

learned so as to act on them, and for the sake of knowing them: "We ought to know them; others do them." Then where is my fault? I refrain even from that which is forbidden to women—to teach by writing—because I am myself to lack the abundant talent, following Quintilian's counsel: "Do not argue, not so much by the precepts as by following the counsel of his own

lies in the "Letter Worthy of" or "Letter of" anything more than a simple opinion, with all the indulgences of our Holy Mother Church? For if the most holy authority, does not forbid it, why must others forbid it? Is it because I oppose Vieira, yet not so for that I oppose the three holy Fathers? Is it because of my mind, such as it is, less free than it derives from the same source? Can it be taken as one of the principles which have been made manifest, that we must not? Besides which, I have not in any way fallen short of that respect owed to him, as his defender has done in this regard, in the observation of Titus Livius: "I do not fit the arts." Nor did I so much as offend the blessed Society. Nor did I offend any other than the person who suggested it. According to Pliny, "The situation publishes a thing is different from who speaks it by name." For had the letter been published, it would have been as unkempt as it was. If it is a critic says, why does he not defend it? He would find revenge and I cannot but greatly value, as I ought, the respect of an obedient daughter of my Church than any praise that might be given to me. If the letter be crude—as it is—then let him laugh at it, and not mock it falsely with what they call cal-

## Part Four

# ENLIGHTENMENT RHETORIC

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# Introduction

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The period in European history from the seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries — the period known as the Enlightenment — is marked by revolutions in science, philosophy, and politics. These revolutions altered long-cherished notions about the physical world, knowledge and truth, human nature, and society. Scientists shifted to the experimental method and sought to name the innumerable parts that make up our universe and to discover the common features that linked these parts together. Philosophers reconsidered the source and status of knowledge, paying particular attention to the psychological processes of perception, reflection, and communication in an attempt to determine how it was possible to discover the truths within the physical world that were so important to science's progress. The philosophers' search for the universals of human nature led political reformers to argue that if all people had the same perceptions and the same capacity for thought and knowledge, then inequalities in social standing went against nature and reason. Democracy therefore seemed to be the natural form of social organization, which meant that the old order should be torn down and replaced. These vast social and intellectual changes inevitably affected the ways that language, communication, and rhetoric were understood during this crucial period.

## RHETORIC IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT: AN OVERVIEW

The scientific and philosophical revolutions of the seventeenth century affected rhetoric in a number of ways. The first effect was indirect, resulting from a change in the conception of logic, a branch of knowledge to which rhetoric was closely allied. The Ramistic doctrines that dominated rhetoric at the beginning of the seventeenth century limited rhetoric to style and delivery, arguing that invention and arrangement were really the concern of logic because logic was the discipline that sought truth (see the introduction to Part Three). But as experimental science and inductive reasoning replaced deductive logic as the standard of inquiry, the

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episto-ontology

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Ramistic distinction became moot. The Ciceronian conception of rhetoric, which included all five classical canons (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), became once again the foundation of rhetorical study and remained so through the seventeenth and well into the eighteenth century.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, traditional rhetoric came to be closely associated with the genres of history, poetry, and literary criticism, the so-called belles lettres. The belletrists revered the great classical writers and orators and applied the rules of classical rhetoric to literary judgment. Critics of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries held that literature was purposeful, intended to please and instruct the reader. The art of persuasion was thus perfectly consonant with the art of poetry. Moreover, the new theories of psychology and human nature seemed to confirm the idea that reasoning and imagination were the key mental faculties, especially in persuasion. Thus, during the eighteenth century, rhetoric became closely identified with literary criticism, a connection that persisted well into the nineteenth century.

Before the end of the seventeenth century, however, traditional rhetoric came under attack by adherents of the new science, who claimed that rhetoric obscured the truth by encouraging the use of ornamented rather than plain, direct language. Many philosophers called for broad language reforms in an attempt to purify communication, at least for science and philosophy. The call for a plain style, taken up by church leaders and influential writers, made *perspicuity*, or clarity, a watchword in discussions of ideal style during the ensuing centuries.

An even more profound and direct influence on rhetoric at the beginning of the seventeenth century was Francis Bacon's theory of psychology (see Part Three, p. 736), which divides the mind into productive and receptive operations or "faculties" (hence, "faculty psychology"). It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century, however, that a complete psychological or epistemological theory of rhetoric arose, one that focused on appealing to the mental faculties in order to persuade. This approach proved to be powerful and durable, for it linked rhetoric with the most advanced ideas in philosophy and psychology and offered an attractive alternative to classical rhetoric.

The elocution movement, which focused on delivery, began early in the eighteenth century and lasted through the nineteenth. Elocution offered instruction in correct pronunciation in an era obsessed with correctness. Moreover, elocution found support in psychology, for it analyzed the hitherto neglected area of nonverbal appeals to the emotions, an avenue of persuasion newly restored to legitimacy.

In the eighteenth century, then, rhetoric could offer a link to the classical period, an analysis of taste and literary judgment, instruction in correct and effective speaking, and a respectable scientific theory of psychological persuasion.

As this brief overview suggests, the rhetorical theories of the Enlightenment are intimately linked to the intellectual and social developments that shaped the modern world. What follows is a more detailed look at the richness and complexity of rhetoric in this remarkable period.

#### ENLIGHTENMENT RHETORIC

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(Burke)

episto-ontology

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## SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY RHETORIC

### *Philosophy and Rhetoric in the Seventeenth Century*

Bacon's prophetic efforts to reform science and advance learning (see Part Three) begin with a reordering of the canons of knowledge and an investigation of the processes of knowing. Bacon divides the human intellect into the "faculties" of memory, imagination, and reason. To these faculties he adds two others of a slightly different kind, the will and the appetite. Bacon's notion of psychology as a function of different faculties or mental operations was to dominate psychology until well into the nineteenth century. As for rhetoric, Bacon's now-familiar formulation is that rhetoric applies *reason* to the *imagination* to move the *will*. It was all too clear to Bacon that reasoning was not enough to achieve persuasion; to teach people or move them to action, one had to address all the faculties. Thus, though he advocates a plain style and has some harsh words for the rhetoric of tropes and figures, Bacon by no means rejects the art of eloquence.

Bacon's reasonable view counters, in several ways, the Ramistic doctrine that dominated the theory and teaching of rhetoric through the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Bacon dismisses the Ramists' severe division of logic and rhetoric, which put invention and disposition into the former discipline and restricted the latter to style and delivery. Like the neo-Ciceronians, who persistently defended classical rhetoric from Ramistic assault, Bacon restores invention to rhetoric. He draws a distinction, though, between investigation, which is the job of logic, and invention, which is the recovery of pertinent information for argument or teaching. Moreover, Bacon scorns the use of deductive logic (the logic of the Ramists) as a form of inquiry. The syllogism might guard against faulty reasoning, he says, but only inductive thinking can produce new knowledge. In this way, he moves toward a conception of logic that would equate it with reasoning and separate it from communication. The communication of knowledge to all audiences, learned or popular, would then be rhetoric's job—whereas for the Ramists, logic governed dialectical communication (that is, the disputations directed to learned audiences), while rhetoric was for popular discourse only. Bacon hints at the doctrine of investigation versus communication but never makes it explicit. René Descartes, however, would articulate it definitively.

The method of Descartes owes nothing to argument and everything to solitary mental analysis. Even more than Bacon, Descartes rejects the Scholastic logic of disputation. The Cartesian method begins with the self and its thought, taking as true only that which the mind cannot find reason to doubt. Scholarly dispute, says Descartes, turns on the desire to win an argument, not the desire to find the truth. For Descartes, experiment is thus clearly preferable to dispute for scholarly investigation. It follows, too, that logic must be reconstituted as a means of investigation rather than of mere proof. Because syllogism relies on established premises, it can convey knowledge but not produce it; hence Descartes thrusts the syllogism and the commonplaces into the realm of rhetoric and defines the investigative method as a process of building on self-evident truths by careful division, sequential addition,

I'd love to do a history  
of rhetoric course using  
Stephenson's The Baroque  
Cycle

so Bacon had 5  
faculties  
(connections +  
"seduction")  
weak defense

and arguments  
missed by me

(Phaedrus)

so says Descartes  
(connections to the  
Jesuit's  
ratio studiorum?)

how would letters  
respond here?

huge binary  
@ work

and the search for causal connection. The commonplaces have no more role in this method than the syllogism does, for they are founded on probability, not indisputable truth. Truth is thus distinguished from mere probability and, of course, from persuasion.

Descartes's ideas were popularized by the *Port-Royal Logic* (1662), which puts them in an orderly pedagogical package. In the *Logic*, authors Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole identify four mental operations: conceiving, judging, reasoning, and ordering. Conceiving means forming ideas and attaching words to them. Judging connects and compares ideas and formulates propositions about them. Reasoning corrects for fallacies and prejudice, using the syllogism as an aid. And ordering organizes ideas for presentation. The Port-Royal scheme clearly distinguishes discovery from presentation. Discovery or analysis is guided by the method of Descartes; it is not to be confused with dialectical disputation or its old-style logic. Presentation appears at the end of the discovery process, where ideas become available for instruction or persuasion. Here, where analysis ends and synthesis begins, it is necessary to recognize that persuasion is a matter not just of correct thinking but of psychology. The Port-Royalists' associate, philosopher Blaise Pascal, argues that the proofs provided by scientific demonstration appeal to the understanding only, and so one must also consider the desires and the will in successful persuasion.

### *Traditional Rhetoric and the Problem of Style*

These new ideas did not revolutionize rhetoric in the seventeenth century, though their influence was considerable. Traditional rhetoric remained strong in schools, courts, parliaments, and pulpits. Ciceronian rhetoricians held to the five canons in opposition to the Ramists, while both Ciceronians and Ramists preserved the syllogism and commonplaces and emphasized the tropes and figures. Ornate style continued to be regarded as beautiful and impressive, and *impressive* was synonymous with *effective*, for the striking phrase would capture the attention of the reader or auditor.

The proper degree of ornateness or plainness of style was a subject of much debate. Bacon was not the first to complain about the excesses of Ciceronian prose. The so-called Senecan style had arisen as an alternative to the Ciceronian and became popular during the seventeenth century. But the Senecan style is "plain" because it avoids stylistic display for its own sake, not because it rejects all verbal ornament and ingenuity. It favors long sentences, less symmetrical than the Ciceronian periods but still carefully structured; it resists Latin borrowings but does not avoid them altogether; and it certainly employs tropes, although it leans toward the less flamboyant of them. Bacon had reservations about this style, too, warning that it often strained after wit and weight that was not earned by the thought expressed.

Pulpit oratory was a frequent target of complaints about stylistic excess. A number of writers decry the state of pulpit oratory, among them François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon, archbishop of Cambrai. In his *Dialogues on Eloquence* (written ca. 1679), Fénelon attacks empty, ornamental sermonizing and cites the need for "natural" delivery and gesture, "natural" organization, real knowledge of the subject

episto-ontology

some ontological  
assumptions underlying  
the epistemology here

"the problem of style"

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the "natural" and the "real"  
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mology of Descartes and Port-Royal, and his use of the Platonic and Ciceronian di-  
alogue form clearly joins him to the classical tradition, a pattern that we shall see  
again. Another critic is Bishop John Wilkins, who, in a discourse on preaching  
(1646), explicitly tries to link preaching with the new philosophy, anticipating the  
Port-Royalists, who would similarly pair inquiry with teaching as the requisite arts  
for the successful preacher. "The greatest learning is to be seen in the greatest plain-  
nesse," says Wilkins, and he cautions preachers against giving "a starched speech  
full of a puerile worded Rhetorick."<sup>1</sup>

### *The Attack on Rhetoric*

Some took the opposition of Bacon and Descartes to Ramist views of logic and  
rhetoric as opposition to rhetoric itself, for plainness was called for and rhetoric  
seemed to be an art of obfuscation. Rhetoric appeared in some ways to be cut off  
from both the old logic and the new science. The place of rhetoric in the curriculum  
of European schools, however, was not threatened. Indeed, it was the new science  
that was excluded from the schools. The well-established and anti-Cartesian Jesuit  
schools relied on the classical curriculum, and the newly established Protestant  
schools, which might have responded to the new science, were simply too poor to  
hire instructors who could teach it. The *Port-Royal Logic* is largely the result of a  
short-lived anti-Jesuit experimental school that attempted to create a Cartesian cur-  
riculum combining religion, mathematics, science, history, and French. The last  
item was the most radical. The classics were to be read in French translation, and  
the students were to learn French composition before Latin. The composition as-  
signment were based on the students' own experience or their responses to reading.  
But the small Port-Royal school was soon suppressed. Only private tutors could  
provide education along Cartesian lines. The aristocratic consumers of such educa-  
tion were interested in Latin education as a gentlemanly acquisition, but some wel-  
comed more practical studies in geography, law, and politics in place of Latin and  
the classical curriculum. These efforts at reform were very slight ripples on the sur-  
face of education. Well into the eighteenth century, until the French Revolution, the  
educational system in Europe resisted calls to include empirical studies. And rhetor-  
ical education continued to focus on style, responding very slowly to the call for re-  
form. The philosophers of the new science sought a plain style for which there  
seemed to be little sympathy.

The members of the British Royal Society, founded in 1660, envisioned a world  
without rhetoric, a world where people would speak of things as they really were,  
without the colorings of style, in plain language as clear as glass—so many words  
for so many things. Their spokesman, clergyman Thomas Sprat, makes a point of  
saying this in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667). Sprat first explains that the  
Society meant to use the experimental method and inductive reasoning to advance

<sup>1</sup>John Wilkins, *Ecclesiastes, or, A Discourse Concerning the Gift of Preaching As it falls under the  
Rules of Art*, 3rd ed. (London, 1651), p. 129; quoted in W. S. Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic  
and Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 456.

there are some  
new ways in  
which rhetoric  
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"a world  
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knowledge, in contradistinction to the outmoded Scholastic philosophy of syllogistic deduction and disputation. The experimenters furthermore resolved, Sprat says, to be wary of their language, for

unless they had been very watchful to keep [it] in due temper, the whole spirit and vigour of their Design, had soon been eaten out, by the luxury and redundancy of speech. The ill effects of this superfluity of talking, have already overwhelm'd most other Arts and Professions; insomuch, that when I consider the means of happy living, and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear . . . concluding, that eloquence ought to be banish'd out of all civil Societies, as a thing fatal to Peace and good Manners.<sup>3</sup>

Sprat forbears because, as Plato (see Part One) and others had pointed out before him, it would not do to leave the power of eloquence only in the hands of the wicked. Rhetoric nonetheless was a source of error. "Who can behold," Sprat writes, "without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledge?" He continues:

For now I am warm'd with this just Anger, I cannot withhold my self, from betraying the shallowness of all these seeming Mysteries upon which, we Writers, and Speakers, look so bigg. And, in few words, I dare say; that of all the Studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtain'd, than this vicious abundance of Phrase, this trick of Metaphors, this volubility of Tongue, which makes so great a noise in the world. But I spend words in vain: for the evil is now so inveterate, that it is hard to know whom to blame, or where to begin to reform. We all value one another so much, upon this beautiful deceit and; labour so long after it, in the years of our education: that we cannot but ever think kinder of it, than it deserves.<sup>3</sup>

Sprat is certainly correct in pointing to education as the source of rhetorical practices and admiration. What we labor to learn, as Sprat elegantly says, we use and admire, but not all stylists are so elegant as Sprat. As to the problem itself, the Royal Society meant to address it by "a constant Resolution, to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words."<sup>4</sup>

Sprat crosses a modest goal with a mighty one. To prune the excesses of style is one thing; "to return back to the primitive purity" of language, even supposing that there ever was such a thing, is quite another. In 1668, Bishop Wilkins, critic of the ornamental sermon and a founder of the Royal Society, proposed a linguistic reform intended, it would seem, to eradicate rhetoric altogether. Wilkins's *Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophic Language* sets forth a new symbol system for linking words with things and dispensing with metaphor and connotation. The symbols of the "real character" language would bear a mathematical relationship to what they represented. Wilkins did not, however, have anything like the symbol

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal-Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London, 1667; rpt. ed. by I. Cope and H. W. Jones, St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1958), p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>Sprat, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup>Sprat, p. 113.

"a source of error"

episto-ontology

sign/symbol  
distinctions

system of modern logic in mind. His scheme follows the suggestion made by Bacon, who had taken Chinese for a model. Chinese, says Bacon, is written "in Characters Real, which express neither letters nor words . . . but things or notions; insomuch as countries and provinces, which understand not one another's language, can nevertheless read one another's writing."<sup>5</sup> European languages were defective in this regard, said the Royal Society thinkers. Words had too many different uses, changed too much from dialect to dialect, and had too many connotations. And the extravagances of style practiced by many writers simply aggravated matters. Wilkins proposed the rudiments of the "real character" language, with simple, regular roots and modifying particles not unlike Hebrew, along with a simple syntactic structure. The symbols were arbitrary and nonalphabetic but had phonetic value so that they could be pronounced.

Though his announced intention was to create a logical language for scientific purposes, Wilkins plainly sought a more sweeping language reform. Needless to say, the constructed language he projected was unsuitable for either goal, and he did not pursue it beyond the outlines of the initial essay. His project is preserved unflatteringly in Book III of *Gulliver's Travels*, wherein Jonathan Swift describes several experiments under way in the Grand Academy of Lagado. In one, a professor experiments with a large mechanical random-character generator, hoping to produce unexpected insights. Another professor tries "to shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one, and leaving out verbs and participles, because in reality all things imaginable are but nouns." There is a scheme "for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever" and to speak instead with *things*:

Many of the most learned and wise adhere to the new scheme of expressing themselves by things, which hath this inconvenience attending it, that if a man's business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in proportion to carry a great bundle of things upon his back, unless he can afford one or two strong servants to attend him.<sup>6</sup>

### Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

While rhetoric was being attacked by the English, the French were reconceiving rhetoric's long-standing connection with literature. In a development that would have a decisive effect on rhetoric in the succeeding two centuries, French critics linked rhetoric to the genres of history and literary criticism, or belles lettres. Under the long reign of Louis XIV, French cultural nationalism flourished. The court supported the arts, including eloquence, and created a cult of French artists and writers. Molière, La Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille were praised as the equals of the classical masters. Madeleine de Scudéry (see Part Three, p. 761) adapted rhetoric to the conversations of the salon, which took place in a private venue but had strong public influence. The French Academy was founded to promote and regulate the native language. Such an environment nurtured a rhetoric that could apply classical theories

<sup>5</sup>See Part Three, p. 742.

<sup>6</sup>Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Robert Greenberg (1726; rpt. New York: Norton, 1970), pp. 155-58.

then, is an  
anxiety here:  
a panic @ times

"real  
character" boy  
everything is n'  
the name

god bless you,  
Swift

now... connecting  
+ carpentry, but  
with a different goal

still does this?

Bingo, another  
circumscription  
@ work

to contemporary eloquence and, coincidentally, avoid contact with the problems of scientific inquiry. Associated with belles lettres, rhetoric conveniently did not challenge the remnants of Ramism or the strictures of Cartesian method. History and poetry did not infringe on logic, however it was defined. This connection with belles lettres seemed a perfect application of classical education in rhetoric. At the same time, this rhetoric incorporated the increasingly popular interest in psychology under the rubric of "human nature." Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian (see Part One) are, for the belletrists, unimpeachable authorities on the construction of effective orations because they are superb observers of human nature. Thus, to use the rules of eloquence to make critical judgments in matters of taste was not to employ highly refined aristocratic sensibilities (so the argument goes) but to appeal to human nature—those universal characteristics, desires, and sensibilities common to all people in all ages and places. The effects of this movement in the next century were to be far-reaching, providing, oddly enough, an opening for the rapprochement between rhetoric and science.

## epist-ontology

ontology and  
epistemology again

we are still  
arguing with  
Locke

### *John Locke and the Idea of Human Nature*

The conceptual link between belles lettres and science was the idea of human nature. Human nature, increasingly regarded as the basis of critical judgment, was still being defined. And as epistemology—the study of human knowledge—became an essential part of the search for truth, common ground was cleared. After Bacon, psychology was the central problem of philosophy. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690; p. 817) John Locke (1632–1704) gave this problem the shape it would have for much of the succeeding century.

Like Bacon, Locke divides the mind into two general faculties, the understanding and the will. The understanding reflects upon perceptions and produces ideas that are then related by association. All general terms, Locke argues, must stand for ideas, not things, since the categories to which such terms refer do not have a concrete external existence. These ideas come into being by reflection upon sensation, which Locke takes to be universal—the same, that is, for all people. *Tree* refers not to a particular tree but to the idea we retain from reflecting upon many instances of seeing particular trees and abstracting their common features. Words refer to ideas, not things, and Locke regards simple or primary ideas, those which result from elemental perceptions, as universal, just as sensation is universal. More complex or secondary ideas may be not universal but culture-bound, communal, or even individual. Thus there is a delicate balance between word and idea that can be easily upset by either incomplete knowledge or unclear communication.

Locke emphasizes (somewhat perversely, a modern reader might think) that our primary ideas are identical and that only words are ambiguous. In this sense Locke attacks rhetoric for increasing obscurity rather than diminishing it. Locke introduces no scheme of "real characters" but, like Wilkins and Sprat, deplors the superfluity of language that thrives on uncertainty, a rhetoric that takes advantage of the faculty of will by befuddling the understanding. Less tolerant than Bacon, Locke will not accept human frailty as an excuse for the existence of rhetoric when it interferes

a small walk  
from the weak  
defense to the  
798  
withoutless attack

with human understanding. He allows, reluctantly, that rhetoric may be acceptable in popular discourse but is never appropriate for instructing or informing.

## EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RHETORIC

### Epistemology, Semantics, and Linguistics

Swift, somewhat unfairly, accuses the British Royal Society of believing that everything is a noun. The accusation points to the underlying dilemma of semantics and epistemology: What is the relationship between language and knowledge? Locke argues that all ideas are mental combinations of sense perceptions and that words refer not directly to things but to mental phenomena, the ideas we retain and build from sense impressions. The key for Locke is to guarantee that words are used consistently, for then they will bear a simple relationship to ideas. The eighteenth-century passion for "fixing" the language, that is, for preventing further change through dictionaries and prescriptive grammar, may have been fed by Locke's conclusion. A surprising number of philosophers following Locke proposed ways to purify language for philosophy.

The seventeenth-century German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, for example, projected an artificially constructed logical language, the "universal characteristic," whose symbols would bear a "natural" relationship to what they signified. Leibniz restricted his notion of a "real" language to formal, logical propositions. Unlike Wilkins, he did not hope to bring human communication in general under such a scheme. Bishop Berkeley, in *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), wonders what to make of all the language that does not, in anyone's philosophy, refer to things, ideas, or abstract relations. Many statements are not propositions at all, he argues, but rather are attempts to affect someone's actions, raise emotions, or create dispositions. Berkeley concludes that the affective power of language is detrimental to philosophy and recommends that philosophers try to reason with ideas stripped of language.

Locke's ideas about language had a profound effect on Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, who also incorporated some of Berkeley's insights in his philosophy of language. In his *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746), Condillac imagines an innate language that is triggered by sensation, an automatic response that is not communicative until it is socially reinforced. This language is the source of our first primitive ideas; the rest of language develops by analogy. Language, for Condillac, is clearly a condition of knowledge. Furthermore, the analysis of knowledge is the primary function of language, since communication can come only after we have shown our ideas to ourselves in internal discourse. But Condillac does not turn from these insights to speculate on the rhetorical quality of external or internal speech. Instead, he looks back to the prevailing concern about perfecting a language for science. If language analyzes and produces knowledge, then we reason well or badly only because our language is well or badly made. In his *Grammaire* (1775), Condillac endorses the search for a universal grammar, believing that such a grammar will represent the relationships of human thought.

note how the  
attack on rhetoric  
resonates with a  
disparaging of  
human being  
(an anxiety)

Labour might very  
well agree with  
Swift. This really  
is awesome in  
rhetoric everything  
is a verb  
: 10:11:11

Why "surprising?"

connections to  
modern day  
computing  
(Stephenson's  
trilogy)

ought vs. is  
the fear of  
affective  
language

there is something  
+ this of course.  
Again, I'm going  
to labour's  
composition etc

episto-ontology

episto-ontology

Huzzah!

episto-ontology

the two authors @  
work here: what  
would Latour re-  
read into this?

The search for a universal grammar stimulated the scientific study of language and led to the founding discoveries of modern linguistics. The *Port-Royal Grammar* of 1660 attempts to examine the common elements of all languages, distinguishing *langues* (particular languages) from *langage* (the universal phenomenon of language). In the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and D'Alembert (1750–1772), the articles on grammar—some of them by Voltaire, Diderot, and Dumarsais—assume that general grammar is coincident with metaphysics, the fundamental order of language being the same as the fundamental order of thought. In 1801, Destutt de Tracy could define philosophy itself as the combination of ideology (the analysis of sensations and ideas, the content of philosophy), universal grammar (the method of philosophy), and logic (or correct reasoning, the goal of philosophy). So well accepted was this idea in France that in 1795 university chairs of logic and metaphysics were replaced by chairs of universal grammar—though eight years later, the status quo was restored.

Giambattista Vico (1668–1744; p. 862), professor of rhetoric at the University of Naples from 1699 to 1741, uses the language of universal grammar and human nature, but he is no Cartesian. Vico vigorously opposes Descartes's epistemology and its implications for rhetoric. For Descartes, the only true knowledge is that about which there can be no doubt. But Vico argues in "On the Study Methods of Our Time" (1709; p. 865) that too much of human knowledge is contingent to be left outside the purview of philosophy, where the Cartesian commitment to certainty would leave it. Vico also argues that knowledge cannot be separated from language, as Descartes and most other philosophers seemed to desire. An adequate philosophy, for Vico, must recognize that knowledge is bound up in human reason, passion, and imagination; that human beings function in social groups and are limited by historical circumstances; and that all these conditions are expressed in their language. Rhetoric, with its concern for probabilities and language, is better suited than the Cartesian method to investigating human knowledge. Vico goes further, attacking even the supposed certainty of physics and mathematics, which is ultimately a matter of belief, he says, not of such actual knowledge of the world as only God can have. As an educator, Vico is also troubled by the potentially disabling effects of a purely Cartesian education: If the merely probable is left out, what happens to law, ethics, politics, history, and even medicine? The Cartesian method is appropriate for science, with its linear causality, says Vico, but the world of human affairs, with its multiple circumstances and relative causality, must be left to rhetoric.

In *The New Science* (1725), Vico asserts that knowledge of human affairs is the only "certain" knowledge, since we can know what we ourselves have made but not what God has made—the world of nature. Thus Vico searches for the origins of history in the origins of human nature, including the universal language from which all languages spring. He posits three stages to this origin-based history, stages that link society, psychology, and language. In the first stage, the poetic, knowledge develops through metaphor: Words suggest associations that become human knowledge and basic social institutions, such as the family. The next stage, the heroic, is marked by the subordination of the individual to the nation through the creation of laws for civil society. The final stage, the human, is more self-conscious, democratic, and individualistic. Inevitably, this stage must lead to the dissolution of social

bonds, a return to a primitive state, and a repetition of the cycle of stages. Vico's notion of stages and cycles in history, easy enough to criticize or dismiss in itself, serves as a kind of heuristic for thinking broadly about culture, language, and society. His influence outside Italy during his own time, however, was negligible; the work of assimilating Bacon, Descartes, and Locke was not nearly done, and for a long time Vico was seen as a mere reactionary, opposing Cartesian progress in the name of a long-dead Italian humanism.

The Cartesian principle of scientific language study was enshrined in the academies of France and Italy and in the Royal Society in Britain. By the end of the seventeenth century, all had proposed the compilation of dictionaries and grammars for the express purpose of settling and correcting their languages. Indeed, the French and Italian academies had produced their dictionaries by the end of the century, rousing the envy of John Dryden, Daniel Defoe, and Jonathan Swift, who advocated "fixing" the language—that is, establishing by law the definitions of words and their proper usage through the ministrations of an academy akin to or part of the British Royal Society. Several incomplete dictionaries (usually focusing on "hard words") and some haphazard grammars preceded Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*. Johnson, too, set out to settle once and for all the proper usage of the language, but came to realize that the language could not be fixed, controlled, or replaced deliberately with a more logical system. Johnson's descriptivism was not well accepted. Indeed, we need only remember the furor over *Webster's Third (New International Dictionary, Unabridged)*, or read the fulminations of the Sunday-paper language pundits to see that the controversy over whether the dictionary prescribes or describes is still with us today. Grammar, too, was conceived of as prescriptive, and so the new grammar books were full of rules, proper models, and errors to be corrected. The polymath Joseph Priestley went against the tide in declaring that rules did not determine correct usage: "The prevailing custom . . . can be the only standard for the time it prevails."<sup>7</sup> And it is the Scottish rhetorician George Campbell whose formulation stands as the modern grammarian's motto: "Good usage," Campbell writes, "is national and reputable and present."<sup>8</sup>

These investigations into language, national and universal, were crowned by the brilliant linguist Sir William Jones's announcement in 1786 that there were fundamental similarities among Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit that could not possibly have been produced by accident. "No philologer could examine them all three," he says, "without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists."<sup>9</sup> The refinement of Jones's search for the original Indo-European language led to the comparative study of modern languages, the scientific study of phonology, the acceptance of the principle that language changes, and the study of dialects—in short, all of modern linguistics.

<sup>7</sup>Joseph Priestley, *A Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar* (Warrington, 1762), p. 184.

<sup>8</sup>George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776; rpt. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p. 142.

<sup>9</sup>Paper read to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1786, published in *Asiatic Researches* 1 (1799), pp. 421–23.

circulation:  
generation  
metaphor

poor guy -  
should have let  
them all finish -  
and influencing  
thinking and  
education

god bless you,  
Joseph Priestley.

Not all of these developments found their way into eighteenth-century rhetoric, conditioned as it was by the persistence of the Latin curriculum and separated from philosophy by the philosophers' antipathy. But because of their role in education and the promulgation of language standards, rhetoricians did incorporate into their theories the study of grammar, speculation about the history of language, investigation into the relationship between language and knowledge, and a practical and influential interest in dialectal differences.

### *The Elocution Movement*

The eighteenth-century fetish of correctness in language was not restricted to diction and usage but extended to pronunciation. Contrary to insistent popular fancy, correctness in pronunciation, as in diction and usage, is not an absolute. Language standards are the property of the ruling class; thus the diction, usage, and pronunciation of the power centers of capital cities tend to be the standards for a national language. Linguistic discrimination is a staple of human interaction—it was once quite deadly to mispronounce *shibboleth*. And in the eighteenth century, it could be worth one's favor at court, success on the stage, appointment at the university, or preferment in the church to speak a dialect regarded as low, rustic, comical, or even altogether incomprehensible. This circumstance was felt with some force by the cultural and intellectual leaders of the British Empire's subject nations in the eighteenth century. Many Scots and Irish (and some Americans) who sought a role in the great world for themselves or their sons chose London for their education. Those who remained at home became a ravenous market for the spate of pronouncing dictionaries, hard-word dictionaries, error-hunting grammars, and tracts on elocution produced during this linguistic century. But some leaders went further and attempted educational reforms that would make "proper" English part of the curriculum.

The champion of the elocution movement, Irish actor Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788; p. 879), claimed to be reviving the subject of delivery and restoring it to its proper stature in rhetorical study. The need for greater attention to delivery had been raised in the previous century. Wilkins in 1646 and Fénelon in the dialogues composed around 1679 had complained bitterly about the quality of pulpit oratory. Others offered advice on delivery for preachers and lawyers, with discussions of acting, facial expression, posture, movement, gesture, projection, tone, pace, and modulation. Criticism of preaching persisted in the eighteenth century, with Richard Steele, in a 1711 issue of the *Spectator*, calling for improvement in the clergy's reading of the Common Prayer. Also previous to Sheridan's efforts was the phenomenon of John Henley, always referred to as Orator Henley, who in 1726 opened a school in London where he taught elocution. Belying widespread criticism of his stagy performances, Henley's pronouncements concerned propriety in delivery and argued for restoring the force of conviction to the church service.

But the story of elocution begins in earnest with Sheridan's proposals for the reform of Irish education and the parallel attempts by the Scottish Select Society to do the same in Scotland. In *British Education* (1756), Sheridan argues that the revival

of oratory, by which he means the detailed study and appreciation of oral performance, ought to be the first priority of Britons, for such a revival would, he believed, bring vast improvements to religion, morality, government, and the arts. He extols the classical authors and claims that Britain need only restore eloquence to its ancient stature to match the greatness of Rome. This argument Sheridan would repeat in a number of works on elocution, education, and reading, as well as in the introduction to his well-received pronouncing dictionary.

eloquence,  
propriety  
and empire -  
through in-  
tense for good  
measure

Sheridan also presented his views in lectures delivered in Dublin and elsewhere from 1756 to 1762, when they were published as *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (p. 881). Among the many remarkable arguments to be found in the lectures is a complaint about the dominance of writing over speaking. English spelling, Sheridan correctly points out, does not indicate pronunciation; one cannot learn pronunciation through reading. Moreover, punctuation does not indicate sentence emphasis and so does not help in reading aloud. Not content with these practical arguments, Sheridan says that writing is inferior to speech, for speech is a gift from God, whereas writing is an invention of mortals. In a separate lecture to a Dublin audience about the special danger of reading for dialect speakers like the Irish, Sheridan also says that what is needed is a better curriculum in Irish elementary schools, one that would include instruction in English, by which he means the polite London dialect. Irish universities, too, should incorporate study of the liberal arts, including oratory, to introduce the Irish to high culture. Through these reforms, Sheridan hoped to keep at least some Irish intellectuals from going to London for education and to create in Ireland an educational center for all those from the empire's margins.

(Plat?)

The *Lectures* discuss what is now standard speech-text material on oral interpretation, vocal expressiveness, and gestures. Words, Sheridan argues, are not the only constituent of language. Expressions and gestures also communicate. Indeed, they are more primitive than words, more natural where words are artificial, more universal where words are national, and more expressive of emotion than is the sophisticated language of words. Locke acknowledged the existence of the passions, says Sheridan, but his researches were limited to the faculty of reason. Sheridan contends that gesture and expression, "the natural language of the passions," may be the key to a complete account of psychology. Sheridan is clearly using philosophy to support his argument rather than trying to advance philosophy. Nonetheless, he suggests an important link between rhetoric and the new science.

Not long before Sheridan published *British Education* and began his lecture series, a group of Edinburgh intellectuals embarked on a mission to reform Scottish education along similar lines, including the introduction of composition in English and practice in English speech delivery to replace Latin declamation. This group, the Select Society, included such luminaries as David Hume, Hugh Blair, Adam Smith, and Lord Kames. Since Smith had spent six years at Oxford and had acquired the proper accent and learning, Lord Kames prevailed on him, in 1748, to present a course of lectures in Edinburgh on correctness in language, taste, and the arts. The Society clearly had "correct" pronunciation as a goal as well (Sheridan was brought in by the Society for two sets of lectures in 1761), although Smith

episto-ontology

apparently devoted only one lecture explicitly to correctness and proper pronunciation. But Smith's own "corrected" pronunciation and style may have contributed, as much as anything else, to the popularity of his lectures. Smith focused on the cultural elevation of the Scots through rhetoric and belles lettres; this focus was strongly seasoned with a scientific attitude toward language study and communication. Smith was succeeded in his role by Hugh Blair and George Campbell, both of whom turned Smith's interests into the key components of rhetoric for the following century.

Elocution as a separate subject by no means disappeared because of these developments. Indeed, courses in delivery or elocution became a standard part of the U.S. college curriculum (as they still are in many places), and a large number of treatises and textbooks on proper delivery were published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most notable of these works is Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* (1896). In this work Austin, an Irish clergyman, develops an elaborate system of notation for posture, gesture, facial expression, and movement. This system should, he says, make it possible to record and study the actions of successful orators, without which amplification the mere record of their words is incomplete. Moreover, speeches can be choreographed with these notations so that students can be taught proper action. The drawings that Austin published in *Chironomia* are reproduced here (pp. 893-96), along with one example of a speech marked with his notation system. Although the system proved too cumbersome for practical use, analyzing nonverbal performance (using film and videotape) and choreographing speeches are standard practice today.

1896

In London, the center of culture, debate became an important part of speech education. While debating also appeared in the speech curriculum in Dublin, Edinburgh, and Boston, the quest for correctness helped to keep declamation the dominant concern. Thus, in a number of ways, the elocution movement helped to shape the fields of speech communication and English composition that were to emerge in the nineteenth century.

norms

### Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

Thomas Sheridan's appeal to the classical authors and the ancient ideal of eloquence allied him with the influential Augustan writers of the early eighteenth century—among them Sheridan's godfather Jonathan Swift. Indeed, the Augustans—chiefly Swift and Pope—saw themselves as rhetoricians. The popular Romantic image of the solitary poet overflowing with spontaneous feelings would come in a few years, spurred by the revival of Longinus's *On the Sublime* (see Part One). But at the beginning of the century, the Augustans held sway. These writers emphasized public matters, taking the study of "man," as Pope and his classical forebear Horace put it, to be the proper activity of the poet. This study relied on the idea that human nature was permanent, that reason was the quintessential human characteristic, and that true knowledge about people came from examining recurrent experiences. It was wrong to spin out one's particular feelings or to dwell on isolated bits of data, on the merely local or personal, however much such activity seemed to be sanc-

Augustans emphasize "public matters"

tioned by the rising philosophy of empiricism. Swift pictured modern writers—those who felt that experience alone could reveal true knowledge—as spiders spinning filthy webs out of their own guts. Instead, the Augustans wrote to inspire national pride, to improve religion and morality, and to satirize inept government. They were social beings, proud of good conversation, given to writing essays in prose and verse, and much less interested in confessions, lyrics, and ballads than their Romantic successors would be. Seeking to affect their readers and to instruct by pleasing, they employed the tropes and schemes of Aristotelian rhetoric—for persuasion, ideally, and not for show—and were inspired by Cicero and Quintilian’s orator, the good man who fosters goodness in others.

ontology  
impacts  
poets &  
poetry

The Augustans were quite familiar with Ciceronian rhetoric, which had, as always, its contemporary advocates. John Ward, who lectured on rhetoric from 1720 to 1755 at Gresham College, defended the Ciceronian model against all the attacks on invention, disposition, *topoi*, and style launched by the philosophers. But such an aggressive classicism, virtually untouched by modern ideas, was increasingly rare. John Lawson’s popular *Lectures Concerning Oratory* (1758), delivered at the University of Dublin, provides an interesting contrast to Ward’s classicism. It is both a standard classical rhetoric and a veritable handbook of Augustan ideas. Lawson gives a history of classical literature, a summary of Aristotle, an explanation of *imitation* in its Augustan sense of describing human nature by adopting classical models, and an outline of classical rhetoric focusing on the figures and tropes and illustrating them with verses. But Lawson downplays invention, justifies the use of rhetoric by citing Bacon on the need to persuade people to accept the truth, and urges speakers to be judicious in the use of tropes, which should express real feelings and convey them to the audience.

the history of the  
classical rhetoric  
the history of the  
classical rhetoric  
the history of the  
classical rhetoric

Locke’s argument for the uniformity of perception and elementary ideas contributed to the search for the common elements of human nature. For this reason, the Augustans regarded Locke as a humanist. His psychology seemed to point to general laws and common experience and to put a premium on effective communication, correctness, and order. Later, these same ideas would suggest quite different notions, those of equality, democracy, and individuality. Still, in the neoclassical age, empiricism could be seen (as it was by Locke) as the search not for data and details but for the essential truths of human experience.

In France, too, classicism and rationalism were reconciled. As we have already seen, toward the end of the seventeenth century classical rhetoric provided a method for making critical judgments about literature. In 1671 the critic René Rapin, for example, notes that the classical authors excelled not only in oratory but in what he christened the *belles lettres*: poetry, history, and philosophy. Like oratory, the other genres can be judged, he says, on the effectiveness of their appeals to *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. And in discussing the appeals, he uses the language of psychology, noting that *logos* is an appeal to the faculty of understanding and *pathos* to the faculties of affection and will. Whereas some defenders of the ancients rejected modern philosophy altogether (and vice versa), several critics looked for connections between the two. For such critics (notably Nicolas Boileau and Jean de la Bruyère), rationalism was a call to reexamine classical standards of critical judgment in light of their

the  
continued  
history of  
ethos and  
psychology

actual effectiveness. The rules of classical composition were thus tempered, on the one hand, by the sense that there was not always a good explanation for why something worked and, on the other, by the recognition that merely following the rules did not necessarily produce the desired result.

In declaring the genres of poetry, history, philosophy, and later of science writing, to be proper objects of rhetorical analysis, the French critics were also responding to the Cartesian imputation that investigation is a mental rather than a discursive phenomenon and that hence all communication, even of philosophical and scientific knowledge, was outside the province of philosophy. Rhetoric sought not to make original inquiries but to judge whether literary or oratorical performances conformed to such standards of "human nature" as orderliness, clarity, correctness, and good sense.

When Adam Smith gave his lectures in 1748, no argument was necessary for connecting rhetoric and belles lettres or for reconciling classicism with empiricism. For example, Smith could dismiss the tropes and figures as "silly" because they did not contribute to clear and effective communication. Rhetoric was not tied to the tropes, after all, but was concerned with the transfer of ideas. Persuasion is a kind of communication, Smith says, and so should conform to contemporary taste. Indeed, taste changes and rhetorical conventions change along with it. Echoing Joseph Priestley, Smith notes that the type of discourse determines the proper form—that is, the nature of science affects scientific writing, just as the legal system affects the form of pleading. All the forms of discourse are rhetorical; rhetoric has simply ceased to be identical to the classical model of composition and style. Rhetoric is now the study of correct grammar and syntax, appropriate style and diction for types of discourse or occasions for speaking, taste or standards of literary and moral judgment, and the means of effective communication in general.

In his lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres, delivered at the University of Glasgow during the 1750s and 1760s, Smith searches for a rational origin for language and supposes that there is a universal grammar corresponding to the structure of thought. He treats logic as a guide for reasoning, a corrective to the mind's natural imperfection. And he describes a rhetoric geared to the mind's operations. The first goal of rhetoric is to promote "perspicuity" in language—that is, to seek a kind of transparency in conveying ideas, combined with strength of expression. Perspicuity depends on thorough knowledge of the subject and "natural" arrangement (suggested by the subject and not by artificial schemes). Perspicuity does not rule out sentiment and passion, for these faculties of the mind require communication as well, especially in persuasive discourse. Indeed, style conveys the personality of the speaker or writer. This last point is of great significance to Smith.

Smith illustrates his observations on rhetoric with literary examples, which more than explicit argument establish the continuity of rhetoric and literary criticism. His critical method is to treat style as an expression of the author's character. He describes authors as "accurate" or "affecting," for example, and treats these characteristics as qualities of mind as well as of style. Reports by his students indicate that Smith was an energetic critic, most in his element when discussing literature and the criteria of taste, though his remarks about authors may seem pedestrian to the twentieth-century

you can really do a lot w/ "effective communication" if you explore the range of what "effective" is?

one step forward, two steps back

reader. Smith judges authors both ancient and modern. Although he is no stranger to the classics, he seeks to convey their content while limiting their influence. "Antiquity is necessary," he says cynically, "to give any thing a very high reputation as a matter of deep knowledge. One who reads a number of modern books altho they be excellent will not get thereby the character of a learned man. The acquaintance of the ancients will alone procure him that name."<sup>10</sup> Among the moderns, the best author is Swift, who writes clearly, shows deep knowledge of his subject, and reveals his personality in his style rather than covering it over with the affected elegance of figurative language—as, Smith complains, Lord Shaftesbury continually does.

Under the banner of rhetoric and belles lettres, Smith brings together many apparently incompatible trends. He accepts the critiques of older rhetoric offered by Locke and the Royal Society, rejecting tropes and classical arrangement and embracing instead "natural" expression and organization. He uses the scientific study of language to support correctness and propriety in style. "Correction" of dialect differences is a matter of improving communication, another Lockean idea brought under rhetoric's charge in the service of provincial education. And he disengages the study of rhetoric from veneration of the classics while exploiting the neoclassical virtue of propriety as a standard for communication. From Smith's perspective, rhetoric's appeal to the passions is not a threat to reason and understanding but a natural part of communication. Literature is an example of the natural tendency to link instruction and entertainment: All that separates history and poetry, says Smith, is that one is prose and the other is verse. Smith does not present his rhetoric as a systematic theory. His lectures—preserved only in a student's verbatim notes—use repetition and example rather than orderly analysis, and treat the method as common sense rather than as revolutionary theory.

### *George Campbell and Epistemological Rhetoric*

George Campbell (1719–1796), a Scottish clergyman and academic, brings a great deal of order and system to much the same set of ideas in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776; p. 902), which he began in 1750 and completed as part of his contribution to a philosophical study circle that he helped to found. Thus Campbell is well placed to synthesize the key concerns of rhetoric at the time: the relationship of rhetoric to contemporary philosophy, the practical concern for improving pulpit eloquence, the popular interest in elocution (by which name he identifies two of the three sections of his book), the connection of rhetoric with literature and criticism, and the long-standing claims of classical rhetoric.

Campbell says that his purpose is to give a "sketch of the human mind; and, aided by the lights which the Poet and Orator so amply furnish, to disclose its secret movements, tracing its principal channels of perception and action, as near as possible, to their source." He will use "the science of human nature" to determine the principles of rhetoric that "operate on the soul of the hearer, in the way of informing,

<sup>10</sup>Adam Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, ed. J. C. Bryce (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1985), p. 182.

first principles,  
then rhetoric

important  
distinction  
I should  
think

(would have been  
a nice endnote  
for the piece)

persuade vs. convince  
≡

believe vs. know  
(used in some lecture)

any connections  
to lecture

"a firm base"

convincing, pleasing, moving, or persuading." Arts as well as sciences must seek their first principles in scientific psychology. Logic is based on the faculty of understanding and ethics upon the will, Campbell says, "but there is no art whatever that hath so close a connexion with all the faculties and powers of the mind, as eloquence. . . . It is indeed the grand art of communication, not of ideas only, but of sentiments, passions, dispositions, and purposes."<sup>11</sup> Campbell seeks not only to ground rhetoric in the science of human nature but to make rhetoric an essential element of that science. For each mental faculty, Campbell identifies a corresponding form of communication and its proper style. For example, one addresses the understanding in seeking to inform or convince. Perspicuity is the proper stylistic quality for informing, as argument is for convincing. The fine arts please the faculty of imagination through the quality of beauty. Similarly, *pathos* moves the passions, and vehemence persuades the will to action. Following Bacon, Campbell argues that persuasion is the culmination of the sequence just outlined: informing, convincing, pleasing, moving, and then persuading. Logic alone will not suffice to persuade, though it is needed to convince. Only rhetoric combines appeals to all the faculties, connecting ideas with aesthetic images and emotional desires to produce an action of will.

In his discussion of reasoning, Campbell must refute the arguments of philosopher David Hume (1711–1776), whose empiricism rejects the claim that true knowledge can come from any source except experience and reflection. In Hume's system, revelation is a fantasy and testimony is unreliable. (Hume's views were opposed to religion, an additional spur to Campbell's desire for rebuttal.) To address the dilemma posed by Hume, Campbell distinguishes demonstration from "moral evidence." The former belongs to the empirical sciences and the latter to rhetoric. In disputes about ethics, law, and religion, there is usually good evidence on both sides of a question. In these areas, science has little to do, and rhetoric much. It is pointless, Campbell argues, to expect moral reasoning to resemble mathematical demonstration. But reasoning is not therefore limited to demonstration. To convince, which is the first step in the process of persuasion, one must appeal to reason; therefore, the rhetorician working in the realm of human affairs must know the "logic" of moral evidence. The types of moral evidence are experience, analogy, testimony, and probability. Campbell shows how much of human knowledge depends on these forms of evidence and sets out the limits of each in contributing to knowledge and belief.

But Campbell then goes one step further; he notes that scientific proof relies on precisely the same basic mental operation as moral reasoning, namely, a belief that we have an accurate memory of a past fact or demonstration or a belief that others have been correct in their proofs. Here, then, is the link between philosophy and rhetoric: The rhetorician appeals to the understanding just as the logician does; moral knowledge and scientific knowledge rest on the same mental operations; the difference between moral and scientific knowledge is a question not of certainty versus probability but of the degree of probability; and the real differences therefore lie only in subject matter. With this firm base in reason, rhetoric can confidently proceed through the steps toward persuasion. Campbell discusses audience, ethical and pathetic appeals, types of discourse, and style. Though not as striking as the

<sup>11</sup>Campbell, p. xlix.



new quib  
understood this  
Separation until  
Let our

concern the way language is used for reasoning and moving. Like Campbell, Blair separates conviction and persuasion. Conviction comes from reason and argument, whereas persuasion combines conviction with techniques for stimulating the feelings that move the will. These techniques are method (or organization), *ethos*, style (aesthetic and pathetic appeals), and delivery. Here Blair draws on classical categories, mixing the familiar rules with modern definitions. Method turns out to be a combination of classical disposition—introduction, narration, argument, and so on—and the Cartesian practice (that is, “method”) of dividing the subject into parts. Argument comprises invention, arrangement, and expression. Invention means knowledge of the subject—not *topoi*—and the subject itself determines the appropriate arrangement and manner of expression. The standard of *ethos* is that of Cicero and Quintilian: a person of good character who is known for being virtuous. Under style, Blair distinguishes between using figurative language for ornament and using it to extend one’s range of expression through metaphor and repetition. He also treats delivery seriously as a part of persuasion and not as mere decoration. Blair’s practical advice on nonverbal expression is barely distinguishable from that in twentieth-century speech textbooks.

Finally, Blair provides a handbook of grammar, usage, and style, prefacing it with a history of language, including a history of writing. The need for such a comprehensive and elegant presentation of the arts of composition, speech, and criticism is attested by the sixty-two editions, fifty-one abridgments, and ten translations of the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* during the century after its publication. It combined all the features that by the end of that century were split into the separate fields of English, composition, and speech.

Smith, Campbell, and Blair were not alone in bringing to rhetoric the doctrines of epistemology and the combination of rhetoric with criticism. Lord Kames, in his *Elements of Criticism* (1762), sought to discover the basic psychological principles of aesthetic response and included eloquence among the arts. And Joseph Priestley, in his *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (given during the 1760s and published in 1777), combined classical rhetoric with modern psychology. Kames’s influence in the intellectual community was considerable, and his effort to ground criticism and the arts in scientific psychology provided support for including the emotions, as well as reason and the understanding, in the study of human nature. Priestley, like Blair, retained the outlines of classical composition transformed into memory (the “natural” form of invention), method (arrangement according to the dictates of the subject itself), style (or effectiveness), and elocution. Priestley’s rhetoric is neither as complete nor as elegant as Blair’s, but Priestley’s prestige as a scientist lent considerable weight to the arguments for seeing the new rhetoric as a legitimate companion to philosophy, rather than as a sentimental holdover from the past.

### *Education and Society in an Era of Reform*

Great cultural and political changes occurred in the eighteenth century. Voltaire’s *Candide* was published in 1759, Rousseau’s *Social Contract* in 1762 (the same year as Kames’s *Elements of Criticism*), and Campbell’s *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* and Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, the year of the American Revolution.

Wow!  
disciplinarity?  
institutionality

James, Campbell, Blair  
disciplinarity  
institutionality

and technological  
changes as well

Locke's philosophy, positing as it did the universality of sensation and ideas, had not only suggested that knowledge was based on human nature but had also reinforced the belief that human nature in fact existed. In a fundamental sense, it appeared, all people were the same.

Advancing those universalizing hints in another way in his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), Locke had argued that government is the result of a social contract, tacit or explicit, to protect the fundamental rights to "life, liberty, and estate." Revolution may be necessary, Locke said, to remove despotic governments that do not preserve these natural rights. The revolution in philosophy seemed to call for inquiry into the natural basis for equality, authority, liberty, and individuality. Tradition could no longer be relied on to reveal truth and right action. A scientific attitude demanded a study of the human condition, and that study inevitably suggested reforms in government and education.

Furthermore, in 1681, Archbishop Fénelon, author of the *Dialogues on Eloquence*, had penned a treatise, *On the Education of Girls* (published in 1687), that was remarkable for at least two reasons. First, it took up the problem of education for women, an area neglected since the short-lived innovations of the Renaissance. Although Fénelon did not advocate great learning for women, he argued that ignorance favors frivolity and presented a basic curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, and household economy. Second, Fénelon's treatise gave attention to early childhood education, an endeavor that should, he said, encourage natural development. His treatise contributed to the vigorous eighteenth-century discussions of both issues.

In the eighteenth century, many more upper-class women were educated, and a great many women of the middle and serving classes became literate. Although Fénelon's girls' school had not survived, Louis XIV founded the academy of St. Cyr, whose headmistress, Mme. de Maintenon, carried on the fight for more and better education for women. Mary Astell (p. 841), although not able to realize her ambitious plans for a women's college, ended her career as the principal of a school for girls, one of many that sprang up in England in the early eighteenth century. Women made up a large part of the new reading public, and more women became writers of published fiction and poetry. However, few engaged in public discourse, and few seem to have studied rhetoric. No doubt some did—Queen Anne received elocution lessons from the actress Mrs. Barry, for example—but generally, because education was geared to one's "station," women were seldom trained in fields relating to business or public affairs. As for speaking in church, women were barred from participating in Roman Catholic and Anglican services, although several Dissenting churches did allow some participation by women. The Society of Friends, for example, was notable for its sexual egalitarianism even at the time of its founding in the mid-seventeenth century. In 1666, Margaret Fell (see Part Three, p. 748), a vigorous proselytizer for the new faith, had written *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures* (p. 753), a book that helped cement the Quakers' liberal position on equality. Women's opportunities for higher education and public rhetoric would expand even more in the next century.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the dominant figure in the development of the new political philosophies of the later eighteenth century, proposed a system of education

based on natural principles and, seconded as he was by the cultural leaders of the time, decisively turned education toward a study of the psychology of learning. The psychological approach meant training the faculties, first through the sensations and then through simple ideas. Classical education, argued Rousseau, was too complex and quite unnatural for a child; the vernacular, not Latin, was clearly the appropriate language for study. Moreover, education should promote the individual's growth as well as the common good. Rousseau advocated national responsibility for education and universal education for children, but he despaired of all these reforms unless society itself could be reformed first.

The French Revolution in 1789 did not bring the reforms Rousseau had envisioned. Still, educational projects begun before the Revolution proceeded. Despite the violent conservative reaction to the Revolution, which threatened all democratic efforts in Europe, education was nationalized in France and in Germany by the end of the eighteenth century and in England by the end of the nineteenth. Teaching was professionalized, child psychology led to modern primary school practices, and the curriculum at all levels was revised to reflect both liberal ideals of individual development and the needs of modern society.

These movements, accelerated by the Industrial Revolution, continued through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries, making education more widely available and consequently pressuring education to be more attuned to a wider audience. The rhetorics of Blair and Campbell, with their emphasis on science and psychology and their extensive use of vernacular literature, were remarkably appropriate to the new educational environment. For all the battering it had received in the previous century, rhetoric remained central to the curriculum and to preparation for public life.

The great ideas of the Enlightenment—empiricism, rationalism, and psychology—all found a place within rhetoric. Locke's rejection of rhetoric did not succeed in killing it off, nor did Swift's attack on the moderns generate any sustained anti-scientific reaction among the rhetoricians. In dividing conviction and persuasion, rhetorical theorists made room for a psychology of emotion as well as of reason. The influence of classical rhetoric was diminished but did not disappear; indeed, the appeal to *pathos* and the canon of delivery seemed more important than ever. The association of ideas, facilitated by a memory well stocked with both images and knowledge of the subject at hand, not only created arguments and a natural arrangement but spontaneously served up figures of speech. Rhetoricians formulated rules for natural composition and speech and also for judging literary works. Within a hundred years of Sprat's strictures, rhetoric's estate was considerably improved.

### ***Selected Bibliography***

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the many ways the industrial revolution continues to shape education and the technologies of the industrial revolution spoke to and influenced how education was reformed

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larly on Bacon and Descartes. George Kennedy surveys the period in his chapter on neoclassical rhetoric in *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (1980).

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On conversation as a women's rhetorical genre developed by European women, see Jane Donawerth, "Conversation and the Boundaries of Public Discourse in Rhetorical Theory by Renaissance Women" (*Rhetorica* 16 [1998]: 181-99). On women's rhetorical strategies in more public venues, see Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Sound of Women's Voices" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 75 [1989]: 212-21). For more on women's education, see the headnote on Mary Astell.