Synecdochism is an action commonly performed in rhetoric, ritual magic, and information science. In each case it involves a substitution of part for whole or whole for part. The nature of the substitution is somewhat different from one field to another, but there are strong similarities. The substitutions that occur in rhetoric and magic are straightforward, while the more complex substitutions in information science tend to include elements of both other kinds as well as some of its own.

In rhetorical usage synecdochism is practiced by mentioning the part to designate the whole or vice versa. A temporary distortion is introduced in the interest of effective speech or writing by using an inaccurate word that nevertheless emphasizes some selected aspect of whatever is being discussed. The distortion is obvious in Antony's request: "Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears". Generations of schoolchildren have laughed at the picture of a crowd of Romans proffering their ears in outstretched hands. The distortion is subtle as Antony continues his speech, painting Brutus and the other assassins of Caesar over and over as honourable men, convincing the crowd of its falsity by the very repetition of that one-sided characterization. Heightening or changing the awareness of the listener is brought about by the choice of words, not by changing the meaning of whatever words are chosen. Synecdochism in rhetoric is like other rhetorical devices in attempting to influence the listener while leaving the rest of the world alone.

As a magical device synecdochism is very definitely an attempt to influence the world. Belief in sympathetic magic is practically universal among primitive peoples and fairly common among the civil-
ized. Almost all practitioners of sympathetic magic accept that charms worked on a part are much more effective than those worked on a model or something only loosely associated with a person or object in the past. Hair clippings and nail parings are especially potent parts according to a belief that goes back at least to Zoroaster, who flourished two and a half millenia ago. The seventeenth chapter of the *Vendidad*, the sacred Zoroastrian book, prescribes a complex set of rites to assure the harmless disposal of hair and nails.

Burying hair is synecdochistically equivalent to burying its former owner. An attempt to procure hair for such use was responsible for a notorious killing that took place in 1928 in York, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. As John Blymire felt progressively less able to sleep well, eat well, or talk well, he visited a succession of what in that time and place were known as powwow doctors, folk healers who professed to achieve cures by magical means. All decided he was bewitched, but only one was able to identify the origin and suggest a remedy. She worked a spell around a dollar bill to determine that a known sorcerer, Nelson Rehmeyer, had laid the hex that caused the illness. To lift the hex the victim would first have to take from the magician a particular grimoire and a lock of hair. After that the victim would bury the hair deep in the ground behind a barn, presumably with an appropriate incantation read from the book that had been taken along with the hair. Symbolic death of the sorcerer would bring relief from the sorcerer's evil spell, just as a real death would.

Blymire enlisted two young fellow-believers to help him carry out the plan. Confronted by the trio at his isolated farmhouse, Rehmeyer did not object to parting with the book of spells, but he did object to giving up any of his hair. He preferred to fight. During the course of the battle that resulted, one or another intruder struck the ill-starred sorcerer, kicked him, knocked him down, beat him with a stick of firewood, battered him with a chair, tied a rope around his neck, dumped kerosene from a lamp all over him, and finally set fire to what by then must have become a lifeless body. The intended disposseors departed without either book or hair. Of course, neither was any longer needed to remove the hex. Any connection with information science ends at this point of the story, but it may be of interest that Blymire and both his companions were found guilty of murder a few months later. Blymire and one youth were sentenced to life imprisonment, the other youth to twenty years. By a quirk of fate, Pennsylvania law required leniency because no robbery had been committed in connection with the murder.

Magical synecdochism is not always so exciting, despite a general disposition to employ magic only in situations having considerable emotional content. The state of feeling has nothing to do