

THE PAST--AND FUTURE--OF RHETORICAL INSTRUCTION

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It has become almost a commonplace to speak today of a "revival of rhetoric" or of the "emergence of a new rhetoric" in reference to events of the two dozen years since Daniel Fogarty's Roots for a New Rhetoric appeared. Most often, this revival is described (borrowing from the work of Thomas Kuhn) as the attempt to gain acceptance for a new rhetorical paradigm, one needed because of the severe inadequacies of what is usually referred to as the "current-traditional paradigm," the one we inherited from the nineteenth century. Richard Young describes the current-traditional paradigm this way: "the overt features . . . are obvious enough: the emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage . . . and with style; the preoccupation with the informal essay and research paper; and so on" (31). Young's views have been echoed by many others, with the result that nineteenth-century rhetoric has generally become the whipping boy for our discipline. By accepting this position unquestioningly, however, I believe we do a disservice both to the nineteenth-century rhetoricians and to ourselves.

In this brief essay, I would like to sketch in some of the history of our field and, in doing so, I hope to argue that the usual charges leveled against the late nineteenth-century model or "paradigm" are, by and large, beside the point. In my view, the charges brought by Young and others are merely symptomatic of the genuine ills that beset the rhetorical model we inherited in the early twentieth century. And to a very large extent, in

spite of the "new rhetoric" with its emphasis on process and invention, those genuine ills still beset us today. Finally, I hope to suggest how this foray into the past may help us define the goals of future rhetorical studies.

The earliest rhetorical instruction and theory in North America were informed not by the classical tradition of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, but by that of Peter Ramus and Omer Talon. The work of these two curricular reformers, who assigned invention and arrangement to logic and left rhetoric only the study of style and delivery, formed the core of rhetorical instruction at Harvard, the first American university, whose laws indicated that the primary purpose of rhetoric was to perpetuate the study of Latin and that its primary parts were elocutio and pronunciatio. Not until well into the eighteenth century did the works of Cicero and Quintilian become widely available--and influential--in colleges. When they did, however, the first revival of rhetoric blossomed, though in the eighteenth rather than the twentieth century. This revival can perhaps best be associated with John Ward's A System of Oratory, which Warren Guthrie views as the most pervasive synthesis of Greek and Roman theory then available. Though Ward's book is by no means original, it did go beyond a narrow focus on style and delivery to discuss invention and arrangement as well, thus restoring to the province of rhetoric that which had been taken away by the Ramistic reformers. More importantly, Ward's book attempted a reunion of theory and practice which I believe to be the very hallmark of the classical system as worked out in the works of Cicero and Quintilian and which I believe must be at the heart of any viable rhetoric. A System of Oratory was widely used until the late eighteenth century, along with the Port Royal Art of Speaking (1696), which also

demonstrated a more complete classical understanding of the nature and purpose of rhetoric, with its marriage of theory and practice.

Accompanying this rediscovery of the classical tradition was the growing influence of rhetoric in American colleges. College or university presidents frequently delivered the lectures on rhetoric; in fact, the first American "rhetoric" was written by the President of Princeton, John Witherspoon. And the first Boylston Professor of Rhetoric at Harvard (1806)¹ was John Quincy Adams, future president of the United States, whose Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory (1810) thoroughly restated the classical doctrine.²

By the end of the eighteenth century, rhetoric was in full bloom. In a college curriculum which lacked rigid boundaries between subjects, rhetoric fulfilled its classical function as the art of communication, one which synthesized material from a wide variety of fields. The relatively small student bodies allowed the principles of rhetoric and dialectic to come into play in the classroom and in student tutorials. Furthermore, the increasing popularity of student debate societies, the use of oral examinations and recitations, and the public disputations associated with commencement at most colleges enhanced the position of rhetoric, which was at that time essentially classical in its aim to produce good citizens skilled in speaking. As Michael Halloran demonstrates convincingly in "Rhetoric in the American College Curriculum: The Decline of Public Discourse," at this time

rhetoric in American colleges was the classical art of . . . public discourse that stood very near if not precisely at the center of pedagogical concerns. It provided students with an art, and more importantly with copious experience and with a tacit set of values

bearing directly on the use of language in managing public affairs (254).

This eighteenth-century model of rhetorical instruction is worth reconsidering at greater length, and Halloran's discussion in the article just cited provides us with a fine point of reference. The model was characterized by several distinctive features. First, Halloran argues, was the central place rhetoric held in the curriculum. Secondly, this model put major emphasis on oral, rather than written communication. And students spoke, in their class recitations and public disputations, on matters of personal, social, and political significance: their words held consequences. As Halloran points out, this emphasis on oral communication effected "a certain readiness of mind and speech, and a zest for rhetorical encounters" (254). In an 1838 Report on Examinations, William McGuffey praises the practice of classroom speaking, saying that it "cultivates the memory, the reasoning powers, the powers of extemporaneous expression, and the ability to defend views." Unless students can do all this, McGuffey warns, they are "not suitably educated for this country" (241). We should note, in passing, that this emphasis on orality carried certain implications for the evaluation of students. Here is how the system, and the evaluation, worked in our early colleges. Classroom activity was built, as I have indicated, around "oral disputation." One student chose and presented a thesis, often taken from reading or class discussion, and defended it against counterarguments offered by other students and the teacher. In addition, students regularly gave speeches publicly, on matters of importance to society, in forums open to the entire college and surrounding community. Reinforcing these curricular activities were the many student speaking societies where, as Scottish rhetorician Alexander

Bain was fond of pointing out, the students usually learned more from their peers than from their teachers. Bain recognized, incidentally, that this model of oral evaluation and the format of the student speaking societies provided a full rhetorical context and motivation for discourse, elements woefully lacking in later school set essays and written examinations.

The culmination of these activities was a three-or-four-week "visitation" held in the late Spring of each year. During these sessions, students who wished to advance or to graduate were to make themselves available for oral examination, by anyone who chose to attend, in all the subjects for which they were responsible and to present disputations and defend them in public. As we will see, this system is very close to one that University of Michigan's Fred Newton Scott 100 years later was to propose as an "organic" method of assessing the effectiveness of secondary schools.

The centrality of rhetorical studies in the curriculum and the primary emphasis on oral discourse presuppose a third characteristic of the eighteenth-century model: its interdisciplinary nature. Rhetoric was seen as that art capable of addressing complex problems in any field where certainty was unachievable. Indeed, the work of Quintilian, which so profoundly affected this model of instruction, presents rhetoric not only as a way of coming to knowledge in any field, but as a guide to action throughout a person's entire life. Rhetoric, then, ranged across all fields of study and brought all of its language skills--reading, speaking, and writing--to bear on public problems.

The strong interdisciplinary nature of eighteenth-century rhetorical instruction relates directly to what I see as one of its most important characteristics: the union of theory and practice. Aristotle's original

work on rhetoric established a theoretical relationship among language, belief, and action, and this relationship is adapted and acted out in the learned orator of Cicero and in the good man skilled in speaking of Quintilian. This relationship also informed the eighteenth-century instructional model. Students put the rhetorical principles and theories they were studying into immediate practice, and a major goal of the university was to produce graduates who could and would continue to put those principles into practice throughout their lives as citizens of a democracy.

The last characteristic I wish to discuss I can only describe in perhaps somewhat vague terms as an ethos of the classroom. As I read the late eighteenth-century lectures of John Witherspoon of Princeton, this ethos pervades every page: at their best, the teacher-student relationships are strong and clear, the teacher serving as a master or as what Gilbert Ryle calls a "connoisseur" for the student apprentices. As I read the lectures of Aytoun of Edinburgh, of Jardine of Glasgow, of Bain of Aberdeen, and later, of Scott of Michigan, as I read reminiscences of former students and anecdotal histories of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century universities, I am struck over and over again by the nature of this relationship and by its importance. Such a relationship, of course, depended upon small classes, on the long-term association possible when a professor normally taught students throughout their college careers, and on the understanding that what was being taught was not so much a subject as a way of life. As one late-eighteenth-century pupil reported, the object of his rhetoric classes seemed "not to fill the mind with facts, but to strengthen and discipline it." This model of learning is a dynamic,

collaborative one, based on learning by doing in association with a teacher who, along with peers, sets up a powerful dialogue or dialectic.

The characteristics of the rhetorical model I have been describing, then, are these: (1) it posited rhetoric as central to the college curriculum; (2) primary emphasis was an oral discourse, and evaluation was conducted through oral examinations, though reading and writing were also important; (3) it was strongly interdisciplinary; (4) it combined theory and practice; and (5) its classroom ethos built on a strong student-teacher relationship.

Perhaps the spirit of this system or model is best summed up by Henry Adams, who notes that throughout his college years he had been

obliged to figure daily before dozens of young men who knew each other to the last fibre. [I] had done little but read papers to Societies or act in the Hasty Pudding, not to speak of all sorts of regular exercises and examinations, and no audience in future life would ever be so intimately and terribly intelligent as these."

As a result, Adams reports that "nothing seemed stranger than the paroxysms of terror before the public which often overcame the graduates of European universities." For his part, Adams declares himself "ready to stand up before any audience in America or Europe, with nerves rather steadier for the excitement"(69).

What--you may well be asking--happened to this model of rhetorical instruction? The answer to this question lies in the progress of rhetoric in the nineteenth century, a progress for which we as yet have no authoritative history (I have gathered together some of the most important articles and books on this subject and have included them on the selected bibliography attached to this paper). While I cannot pretend to offer

definitive answers in this brief paper, I do want to suggest that the sorry plight of rhetoric in the early twentieth century has far less to do with an emphasis on product-centered stylistic instruction or on adherence to the infamous four modes of discourse, and far more to do with the fragmentation of the model I have described and the loss of those features which characterized it.

Certainly, by the late nineteenth century, rhetoric had lost its central place in the college curriculum. This loss can, I believe, be related to four significant trends. The first trend I see as moving away from the strong interdisciplinary basis of the eighteenth-century instructional model. This shift is manifested in two ways, the first of which has to do with the rise of the belles-lettres movement, as in the lectures of both Adam Smith and Hugh Blair. Blair's Lectures, the enormously popular and dominant text in universities until around 1825, did not present a classical treatment of rhetoric. Instead, Blair devoted primary attention to style, viewing invention as beyond the scope of rhetoric. Blair also emphasized the importance of developing "taste" in reading literary works, particularly poetry. Hence, in his work the province of rhetoric was both truncated (to a narrow focus on style) and diffused (to emphasize the aesthetic appreciation of literature rather than the active production of public discourse.) Such a shift in focus, of course, tends to put oral discourse in the back seat, to ignore the importance of the speaking societies Bain and Henry Adams saw as so instrumental to rhetorical education, and to treat rhetoric more as a subject to be learned than as a means of gaining and sharing knowledge in any field.

Certainly the belles-lettres movement was by no means entirely negative, and I do not wish to present it in such a light. It was, after all, part of the long war waged on behalf of the vernacular in higher education. The journals of the time are full of intense and often bitter debate over whether classical language study should give way to "English" studies. By stressing the importance of instruction in the appreciation of literary works, the belles-lettres movement helped support the argument that the study of literature in English was a legitimate pursuit in colleges. Despite this positive effect, however, the belles-lettres movement also contributed to a major shift away from a focus on rhetoric as the productive art of public discourse on subjects of importance in any field, and hence weakened the interdisciplinary base of rhetoric.

The belles-lettres movement is inextricably linked to another major trend in nineteenth-century colleges: also chipping away at the interdisciplinary base of rhetoric were the increased specialization of disciplines and the concomitant rise of English departments (Parker). As we know, rhetoric is perhaps less suited than any other subject except philosophy to specialization. Its central function in the eighteenth-century instructional model described earlier was as a synthetic art which brought together knowledge in various fields with audiences of various kinds; its goal was the discovery and sharing of knowledge; and its tools were the three communicative arts of reading, writing, and speaking. The specialization of knowledge which took place in nineteenth-century universities is most often associated in the literature with American scholars' discovery of the German system and its subsequent influence on the curriculum. But an equally important contributor to departmentalization was the pressing and practical bureaucratic matter of

how to deal with the rapid expansion of scientific knowledge and with enrollments that actually doubled in the last twenty years of the century. Teachers had to contend not with a small group of students, whose progress they could closely guide and monitor through four years of study and with whom they could engage in daily dialogue, but with large and increasingly unwieldy classes.

By the 1890's, departments of instruction were vitally important to the bureaucratic organization of colleges. The trend toward specialization, steadily growing enrollments, and the continuing influence of "belles-lettres" led to what we now view as a permanent institution: the department of English. The first professors in the discipline fought hard to include the study of English literature in the curriculum. The figure who epitomizes their triumph is Francis Child, who was, ironically, Harvard's fourth Boylston Professor of Rhetoric (1851-76). In 1876, in a bid to keep him from moving to Johns Hopkins, Harvard created a new Chair of English Literature for Child, who immediately resigned the chair of Rhetoric. In his new capacity, Child built a powerful academic department, one based almost exclusively on literary scholarship and on reading, and hence one which denied the interdisciplinary nature of earlier rhetorical instruction as well as its emphasis on production--rather than consumption--of discourse. It was this Harvard model which was to predominate in North American higher education, in spite of attempts by such teachers as Fred Newton Scott of the University of Michigan to hold to a more truly interdisciplinary rhetorical model.³

The triumph of the belles-lettres movement and the trend toward specialization were not solely responsible for the displacement of rhetoric in the curriculum. Ironic as it may seem, another trend--the growing

emphasis on writing in colleges, particularly seen in the shift from oral to written evaluation of students--also played an important role. The early colleges had nothing resembling our present written examinations and set themes, preferring instead to test students' skills in oral discourse. But large classes and the bureaucratic demands for departmentalization and specialization led teachers to search for ways to save time and standardize procedures. Hence the rise of written examinations and set essays. These exams, and the set themes students wrote, took up far less time than class debates or end-of-the-year disputations. Moreover, they lent themselves to systematic, standardized evaluation. Consequently, as Warren Guthrie points out, by 1850 most college curricula advertised "Rhetoric and Belles Lettres" or "Rhetoric and Composition," and seldom "Rhetoric and Oratory." The resulting emphasis on written discourse, with the inevitable loss of the powerful concept of oral public discourse, further weakened the ties between the new English discipline and the old model of rhetorical instruction and, into the bargain, set up a potentially disastrous conflict between instruction in reading (literature) and instruction in writing (composition). Once rhetoric's interdisciplinary base was gone, its role was seen less and less as the martialing of speaking, reading, and writing together in pursuit of a student's own goals. Where speaking, reading and writing had once been rhetoric's means to a desired end, increasingly they became only sterile ends in themselves.

Given our current notions about the relationship between writing and learning, we might be tempted to view the increased emphasis on writing in nineteenth-century colleges as a boon, even at the expense of orality. Unfortunately, once writing was viewed as an end in itself and was divorced from its former rhetorical role, this focus on writing only reinforced the

narrow view of rhetoric as concerned solely with forms, with empty words and stylistic flourishes. Bain's nineteenth-century texts on grammar and rhetoric, which were very influential in North America, devote primary attention to elements of writing style, not as an end in themselves but as a means of increasing student powers of analysis and criticism. But the over-simplistic codification of Bain's dicta in other texts, the emphasis on rigid rules for usage and arrangement, and the focus on writing as end rather than means--all these factors helped create a kind of assembly-line English curriculum. And, as noted earlier, accompanying the growing volume of student writing produced on the assembly line was the need to evaluate this writing in some standardized way. All these factors led to a preoccupation with standards of usage that grew, by the end of the century, into a virtual cult of correctness. But this focus on style and correctness, as I hope I have shown, is only a symptom of what was wrong with rhetorical instruction. It was not the cause, as Young and others have argued, but rather the result of rhetoric's loss of its interdisciplinary base, a loss which left the study of writing with no raison d'être.

This preoccupation with standards of usage unrelated to purposeful or meaningful public discourse was further entrenched by the debate over college entrance exams and the furor over the "illiteracy" of secondary school graduates. And in this debate we again witness the diminution of the old eighteenth-century model. In 1880, Richard White charged that the public school system was a total failure (537); Adams Sherman Hill, fifth Boylston Professor of Rhetoric, complained of "a tedious mediocrity everywhere" (12); and in 1889 C.C. Thach announced that "it is difficult to believe, at times, that many of the writers of college entrance papers are

English-speaking boys" (94). The journals of this period, in fact, present many of the very same charges made in recent years concerning a "literacy crisis."

The debate over standardizing entrance requirements was, of course, predictable, given the rise of specialization, the growth in enrollments, and the growing focus on writing not as a means of influencing important public affairs but merely as a "set exercise" by which one passed or failed. In this debate, Michigan and Harvard again took opposing points of view. The Michigan model, championed by Fred Newton Scott, called for university representatives to visit the public schools and examine faculty, curricula, and students. Scott defended his plan as "organic," noting that it brought the two levels of education face-to-face in working out standards and requirements and insisting that standards would thus be internal, rather than external, to the system. In his plan we can easily see the influence of the eighteenth-century oral-based curriculum as well as the influence of classical rhetoric, with its emphasis on dialectic and enthymematic reasoning as means of discovering and sharing knowledge. The Harvard model, on the other hand, was based on the Oxford-Cambridge tradition of using a set of arbitrary requirements for admission. To these, Harvard added a written examination for all applicants in 1873. Scott condemned these written exams, which were built around a required reading list, claiming that the rigid exams defied both the principles of learning and common sense and elicited "the merest fluff and ravelings of the adolescent mind, revealing neither the students' independent thought, nor command of English." The exams were, he charged, simply a "convenience for the examiner, not an essential of study" (13-14). Again, however, the Harvard model--with its emphasis on uniform, standardized written entrance

exams and its thinly-veiled contempt for the public schools--prevailed, contributing directly to the rage for correctness at any cost, a rage that completely undermined the traditional goals and functions of rhetoric and rejected the once powerful model of class disputation and oral examination.

The tendency to see writing as an end in itself rather than as a means of finding meaning and knowledge and bringing others to experience them, the shift away from oral discourse, and the rise of standardized examinations that seemed increasingly unrelated to questions of important public policy--all these factors helped destroy the classroom ethos described earlier. By enforcing standards of measurement that were external to the teaching situation, the Harvard overseers essentially pitted universities against public schools and teachers against students. In criticizing such exams, Bain says:

The conduction of Examinations was originally viewed as a part of the teaching; and the point considered was only how much and what kind of examination should go along with vive voce lecturing and with class disputation. . . . The examinations at the close of the course or curriculum, were merely questions analogous to those put during teaching, to show whether pupils retained in their memory to the last what they had imbibed from day to day" (309).

In Bain's remarks, we hear the echo of the ethos which dominated the eighteenth-century model of instruction, and which was increasingly absent in large "composition" classes set to write themes on such topics as "On Spring Flowers."

The loss of this ethos I believe led directly to the view, so strongly established by mid-twentieth century, that composition or writing was not "important", and justified I.A. Richards' famous remark that rhetoric was

"the dreariest and least profitable part of the waste the unfortunate travel through in freshman English" (3).

The final trend I wish to point to as being responsible for displacing rhetoric from the center of the curriculum has been implied in much I have already said: the divorce of theory and practice. Such a divorce was indeed inevitable once speaking, reading, and writing were separated, and once writing became merely an end, a demonstration of "proficiency," rather than a means to find and share truth. As the twentieth century progressed, "theoretical" work in rhetoric became the province of a small band of scholars, engaged primarily in textual analysis and preservation. Rhetorical theory became less and less of a living tradition and more and more of an arcane field of study locked away in footnotes and museums. Scholars interested in oral discourse, of course, opted out of English departments, whose primary commitment by then was to the analysis and appreciation of literary texts. Writing, divorced from its original purpose in rhetorical instruction, shifted its goal to being able to produce a "correct" essay in response to a set topic, and textbooks offered compendia of how-to tips completely ungrounded in any theoretical framework that could relate language, action, and belief. This state of affairs can only be described as the pale shadow of what had once been the most vital element in a student's instruction.

What I hope this look at the history of our discipline has shown us is that the rhetorical "paradigm" of the early twentieth century was not flawed simply by its attention to written products and to style. Rather, it was flawed by its failure to put important personal, social, and political purposes at the center of rhetorical instruction and to bring all of the communicative arts to bear in achieving those purposes. And

although I do not have the time to argue the position fully here, I also believe that this central failure was due as much to bureaucratic administrative demands as to the pernicious attitudes of rhetoric and English teachers and authors.

I also hope that this foray into the past suggests a good deal about the future of rhetorical studies. I firmly believe that if there is to be a future for rhetorical studies, we must create a discipline informed by but not slavishly imitative of the eighteenth-century model I described earlier, a model, incidentally, which was itself informed by the classical ideal of training good men skilled in speaking. As I see it, a viable new rhetoric must do more than focus on the writing process and on invention: it must reclaim its interdisciplinary base by, at the very least, reuniting speaking, reading, and writing; it must embrace a model of learning that will echo the classroom ethos I described; and it must marry theory with practice so that finding and sharing knowledge regarding significant public issues once again is at the heart of our efforts.

Let me be as forceful as I can. I believe that powerful rhetorical instruction can no longer maintain separate or discrete "places" for speaking, writing, and reading: the fragmentation of our discipline into speech departments, English departments, linguistics departments, even reading departments, with the accompanying splintering of rhetoric's original purpose is probably the central most important cause of the decline of rhetoric and composition studies. And in spite of their common separation in the university curriculum, I believe the issue of the differentiation among these three communicative arts is still far from clear. Recent research has pointed up the links between reading and writing. In addition, recent research on professional or work-related

writing has found that such writing most frequently grows out of and is closely related to speaking. I believe, in short, that we have the necessary research to argue for a reunion of these communicative skills. Such a reunion, however, implies a major restructuring of university curricula, a restructuring away from extreme fragmentation and departmentalization that I for one would welcome, but one that will not be easy, or perhaps even possible, to achieve. In the short run, however, we can bring this change about in our own classrooms by bringing reading, writing, and speaking together as those tools we use to shape and share knowledge. In this endeavor we may well be aided by the revolutionary new media, which tend to blur the distinctions especially between speech and writing. But even without such media, it requires very little effort on our parts to acknowledge that writing often grows out of speaking, that writers must be readers of their own work at least, and that the skills of writing, reading, and speaking are sterile ones indeed unless they are put to use in realizing individual purposes.

Secondly, the future of rhetorical studies depends on our creating and maintaining a classroom ethos that will more accurately reflect the values I believe we actually profess. To me, this means giving up the picture of ourselves as completely objective "learning facilitators" or "classroom managers," or even as repositories and transmitters of knowledge or markers of essays. Instead, it means putting dialogue and dialectic at the center of our classes, learning as well as teaching, and joining our students in holding to a high standard of public discourse. In such an atmosphere, teacher/connoisseur and student/apprentice work in a context of shared values to make meaning out of the world of their experience. Such an ethos would, I believe, have profound implications for our entire system of

evaluation, implications I have pursued elsewhere. Very briefly, however, such a shift would open up the possibility of creating a system of evaluation which would not be external to the teacher-student relationship and hence would not undermine it. In speaking of a classroom ethos, I do not intend to induce a flashback to sixties love-ins or to sound simple-mindedly idealistic; I have been teaching far too long for that. I do, however, want to insist that we have been too self-effacing for too long about our own importance. Fifty or a hundred years from now, someone may be reading a student's reminiscences about one of you, reminiscences which will show--as did those eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ones to which I earlier referred--that the teacher-student relationship is often at the very heart of what is learned in any class.

Lastly, and most importantly, I believe that a viable new rhetoric must again reunite theory and practice by putting rhetoric in the service of defining and maintaining what Michael Halloran calls public discourse and what Maxine Green refers to as "the public space," a concept which, she argues, might "give rise to a significant common world." Professor Green goes on to say:

I do not believe that we can maintain public education . . . or restore its significance . . . if we do not concern ourselves in this way. I cannot imagine a coherent purpose in education if something common does not arise in a public space. I am not thinking . . . about anything that is predictable, anything that is sure. I want to see atmospheres created in which . . . "civic learning" can be revived. I want to see imagination released . . . so that young people will be enabled to look out beyond the actual and the given and summon into being alternative worlds. I want to

see alienation and fixity give way to participation and movement, the free play of movement, the free play of thought, all for the sake of the common world (9).

Establishing such a common world, one that would be conducive to purposeful discourse, demands a theory that accounts for and is integrated with practice. Unfortunately, we have a long way to go before we can achieve that goal. Our "theorists" are, most often, in English departments, struggling over abstruse questions of intentionality in literary texts, while theorists in linguistics and speech departments strive to describe the abstract grammar of a sentence or to define the theoretical concept of "dialogic communication." Meanwhile, instruction in rhetorical practice--speaking, reading, and writing--is quite ordinarily relegated to graduate students and part-time instructors, although we do little or nothing to train these graduate students in the rhetorical tradition. I also find it curious that much of the "theoretical" work in rhetoric has been in the service of proving that modern rhetoric is characterized by understanding, mutual sharing, and two-way communication, as in the psychological theory of Carl Rogers. Yet how well does such a theory account for or describe twentieth-century rhetorical practice, which has surely reached new heights (or depths) of the manipulative use of language? Such a curious disjunction between theory and practice is, of course, perfectly obvious to our students, both undergraduate and graduate, and has done much to cripple some of our best efforts.

Perhaps I do not need to convince readers of this volume of the extreme difficulty of reversing these trends and of realizing a future for rhetorical studies which would see our ancient interdisciplinary base restored and would see theory and practice wed in the pursuit of rhetoric's

classical goal: to prepare citizens who understand the shared values of their culture and who can bring that understanding, through language, to bear on significant personal and public problems. But in spite of the extreme difficulty, I am convinced that such an enterprise must be undertaken, that the time is propitious, and that we, as teachers of rhetoric, are best suited to the task. Surely our biggest challenge is learning to live in the world. In the richness of its best eighteenth-century embodiment, rhetoric was the art best suited to helping us learn to do so. As such, it is infinitely worth reviving and giving to our students who, by learning to live in this world, will surely change it.

NOTES

¹ The Boylston chair is the subject of a dissertation by Paul E. Ried.

² We should note, however, that by the time Adams's lectures were published, Blair's essentially anti-classical approach had a firm hold in American colleges.

³ The man who succeeded Child as Boylston Professor was Adams Sherman Hill, who for thirty years presided over the demise of rhetoric at Harvard. For a discussion of Child's influence and of the alternative model developed by Fred Newton Scott, see Stewart.

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