new now; the present is continually finding its place. In this way, each

---

9 Stormer states, “Because discourses need to orient their address in an ever-shifting present, ‘now’ is forever being figured and refigured” (p. 29).
tweet provides an “encapsulment” of the past and present. And encapsulment works through the distending power of expansion. Citing Casey’s study of remembering, Stormer outlines four ways in which encapsulment produces expansion:

(1) memories branch into other memories . . . ; (2) the same recollections are themselves distended through successive elaborations; (3) in the moment of folding, the past blends with the present, thus widening its scope of significance (it is about ‘more’ now); and (4) the very performance of contraction, ironically once again, is to extend the duration of the past into the present. (p. 30)

Again, each tweet is individual and individuating while simultaneously amplifying and translating the tweets around it, widening the performative scope of signification. Each tweet, limited to 140 characters, offers a contraction that extends the duration of the past into the present.

Carvin, by arranging these tweets, draws upon or becomes the scenius—referring to not only the community of Twitter users but also the total scene of sociotechnical practices—to curate a chorography of this event. Chorography operates through proairetic invention, a term developed by Brooke (2009) to understand invention with digital media. Brooke distinguishes between hermeneutic and proairetic invention. The former refers to the process of interpretation whereby materials are invented to fill in meaning to resolve a situation, which is most often a process of eliminating possibilities—a reading into. In contrast, proairetic invention operates through the generation of possibilities, thus resisting closure and postponing meaning—a reading out from. Digital curation as a proairetic practice allows a topic or event to amplify and exfoliate
meanings as it unfolds. Digital curation provides a means of keeping pace with memory that seeks to find a place in an ever-changing present.

Because digital curation encourages proairetic invention, arrangement becomes increasingly important to remembering and forgetting. As I discussed in previous chapters, Brooke (2009) argues that digital media technologies introduce a shift in memory’s relationship to the past. Rather than an axis of absence/presence, Brooke argues for an axis of pattern/randomness, which in turn shifts attention to persistence. We can see pattern/randomness and persistence at play in Carvin’s curation. Carvin, for example, finds and/or imposes patterns on the tweets surrounding the event, dividing the tweets into common topics, such as “First tweets from the scene,” “Some of the first news reports of the shooting,” and “Reactions to the shooting by politicians.” And Storify, as a curation platform, allows these tweets to persist through time so that they may continually find a place in the present.

Furthermore, arranging tweets through Storify allows the resulting curation to perform the functions of a copious text; that is, by bringing together this collection of tweets Carvin’s Storify enacts both centripetal and centrifugal forces. Curation is centripetal because it brings disparate things into a collection, while simultaneously enacting a centrifugal force as it points outside of itself. This centrifugal force is particularly apparent online because each artifact, or thing of memory, links to the original source. Additionally, Storify’s platform allows each piece of content to be shared through other social media applications. In this way, digital curation does not necessarily impose an interpretation of an event or topic but rather focuses on building networks and ambience within a collection. Indeed, Brooke suggests that collection bridges the gap
between narrative and database. According to Manovich (2001), narrative and database are two distinct cultural forms, and with digital media technologies the database has replaced the narrative in prominence. Brooke, in contrast, suggests that narrative and database occupy the same space in a collection. A collector, for example, imposes a narrative upon the objects collected, whereas to an outsider the collection remains a database of objects. In relation to our example, Carvin, by bringing together this particular collection of tweets, imposes a narrative on the events, but at the same time, viewers of the collection may easily build their own narratives from the database. Narrative and database, then, are expressions of the centripetal and centrifugal capacities of copia and curation. As such, arrangement comes to refer to the gathering and collecting of things in productive patterns of persistence.

Stormer suggests that mnesis is felt through things, and so “the materiality of remembering and forgetting is a kind of mediation objectified in things” (p. 18). Whereas Plato rejected the materiality of mediation, Stormer embraces the agency of material things in accounting for the mediation of memory. Drawing upon Bennett’s notions of vital materialism and thing power, which aim to “theorize a vitality intrinsic to materiality as such, and to detach materiality from the figures of passive, mechanistic, or divinely infused substance,” Stormer argues that the value of things in remembering and forgetting occurs through their recalcitrance.10 Granting agency to things in the mediation of memory illuminates how discourse

---

10 Embracing the agency of material things recalls Jack Selzer’s and Carole Blair’s reasons for insisting on a material rhetoric that accounts for the rhetorical dimensions of materiality. Material things have “recalcitrance” that produce consequences and partiality, both of which cannot be ascribed to symbolic activity alone.
makes its place; in other words, the material recalcitrance of things becomes part of the
capacitation of memory. In relation to arrangement, the focus on materiality refers to the
assemblage of sociotechnical practices that make digital curation possible—from Twitter, to
Storify, to mobile phones, to digital networks.

Digital curation, thus, invents digital memories through the arrangement of things, of
digital content, and this arrangement of things recalls Lanham’s (2006) notion of style and
cloquence: “to share a beautiful attention structure” (p. 58). Digital curation, as exemplified by
Storify, creates an eloquent attention structure through practices of copia and amplification, which
as mentioned, refer to both invention and style. Curation needs copia in order to amplify a topic
from which memory finds a place and from which we find a place for memory. The tropes of
amplification, as stylistic figures, magnify and extend the topic. Auxēsis, which is the use of
superlatives to create vivid descriptions, can be seen in the tweets Carvin has chosen to curate—
words such as “Breaking,” “Update,” and “Flash.” Simultaneously, auxēsis can be used as a style
of curation itself; that is, selecting and arranging only the most vivid things, thus pointing to a
mode of selecting, of choosing what things to curate. Similarly, curation relies upon congeries, the
accumulation of synonyms for emphasis. Each thing of memory adds to and extends the story
and the memory of the shooting. At the same time, Carvin’s curation employs ratiocinato, or
reasoning through enthymemes. Carvin’s curation does not make an explicit argument, but
rather gathers and presents the topic, requiring that readers make the connections themselves by
following the content to their sources to fill in the context. In so doing, Carvin’s curation
demonstrates how context becomes content. By bringing together these things into a collection, Carvin gives them a new context in which the content matters.

The concept of *copia* and the tropes of amplification point to a paratactic and running style of digital memory. Carvin refuses to make complex connections or explanations; instead, he relies upon simple spatial and temporal relationships, for example, “First tweets from the scene.” Carvin essentially creates a list. And as Lanham (2003) notes, “[Lists] represent parataxis par excellence” (p. 32). Lists, as paratactic displays, have a persuasive force by helping, or at least seeming, to create order from abundance. Eco argues that lists help “to make infinity comprehensible.” In an interview with *Der Spiegel*, Eco states, “And how, as a human being, does one face infinity? How does one attempt to grasp the incomprehensible? Through lists, through catalogs, through collections in museums and through encyclopedias and dictionaries” (as cited in Beyer & Gorris, 2009, para. 2). Eco suggests that lists create culture through enumeration and order. Lists, therefore, offer a way to play with and to curate *copia* without imposing a single mode of ordering or narrative:

Items in the list aren’t necessarily responses to the same questions but may hang together in other ways. . . . a list differs from a classification in that it recognizes its incompleteness. It doesn’t even need to seek completeness. If someone comes along with something to add to the list, something that emerges as important, this may indeed be added to it. (Law & Mol as cited in Adam, p. 176)

Lists allow their makers to express without exhausting the inexpressible. Lists, as paratactic displays, offer a place for digital memory to occupy. Carvin’s Storify does not impose an order,
narrative, or interpretation on the event, but rather offers a space for him and for us to grapple
with the trauma and memories of the event—a kairotic encounter with memory by which we
remember and forget.

Additionally, paratactic lists lend themselves to a running style of digital memory.
Lanham (2003) suggests that the running style of prose “is basically paratactic, incremental,
shapeless” (p. 48). He argues that the difference between the periodic style and the running style
points to “a basic difference in how one human intelligence presents itself to another” (p. 48).
The periodic style presents a perspective from the past; in contrast, the running style offers the
perspective of the present. As Lanham explains, with the periodic style “the mind shows itself
after it has reasoned on the event” to arrest the temporal flow into a beginning, middle, and end
(p. 49). On the other hand, the running style imitates the mind in real-time interaction: “The
serial syntax registers the first thing first and then the second thing second, simple chronological
sequence always calling the tune and beating the tempo” (p. 49). Moreover, Lanham states:

Such a syntax models the mind in the act of coping [emphasis added] with the world. The
coping [emphasis added] is all small-scale, minute-to-minute tactics, not seasonal grand
strategy. There is no time to reflect on grand strategy; the reader goes on patrol with the
writer, sharing immediate dangers and present perplexities. Things happen as they want
to, not as we would have them. Circumstances call the tune. (p. 48-49)

A running style of memory as a mode of curation allows individuals, such as Carvin, to cope
with and curate copia by keeping track of events, of memories in real-time interaction. To storify,
to curate, to memory is a tactical engagement with memory rather than a strategic one. Lanham’s
description of the running style recalls the concepts of digital network memory and digital ambient memory: memory created on-the-fly and emerging from the totality of the digital environment. The running style offers a style of engagement with memory that is happening in the present. Together, parataxis and the running style, as styles of curation, point to a style of digital memory that resembles as spatial and temporal gathering of things. Digital curation requires an on-going enactment, real-time performance, and futurity. That is, Carvin used Storify to curate and to develop the event as the event developed. Carvin created the Storify through the ambient environment of Twitter and other social media while simultaneously leveraging their digital network properties to connect the event to readers to create the curation on-the-fly, as needed. Storify allowed Carvin and his readers to keep up with the event itself. And now, Carvin’s curation exists beyond its moment of production and circulates and performs in futurity.

Digital curation, as a mnesis practice, emphasizes the performative dimensions of discourse and memory. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the materiality of media helps to determine the mediation of memory so that how memory is represented affects what memory is represented—the very hope for representation. In the present example, Storify embodies values of digital curation and of digital memory itself, such as instantaneity and connectivity, that, subsequently, establish social protocols for remembering and forgetting. The materiality of media, then, is a crucial element in the constitution of and performance of digital memories. In classical rhetoric, the canon of delivery was tied to “the physical constraints of the speaker’s body and how those constraints should be addressed by—and used to the advantage
of—speakers as they perform a speech” (Jones, 2010, p. 4). Delivery was an embodied performance. Although the physical constraints have changed, delivery is no less embodied today. For example, Jones (2010) argues, “Deprived of the cues and signals of physical bodies, messages take on another body, that of the digital network” (p. 4). As scholars and practitioners, our attention should shift to how we might leverage the materiality of media and their accompanying sociotechnical practices so individuals, collective, and publics might find some recourse to rhetorical agency within the copia of digital memories.

Digital curation, as I have articulated it here, offers one such possibility because curation seeks to deliver and perform the memory being curated. Put differently, the concepts of to storify, to curate, and to memory echo Barthes’s articulation of to write as an intransitive verb. Brooke (2009) explains, “The intransitive manner of to write means that the author is as much a product of her text as the text is the result of her labor” (p. 177). To write is to be written. To curate is to be curated. Carvin, as a curator, constructs his Storify, but to do so, he relies on the tweets of others. Here again, we see the intertwined forces of copia—both centripetal and centrifugal. Carvin’s Storify draws us in and pushes out again to remember and forget. In this way, digital curation is less about delivery than performance. Brooke (2009) notes, “Particularly in the case of delivery, we must consciously resist the impulse to reduce that canon to a transitive, instrumental process of transmission” (p. 177). Memory, here, is not to be delivered or transmitted; rather, memory emerges with the resonances between digital networks and digital ambience. Brooke further explains that digital media technologies “draw us away from the ‘instance of reality,’ the one true rendering of reality in discourse, and closer to the ‘instance of
discourse,’ where it is a particular performance, one that constitutes reality, that is taking place” (p. 192). In the present case, Carvin’s Storify does not offer an “instance of reality,” a true rendering of the shooting or its memory. Rather, Storify allows Carvin to create and curate a place from which memory may appear. Furthermore, Brooke is correct to assert that we must “[see] discourse as circulating rather than something that we circulate” (p. 192). Similarly, we must see memory as circulating rather than as something that we circulate. From this perspective, curation offers a way to collect and to gather the copia of circulating memories.

To storify and to curate are inventive practices that allow topics, events, and memories to amplify and exfoliate meanings as they unfold, thus postponing a preferred meaning or preferred memory. Curation, as mnestic practice, creates the place from which memory, and discourse, may fold and unfold the past, present, and future. Rather than arresting the folding of memory, curation contracts the past into a present, and through contraction creates expansion. Curation allows us to stay with memory as it moves. Curating copia, then, is a kairotic gathering of and encounter with memory, with rhetoric, with eloquence. Curating copia is a mnemonic and memorial practice that creates rhetorical agency for individuals, collectives, and publics by inventing memories with memories. We become accomplished voluptuaries, taking pleasure in mnemonic and memorial excess and inventing, arranging, styling, and delivering new memories out of this excess. Curating copia will become an increasingly important practice of attuning ourselves to digital network memory and digital ambient memory along with digital rhetoric as such, a rhetoric responsive to digital media technologies and the culture they help construct.
Ours is a culture obsessed with memory. Accordingly, research on and about memory is increasingly relevant to a growing number of fields and disciplines, which, in turn, have developed a range of subjects and objects of study, of methods, of theories, and of paradigms that constitute the emerging interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary field of memory studies. And as this dissertation has demonstrated, the adoption and assimilation of digital media technologies introduces new affordances and constraints not only to disciplinary research, but also to memory itself. As rhetorical scholars, we are positioned to contribute to discussion of both memory and digital media technologies and their intermediation. But as Brooke (2009) points out, our contribution depends on our ability to rethink some of our assumptions about rhetoric. Consequently, the research presented has focused on the materiality of media to illuminate the practices and outcomes of the intermediation of memory and digital media technologies. And I have done so from the perspective of visual and material rhetorics. Indeed, this research fits within and extends the material turn in rhetorical theory. As noted in chapter three, Selzer (1999), in *Rhetorical Bodies*, calls for rhetorical scholars to recognize “the presence of a material dimension in rhetoric and of the rhetorical dimension in the material” (p. 9). Selzer’s provocation corresponds well with Carole Blair’s insistence on the materiality of rhetoric as consequential and partial. Indeed, the turn to materiality marks not only a return to embodied performance and experience, but also a recognition of the constitutive effects of objects, technologies, and practices. This dissertation, for example, has taken as its exigence the exhortation to “Remember Everything” and our ostensible ability to do so. And this exhortation
challenges us to reorient our relations not only with one another but also with the material world. Such a reorientation calls for investigations that attend to the complex processes of materialization and local manifestations that are not alone the result of symbolic activity. As users of digital media technologies, we are immersed in sociotechnical practices that rely upon materiality’s productive affordances and constraints, contingencies and ambiguities. By focusing on the materiality of sociotechnical practices, I have attempted to show how practices are persuasive tactics that both constrain and empower practitioners. By looking at intermediated practices of memory and digital media technologies, I have argued for and demonstrated a digital rhetoric responsive to materiality so that materiality itself is a productive, persuasive force that shapes human realities and memories that, in turn, shape our relations with the world.

The concepts, such as digital network memory and digital ambient memory, and practices, including rephotography/hauntography and curation, presented in this dissertation attend to the performative, place-based, and archival sociotechnical processes of memory and digital media technologies. In chapter three, I examined the material assemblage of digital imaging technologies, including the psychosis of digital imaging and the monumentality of the mundane, and the rhetorical circulation of digital images to understand how rhetorical functions change within digital environments, specifically their ability to constitute an explicitly collective or public memory. Future research will need to further our understanding of how such sociotechnical practices perform individual, collective, and public memory. Because individuals, collectives, and publics are embedded and embodied in digital network memory and digital ambient memory, how memory is mediated and who and what is mediated will continue to change as technologies
change. As such, digital network memory and digital ambient memory will need to be developed further to understand the networked and ambient qualities of memory. In particular, more in-depth investigation into algorithmic interventions and inventions, an algorithmic rhetoric, will be needed to understand the ambient abilities and capacities of digital media technologies and their consequences for practices of memory. How digital images become linked to and connected with other digital images becomes especially important for understanding what will be remembered or forgotten. And if these links and connections are made automatically, that is, algorithmically, what is remembered and forgotten may not be readily apparent. Put differently, we may not be fully aware participants in the digital ambient memory in which we find ourselves. In this way, digital network memory and digital ambient memory offer theoretical and critical concepts for exploring practices of memory and digital media technologies. In this way, these concepts point towards productive practices that may be employed by individuals, collectives, and publics to engage with memory differently.

Indeed, chapter four, similarly, addressed the circulation of digital images in creating a social protocol for remembering places of memory. The circulation of digital images through digital networks has enabled a style of photography, rephotography, to become persuasive, that is, to have consequences for remembering and forgetting. In this way, rephotography, what I also referred to as hauntography, acts not only as theoretical and critical concept, but also a productive and pedagogical approach to practices of memory. Rephotography becomes a productive mode of engaging with place and memory, possibly allowing individuals, collectives, and publics to find recourse in the past for the present that anticipates a future. By re-imaging
the things and places of memory, we may begin to reimagine a future different from our past and present. One future area of research should be the opportunities presented by augmented reality technologies and location-based services. As such, more empirical investigations that attend to the complex processes of materialization are needed to make sense of how we understand places of memory and the place of memory in our world.

This final chapter attempts to do just that—to find a place for memory—by focusing on digital curation as a practice of coping with digital copia—the abundance and plenitude of digital memories. Such abundance revalues remembering and forgetting as productive, and potentially playful practices. Curation, as rhetorical and compositional practice, allows individuals, collectives, and publics to move with digital memory as it moves. Here, what is important is creating a space in which memory may appear. Curation, then, is the practice of carving out an archive—a commencement and a commandment.

Taken together, this dissertation shows how memory animates rhetoric in digital culture. We remember. We forget. Though remembering and forgetting are beyond our control, we may find recourse in memory by acknowledging its productive abilities and capacities. Put differently, we can never remember or forget the same thing twice. Every act of remembering is one of forgetting and one of refuguration. We should ask, then, as we continue to make the material turn, how remembering and forgetting are implicated in assemblages of material things, including digital media technologies. How do the rhetorical capacities of these technologies participate in and constitute our memories? Digital media technologies are not simply tools for
memory—for remembering and forgetting; rather, they offer new ways of dwelling with memory and create the foundation for our ability and capacity to memory.
REFERENCES


stories.jspa?secondarySortBy=last24hours&sortBy=viewed&sortOrder=2&numResults=12&topicId=412374


route9autos.co.uk. (2010). argyle st then in now. Looking into the past. Retrieved from http://www.flickr.com/search/groups/?m=pool&kw=1051492%40N21&q=argyle+st+then+in+now Access Date


