**Chapter Ten Part Two Video Transcript**

Chapter 10 spends a good chunk of time focusing specifically on Kenneth Burke, and here's why. Kenneth Burke was the 20th century's essential rhetorical theorist. Burke's work was vast in scope, his influence was pervasive, but his vocabulary was idiosyncratic. He was a protean figure. He pushed the boundaries of rhetoric beyond its traditional canon. Not since the Renaissance has a single theorist explored disciplines as diverse as philosophy and drama and religion, political science, history, and of course, rhetoric. But his scope and his vocabulary can try the patience of even the most diligent reader. Burke was hard to read. He still is now. He described himself as a word man. He never earned a bachelor's degree, never earned a PhD, was never a tenured professor. But despite the difficulties of this word man, the effort to understand Burke is repaid with genuine insights into the history and theory of rhetoric in the 21st century. It's important to consider as we kind of move from chapter nine to chapter 10, from modernism to postmodernism, where Burke falls in those kind of temporal categories. So he lived from 1897 to 1993. He did a lot of his most important work in the 1930s, 40s, 50s and 60s. So kind of the middle of the 20th century. And we can kind of think about Burke as kind of a bridge figure between the modernist and postmodernist temporal categories. So could he have been better placed perhaps in chapter nine? For sure. But in chapter 10, we try to make the argument that Burke actually kind of functions as a useful bridge between modernism and postmodernism. Let me tell you a little bit about why we think so. So Burke's kind of own life, and then his work, but his life, first was marked by discontinuity and rupture. So he started writing poetry in the early teens, so the 19 teens, just as the world was convulsing with the spasms of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and World War I.

So Burke published articles and books as the Great Depression and it kind of signaled the collapse of a lot of modernist economic assumptions. And then, of course, the death and devastation of World War II in the 1940s after that. So all that to say as we've been learning about in Chapter 9 and Chapter 10 so far, the social and political order was challenged, the social structures were challenged. Organized labor began to push back against the dominance of large corporations. And of course, global war, including the nuclear bomb, raised serious doubts about kind of the continuity of human progress, that things just keep getting better and better. So all told, Burke's formative years were marked by the breakdown of social values and the search for new sources of social order. So you'll hear that vocabulary remind you a little bit about the transition from modernism to post-modernism. So Burke wrote a lot, way too much to cover just in this chapter, especially because our chapter is devoted to post-modernism, but as you're reading, notice in the section on Burke five important themes. First, rhetoric is symbolic action. So Burke really drove home the point that language doesn't just reflect reality, but also shapes it. So rhetoric is symbolic action. Rhetoric acts on the world. It changes it. It doesn't just reflect something that's already out there.

Second, Burke coined a term called identification. And he said that you can only persuade insofar as you can identify with the person or the community that you're trying to persuade. It sounds kind of intuitive and obvious to us now, but it represented a shift from this idea that you change people's minds by kind of overwhelming them with evidence. And if you can give them enough evidence and strong enough arguments, then you'll persuade someone, then you'll be an effective rhetoric. Brooks said, Yeah, that's important. But he also said this kind of more subtle principle of your audience, your individuals that you're trying to persuade, seeing you as like them, similar to them, is really important in order for those arguments to actually come through and to resonate. Third, Burke introduced us to terministic screens. Terministic screens describe the terms, words, language, terms, that operate as screens for seeing the world. So you might think about something like eyeglasses or a window pane.

Burke thought that the language or words that we use, the symbols that we use, function as something that we kind of look through and afterwards are changed by the language that we choose. So rationale for studying communication, for studying symbols, is that you don't just reflect the reality, but the words that we actually choose change how you see the world. So again, that idea that it's not just a reflection of reality, but also a shaping of reality.

Fourth, Burke helped introduce us to what he called the pentad. These are five elements for detecting the rhetor's motive. It's important to note the pentad was not focused on kind of a journalist's who, what, when, where, why, and how. But instead, it was a critical technique to understanding the motive of a rhetor. So a rhetor would reveal their motive based on the language that they used. And then finally, we talk a little bit about the principle of form in this chapter. Form was concerned with how a rhetor can arouse desires in an audience and then fulfill those desires. So as a persuasive technique, if you can build up a desire in your audience and then gratify that desire, it's a wonderful way to kind of move your audience along with the message that you're trying to put forth. So taking all that together, was Burke a modernist or a postmodernist? I'd encourage you to kind of challenge that thesis. Look for answers to that question as you're working through both chapter nine and chapter 10. And of course, the so what, why does that matter? And the big hint, as you can tell by the amount of time that we devote to Burke in this chapter and really his principles in the book, it does matter. Was he a modernist or a post-modernist? The answer is yes. And that explains why he matters today, why he's so relevant for us today as we're learning rhetorical theory.