



# Argumentative “Moves” in SSHRC Grant Writing

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# Outline for the workshop

- Writing processes that work
- Constructing arguments
- Argumentative “moves” in SSHRC proposals (see last slide for sources on this)
- Style and design strategies
- Further reading



# The writing process

- Idea generation at all stages
- Iterative process
- Drafting
- Revising
- Genre knowledge; genre as social action
- Groups, research teams



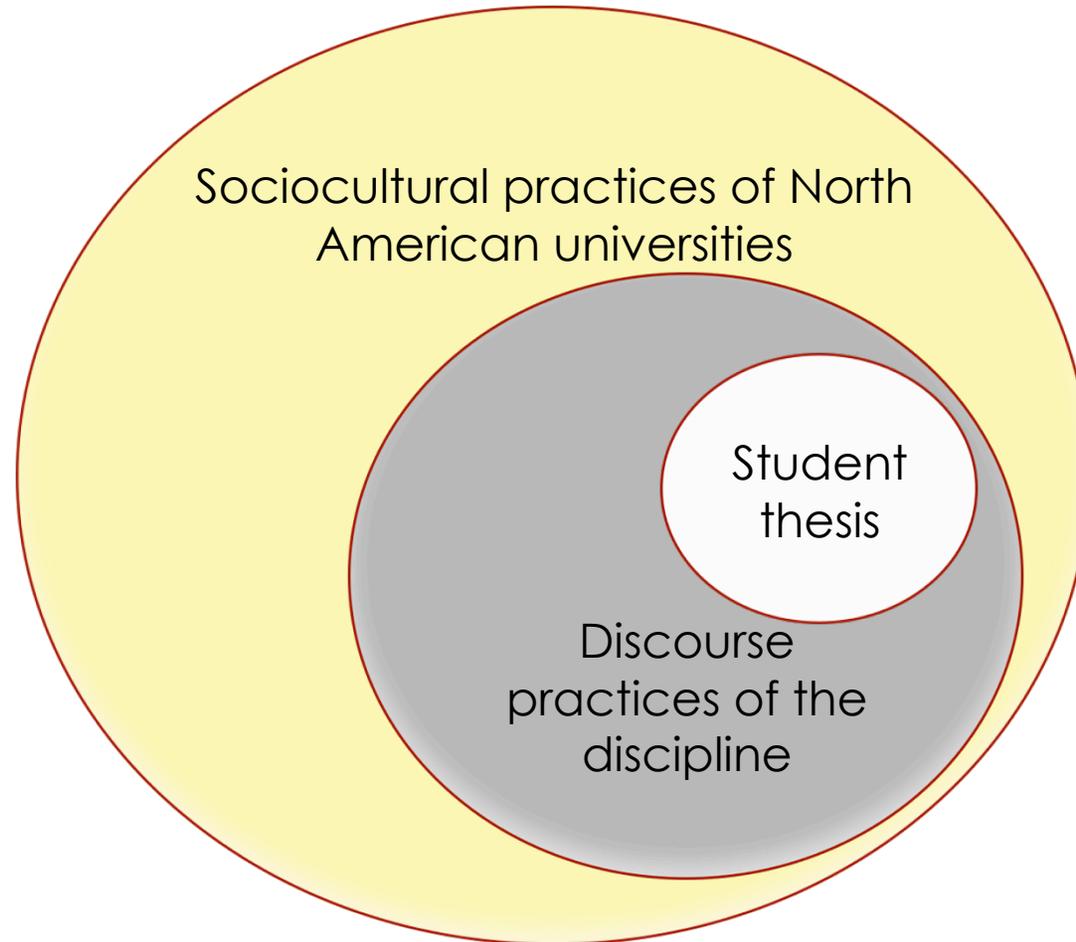
# Format/Genre

- Format refers to a description of the look or dimensions of a document: double-spaced, 500 words, 4 citations, APA style
- Genre refers instead to the **communicative function** of the document: to persuade me that your research is worth funding, that you follow acceptable research methods
- Think about assignment descriptions given to undergraduates—they often focus too much on format and offer little guidance about the intellectual task the assignment demands



# Writing as social practice

SSHRC = CRSH



Fairclough's three dimensions of discourse, as depicted in B. Kammler and P. Thomson, *Helping Doctoral Students Write Well*, p. 21.



# Discourse communities

- Swales (1991) developed the concept of discourse communities to explain the purposes within documents
- His concept of rhetorical “moves” within documents—such as “establish a research territory”—leads to one method for establishing the typical purposes for a document
- SSHRC research grant evaluation committees form into discourse communities for example



# Genre sets

- Genres typically do not occur alone but instead as part of a set of social actions within a group
- Graduate students may write a variety of related documents: grant applications, course papers, exams, conference proposals, posters, a thesis



# Genre and disciplines

- Genre is a tool or way of thinking about how these discourses of the disciplines work
- Genres are “focused, purposive, [and] highly differentiated task[s]”
- Genres are always situated within a context of power relations: funder/applicant, supervisor/student, FEC/worker

**Bazerman, “Introduction.”**



# SRG Summary

- Should be a concise overview of the whole grant
- Include two or three sentences on the key topics listed in the grant guidelines (headings: objectives, context, originality & contribution, relation to ongoing research, theoretical approach, methods, timetable, communication of results)
- Reproduce the structure of the grant in brief
- Address a non-specialist reader
- Highlight uniqueness & timeliness of your project



# Texts and Identity

- Kenneth Burke: rhetoric/persuasion depends upon identification between rhetor and audience
- Texts written by graduate students build their identity as a member of their discipline
- You as a professional are your textual self—or rather, selves: the stories you tell about yourself and your work





Chaim Perelman  
and Lucie  
Olbrechts-  
Tyteca: *The New  
Rhetoric*

*Key Terms:*

- *Adherence*
- *Presence*



[www.justrhetoric.com/links](http://www.justrhetoric.com/links)

# Adherence

Adherence from the audience:

- The audience buying into or agreeing with the speaker's argument

Adhere: to stick to; even stronger than persuasion



# Argumentation vs. Demonstration

- Demonstration: mathematical, logical, rational instead of the reasonable
- Argumentation: contains ambiguity of language, more reasonable



# What is presence?

- How do you create “presence”?
- Elements that speaker chooses to focus on
  
- Why is *presence* important?
- It helps persuade the audience by making the subject concrete and real



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Liaison or associative:** taking two different concepts and establishing a bond between them; connect the starting point with the thesis
- Example: connect life to act of abortion; connect quality of life with money—the more money you have, the more improved the quality of your life will be because you can afford to buy yourself labor-saving devices or trendy clothing



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Quasi-logical:** two subsets: one based on similarity and one based on difference.
- Similarity is more persuasive because people are more likely to accept premises based on logic or what appears to be logic.
- Example: Energy independence is one of the U.S. major priorities. US has plenty of oil reserves in the Arctic. Therefore US should drill in Arctic preserves.



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Cause and effect:** relationship between elements based on a sequence
- Examples: one thing was the cause of another thing;



# Techniques of Argumentation

## ■ Coexistence

- No time link between events
- Person can be judged by her/his actions
- Selecting particular traits results in different conclusion
- Argument from authority: important person says something is good, people believe it, even if it isn't logical



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Example, illustration, and model**
- **Example:** to create a generalization about something or use one example to reach a conclusion about another example
- **Illustration:** illustrates general belief
- **Example:** smokers suffer ill health therefore smoking is bad.
- **Model:** convince an audience to imitate qualities of a certain person
- **Example:** exemplary teacher: use her or him as model



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Metaphor and analogy:**
- A:B :: B:C (they must come from different spheres)
- Example: Coach tells players to act like animals and “kill” opponents
- Theme :: Phoros
- When these fuse together, the analogy becomes a metaphor



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Appearance-reality pair:** avoiding incompatibilities by dissociating pairs
- Term 1 (appearance) vs. Term 2 (specific, but understood in relation to term 1)
- Example: someone who thinks killing is wrong but supports the death penalty. Killing is an action, while the death penalty is more passive.



# Techniques of argumentation

- **Reversal:** dissociates values to eliminate incompatibility
- Example: I can't be there in spirit, so I'll be there in person.
- Reverses the general understanding to highlight the real over the possible.





## Kenneth Burke



- “Rhetoric is the attempt to bridge the conditions of estrangement that are natural and inevitable”
- “The use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents.”
- “Change of attitude or action through identification”

[http://www.famousquotesandauthors.com/authors/kenneth\\_burke\\_quotes.html](http://www.famousquotesandauthors.com/authors/kenneth_burke_quotes.html)

# Key Concepts of Burke's Theory

- *Identification*: Individuals form selves or identities through various properties or substances i.e. physical objects, etc.
- *Consubstantiation*: Share substance with whatever or whomever you associate, and simultaneously define yourself against others

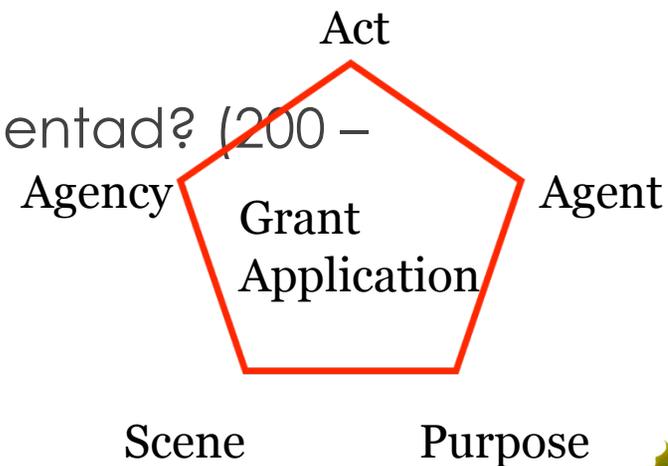


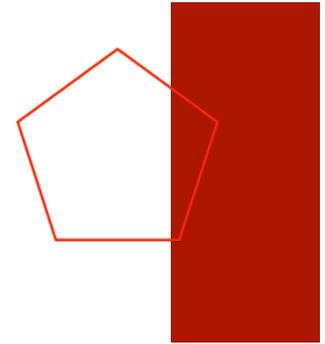
# Burke's Pentad

- What is Burke's pentad? (200)
- Reduce statements of motive to fundamental level

- What are the five parts to the pentad? (200 – 202)

- Act
- Agent
- Agency
- Scene
- Purpose





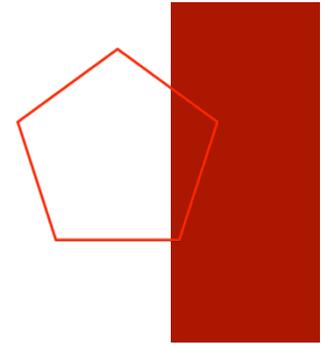
# Act

What took place in thought or deed.

- E.g., Antony & Cleopatra (Act 1, Sc 1)
- Defining Antony's character
- Play subject matter/introduction
- Characterize Antony and Cleopatra's affair in a particular way
- Antony rebelling against Caesar
- Affirmation of power
- Characterizes their relationship
- Presents a problem for the Roman Empire; one of the leaders is distracted

Grant context

- Presents a problem to be researched



# Agent

What person or kind of person performed the act?

- Philo is the actor in the first exchange
- Antony: rebelling vs. Caesar
- Cleopatra: manipulating Antony
- Shakespeare: presents the actors, the act, etc.
- Actors who present the play
- Caesar who sends message

Grant context

- How do you present yourself on paper?  
Literate? Informed? Credible?

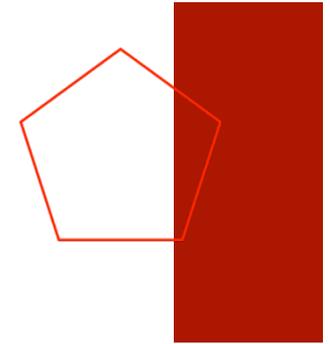
# Agency

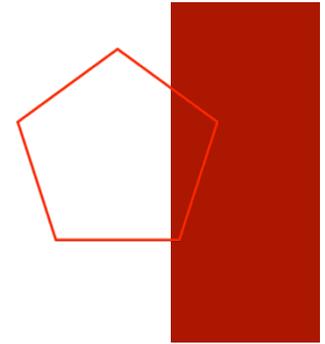
What means are used to perform the act?

- Words, conversational exchanges
- Gestures, facial expressions, whole gamut of non-verbal communication\
- Messenger—delivers message that causes Antony to rebel

Grant context

- Jargon
- Citations
- Form
- arguments





# Scene

What is the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred?

- Roman empire, Egypt, in Cleopatra's palace
- A & C are having an affair
- A is already married
- Caesar's message
- Roman occupation in Egypt

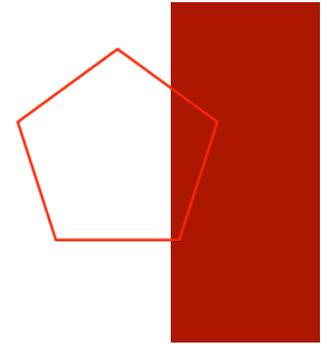
- How do you set the scene for your research project?
- What discipline is it in?
- What methods do you use?

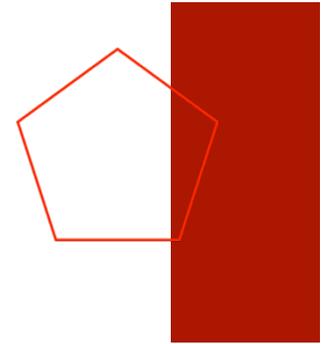
# Purpose

- What is the Agent's private intention in performing the act?
- Philo--biases Demetrius and the audience against Antony
- Antony—trying to prove he loves Cleopatra
- Cleopatra—keep control of Antony, her country,
- Shakespeare—entertain, character development, critiquing political climate in England, plot development, earn a living

## Grant context

- Why are you researching this problem?
- How does this build your career?





# Attitude

What is the manner in which the means are employed?

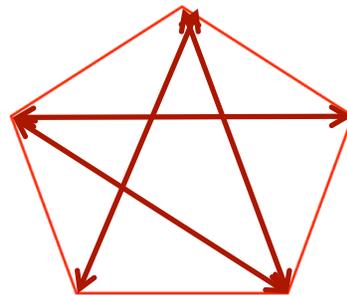
- Cleopatra—manipulative
- Both are defiant;
- Philo—disgusted and disappointed by Antony's behavior; sarcastic attitude

Grant context

- What is your attitude to this research? Excited? Committed? Casual?

# Ratios in Burke's Pentad

- Relationship between the various aspects of the pentad
- The elements of the pentad interact, depend on each other; they can't stand alone
- Helps to balance the analysis: maintains coherence



## Burke's Pentad cont'd

- Scene is important to I, i: determines the action, purpose behind the action
- Agents—what they say, how they act, all helps to define their purpose through the act





## Informal Logic: Toulmin

- Claim is a statement: The gun registry in Canada has failed to live up to its promise of making women safer
- **Claim + stated reason:** The gun registry in Canada has failed to live up to its promise of making women safer **because the kinds of guns used to kill women in domestic violence do not require registration.**
- From: “Citing a tragedy to support a farce,” Matt Gurney, *National Post*, March 22, 2010: A10.



<http://www.usc.edu/libraries/partners/laih/fellows/StephenToulmin.php>

## Stated Reason + evidence

- Evidence to support stated reason (Grounds) (facts, data, statistics, testimony, examples):
- The numbers of gun murders were dropping in Canada well before the registry began
- 50 women per year are murdered, roughly 30% with firearms
- 2/3 of these firearms are long guns [which do not require registration]
- 10 women a year die from domestic gun violence



## Unstated assumption (**Warrant**) (draws on beliefs, values of reader)

- If the gun registry doesn't protect women from domestic assault, it's pointless
- Unstated assumption underlying this claim?
- Measures taken to reduce domestic violence that don't work should be abolished
- Supporters who argued the gun registry would protect women from domestic violence were mistaken/wrong
- Actions that fail to increase women's safety and reduce their gun-related murders are pointless



## Evidence support unstated assumption (**Backing**)

- Backing = facts, statistics, testimony, examples
- Government ventures that cost a lot but don't achieve their goals are a waste of money
- Backing: actions that waste money and fail to protect women as intended are bad
- Evidence: 1/3 of women are killed by their partners using guns that don't need to be registered



## Unstated assumption (**Warrant**) (draws on beliefs, values of reader)

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## Argument Against this Position (conditions of **rebuttal**)

- The gun registry cost a lot of money; we can't waste that money by abolishing the registry
- Maybe we should make owners of long guns register those as well
- Even if one person is saved, doesn't that make the expense worth while. How much is a human life worth?



# Qualifiers (hedges added to make claim less vulnerable to rebuttal)

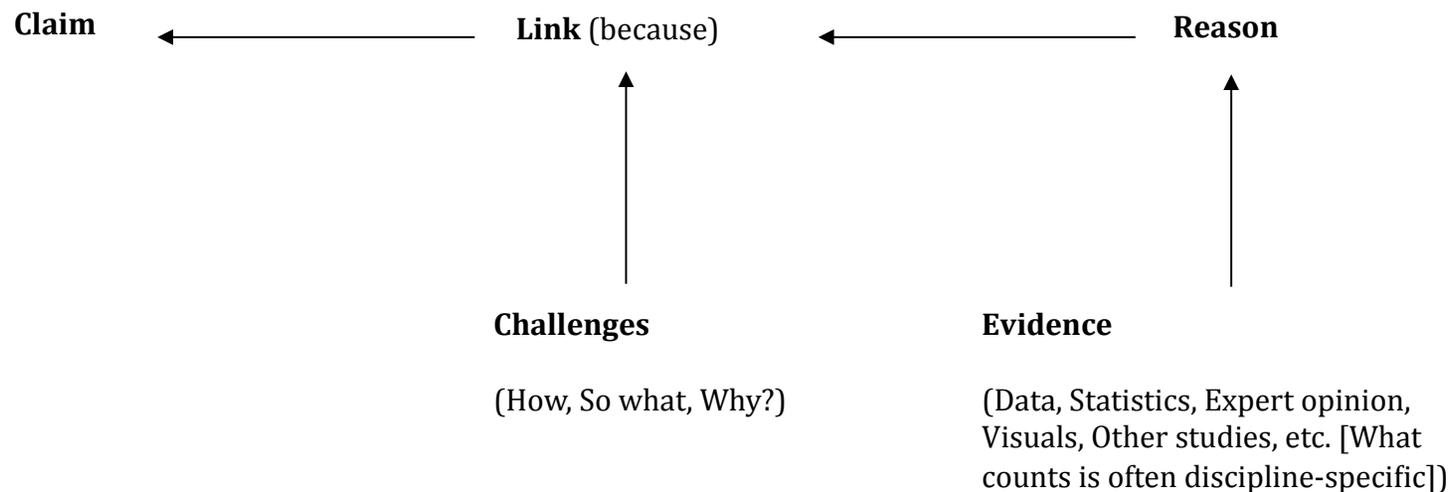
SSHRC = CRSH

- The gun registry in Canada has not prevented domestic violence against women because the kinds of guns **generally** used to kill women do not require registration.



# Informal Argument and Academic Writing

SSHRC = CRSH



Ex. [this study] will be a unique scholarly contribution as very few studies genuinely combine oral history and the documentary record.



# Claims and Assumptions

- Claim + stated reason rest upon an unstated reason
- Both the stated and unstated reasons rely on shared assumptions of value between the writer and the reader
- Evidence demonstrates the validity of the stated or unstated reasons
- When values are shared, less evidence is needed to convince the reader



## A claim in 3 parts

- By engaging in historical/archival research, by reviewing the vast amount of public information now available on [this topic], and by conducting interviews with policy makers, researchers, activists and industry representatives, **my research will develop a systematic assessment** of [topic] and the conditions in which it has become finalized.



# Exercise 1

- Write a one sentence claim about your project



# Argumentative “moves”

- “moves” are like tacit questions that grant writers answer
- Moves are a way to organize the proposal
- Moves create a narrative



# Narrative

“A problem exists of social and research importance (territory). Some research already exists, but there is also clearly an absence of research in a particular area (gap). The researcher(s) is/are well prepared (means) to address the problem (goal) by conducting the following study (methodology).”



## Example

- “Recently, Alberta has received much media attention because of its massive drawing power for migrants in a context of unprecedented economic growth (3 references 2007/2006). A less noticed but equally important development is the steady increase of the birth rate in this province, a situation diametrically at odds with the persistent pattern of low fertility in Canada. Most surprising is the apparent lack of scholarly interest to this new development. My study seeks to address this void in the demographic literature . . . .”



## Exercise 2

- Write two or three sentences that build a narrative about your work.



# Territory

- Research territory refers to current research issues or problems
- “Real world” territory refers to social problems or issues
- Connect the two territories: a real world problem exists for which a research area can propose a solution



## Example

- “[this study] will also be of interest beyond the academic community. The project grows out of the initial steps taken by the office of the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba (TCRM). . . It is essential to know the history of agriculture in First Nations communities in order to understand what the barriers have been and how they may be removed.”



## Exercise 3

- Write two or three sentences that connect your research territory to society beyond the university.



# Pointing out a gap in literature: Excerpt 1.4

SSHRC = CRSH

“Particularly worrisome has been the increase in adolescent gang membership. A subset of the offending population, estimated at 68% of institutionalized youth, are affiliated with a gang, yet **little research has been done to distinguish gang members from other types of young offenders** (Kratcoski & Kratcoski, 1996); Richter-White, 2003). It may be that young people are turning to gangs for protection from other gangs, as a way to gain respect, to escape from troubled homes, because their friends are doing it, peer pressure, or as a way to earn a living through drug trafficking, illegal weapons sales, robbery, and theft (Lloyd, 2002). However, **the reasons why adolescents choose to join a gang remain understudied with no clear answers.**

–Nicole Kostiuik, *Attachment in Incarcerated Adolescent Gang Members*, 2007.



# Gap

- Establishes that a problem exists
- Provides motivation for the proposed study by implying the gap needs to be filled
- “This consolidation appears to be pointing to a ‘two-tiered’ financial system: an increasingly ‘exclusive’ financial world accessible to those with capital and wealth, and high-cost financial practices for those populations who are prevented from accessing mainstream credit (ref. 2005).”



# Goal

- States the aim, general objective, chief contribution of the study
- This move responds to the gap or problem identified in the proposal
- “My study seeks to address this void in the demographic literature . . .”



## Example

- “The principal goal of my study is to address these and other related questions and to uncover the underlying social demographic and socioeconomic factors responsible for the recent fertility rise in Alberta.”



## Exercise 4

- Write a goal statement.



# Methodology

- How the goal will be achieved, including descriptions of methods, procedures, plans, or actions and tasks
- Writers demonstrate their methodological competency:
- Presented the specific steps of their study
- Named a theory or method that would enable them to reach the project goals



# Cite Sources that Support your Methods

SSHRC = CRSH

“Vaccinia virus (VV) is considered the prototypic poxvirus, and is amenable to **genetic manipulation** through a multitude of available DNA recombination tools (450). VV has also been used extensively as a **gene delivery mechanism**, as its large DNA genome makes it relatively easy to insert foreign DNA sequences for protein expression in mammalian cells (50, 100). Despite the fact that the natural host for VV is unknown, **VV remains an excellent model in which to study virus:host interactions due to its complex genome and vast array of anti-immune mechanisms** (169). In response to the selective pressures initiated by the host immune system, poxviruses such as vaccinia virus encode a vast array of proteins which modulate both innate and adaptive immune responses (Table 1.2) (21, 105).”

John Taylor, *The inhibition of apoptosis and Bax activation by mitochondrial antiapoptotic proteins encoded by vaccinia virus and ectomelia virus*, Fall 2007. (bolding added)



# Means

- Addresses writer's credibility and readiness to conduct the research

Strategies:

1. Cite their own past or ongoing research to imply connection between proposed research and their competency
2. Make explicit claims about their competency based on previous research



# Examples

- “My own book [title] remains the most comprehensive analysis but the focus was on . . .”
- “To fully address the question on the formalization of fringe finance I draw on ‘cultural economy’. Cultural economy is an approach influenced by post-structuralism, ‘governmentality’, actor-network theory and ‘science studies’.”



## Exercise 5

- Describe the methods you will use to perform your research.



# Document design/style

- When you have a full draft, we'll get together to talk about style and design considerations
- The following slides give you an idea of what that means
- At this point in the process, however, it isn't profitable to focus on these areas



# Objective strategies

- Nominalizations (a verb changed into a noun)
  - We investigated the problem to see . . .
  - A problem investigation showed . . .

Nominalizations remove agency, creating an objective tone

They can improve conciseness.

**Warning:** Overuse of nominalizations can confuse and bog down a reader's understanding



# Passive Voice

- Linguistic construction that places the object in the subject position
  - We investigated the problem (active voice)
  - The problem was investigated by us (passive voice)
- Create objectivity, improve conciseness
- Mitigate blame, emphasize processes over agents
- **Warning:** Overuse can make prose boring or difficult to process



# Signposting

- Techniques that provide a framework or conceptual map for the document (headings, bulleted or numbered lists, etc.)
- Help to organize the information for the reader
- Help reader retrieve specific information later
- Writers use SSHRC headings, as well as their own to guide readers



# Example of signposting

Research plan/Methodology

1. Historical Context Analysis
2. Mapping Public Discourses of Fringe Finance
3. Narratives of Regulation



# Citation

- Citing others: writers build on others' work rather than demolishing it
- Citing oneself: used to enhance writer's credibility



# Example

- “Although sources of public data relating to corporate structure have been used to assess levels of corporate regionalization (Rugman, 2005, Rugman 2004) and processes of transnational class formation (Carroll 2004; Carroll and Fennema 2002), they have rarely been used in the critical finance literature.”



## Further reading

- [http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/grants/documents/StudyonSuccessfulSSHRCApplications\\_000.pdf](http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/grants/documents/StudyonSuccessfulSSHRCApplications_000.pdf)
- <http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/grants/documents/bibliographyforSSHRCapplicationstudy.pdf>
- <http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/grants/AboutGGRC.htm#Inservices>

