President Ronald Reagan’s June 6, 1984, “Address on the 40th Anniversary of D-Day” is one of his most celebrated speeches, and yet no critical assessment of the address exists in rhetorical scholarship. In this article, I examine this speech as a deictic epideictic address, or a speech in which the rhetor uses the physical place, the immediate scene/setting, and the assembled audience as evidence to commemorate the past and chart a clear course for the future. Through this analysis, I argue that Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc is exemplary because it relies on rhetorical vision and deixis to connect a past moment to the present, and in so doing, invites the audience to participate in the discourse emotionally, mentally, and even physically. I conclude by suggesting that a deictic approach to rhetorical criticism offers scholars a vocabulary to describe how speakers can “point”
or refer to the physical and material elements of a speech setting as evidence for their argument.

The first stop was Pointe du Hoc, where American Rangers, 225 of them, had overcome enormous German resistance and climbed a sheer hundred-foot cliff to gain a critical foothold during the early hours of D day; more than 100 died or were injured during the climb. Sixty-two of the survivors were there for the anniversary; with gray hair and faces weathered by age and life’s experiences, they might have been elderly businessmen, and I suppose some of them were; but these were the boys, some of them just starting to shave at the time, who had given so much, had been so brave at the dawn of the assault. On that windswept point for which so much blood had been spilled, I tried to recount the story of their bravery. I think it was an emotional experience for all of us.¹

—Ronald Reagan, recalling the speech in his autobiography seven years later

On June 6, 1984, President Ronald Wilson Reagan spoke in Normandy, France on the 40th anniversary of D-Day. In his relatively brief remarks, Reagan praised the U.S. Army Rangers who scaled the cliffs of France and used the story of D-Day to support the West’s ongoing commitment to “protect and defend democracy” in Europe.² He compared the struggles of World War II to the challenges facing European democracies in the shadow of Soviet communism, pledging that the United States would stand with other nations seeking freedom. For Reagan, this historic celebration of the Allied victory at D-Day was an opportune moment to recommit the United States and its Western allies to the current Cold War struggle between democracy and communism. Reflecting on the speech in 2004, Washington Post reporter and Reagan biographer Lou Cannon described the address as “elegiac,” a term that captures the cadence or repeated rhythms adopted by Greek poets to recite national history and memorialize the dead.³ At Normandy, Reagan recounted the events of D-Day and immortalized “the boys of Pointe du Hoc” by situating their daring acts within the broader historical context and then comparing the Allied defeat of Nazi Germany to the present moment. In this way, the text accomplished two specific rhetorical purposes: honoring past heroes and using their actions to motivate present and future action. In a 2013 inter-
view, Reagan White House speechwriter Peggy Noonan commented on these two goals:

The text of the speech—the ostensible thing that was being said—was, “Look, civilized nations of the West, look what you did forty years ago when you held together, joined together, you defeated a terrible tyranny called Hitler’s Germany.” So that’s what the speech is. Underneath that, Reagan was really saying to all the gathered leaders of the West who were there that day, “Guys, look what your parents and grandparents did. If we hold together as they did, we are going to defeat together the tyranny of our time—and that is Soviet communism.” So, by lauding the World War II generation, Reagan was also trying to inspire those who now still had to hold together—the Berlin Wall had not fallen—to push that wall over. So, he very consciously . . . used that speech to say, “Look what we did last time. We can still do it!”

Noonan’s reflection offers insight into why this speech had such resonance in 1984, and why it continues to be ranked as one of Reagan’s most celebrated addresses. In his remarks, Reagan asked his audience to honor the memory of the men who fought at Normandy by standing against the present threat of Soviet communism. These were “the boys of Pointe du Hoc” who had risked their lives to liberate Europe in 1944. Their heroic actions—and their bodily presence—provided the underlying value justification for continuing the effort to free Europe from Soviet communism in 1984.

Thirty years later, Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc remains the standard-bearer for U.S. presidential commemorations of D-Day. Indeed, Reagan is to Pointe du Hoc as Kennedy is to Berlin; all successive presidential addresses at Normandy are judged by Reagan’s 1984 speech. In this article, I argue that although this speech often is praised as an exemplar of epideictic or ceremonial speech, this genre is insufficient in itself to illuminate why this speech is so remarkable. To fill this void, I combine classical and modern rhetorical scholarship to examine Reagan’s Pointe du Hoc speech as a deictic epideictic address, or a speech in which the rhetor uses the physical place, the immediate scene/setting, and the assembled audience as physical evidence to commemorate the past and chart a clear course for present and future action. To begin, I offer a theoretical framework for what constitutes deictic epideictic speech and explain why this delineation is
necessary and important for rhetorical scholarship. I then show how Reagan’s “Address on the 40th Anniversary of D-Day” stands as a superb example of deictic epideictic rhetoric through its reliance on the physical place, the immediate scene/setting, and the assembled audience as evidence. Through this analysis, I argue that Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc is exemplary because it uses immediate and imaginary deixis to connect a past moment to the present, and in so doing, ushers the audience into the events of D-Day in an unusual and special way. In my conclusion, I suggest that by employing a deictic approach to rhetorical criticism, scholars can better understand how the physical and material elements of a speech setting work together with the speech text to further the rhetor’s argument.

**DEICTIC EPIDEICTIC: POINTING WORDS OF PRAISE OR BLAME**

Aristotle defined epideictic as speech focused on matters of praise or blame—speech that often transcended the present moment by “reminding [the audience] of the past and projecting the course of the future.” Current examples of epideictic oratory include presidential inaugural addresses, eulogies, Fourth of July celebratory remarks, commencement addresses, and the like. Although on the surface these rhetorical acts may appear strictly ceremonial, they almost always reflect on previous events—such as election results, a life well lived, the Revolutionary War, or collegiate endeavors—and paint a vision for future action. In doing so, epideictic discourse fuses the past and future together in the present moment. Celeste Michelle Condit offers important insight into epideictic speech when she argues that the rhetor uses epideictic discourse to define “major shared experiences” in the nation’s past and, in so doing, shapes both the present community and ones to come. Mary E. Stuckey explains this concept further, stating that “[i]n offering praise or blame, in fact, epideictic works to affirm a community’s values. . . . Epideictic, then, may well serve as a way not just to create adherence to a thesis but also to intensify allegiance to one.” Perhaps nowhere else do we see this shaping and sharing of a community more clearly than in the epitaphios logos, the Athenian funeral oration. Nicole Loraux explains that “[h]omage to the dead and celebration of ‘the entire nation’ went hand in hand [in the epitaphios logos], and the civic spirit found its own reflection on every side: that of the dead was matched by that of the living, who come to the demosion sema [the public
cemetery of Athens] to learn a lesson in patriotism while listening to the
orator.” In other words, memorializing the dead provided an opportunity
for the surviving citizens to rededicate themselves to the ideals and values of
the community. In ancient Greece, the physical place of such addresses
played a significant role in this communal identification.

Although rhetorical critics have long discussed the power of epideictic ora-
tory, we often have overlooked how the physical place of epideictic speech
influences its rhetorical force. In his introduction to Pericles’s *epitaphios logos*,
Thucydides emphasizes the physical construction and scene/setting of the
Athenian public funeral as a critical component of the *epitaphoi*.

Three days before the celebration they erect a tent in which the bones of the dead
are laid out, and everyone brings to his own dead any offering he wishes. At the
time of the funeral, the bones are placed in chests of cypress wood, which are
conveyed in hearses; there is one chest for each tribe. They also carry a single
empty litter decked with a pall for all whose bodies have not been found and
recovered. . . . The public cemetery is situated in the most beautiful suburb of the
city; there they always bury those who fall in war; only after the battle of Marat-
thon, in recognition of their preeminent valor, the dead were interred on the field.
When the remains have been laid in the earth, a man, chosen by the city for his
reputed sagacity of judgment and moral standing, delivers the appropriate eulogy
over them; after which the people depart.10

Speaking in the presence of the dead, it would have been impossible for
Pericles and his audience to ignore the coffins and fresh graves before them.
The coffins were material—if mute—evidence, an important means of
persuasion. As I will show, Reagan relied on a similar kind of evidence in his
“Address on the 40th Anniversary of D-Day”: the “boys of Pointe du Hoc”
who sat before him.

Ancient rhetorical theorists also recognized the power of place or scene—
imagined and real—as an effective means of persuasion. In book 3 of the
*Rhetoric*, Aristotle describes the way rhetorical vision can function persuasively.
His terms refer most often to imaginary sight, or the ability to conjure up images
without actual physical/material evidence.11 He argues that speakers should
use the rhetorical technique of “bringing-before-the-eyes,” or “visualization,” to show things “as being done rather than as going to be done.”12 For
Aristotle, “bringing-before-the-eyes” denotes action, which he also cap-
tures in his praise of *energeia* as a mode of description that “signify things engaged in activity.” In many ways, Aristotle’s introduction of *energeia* informs or grounds all other theories of rhetorical vision. His idea that a speaker can use various rhetorical techniques to communicate lively activity and help the audience see (either metaphorically or literally) the events of a certain situation impacts other Greek theorists, Roman rhetoricians, and more modern critics such as George Campbell and Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. In the Roman tradition, rhetoricians such as Quintilian, Cicero, and Erasmus introduce several other terms to describe theories of rhetorical vision. One of the most common is *enargeia*, a term often confused with Aristotle’s *energeia*. Where *energeia* describes activity and motion, *enargeia* refers to techniques of vivid description. These two terms work together, however, in that *enargeia* addresses the metaphorical nature of rhetorical vision, where the audience “appear[s] to see” something in their minds instead of actually seeing it physically. Although Quintilian emphasizes the power of imagined scenes that an orator can call up in the audience’s mind’s eye, he acknowledges the power of real objects as well, referencing the emotional power of Julius Caesar’s bloody toga. Moreover, Cicero frequently relied on physical objects that his audience could see literally—monuments, places, people, and things—as evidence. In this way, what was physically real worked on the audience to achieve a tangible, touchable form of rhetorical vision. This is the kind of vision Reagan attempts at Pointe du Hoc.

The ancient theorists did not provide concepts and a terminology by which the orator might call attention to important physical elements of a speech situation. Fortunately, however, modern linguists have. The linguistic theory of *deixis* (from the Greek word for “pointing”) provides a vocabulary for examining how rhetors can use the immediate situation for their rhetorical purposes. First introduced by German psychologist Karl Bühler in 1934, *deixis* (or a “deictic utterance”) works as a “widespread sign to point” to something or someone within a physical or imaginary scene. A speaker might refer to “this person” or “that dog”; “this” and “that” work as deictic indicators to specify exactly which person or dog the speaker wishes to point out. Bühler argues that *deixis* can work both in physical, tangible, touchable spaces and in imaginary scenes created by the speaker through language. Deictic words “point” the audience to what Bühler calls “sensory deictic clues.” These “sensory deictic clues” refer to physical places, ob-
objects, and people within the speech situation that the audience can physically see or mentally imagine.

Jeanne Fahnestock brings this linguistic theory in contact with rhetoric. She connects *deixis* with theories of rhetorical vision: *deixis* “combines those forms of interactive language that orient the listener or reader to a place and time that can be anywhere on a scale from the physically immediate to the imaginary.”²⁴ Fahnestock differentiates between “immediate *deixis*” and “imaginary *deixis*.”²⁵ Deictic references that refer to physical places, objects, and people immediate to the speech situation work as immediate *deixis*, where imaginary *deixis* allows a speaker to verbally construct “real or imaginary places and times” in a way that resembles the theories of rhetorical vision discussed earlier.²⁶ As I will demonstrate, immediate *deixis* can provide powerful evidence for a rhetor’s argument by pointing the audience to the people and objects immediate to the speech situation, and in many cases strategies of immediate *deixis* can be more persuasive than verbal imagery alone. Deixis invites the audience to participate in the discourse by physically seeing or mentally envisioning the people and/or objects to which the speaker points.

For the purposes of this article, theories of rhetorical vision and *deixis* work together to show how Reagan used vivid, active language (*energeia*) to recount the story of D-Day in such a way that his audience could imagine the events that took place 40 years earlier (*enargeia*). However, Reagan did not rely solely on verbal strategies of rhetorical vision. In the analysis that follows, I show how the president used deictic language to “point” to the physical place, the immediate scene/setting, and the assembled audience of his address as evidence to commemorate the past and chart a clear course for present and future action. In so doing, Reagan located his audience (both those assembled at Pointe du Hoc and those watching the speech on TV) in the present moment and yet reminded them of how the past sacrifices of the U.S. Army Rangers should motivate future actions to protect and defend democracy around the world.

**Reagan at Pointe du Hoc**

Reagan utilized strategies of rhetorical vision coupled with specific deictic markers to retell and recreate the historical events of June 6, 1944. As Reagan focused on his “text”—the jagged boulders and concrete bunkers
and bodies withered with age—he used figures of immediate deixis and imaginary deixis to link the past with the present. He spoke as if his immediate audience had been present at D-Day, because, in fact, the 62 U.S. Army Rangers seated before him had enacted the heroic endeavors that he described. At the same time, Reagan used poetic phrasing and vivid imagery to recreate the D-Day scene at Pointe du Hoc for those members of the audience who were not present 40 years ago. This rhetorical pairing of immediate and imaginary deixis invited the audience into the place and scene/setting of the discourse. As Reagan related the historical details of the Allied advance on D-Day, his audience—those gathered for the ceremonies at Normandy, the teenager watching the morning news in the United States, and even the rhetorical critic in 2015—participated in the scene/setting while Reagan recreated it for them. I now turn to the text of Reagan’s address and related archival materials to examine how the president accomplished his rhetorical purposes through three specific deictic elements of this speech: place, scene/setting, and audience.

THE RHETORICAL POWER OF POINTE DU HOC AS PLACE

Ronald Reagan’s 1984 visit to Pointe du Hoc and Omaha Beach was part of a ten-day European tour designed to strengthen U.S. ties with its Western allies, particularly Great Britain, France, and Ireland. The White House chose specific places that would highlight the importance of this relationship. In an April 1984 memo, William Flynn Martin, the director of international economic affairs for the National Security Council, noted that certain places would play a significant role in the president’s trip. He wrote that Reagan’s visits to Ireland, Normandy, and London would “provide the President with an ideal backdrop for his themes of peace and prosperity and the importance of Allied support and cooperation in the achievement of both.” Although Reagan would speak at two sites, Pointe du Hoc and Omaha Beach, on June 6, 1984, the Reagan White House saw Pointe du Hoc as especially significant.

A speech draft from the National Security Council dated April 30, 1984, commented on the symbolism of Pointe du Hoc as place. “This is a dramatic location on a point of land surrounded by steep cliffs. . . . The Cliffs which fall away to this often rough sea witnessed extraordinary heroism. Forty
years ago—as part of a great Allied effort—brave American Rangers scaled these heights under fire. This ceremony and this place honors them.\textsuperscript{29} The persuasive power of Pointe du Hoc as place continued throughout successive speech drafts leading up to Reagan’s address. A handwritten note on the top of a May 21, 1984, speech draft summarized the speech’s overarching theme: “Pointe du Hoc a symbol of our selfless effort—against impossible odds men willing to do great deeds.”\textsuperscript{30} This notation hinted at the connection Reagan would draw between the U.S. Army Rangers’s heroic action in 1944 and the United States’s ongoing commitment to defending democracy against Soviet expansion.\textsuperscript{31} In a May 1984 memorandum to Reagan, Secretary of State George P. Shultz wrote of Pointe du Hoc:

It was here on June 6, 1944 that the US Army Rangers scaled the cliffs under heavy fire and secured the area to protect the landings at Omaha and Utah Beaches. . . . Here you will make your principal statement of the day—a 15 minute speech stressing the bravery of the fallen and the survivors of this battle and emphasizing that Normandy marked the beginning of a continuous U.S. commitment to the security of Europe.\textsuperscript{32}

In this document, Secretary Shultz stressed the foreign policy goals of Reagan’s address: memorialize the dead, honor the living, and show how the events of D-Day worked to strengthen U.S.-European ties in the future.

Files from the White House Office of Speechwriting demonstrate that the Reagan speechwriters understood that the president’s address was to fulfill a function similar to the Athenian \textit{epitaphios logos}. In a miscellaneous series of notes, an unidentified author scratched out the following passage from Thucydides’s famed account of Pericles’s Funeral Oration.

\begin{quote}
For her[o]es have the E[arth] for their tomb; and in lands far from their own, where the column w/ its epitaph declares it, there is enshrined in every breast a record unwritten w/ no tablet to preserve it, except that of the heart.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

Below this paragraph, the author wrote: “Remind people this was written in [the] 400 b.c. Funeral oration of Pericles.”\textsuperscript{34} Although the date of Pericles’s oration was incorrect, the author of these notes obviously knew his or her history enough to recognize that Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc followed the ancient Athenian tradition of memorializing the dead through public
speech. This specific quotation suggests the eulogistic function Reagan’s speech would fulfill. Although he would not confront the immediate shock of death in 1984, he would use this occasion to honor the heroes of D-Day who epitomized the values driving the Allied forces in 1944: freedom from tyranny, love of country, and moral resolve. Just as the citizens of Athens would listen to a revered orator deliver a eulogy over the dead, Reagan’s audience would hear the president retell the story of Pointe du Hoc to the very men who enacted the daring feat 40 years earlier.35

The White House timed the “Pointe du Hoc” speech so it could be broadcast live on U.S. networks over the morning news. The “Draft Notional Schedule—Trip of the President to Europe” dated May 7, 1984, specified that Reagan would arrive at the Pointe du Hoc landing zone at 8:20 AM EDT (2:20 PM local time), tour the Ranger Memorial for ten minutes with two survivors of the Pointe du Hoc landing, and begin his “Remarks to assembled Veterans and unveiling of plaque commemorating Pointe du Hoc” at 8:40 AM EDT (2:40 PM local time).36 White House deputy chief of staff Michael Deaver planned to use footage of the address during the 1984 Republican National Convention, and this trip served a political purpose in Deaver’s electoral strategy for November 1984.37 As Secretary of State George P. Shultz wrote in a memo to the president, “The public relations highlight of your trip to Europe will undoubtedly be the celebrations in Normandy. . . . [t]he intense media interest provides an opportunity for you personally, and allied leaders as a group, to reach an unprecedented audience on both sides of the Atlantic.”38

White House speechwriter Peggy Noonan was tasked with writing Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc. In her memoir of her years at the White House, she described the challenge of crafting a speech that would use “big, emotional words and images so [the White House Office of] advance and Mike Deaver would be happy” but also retell the story of D-Day so anyone, young or old, would understand what the day symbolized for the Allies in 1944 and freedom-loving nations in 1984. “I thought that if I could get at what impelled the Rangers to do what they did,” she wrote, “I could use it to suggest what impels us each day as we live as a nation in the world. This would remind both us and our allies of what it is that holds us together.”39 Noonan wrote for two audiences: the U.S. public watching the speech on the morning news and Reagan’s immediate audience in France, particularly the U.S. Army Rangers who had climbed the cliffs on which the president would
stand. She knew that the speech would be broadcast live in the United States, and she imagined the “kids watching TV at home in the kitchen at breakfast.” By describing the events of D-Day, Noonan wanted to place “it all in time and space for myself and, by extension, for the audience. If we really listen to and hear the snap of the flags, the reality of that sound . . . will help us imagine what it sounded like on D-Day. And that would help us imagine what D-Day itself was like. . . . History is real.” By using the images of sight and smell and sound, Noonan said she “wanted American teenagers to stop chewing their Rice Krispies for a minute and hear about the greatness of those tough kids who are now their grandfathers. . . . Pause, sink in, bring it back to now, history is real.” The goal was to help the U.S. audience, although far removed from the scene of battle, to connect past history with the present.

As important as the U.S. public was, Noonan structured the speech so the president could speak directly to the heroes of his story: the U.S. Army Rangers. In the midst of her preparations, the head of Reagan’s advance office told Noonan that the men who scaled the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc would be sitting right in front of Reagan as he spoke. “The Rangers were going to be sitting all together in the front rows, sitting right there five feet from the president. . . . Well then he should refer directly to them. He should talk to them. He should describe what they did and then say . . . ‘These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc.’” By talking “directly to them,” Reagan could celebrate their heroic actions and call on his audience to show similar resolve and bravery in the fight between democracy and communism.

Historian Douglas Brinkley provides some insight into how Pointe du Hoc as a memory place connected World War II with the Cold War. He references a *Time* cover story that ran on May 28, 1984, entitled “D-Day: Forty Years After the Great Crusade.” An underlined copy of this article sits in Noonan’s Normandy files at the Reagan Library. Lance Morrow, the author of the article, wrote that World War II veterans would “go up again to Pointe du Hoc and shake their heads again in wonder at the men who climbed that sheer cliff while Germans fired down straight into their faces.” Of more importance, however, is Morrow’s claim that the 40th anniversary of D-Day would become, in Brinkley’s words, “*the* election year symbol of the Reagan administration’s New Patriotism.” According to Morrow,
The ceremonies in Normandy will celebrate the victory and mourn the dead. They will also mourn the moral clarity that has been lost, a sense of common purpose that has all but evaporated. Never again, perhaps, would the Allies so handsomely collaborate. The invasion of Normandy was a thunderously heroic blow dealt to the evil empire. Never again, it may be, would war seem so unimpeachably right, so necessary and just. Never again, perhaps, would American power and morality so perfectly coincide.\footnote{In this article, Brinkley explains, Morrow demonstrated “how the D-Day story had spellbinding, redemptive qualities that Reagan could sell to Cold War America. . . . Morrow, perhaps placing himself into the President’s mind-set or psyche, explained D-Day to \textit{Time} readers as an American religious fable or sterling folklore moment.”\textsuperscript{45} Of course, Morrow’s decision to describe Nazi Germany as “the evil empire” was most certainly a direct reference to Reagan’s earlier characterization of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{46} Although the extent to which this article influenced Noonan’s writing is not clear, it accurately predicted how Reagan’s address at Pointe du Hoc would tap into the mythic heroism of the U.S. Army Rangers’s actions on D-Day.}

Brinkley’s account provides one more important insight into Reagan’s speech. In the quotation above, he describes Morrow’s description of D-Day as an “American religious fable or sterling folklore moment.” One might characterize Reagan’s Pointe du Hoc speech similarly, because the president celebrates the heroic actions of the Allied soldiers, memorializes those who died in the battle, connects their valor and sacrifice to the present moment, and calls for future action worthy of this sacrifice. These characteristics show how Reagan’s address fits into the epideictic genre in a special way. Most fables or folklore ask the audience to imagine the story in their minds, but Reagan recounted the story of “the boys of Pointe du Hoc” in the physical place where the Allied advance began. Instead of describing the events in word pictures, Reagan placed his audience right into the middle of it. It is here that the scene/setting of Reagan’s address becomes important.

\textit{Scene/Setting}

Although members of the Reagan White House described Pointe du Hoc as a place of historical significance, they also saw the immediate scene and
setting of the president’s address as an important and interrelated element of the speech. Because of Reagan’s leadership in the U.S.-European summit process, wrote William Martin to Robert C. McFarlane, “the stage is set for a very successful trip by the President to Europe.”47 With the stage set and the script of events, speech drafts, and attendees confirmed, how would the White House utilize the physical setting at Pointe du Hoc on June 6, 1984? And how would Reagan use the occasion to describe the scene 40 years earlier?

President Reagan spoke with his back to the English Channel and the “boys of Pointe du Hoc” seated on both sides of him (see fig. 1). This staging was deliberate. A miscellaneous note scratched on the back of a White House notepad described the set up: “RR stands in front of memorial dagger w/ Rangers, Mrs. Rudder & Mrs. Reagan seated in front on same level—in horseshoe—vets dependents[,] other veterans[,] VIP—military brass[,] offi- cial. RR won’t even be announced. No one else speaks.”48 This arrangement had several important effects. Although U.S. presidents most often speak from an elevated podium or platform at some distance from the audience, Reagan situated himself on the “same level” as the U.S. Army Rangers. The president and the “boys of Pointe du Hoc” were featured together on the elevated stage, with the larger audience assembled around
the stage in a “horseshoe” formation. This allowed two rhetorical exchanges to occur simultaneously. In the first, Reagan spoke directly to an intimate group of 62 U.S. Army Rangers who had fought to secure the very ground on which they sat. In the second, the U.S. Army Rangers worked alongside Reagan as silent rhetors, their physical presence testifying to this sacred occasion and what D-Day meant for future generations. For the broader audience assembled around the stage, it was impossible to look at Reagan without seeing the U.S. Army Rangers on either side. The second part of the note reveals an unusual departure from protocol. The president was never announced to the audience but instead simply walked up behind the podium (which did not contain the typical presidential seal) and began to speak. This decision worked as a subtle reminder that the president was not the featured headliner of this event. Instead, “the boys of Pointe du Hoc” were the main attraction on the 40th anniversary of D-Day.

Reagan began his address by recalling what was being commemorated: “We’re here to mark that day in history when the Allied armies joined in battle to reclaim this continent to liberty.” In this opening passage, Reagan invited the audience to imagine the historical context of June 6, 1944. “For 4 long years, much of Europe had been under a terrible shadow. Free nations had fallen, Jews cried out in the camps, millions cried out for liberation. Europe was enslaved, and the world prayed for its rescue.” The lack of conjunctions underscored the relationships among these events, and Reagan’s dual use of “cried” emphasized the horror of Nazi occupation and the concentration camps, as if the suffering continued, unbound, with no end in sight. These stylistic devices created a distinct rhythm that set the tone—solemn, reverent, patriotic—for the rest of the speech.

In addition, Reagan used words that vividly fused the present moment and the past actions of the heroic Allied forces. He shifted abruptly from the past to the present to describe the immediate scene, “a lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France,” and to contrast that scene to the mayhem of battle 40 years earlier. Although the air was now “soft,” Reagan reminded his audience that “40 years ago at this moment, the air was dense with smoke and the cries of men, and the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire and the roar of cannon.” These powerful metaphors of sight, sound, and smell made the realities of war viscerally present. Booming verbs such as “crack” and “roar” anchored the sentence, causing it to flow rhythmically and heavily, almost like the sharp popping of artillery.
After positioning the audience in time and place, Reagan referred repeatedly to the physical space as a catalyst for the U.S. Army Rangers’s actions. The audience could imagine the horrific scene on June 6, 1944. How would the soldiers respond? The president continued the narrative:

At dawn, on the morning of the 6th of June, 1944, 225 Rangers jumped off the British landing craft and ran to the bottom of these cliffs. Their mission was one of the most difficult and daring of the invasion: to climb these sheer and desolate cliffs and take out the enemy guns. The Allies had been told that some of the mightiest of these guns were here and they would be trained on the beaches to stop the Allied advance. The Rangers looked up and saw enemy soldiers—the edge of the cliffs shooting down at them with machineguns and throwing grenades. And the American Rangers began to climb. They shot rope ladders over the face of these cliffs and began to pull themselves up. When one Ranger fell, another would take his place. When one rope was cut, a Ranger would grab another and begin his climb again. They climbed, shot back, and held their footing. Soon, one by one, the Rangers pulled themselves over the top, and in seizing the firm land at the top of these cliffs, they began to seize back the continent of Europe.\(^{50}\)

In this passage, Reagan relied on what was visually evident and physically present: the “sheer and desolate cliffs,” the beachhead at the “bottom of these cliffs,” the hazardous climb to the “top of these cliffs.” Through his repeated references to “these cliffs,” Reagan reminded his audience that they were sitting on top of the cliffs that the U.S. Army Rangers had fought and died to free. The immediate deictic references (“these cliffs”) provided context for the audience to imagine what the U.S. Army Rangers had enacted (“they began to seize back the continent of Europe”). Through deictic words and vivid metaphors, Reagan brought the present audience into the past, inviting them to respond kinesthetically with the Rangers who jumped and ran to the bottom of the cliffs upon which they now were seated.

These deictic terms also created a stark contrast between the U.S. Army Rangers and the audience present in 1984. It would be nearly impossible to listen to Reagan’s narrative as a member of the immediate audience and not realize that one was seated in the exact spot from which the German soldiers “[shot] down at [the Rangers] with machineguns and [threw] grenades” to halt their advance. In that moment of commemoration, with flags and
honor guards and well-dressed dignitaries, the contrast between past and present was stark. The U.S. Army Rangers scaled the cliffs so this audience, many of whom were children on June 6, 1944, could commemorate their heroic sacrifice 40 years later.

AUDIENCE

Up to this point in the speech, Reagan had been describing the Allied advance on Pointe du Hoc as an event in the past. Although the president had connected the immediate scene/setting of D-Day to the present (“these cliffs” were the same in 1944 and 1984), he could have been referring to an event that took place 200 years earlier. However, after recounting how the U.S. Army Rangers climbed to the top of these cliffs and, in doing so, “began to seize back the continent of Europe,” Reagan introduced the human actors who linked the past with the present.

Two hundred and twenty-five came here. After 2 days of fighting, only 90 could still bear arms. Behind me is a memorial that symbolizes the Ranger daggers that were thrust into the top of these cliffs. And before me are the men who put them there. These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs. These are the champions who helped free a continent. These are the heroes who helped end a war. Gentlemen, I look at you and I think of the words of Stephen Spender’s poem. You are men who in your “lives fought for life...and left the vivid air signed with your honor.”

Once again, Reagan used deictic or “pointing words” to refer to the U.S. Army Rangers seated before [him]: “These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc.” The president used the same word, “these,” to describe both “these cliffs” the Rangers scaled and “these...boys...men...champions...[and] heroes who helped end a war.” This word choice allowed Reagan to draw the audience’s attention to the jagged rocks directly behind him and the elderly men in front of him. After recounting the historical narrative, the president introduced the main actors of his story: the boys of Pointe du Hoc. In a climax construction, Reagan redefined how this struggle had changed these warriors. Initially, they were “the boys of Pointe du Hoc.” They became “the men who took the cliffs...the champions who helped free a continent.”
Now, they were “the heroes who helped end a war.” Through this construction, Reagan described the U.S. Army Rangers’s climb as a movement of maturity; as they took the cliffs, they were transformed from boys to champions. In this way, their bodies shifted the discourse from the imaginary to the immediate. The Rangers became part of Reagan’s rhetorical text, a living representation of what had happened 40 years ago.

Reagan then linked these brave men to other Allied troops, using vignettes vivid in their specificity to describe other soldiers and nations who had fought beside the U.S. Army Rangers. Scottish soldier Bill Millin of the 51st Highlanders cheerfully played his bagpipes as he led a group of reinforcements to rescue British soldiers trapped near a bridge, and Lord Lovat of Scotland apologized for being “a few minutes late” coming from “the bloody fighting on Sword Beach, which he and his men had just taken.” There were others, too. Reagan praised the “impossible valor of the Poles who threw themselves between the enemy and the rest of Europe as the invasion took hold, and the unsurpassed courage of the Canadians who had already seen the horrors of war on this coast. They knew what awaited them there, but they would not be deterred.” Reagan enumerated “a rollcall of honor”: the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, Poland’s 24th Lancers, the Royal Scots Fusiliers, the Screaming Eagles, the Yeomen of England’s armored divisions, the forces of Free France, and the Coast Guard’s “Matchbox Fleet.” By specifically naming these groups, the president made their sacrifices present to the assembled audience and emphasized that the U.S. Rangers had not won the battle alone. This listing also underscored the need for Allied cooperation in the present-day struggle against Soviet communism.

After recognizing the other nations who fought to free Europe, Reagan returned to the heroes of his story. He recalled how young the Rangers were and focused his audience’s attention on their moral resolve:

Forty summers have passed since the battle that you fought here. You were young the day you took these cliffs; some of you were hardly more than boys, with the deepest joys of life before you. Yet, you risked everything here. Why? Why did you do it? What impelled you to put aside the instinct for self-preservation and risk your lives to take these cliffs? What inspired all the men of the armies that met here? We look at you, and somehow we know the answer. It was faith and belief; it was loyalty and love.
Using his words to “point” again to the U.S. Army Rangers, Reagan explained that as he and the rest of the audience looked at them, they could understand why they risked everything to seize the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc. These men, although gray and frail, were the living proof that the Allies understood the “profound, moral difference between the use of force for liberation and the use of force for conquest.”

As Reagan translated the heroic actions of the men sitting before him, he shifted the speech to transform commemoration into future resolve for the larger audience. “You all knew that some things are worth dying for. One’s country is worth dying for, and democracy is worth dying for, because it’s the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man.” This bold claim positioned democratic freedom above all other governmental structures, in particular the “tyranny” the men of Normandy came to fight: “All of you were willing to fight tyranny, and you knew the people of your countries were behind you.” Reagan then linked the Rangers to those at home who supported them, identifying particular groups of citizens in their specific locales. In “Georgia they were filling the churches at 4 a.m., in Kansas they were kneeling on their porches and praying, and in Philadelphia they were ringing the Liberty Bell.” He also evoked their “rockhard belief that Providence would have a great hand in the events that would unfold here; that God was an ally in this great cause.” Again, sharply drawn examples made that point intensely. He told of Lt. Col. Robert Lee Wolverton, commander of the 101st Airborne Division of the U.S. Army, who asked his parachute troops to kneel with him in prayer, but who said: “Do not bow your heads, but look up so you can see God and ask His blessing in what we’re about to do.” He told of Gen. Matthew Ridgway, who relied for strength on the Bible, “listening in the darkness for the promise God made to Joshua: ‘I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.’” Reagan recreated the battle, the fears and hopes of those who fought there, and in so doing recreated intense patriotic and religious feelings about the rightness of the cause for which the U.S. and Allied forces fought and died.

**DEICTIC EPIDEICTIC AS IMPETUS FOR FUTURE ACTION**

In the first half of his speech, Reagan used pointing words to praise the heroic actions of the U.S. Army Rangers at Pointe du Hoc. The immediate
scene/setting and the assembled audience enabled the president to connect the past with the present through vivid, tangible cliffs and bodies. The second half of Reagan’s Pointe du Hoc address linked the Allied victory on D-Day to present and future action. In other words, the deictic epideictic elements that characterized the first half of the speech now worked to achieve a deliberative purpose. The president assumed his role as historical narrator, moral guide, and interpreter of important events. “When the war was over, there were lives to be rebuilt and governments to be returned to the people. There were nations to be reborn. Above all, there was a new peace to be assured. These were huge and daunting tasks. But the Allies summoned strength from the faith, belief, loyalty, and love of those who fell here.” Here men fell and died in faith, belief, loyalty, and love; thus, it was here that strength and resolve could be found for the future.

Reagan described Allied efforts to rebuild Europe, including the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Alliance. But despite “our great efforts and successes . . . some liberated countries were lost. The great sadness of this loss echoes down to our own time in the streets of Warsaw, Prague, and East Berlin.” Once again, the president made these losses tangible and specific. The tragedy was, in his words, that “Soviet troops . . . did not leave when peace came. They’re still there, uninvited, unwanted, unyielding, almost 40 years after the war. Because of this, allied forces still stand on this continent.” The present-day Soviet presence in Europe was a continuation of the Second World War, implying that there was still more to accomplish even after the Allied victory in 1944.

In the final minutes of the speech, Reagan offered the moral to this story, what was to be learned from these events:

It is better to be here ready to protect the peace, than to take blind shelter across the sea, rushing to respond only after freedom is lost. We’ve learned that isolationism never was and never will be an acceptable response to tyrannical governments with an expansionist intent.

Yet learning was not enough; specific actions were necessary. “[W]e try always to be prepared for peace; prepared to deter aggression; prepared to negotiate the reduction of arms; and, yes, prepared to reach out again in the spirit of reconciliation.” The rhythm underscored the importance of preparation to respond to possibilities and risks. Reagan stated that the United
States welcomed reconciliation with the Soviet Union so that both countries
could “lessen the risks of war, now and forever.” The shift was subtle and
somewhat unexpected, the language reflecting a desire to reunite in an effort
that echoed their past alliance.

This spirit of reconciliation was underscored by his public recognition of
“the great losses also suffered by the Russian people during World War II:
20 million perished, a terrible price that testifies to all the world the necessity
of ending war.” The National Security Council and State Department had
pushed the speechwriting staff to include this line, noting that “an addition
of a short paragraph alluding to Soviet losses . . . will assist us in maintaining
the moral high ground we have secured in our public diplomacy struggle
with the Soviets.”51 Reagan used this inclusion to stress that the United
States did not desire war but wanted “to wipe from the face of the Earth the
terrible weapons that man now has in his hands.” However, Reagan placed
responsibility on the Soviet Union, stating that the Russians needed to
demonstrate a “desire and love for peace, and that they will give up the ways
of conquest” so that the United States could “turn our hope into action.”

After describing his vision for a post–Cold War world, Reagan returned
to the immediate scene and spoke in his own voice as U.S. president. He
called on his audience to rededicate themselves to the values for which the
Allies fought and died. At this ceremony commemorating the 40th anniver-
sary of D-Day, he stated that it was “good and fitting to renew our commit-
ment to each other, to our freedom, and to the alliance that protects it.”

We are bound today by what bound us 40 years ago, the same loyalties,
traditions, and beliefs. We’re bound by reality. The strength of America’s
allies is vital to the United States, and the American security guarantee is
essential to the continued freedom of Europe’s democracies. We were with
you then; we are with you now. Your hopes are our hopes, and your destiny is
our destiny. Here, in this place where the West held together, let us make a
vow to our dead. Let us show them by our actions that we understand what
they died for. . . . Strengthened by their courage, and heartened by their value
[valor], and borne by their memory, let us continue to stand for the ideals for
which they lived and died.

In his peroration, Reagan “pointed” yet again to the U.S. Army Rangers
seated before him at Pointe du Hoc and those buried at the Normandy
American Cemetery down the road. These men, who had sacrificed so much to liberate Europe from Nazi tyranny in 1944, were the living, enduring link between the past and present. They had risked and even given their lives; how could the Allied coalition not honor their sacrifice? Here, in this sacred place, Reagan spoke as national priest and called on the Allies to consecrate themselves to the task set before them. By directing the audience’s attention to the physical place, immediate scene/setting, and assembled audience—Pointe du Hoc, the cliffs, and the U.S. Army Rangers—and what they symbolized for the West, Reagan used immediate and imaginary deixis to celebrate the past while casting a vision for the future. This “lonely, windswept point on the northern shore of France” was the “place where the West held together” 40 years earlier. Now, with nuclear war as a very real threat to humanity, what might Pointe du Hoc symbolize for relations between the Soviet Union and the Western allies? In his speech, Reagan reconstituted the very place for which men fought and died to call on Western leaders to stand against communism while seeking peace with the Soviet Union. Although many in the immediate audience were not present at Pointe du Hoc in 1944, the president invited them to become fellow soldiers for the cause of democratic freedom and to demonstrate their moral resolve to “stand for the ideals for which [the Allied soldiers in 1944] lived and died.”

**CONCLUSION**

In this article, I have argued that Reagan used strategies of rhetorical vision and deixis to “point” his audience to the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc and the U.S. Army Rangers who climbed them to give presence in the present moment to their heroic actions 40 years earlier. In so doing, Reagan tapped into the mythic narrative about what the “boys of Pointe du Hoc” did that day and what so many Allied soldiers struggled to accomplish on June 6, 1944. These cliffs and these men were the physical, tangible, touchable link connecting the past to the present moment. Just as Lincoln consecrated the Gettysburg battlefields and immortalized the men “who here gave their lives, that that nation might live,” Reagan used the sacred ground of Normandy and the bodies of the soldiers who fought and died to free Europe to call the United States and other Western allies to rededicate themselves to the values and principles that motivated the Allies during World War II. This connection invited—and still invites—audiences and critics to participate in the dis-
course, reappropriating the events of D-Day to inform the present moment and shape future action.

Using Reagan’s address as a case study, I have outlined how deictic epideictic works to describe ceremonial addresses that rely on the physical place, immediate scene/setting, and assembled audience as powerful evidence. By its very definition, epideictic oratory (from the Greek verb *epideiknunai*, which means “to display” or “to show”\(^{53}\)) points to people, places, and/or events worthy of praise or blame. By using deictic or “pointing” words (such as “here,” “there,” “before,” “behind,” “you,” “me,” “us,” and “we”), the rhetor directs the audience’s attention to the people being praised (or, in some cases, blamed). In this way, deictic epideictic invites the audience to participate in the discourse mentally, emotionally, and even physically. In response, the audience can experience and enter into the physical place and scene along with the principal actors of the story. The relationship between rhetorical vision and *deixis* applies to public address scholarship more broadly, however, in that it offers a vocabulary to describe how speakers can “point” or refer to physical and material elements of the speech setting as evidence for their textual argument. *Deixis* roots the audience in a specific time while also enabling the rhetor to reconstruct past events in such a way that the audience can experience them as if they were present. It also directs the audience to what is literally before their eyes. Examining a speaker’s deictic utterances, therefore, can explain how rhetors rely on the physical and material elements of a speech setting. Because theories of rhetorical vision focus almost exclusively on mental imagery, it is difficult for critics to articulate how the physicality of the rhetorical situation works in relation to the speech text. However, *deixis* provides a helpful solution by showing how rhetors can “point” verbally to physically real places, people, and things. In so doing, these places, people, and things work as a tangible, touchable manifestation of rhetorical vision.

Finally, a consideration of *deixis* reminds critics that all rhetorical acts are situated and performative. The speech setting almost always requires a specific location and a geo-temporal relationship between the speaker and the audience. Where reception of literary texts (novels, poetry, and the like) does not entail the spatial or temporal proximity of reader and writer, natural conversational interactions *by their very nature* require the copresence of speaker and audience. Recent scholarship on the intersections of rhetoric, memory, and place reminds us that “memory places are especially
powerful rhetorically” and that “strong understandings of public memory and of public memory places can emerge only by comprehending their specifically rhetorical character.”

Although public memory scholars frequently examine how a place works rhetorically on visitors, few public address scholars have considered how a speech’s physical location—that is, where it is placed—influences and even advances a textual argument. As I have demonstrated, Reagan speechwriters and senior staff understood the persuasive power that Pointe du Hoc would have in relation to the speech text; in fact, they specifically chose this location for Reagan’s address. Therefore, it is no stretch to claim that the physical place became a part of the text itself. In fact, it is impossible to appreciate Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc without examining the significance of the jagged cliffs, aged bodies, and white crosses lining the northern shore of France. What other texts might warrant a similar claim? How might rhetorical scholarship merge close textual analysis with a consideration of the spaces and places in which speeches are delivered? Deictic epideictic offers one way for critics to examine how a rhetor draws on the physical place, immediate scene/setting, and assembled audience to further his or her argument. Although the speaker and the text are rooted in time, the place of a public address can maintain and even reappropriate the text for future audiences. In this way, Reagan’s speech and other rhetorical acts are not constrained by time or conceptual space but instead merge with contemporary sensibilities.

NOTES


11. Although Aristotle is most famous for introducing “bringing-before-the-eyes” and energeia as techniques of rhetorical vision, his discussion in 2.8 suggests that orators can also rely on physical things and objects (such as the arrangement of one’s body, projection of the voice, and clothing) as a way to help the audience physically see what the orator describes.


13. Aristotle, Rhetoric, 3.11.2. In this same chapter, Aristotle defines energeia as a mode of description that signifies activity, makes the lifeless living through metaphor, and makes something seem like it is living through being actualized. Put simply, “energeia is motion.”

the ‘Rhetoric’: ‘Lexis,’ Appearance, and the Epideictic Function of Discourse,”

Donald A. Russell (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 6.2.26–36,
8.3.61–72, 9.1, 9.2; and Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, trans. and
Thompson (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 2.47–51. See also
Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics
of Evidence* (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2012); Caroline van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric
and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press,
2007); and Ann Vasaly, *Representations: Images of the World in Ciceronian Oratory*
(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

16. George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, ed. Lloyd F. Bitzer (Carbondale:
Southern Illinois University Press, 1963). For a helpful discussion of the difference
between “vivacity” and “resemblance,” see Arthur E. Walzer, “On Reading George
Campbell: ‘Resemblance’ and ‘Vivacity’ in the ‘Philosophy of Rhetoric,’” *Rhetorica* 18

17. Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca’s conception of *presence* showcases how
supporting “data” can be used to persuade the audience. A speaker creates this
presence through his/her choice of what evidence to feature in discourse. Although
speakers most often create *presence* through language, it can also be accomplished by
showcasing physical objects and people. See Chaim Perelman and Lucie
Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame, IN:
University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), 115–18, and other related passages. For a
helpful discussion on how presence works through physical objects and construction of
spaces, see Alan G. Gross, “Presence as Argument in the Public Sphere,” *Rhetoric

18. In his footnote to Aristotle’s description of *energeia*, George Kennedy explains that
“The English cognate [for *energeia*] is energy. As a rhetorical term *energeia* may be
translated ‘actualization’ or ‘vivification.’ It is sometimes, but not always,
‘personification’ and should be distinguished from *enargeia*, which means ‘clearness’ or
‘distinctiveness’” (3.11.2, p. 222, n. 117).

19. Longinus, *On Great Writing*, 23. Quintilian picks up the discussion of *enargeia* when
he instructs the orator to form “what the Greeks call *phantasiai* (let us call them
‘visions’ [*visiones*]), by which the images of absent things are presented to the mind in
such a way that we seem actually to see them with our eyes and have them physically
present to us” (*The Orator’s Education*, 6.2.29). He adds that if a rhetor has “before [his] eyes [est in oculis habebo] all the circumstances which one can believe to have happened during the event,” such as the people involved, the place the event happened, and the objects related to this event, the speaker will produce “enargeia, what Cicero calls *illustratio* and *evidentia*, a quality which makes us seem not so much to be talking about something as exhibiting it. Emotions will ensue just as if we were present at the event itself” (*The Orator’s Education*, 6.2.32). Quintilian adds to his definition of *enargeia* later in the work: it produces vividness [*evidentia*] or a “representation” of things, displays these things in the “mind’s eye,” paints the “whole scene” of an event “in words,” gives us a vivid picture of events, and provides all the relevant details through vivid description and amplification (*The Orator’s Education*, 8.3.61–63). For Quintilian, *enargeia* describes a rhetor’s presentation of images as evidence through vivid language and amplification.


28. In his book *The Boys of Pointe du Hoc: Ronald Reagan, D-Day, and the U.S. Army 2nd Ranger Battalion* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), historian Douglas Brinkley writes that of the two speeches—one at Pointe du Hoc and the other at Omaha Beach—the second was considered the major foreign policy speech. “Some in the White House simply referred to Omaha Beach as ‘the Speech’ and Pointe du Hoc as ‘Brief Remarks.’” White House principal speechwriter Tony Dolan (who wrote the 1982 Westminster Address and the 1983 “Evil Empire” speech) was assigned the Omaha Beach speech, and “Pointe du Hoc was considered a sideshow on June 6, a feel-good, non-policy-based moment. Therefore, Peggy Noonan was tasked with penning the ‘impressionistic’ oration, while Dolan’s ‘realist’ policy speech” would be headlined by prominent U.S. newspapers on June 7 (163). Brinkley’s account was published in 2005, when multiple documents related to the “Pointe du Hoc” speech had not been
declassified. During my visit to the Reagan Library in June 2013, I accessed a number of documents (all of which were declassified after 2005) that show that the Reagan White House planned for “Pointe du Hoc” to be the centerpiece of Reagan’s visit to Normandy. See the National Security Council’s official briefing book, “The President’s Trip to Europe: Ireland, UK and Normandy, June 1–10, 1984,” RAC Box 4, Executive Secretariat, NSC: Trip File, Ronald Reagan Library.


31. Special Assistant to the President William F. Martin wrote that the Pointe du Hoc address was to be “emotional, stirring, and personal. The themes include reconciliation of former adversaries, how postwar cooperation has kept the peace for the longest period in modern European history, Alliance solidarity, and the strength of the American commitment to Europe.” See memo, William F. Martin to Robert C. McFarlane, April 10, 1984, folder “President’s Trip to Normandy (2),” Box 161, White House Office of Speechwriting: Research Office, 1981–1989, Ronald Reagan Library.


33. This passage is almost identical to Thucydides’s actual account. The only differences are that “her” is actually “heroes” and “E” stands in for “earth.”


35. Thucydides, The History of the Peloponnesian War, 2.34.1–8. Quoted in Loraux, The Invention of Athens, 45-46.


37. See “Election Year Scheduling,” February 27, 1984, folder “Election Year Scheduling (Binder)—2/27/1984,” Box 33, Michael Deaver Files, Ronald Reagan Library. Footage
of Reagan’s speech at Pointe du Hoc was also featured in the Reagan-Bush ‘84 campaign film, *A New Beginning*.


42. Kathleen Hall Jamieson writes that “television enabled Reagan to transport the national audience to the stage he had set in Normandy. . . . The dramatization was compelling, the staging unsurpassable, the visual argument politically potent.” See Eloquent in the Electronic Age (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 162–63.


46. On March 8, 1983, Reagan delivered an address at the annual meeting of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida. Although the speech was designed for a religious audience, Reagan’s remarks received both praise and criticism for describing communism in explicitly moral terms. He called on his audience to resist the temptation “to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil.” Reagan also maintained that the struggle between democracy and communism was not ultimately a matter of military might but a spiritual crisis, “a test of moral will and faith.” Instead of presenting U.S. democracy and Soviet communism as two competing views of the world, Reagan pronounced one good and the other evil. The explicit argument was that the United States was on the side of what was right and good, and that the nation had a responsibility to extend democratic liberties to those oppressed by Soviet communism. See Ronald Reagan, “Remarks at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Evangelicals,” March 8, 1983, http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3409 (accessed May 15, 2014).


49. All Reagan quotations are taken from the Reagan Library’s text of the president’s “Address on the 40th Anniversary of D-Day” unless noted.

50. For the sake of analysis, the deictic or “pointing words” that accomplish immediate and imaginary deixis are bolded and italicized.


52. Abraham Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address,” November 19, 1863. See also Garry Wills, Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992) for Wills’s excellent analysis of how Lincoln’s address functioned as a modern-day epitaphios logos.


55. This idea is similar to how Michael Leff talks about Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address in his essay on hermeneutical rhetoric. See Michael Leff, “Hermeneutical Rhetoric,” in Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader, ed. Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 196–214.