

Editors' Introduction

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The pleasure of reading a special issue of a journal comes from seeing how the various authors illuminate, often in unexpected or mutually reinforcing ways, the different facets of a particular topic. But the pleasure of producing and reading a general issue like this one arises from seeing the breadth of one's field. For rhetoricians, that breadth is perhaps no surprise given rhetoric's nature as an art whose application isn't restricted to any particular subject matter (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1355b). Nonetheless, even given the capacious nature of rhetoric, this issue includes articles on an impressively broad range of topics, from Construction Grammar to stand-up comedy, from pop music to optical weapons systems.

The insights gained when the issue's authors bring rhetoric to bear on such varied subjects testifies to how robust and illuminating the principles and methods of rhetoric are, from those that were formulated in the classical period to those that have developed over the long history of rhetoric up to the present. The phrase "rhetoric of," prepended to innumerable (and sometimes seemingly unlikely) subjects, has led to new understandings of existing fields and phenomena. That has sometimes happened over the objections of practitioners working within a field, but as Aristotle first asserted and rhetoricians since have so often confirmed, rhetoric, sometimes held to be irrelevant or even antithetical to a particular pursuit, is inevitably found to be integral to it.

But while these applications of rhetoric to various fields expand what Chaim Perelman has called the realm of rhetoric, they also have a reciprocal effect, in that they change the nature of rhetoric itself as a field. The figure of the wandering sophist travelling from city-state to city-state might be a good analogy for the forays rhetoric makes into various fields. But while the work of the sophist changes the place he visits, the sophist, after exercising his *techné* within the specific environment he is visiting, no doubt also comes away changed, with an expanded sense of his art's possibilities and potential.

Aristotle's reference to "the means of persuasion" in his foundational definition of rhetoric (1355b) refers to the *pisteis*, but various articles here demonstrate how the means to achieve rhetorical ends can be expanded beyond the traditional tools of rhetoric. Those means may involve the strategic use of musical structures (Twomey), the incorporation of autofiction (Kaisarli), figural manipulation of time (Mehlenbacher), or insertion into optical weapon systems (Nuñez de Villavicencio). Other articles here re-frame traditional elements of rhetoric by situating them within new contexts such as Construction Grammar (Hashemi, Chen, and Harris) or notion-based grammar (Collinet). These articles are able to extend the branches of rhetoric precisely because at the same time they offer us new perspectives on its classical elements, deepening its roots.

In addition to these articles, this issue also presents two personal essays that serve as an extension of *Rhetor* special issue 8.1, in which rhetoricians reflected on how their national identity affected their rhetorical work. Issue 8.1 focused mainly on Canadian and European rhetoricians, but the two essays here are by rhetoricians who emigrated from the United States to Canada, so they offer a fascinating dual perspective on how national identity affects rhetorical scholarship.

We would like to offer our thanks to the authors and reviewers who contributed to this issue, to John Moffatt, who helped lay its foundations, and to the executive officers and members of RhetCanada, the Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric, who have provided a community and a context that allow research like this to flourish.

WORKS CITED

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