

**Persuasive Attack in Music:  
A Rhetorical Analysis of ‘Fighting Trousers’  
and  
‘The Very Model of a Mad Attorney General’**



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Cultures around the world often have found power in music. Whether acting as the energizing force behind a film or a social protest, music has an amazing educational and structuring quality. In fact, Plato wrote in *The Republic*, “rhythm and harmony penetrate deeply into the mind and take a most powerful hold on it.”<sup>1</sup> In many cases, music holds power over individuals’ lives and helps them sort out cultural and personal dilemmas through a unique form of communication. The capability of music to attack and persuade merits further exploration.

Previous studies have attempted to address music’s unique qualities of persuasion,<sup>2</sup> including its ability to create and support a group’s local meanings and to connect with audiences to help them understand a dilemma.<sup>3</sup> Studies on criticism, attack, or *kategoria* have explored how persuasive attacks seek to illuminate an offense and charge another with the wrongdoing.<sup>4</sup> Adding the concept of *kategoria* to scholarship on the rhetoric of song is beneficial to further our understanding of the rhetorical components of music. More specifically, adding *kategoria* to the rhetoric of song clarifies how music can illuminate potential wrongdoings in society and how the public perceives an offense. Thus, this essay will elaborate how the research on the rhetoric of music can benefit by adding *kategoria*’s distinction of perceived offensiveness discussed by Benoit and Dorries.<sup>5</sup>



This essay analyzes two popular “diss” songs, or songs whose primary intention is to attack or insult another person or group. Both Professor Elemental’s “Fighting Trousers” and A. Barton Hinkle’s “Mad Attorney General” were incredibly popular and widely circulated on the web, with about 2 million users viewing Professor Elemental’s video on YouTube and over 5 million visits to the “Mad Attorney General” webpage. Utilizing similar form and substance, these persuasive attacks (*kategoria*) effectively utilize multiple strategies for enhancing the offensiveness of their opponents’ alleged acts and increasing responsibility for their actions. Representing two distinct musical genres, these songs illustrate how artists direct their appeals both at the targets of their attack, as well as to the public. Both Professor Elemental’s and Hinkle’s songs repeat key ideas, forming motifs that run throughout a majority of diss songs in the music industry. This musical form is well received by the listening public, as they provide an excellent outlet to produce effective attacks against a wide range of adversaries.



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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Rhetoric of Song*

During the 1970’s, rhetoricians began to explore the rhetoric of music after a call for rhetorical studies to expand its scope. Over the past four decades, interest in this area of study continues to grow. Within the scholarship, there are three general reasons provided for studying the rhetoric of music. First, scholars argue that music acts as a form of persuasive communication.<sup>6</sup> Second, research suggests that music provides a unique form of communication, functioning beyond typical rhetorical appeals.<sup>7</sup> Third, many argue that music pervades our society and influences a large number of citizens.<sup>8</sup>

The first studies on the rhetoric of music focused almost exclusively on the persuasive power of lyrics.<sup>9</sup> These studies frequently focused on song lyrics used in social movements, primarily arguing that protest songs support the ideology of the movement and the members protesting.<sup>10</sup> For example, James R. Irvine and Walter G. Kirkpatrick argued that “music, in contemporary culture, plays a key role in the development of and maintenance of attitudes and values held by various groups within the general population.”<sup>11</sup> In many instances, protest



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lie\\_In\\_15\\_-\\_John\\_rehearses\\_Give\\_Peace\\_A\\_Chance.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lie_In_15_-_John_rehearses_Give_Peace_A_Chance.jpg)

songs were found to bolster the solidarity of the group's membership and give them strength, as they dealt with stressful and potentially violent situations.<sup>12</sup> However, the persuasive power of the protest songs was limited to in-group members, rarely aiding in the recruitment of new members.<sup>13</sup>

Although scholarship continues to analyze the lyrical content in music, current research also focuses on the role of melodic accompaniment in helping listeners ascribe meaning to a song's lyrics.<sup>14</sup> For instance, Alberto Gonzalez and John J. Makay illustrate how Bob Dylan employed

chords from his earlier, more popular albums to build support for his religious albums.<sup>15</sup> By using "familiar" messages, Dylan built common ground with his more secular fans in order to generate acceptance of his overtly religious messages. Additionally, Robert Francesconi illustrated how free-form jazz developed a new reference point for listeners to understand the African American community and its musical roots.<sup>16</sup> By adjusting jazz's use of instruments, harmonies, and melodies, the free-form jazz movement created a tension between "Western" and "African" style and form to help listeners re-conceptualize the purpose of jazz music.

Rhetorical analyses of music also have examined how context affects a song's persuasive message.<sup>17</sup> Theodore Matula argues it is essential to consider the contextual and cultural dimensions of song in addition to the lyrical and musical elements, which he defines as, "a set of significant symbolic events, musical and music-related, that occur together in the perception of a listener and that function to frame listening experiences."<sup>18</sup> Additionally, Deanna Sellnow argues that considering contextual elements of song illuminates who the artist believes can and cannot speak in a particular situation.<sup>19</sup> From these authors' perspectives, an audience's



expectations of a song's musical (rhetorical) form influence how they process the message. The rhetorical critic's role, then, is to uncover the musical enthymemes that connect the rhetorical context to the text, which provides a broader understanding of the message's persuasiveness. Such contextual implications suggest that the rhetorical power of a song is based on previous expectations, which suggests that challenging cultural expectations can change the musical community.<sup>20</sup>

The preceding studies provide guidance on how rhetorical critics can analyze the lyrical, musical, and contextual elements within the rhetoric of song. Deanna and Timothy Sellnow demonstrate that the rhetoric of song can provide scholars with a better understanding of how music operates persuasively.<sup>21</sup> The authors also call for scholars

to continue exploration of the implications of music as a rhetorical form. One such addition to the extent literature is an examination of how *kategoria* functions in musical compositions.



# PERSUASIVE ATTACK

Criticism, attack, or *kategoria* has not received as much attention in the literature as persuasive defense.<sup>22</sup> Persuasive attack may be viewed unfavorably (as in “yellow journalism” or mudslinging in politics), but it can also expose or call attention to wrongdoing. Society must become aware of injustice before it can be remedied. Research related to persuasive attack has investigated complaints,<sup>23</sup> reproaches,<sup>24</sup> inducing guilt,<sup>25</sup> and finding fault.<sup>26</sup> Walter R. Fisher discussed subversion as a purpose (motive) of rhetoric and Halford Ross Ryan (1982, 1988) identified *kategoria* and *apologia* as a speech set.<sup>27</sup>



Anita Pomerantz identified the two key components of a persuasive attack when she explains that “blamings” or complaints have two key elements: an offensive act must have occurred and the target of the complaint is alleged to be responsible for that act.<sup>28</sup> First, before an image is at risk, others must perceive the person (or group, or organization, or company, or other entity) as having committed an act. This action could be an act of omission as well as one of commission (misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance). The accused may have performed the act in question, encouraged others to perform the act, or have allowed others to perform it -- but some action must have occurred before blame can arise. Second, an audience must consider that act offensive for the accused’s image to be at risk. So, if you committed an act that is thought to be beneficial, your image is not at risk. Similarly, if someone else committed an offensive act, your image is not at risk. Only when both conditions are true – or thought to be true by others – is your image threatened.



William L. Benoit and Bruce Dorries further developed the idea that persuasive attack is comprised of responsibility offensiveness.<sup>29</sup> They identified four strategies for increasing apparent responsibility for the act (blame): the accused committed the act before, the accused planned the act, the accused was aware of the consequences of the act, and the accused benefitted from the act. They also laid out six strategies for increasing the perceived offensiveness of the act: extent of damage, persistence of effects, effects on the audience, inconsistency, victims were innocent/helpless, and perpetrator had a special obligation to protect the victims (e.g., no one should abuse a child, but it seems worse for a priest to do so). Benoit and Dorries applied this typology to analyze the use of persuasive attack in a television show (Dateline NBC) criticizing Wal-Mart. The study found Dateline’s attack was generally effective at establishing Wal-Mart’s “Buy America” campaign to be offensive and purposely deceptive, an act for which the company was ultimately held responsible.

Other studies have expanded on the use of this typology. For instance, William L. Benoit and Allison Harthcock investigated newspaper advertisements from the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.<sup>30</sup> In addition to looking for the strategies for elaborating responsibility and offensiveness, Benoit and Harthcock identified how the target audience, appeals, content (e.g., types of evidence), and the organization of these ads influenced an opponent’s perceived responsibility. Additionally, William Benoit, Andrew Klyukovski, John McHale, and David Airne identified criticisms of Bill Clinton, Ken Starr, and Congress in political cartoons on the Monica Lewinsky affair.<sup>31</sup> They concluded that multiple rhetors working independently may create a rhetorical vision.<sup>32</sup>

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Additionally, Nancy J. Legge, James R. DiSanza, John Gribas, and Aubrey Shiffler analyzed Rush Limbaugh's comments about college student Sandra Fluke.<sup>33</sup> They concluded that rhetors' claims focusing on the extent of damage an opponent has already caused are more powerful than claims of future negative damage. Moreover, they found that Benoit and Dorries' typology needed more categories to capture Limbaugh's attacks, such as pejorative labeling, which can be combined with other attacks to indicate an offensive action.



Furthermore, William Benoit and Kevin Stein investigated *kategoria* in cartoons about the Catholic Church sexual abuse scandal.<sup>34</sup> They found three recurrent themes (Catholic priests sexually abused children, the Catholic Church covered up the scandal, and the Catholic Church responded ineffectually to sexual abuse) and discussed three rhetorical resources employed in the cartoons (church related symbols and concepts, contemporary events, and cultural knowledge). Finally, William Benoit and Jeffrey Delbert analyzed television advertisements from Macintosh computers attacking IBM computers and the Windows operating system.<sup>35</sup> They concluded that this ad campaign was well-designed to illuminate the shortcomings of PCs when compared to Mac's supposedly superior traits.

As the body of research exploring *kategoria* grows, researchers must continue to understand how rhetors increase the belief of wrongdoing on the accused. Whether by creating a successful advertising campaign, newspaper assault, or television show, persuasive attack has been shown to effectively tarnish another's image. Connecting the concepts of

*kategoria* and the rhetoric of music, this study expands the literature by illustrating how music can increase the perceived offensiveness of another's act(s).

## ANALYSIS OF SONGS

The current analysis investigates two “diss” songs that utilize persuasive attack. Both songs were widely viewed and circulated on the internet. In fact, Professor Elemental's video has over two million views on YouTube and the Mad Attorney General's webpage had over 5 million visitors. The first section of the analysis identifies the major themes from each song, illustrating what offenses the rhetors claim to have occurred and who is responsible for the acts. Subsequently, the discussion examines the major similarities between these songs and suggests how the use of *kategoria* advances our understanding of musical texts.

### PROFESSOR ELEMENTAL'S “FIGHTING TROUSERS”

Professor Elemental released “Fighting Trousers” as a single on his 2010 album *The Indifference Engine*. The song offers a response to the repeated comparison made between the professor and another artist called Mr. B, the self-proclaimed “Gentleman Rhymer.” In an interview with *Guerrilla Geek*, Professor Elemental claimed his song attacked Mr. B because “the way to settle things in hip-hop is by way of a lyrical battle. Hence the song ‘Fighting Trousers.’”<sup>36</sup> Such lyrical contests illustrate how persuasive attack songs function in the hip-hop genre, wherein the artist's primary role is to attack other emcees for musical transgressions and to voice his or her superiority in the rap scene.<sup>37</sup>

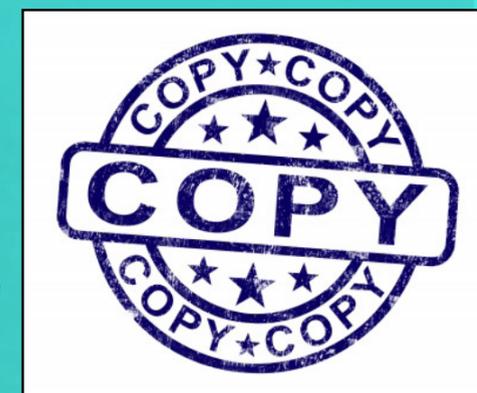


Steampunk Family the von Hedwigs ([http://www.flickr.com/photos/von\\_hedwig/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/von_hedwig/))



Amphalon via [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mr\\_B\\_The\\_Gentleman\\_Rhymer.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mr_B_The_Gentleman_Rhymer.jpg)

The most frequent attack in “Fighting Trousers” claims Mr. B is an unoriginal artist. In response to Mr. B’s plagiarism, the professor muses that although “I don’t normally approve of war games... let [his impersonation] end now.” Throughout the song, the professor accuses Mr. B of stealing his rhymes as part of his unoriginality. However, no specific claims surface that describe when or how verbal plagiarism occurred. Instead, the song seems to conflate the issue of lifting the professor’s rhymes with the Gentleman Rhymer’s “parody” of chap hop, the style of hip-hop Professor Elemental claims to embody. For instance, he claims, “This is hip-hop, not an Elvis night. Shelve this professor impersonation” and “what you need to do is rap and not parody chap hop.” The song also compares Mr. B to George Formby, a British comic who played the ukulele, which is yet another assertion that B lacks original material. Rather than specifically attacking a specific line or rhyme Mr. B has stolen, the professor elucidates B’s entire persona as inconsistent with his claim to be a chap-hop artist.



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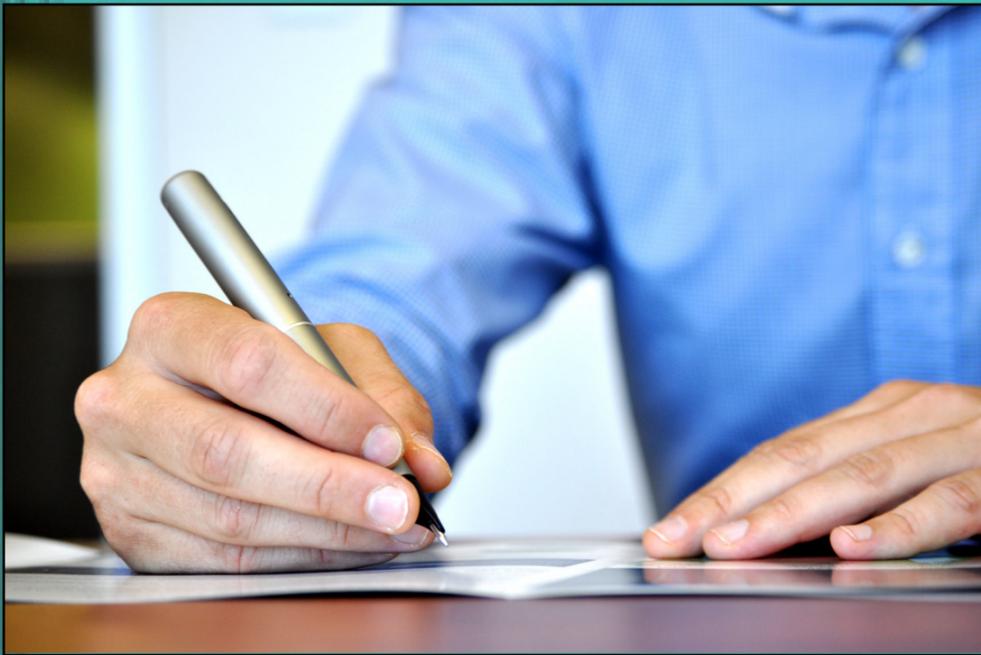
The primary reason Mr. B’s impersonation is considered offensive rests on the assertion that Mr. B does not adhere to the major tenets of chap-hop, which originated in the United Kingdom and combines elements of hip-hop and the steampunk culture. According to Professor Elemental, chap-hop should focus on encouraging education and personal growth. In accordance with the “professor” persona he adopts, Elemental compares himself to a “bright Brighton Peer” to illustrate his intellectual superiority. Additionally, Professor Elemental clearly indicates chap-hop artists must teach others how to perform original variations on themes, with an emphasis on the art of chap-hop and its style. However, he attacks Mr. B by indicating, “I’m not seeing you at ciphers or workshops with kids or gigs” and by accusing Mr. B of commercialization by selling “out to Coco-Cola.”

Attacks on Mr. B’s lax morals are further clarified in a chap-hop battle, in which Elemental accuses Mr. B of only being able to cover other artists’ songs instead of creating his own.<sup>38</sup> Thus, the only “chap” element of his style is his “funny jacket and a hat.” These attacks illustrate that whether or not Mr. B is aware of his encroachment on others’ styles, he personally benefits from stealing other artists’ insights by neglecting the deeper goals and potential of the musical genre. The professor’s continued attacks seek to emphasize how Mr. B’s copycat, commercialized style is ruining the pure values and the potential success of chap-hop.

Thus, regardless of whether or not Mr. B was aware that his acts were offensive, the professor asserts he must respond to, and punish, Mr. B merely for his repetitive transgressions. His punishment is to “get out of the game” because “there’s not room in town for two gentlemen rhymer.” Professor Elemental suggests Mr. B should be “banned from using a pen” because of his attempt to commercialize the genre. In his tragically framed attack, the professor argues he should remain as the primary chap-hop artist because he has the “cleverest wits” and “when this George Formby clone is performing audiences go home before he begins talking.” In a “battle,” or heads up rhyming competition, Professor Elemental asserts he would surely win, which he could prove because if Mr. B. “set foot on [his] stage” he would “get ruined again.” Much like the chorus repeats, Professor Elemental “will not lose” and will continue his attacks until this mutated form of chap-hop is removed from the scene.



Another interesting element of this attack is the form of the text. Structured like a formal letter, the song begins with an introduction, “dear sir,” and finishes with the closing, “yours et cetera, et cetera, sincerely and so forth.” Professor Elemental’s use of a formal tone underscores the need for the genre’s music to remain consistent with chap-hop’s major tenets. Such a form seeks to “settle [disputes] like gentlemen, armed with heavy sticks.” In part, Professor Elemental attempts to create a vision that in order for the community to accept a chap-hop artist as legitimate, they should be both original and be able to teach others how to create their own personas. Similar to the next song, the professor seeks a cheerful tone to illustrate the shameful practices of the opponent.



## THE ATTORNEY GENERAL’S SONG

On May 7, 2010, The Richmond Times Dispatch published a song titled, “The Attorney General’s song.”<sup>39</sup> Sung to the tune of Gilbert and Sullivan’s “Major-General’s Song,” this parody attacks Ken Cuccinelli, Virginia’s Attorney General and 2013 gubernatorial candidate. The major thrust of this persuasive attack confronts Cuccinelli’s pursuit of supposedly absurd policies, especially his propensity to sue organizations for potentially misappropriated government money. Before the song was published, a slew of sources repeatedly attacked the Attorney General for assaulting university research grants,<sup>40</sup> the legality of healthcare bill,<sup>41</sup> and his view of global warming.<sup>42</sup> The song addresses these attacks in a satirically framed song in order to exploit the supposed absurdity

of his policies. Each stanza attacks a particular policy using a mimicked Cuccinelli’s voice.

First, the song attacks the Attorney General for his denouncement of groups like the EPA, whom he asserts have wasted taxpayer’s money to needlessly protect the environment. The first stanza of the song imitates the Attorney General’s “voice” to state, “I’ll stop environmentalists from regulating greenhouse gas by proving carbon dioxide does not have an atomic mass.” Additionally, using pejorative labeling, he declares, “I’ll prove the EPA is overrun with Commie militants who haven’t shown a single lick of scientific diligence.” Such statements simultaneously attack Cuccinelli’s actions and his ad hominem attacks on his opponents, which many news sources documented during his tenure.<sup>43</sup> The song continues to attack Cuccinelli by critiquing his stance on federal and state funding of scientific endeavors, such as his 2012 lawsuit against University of Virginia Professor Michael Mann’s Global Warming research.<sup>44</sup> The Attorney General song seeks to undermine Cuccinelli’s arguments by suggesting he is clueless about how to conduct scientific research and the need for public funding.



Second, the song attacks Cuccinelli’s attempts to sue the federal government after passing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law. Comparing the American government to the Mexican federales, the fake Cuccinelli claims, “Our Founding Fathers would have found them utterly heretical,” as “nothing in the Constitution...allows the government to take upon itself an act of such obscene aggrandizement.” Adding more “bureaucracy” will only slow down medical treatment, and quite ironically, slow down the process of medical advancements. All of these attacks have been documented in various news articles,<sup>45</sup> although the song’s language frequently is hyperbolic. For instance, Cuccinelli does not actually utter such extreme examples, such as

claiming “Obamacare...might put your grandma on a gurney, bound for euthanasia.” Nonetheless, the sentiment reflects the Attorney General’s attitude that the government provides care that will cause death by bureaucracy.

Health  
Medical

Third, the attack focuses on the Attorney General’s attack on the LGBT community and their presence on university campuses. During his first few months in office, Cuccinelli claimed, “the law and public policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia prohibit a college or university from including ‘sexual orientation,’ ‘gender identity,’ ‘gender expression,’ or like classification as a protected class within its non-discrimination policy.”<sup>46</sup> The song exaggerates his stance by claiming, “the colleges have no grounds to grant those fellows equal rights,” “God meant us all to procreate, it’s all right there in Leviticus,” and “I simply want to guarantee our young men’s masculinity by keeping Sapphic types far from the commonwealth’s vicinity.” This stanza underscores Cuccinelli’s commitment to suppressing the presence of gay and lesbians groups on campus. Such attacks illustrate the Attorney General’s knowledge of these individuals’ plights and his planned discrimination. Not only is this severe, Cuccinelli personally assures he can live in a world that subscribes to his personal religious views, even in supposedly secular institutions.



The song concludes with another attack on modesty by elaborating on his protest of Virginia’s historic state seal. At a meeting in early 2012, Cuccinelli wore a pin displaying Virginia’s “new” seal.<sup>47</sup> In an act of solidarity, he handed out these pins to all present in the room for their first meeting. “The Mad Attorney General,” attacks his ideals here by asserting, “the artifacts of history are something I cannot resist, but images of virtue that her breast and melon are too risqué” and “I don’t believe in censorship, but I won’t go down in history as the man who let a nipple slip.” Such attacks reference his often inconsistent policies as a way of illuminating his awareness of his “mad” policies, such as asserting that liberty stands apart from government while also inserting government into personal beliefs. The song portrays his supposed conservatism as a shortcoming, but also as the basis of his rhetorical vision, a more modest, Christian society.

Many of these policy attacks are based upon Cuccinelli’s supposedly “mad” or “paleoconservative” bent. The attacks are satirical in nature, using pejorative labeling like “liberal plot,” “Commie militants,” and “filthy sodomites” to underscore their supposedly absurdist nature. In terms of kategoria, the song builds the case that Cuccinelli repeatedly committed offensive acts against a public and an environment he was supposed to be protecting. Moreover, the lyrics and playful melody help to accentuate Cuccinelli’s supposed attacks on helpless victims, such as the LGBT community, as well as his attachment to an outdated ideology that is harmful to American society. Additionally, the song’s tenor suggests that he personally benefits from his acts by having his personal beliefs validated and legislated in the state. This attack illustrates that the Attorney General’s policies were the most egregious acts he could have committed.



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## DISCUSSION

Songs that incorporate the elements of persuasive attack are pervasive and easily accessible in popular culture. Many of these songs address current societal concerns and strive to illustrate why another person or group's point of view needs correction. Previous literature has discussed the importance of such attacks in advertising, but not in music, which has an equally important impact on people's perception of the world around them. In an attempt to close this gap, the current analysis discusses two popular diss songs. "Fighting Trousers" represents an artist's attempt to correct the repetitive and uninventive streak in contemporary chap-hop music. "The Mad Attorney General" uses a popular melody to address political grievances evolving along partisan lines in contemporary politics. At first glance, the songs may appear quite different. However, the songs were chosen because both utilize similar strategies to attack uninspired and anti-intellectual pursuits in society.



One of the main themes to emerge within these persuasive attacks are charges that the sanctity of a scene -- such as hip-hop style, the educational system, or political arena -- is being threatened. Professor Elemental's view instructs the audience that chap-hop culture is in jeopardy when artists merely copy each other's performances and fail to innovate. "The Mad Attorney General" informs the audience politicians who seek to validate their political bent, rather than to encourage intellectual inquiry and a culture of acceptance, threaten our political environment. These political attack songs direct our attention to wrongdoings that change our scene through unprogressive and shortsighted acts that are monetarily driven. In these persuasive attacks, each artist asserts a verbal scolding is necessary because these repetitive transgressions are attempts to make an esoteric worldview dominant, while eliminating others' more benevolent attitudes and endeavors.

Another area of consequence in musical persuasive attacks is the extensive use of burlesque framed messages. According to White, a burlesque frame provides a drama wherein the attacker can turn a situation into a reductive, absurd, and often extreme reality.<sup>48</sup> Frequently, burlesque caricatures function as a perspective by incongruity by focusing and mocking an individual's external behaviors. In addition, the caricature omits the actor's motives in an attempt to depict one as a "heartless" or senseless being. For example, Professor Elemental uses obscure references to cultural figures and instrument-mastery to suggest Mr. B. is motivated by materialistic concerns via commercial success. Attacks against the Attorney General are all tongue-in-cheek and use cultural references to attack Cuccinelli's supposedly misguided actions. This is important to understand in persuasive attack songs, as a burlesque frame makes it easier to reject opponents. Focusing solely on their behaviors and not exploring their motives, the audience is called upon to condemn their opponents wholly. The attacks still focus on the alleged's responsibility, but we are made to fill in just how much the opponent knew the sin was egregious.

Additionally, although the songs' attacks are cloaked by humorous jibes, these persuasive attacks assert their position as the perspective of perspectives. The songs name the transgressions as grievous sins, explicate that the accused are knowingly committing these sins, and assert that society





must stop the accused from continuing to transgress. As such, these attacks provide a vision of how to create chap-hop music and effectively structure political scenes. Functionally, the use of humorous jibes and burlesque-framed attacks seem to bolster Legge, et. al's claim that Benoit and Dorries' typology can be further refined, specifically adding the category of pejorative labeling to classify when rhetors are applying negative, detrimental, or disparaging definitions to an offensive action.

Further studies must be conducted on persuasive attack songs. More specifically, future analyses should compare how artists in different genres construct their attacks to contend a scene is flawed and needs correction. The direct comparisons could illustrate conflicting rhetorical visions and the negotiations that would ensue in subsequent songs. Further analyses could also explore other persuasive songs that did not use burlesque frames to explore if there were any differences in the persuasive attacks.

The analysis of "Fighting Trousers" and "The Mad Attorney General" illustrate how the concepts of *kategoria* can illuminate the major components of persuasive attack in song. These songs explicitly state the wrongdoings and assert the response was warranted after continual offenses. Additionally, both songs call upon the listeners to decide whether the accused knew what they were doing was wrong and reject their presence in their scene. This leaves the decision of "stepping off" up to the listener, and encourages the audience to participate in the rejection of wrongdoing by becoming part a formal jury and re-establishing the proper order of society.



Dear Sir,  
Regarding your recent foray  
Into the rap business and the scene you portray,  
See I don't normally approve of war games,  
But "He's biting you" is what they all say  
And by Harry, they might be right--  
This is hip hop, not an Elvis night!  
Shelve this Professor impersonation,  
Let it end now, it's impertinent waiting!  
You seem a reasonable chap,  
What you need to do is rap  
But not parody chap hop  
'Cause that's not proper, just not cricket!  
Put away your ukulele or I'll tell where to stick it!

I - Don't like your tweed, sir!  
Will - Teach you the professor's ready!  
Not - Let's see who strikes the loudest!  
Lose - Put on my fighting trousers!

## *Fighting Trousers*

I've got super producers and fans that play me  
You've got a granddad's mustache and a ukulele  
Don't look around sir, I'm speaking to you  
Roll up your shirt sleeves, Queensbury rules  
Never test professors with the cleverest wits  
Let's settle this like gentlemen: armed with heavy sticks  
On a rotating plate, with spikes like Flash Gordon  
And you're Peter Duncan; I gave you fair warning  
When this George Formby clone is performing  
Audiences go home before he begins talking  
A new career might be more rewarding  
I'm a bright Brighton peer, you're rap's Piers Morgan

I - Don't like your tweed, sir!  
Will - Teach you the professor's ready!  
Not - Let's see who strikes the loudest!  
Lose - Put on my fighting trousers!

I'm not seeing you at ciphers or workshops with kids or gigs  
Dear sir, you're not worthy of this!  
Sold out to Coca-Cola  
Used for a trend  
And that means you're banned  
From using a pen  
Hope it's safe to assume you won't do this again  
Set foot on my stage and get ruined again  
Be out, Mr. B, I've set the egg timer  
There's not room in town for two gentlemen rhymers  
Leave town by the end of this instrumental  
Yours, et cetera, et cetera, sincerely, and so forth,  
Professor Elemental

I - Don't like your tweed, sir!  
Will - Teach you the professor's ready!  
Not - Let's see who strikes the loudest!  
Lose - Put on my fighting trousers!

I am the very model of a mad Attorney General,  
My politics are paleoconservative and visceral --  
I'll sue the pants off Democrats and wreck their plans historical  
With writs and briefs that I'll compose, tendentious and rhetorical

I'll stop environmentalists from regulating greenhouse gas  
By proving carbon dioxide does not have an atomic mass --  
That solar-radiative forcing's nothing but a liberal plot  
And dendroclimatology is superstitious tommyrot.

I'll prove the EPA is overrun with Commie militants  
Who haven't shown a single lick of scientific diligence --  
In short, in matters legal, ecological, and federal  
I am the very model of a mad Attorney General.

I'll stop the federales, too, from passing mandates medical --  
Our Founding Fathers would have found them utterly heretical:  
There's nothing in the Constitution that allows the government  
To take upon itself an act of such obscene aggrandizement.

Our hospitals and clinics do not need yet more bureaucracy  
The whole scheme is most antithetical toward democracy;  
ObamaCare could mean as well a case of hip dysplasia  
Might put your grandma on a gurney, bound for euthanasia.

The situation's reached the point that it is nearly critical --  
And so I'll sue to save the life of our corpus political.  
In short, in matters Hippocratic, curative, and medical,  
I am the very model of a mad Attorney General.

I'll save our universities as well from filthy sodomites;  
The colleges have got no grounds to grant those fellows equal rights.  
The legislature has declared they constitute a second class --  
Though some might find that attitude as dated as Depression glass

I do not think we need more men who know how to redecorate  
Or women dressed like lumberjacks -- God meant us all to procreate.  
It's right there in Leviticus: Verse seventeen of chapter eight  
Requires colleges to let their faculties discriminate.

I simply want to guarantee our young men's masculinity  
By keeping Sapphic types far from the commonwealth's vicinity  
In short, in matters non-Euclidian or homosexual  
I am the very model of a mad Attorney General.

I also like to think myself a rather high-browed classisist  
And artifacts of history are something I cannot resist  
But images of Virtue that expose her breast and mamelon Are too  
risque -- they're apt to turn the concupiscent rabble on.

There's nothing more erotic than the Iliad or the Odyssey  
And so I'll substitute a pin that manifests more modesty  
(One mustn't risk the chance that some poor lad's Attic exuberance  
Could lend itself to lusty thoughts and some turgid protuberance).

I'm simply trying to keep things clean, I don't believe in censorship --  
But won't go down in history as the man who let a nipple slip.  
In short in matters glandular, lactiferous, and sensual  
I am the very model of a mad Attorney General.

## *The Attorney General's Song*

# End Notes

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