The Relationship Between Ethics and Rhetoric in Higher Education and its Ramifications

By

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Dedicated to my father William J. Anders,

without whose support none of my endeavors in academia could have been possible.

ABSTRACT

This project traces the historical relationship between ethics and rhetoric in higher education. It selectively utilizes influential people and periods to demonstrate how Western rhetorical education's relationship to ethics has been shaped. This history starts in ancient Greece, with the philosophers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, then travels through Quintilian to the Renaissance and Peter Ramus, whose influence carries into the founding of universities in the United States. The thesis demonstrates how, as American society evolved, the influences of religion, politics, the founding fathers, and The Scottish Enlightenment helped shape not only American universities but also the relationship between ethics and rhetoric in US higher education. It then shows that as the US population expanded, the effects of the Civil War, World War II, and public discourse around education further shaped US higher education and its purpose. Finally, it tracks the effect of 20th-century rhetoric and writing teachers, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), The New Critics, *The New Rhetoric*, and the general organization of university departments, revealing how these affected the make-up and content of rhetorical instruction in higher education and its relationship with ethics as it exists in the present moment.

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Introduction

Rhetorical instruction in the West, in its varied forms and focuses, has been heavily inspired and influenced by ancient Greek traditions. An excerpt from the opening chapter of my university's first-year composition textbook states, "That's why Aristotle cautioned that people need to understand rhetoric—both to get their own ethical messages across *and* to be able to recognize and resist unethical messages that others attempt to use against them" (Lunsford et al. 6). However, many aspects of these traditions have been manipulated, parsed, or eliminated entirely from higher education (Duffy 9). The relationship between ethics and rhetoric within universities has been inconsistent as the importance of that relationship has been stressed and diminished at various times throughout the history of Western education. By analyzing the history of that relationship, this project may offer insight into the ramifications of such inconsistencies in universities, students, and public discourse.

Trying to write a proper introduction for this thesis has proven complicated for multiple reasons. Initially, I intended to use traditional academic language that distances the writer from the content as is usually the format for these types of projects but, when considering the context, perspective, and intentions of this work, strict adherence to that format seemed a bit disingenuous and contrary to the points I'm trying to explicate here. There has always been a relationship between ethics and rhetoric. As I'll explain later, and regardless of historical attempts to do otherwise, rhetoric and ethics are inherently connected, however, the strength of that connection is varied throughout Western higher educational history. The overall intention of this work is to show the complicated historical relationship between ethics and rhetorical instruction, as they may have contributed to the toxic discourse, misinformation, and public and political attacks on higher education. In the spirit of that conversation, I feel it is important to

bring myself into the work so that my perspective can be utilized in clarifying my arguments. In more traditional research projects, data is provided in somewhat of a vacuum and it is my belief that when connecting rhetoric to ethics, what I feel and believe should also play a role in the conversation. Therefore, my perspective will be utilized alongside the documentation that I provide. I also feel that it is vital to this conversation to describe my underlying inspiration for taking on this project and its intentionality. To be clear, I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel here and I understand the value of more traditional thesis formats and research projects. However, some of these traditions may be questioned throughout this work while still utilizing different aspects of those same traditions. As I said, it's complicated.

Another complexity that has arisen is that of positionality. One of my intentions in this project is to be topical and current so many of the examples I provide may sound related to the discourse concerning education today. For example, the first sentence of the opening paragraph of the 'Issues' section of the American Association of University Professors states, "The Trump administration and many state governments are accelerating attacks of academic freedom, shared governance, and higher education as a public good" (Political Attacks). As I write this introduction, the foundations of our society seem to be shifting every day. I sometimes feel that I'm trying to build a structure on quicksand or a house of cards during an earthquake. The ground on which I'm trying to build this conversation seems to shift with every news cycle and it is often exasperating, to say the very least. Many of the changes taking place in our society today are examples of the consequences that are the foundations of the conversation that I'm trying to have and so it becomes increasingly difficult to hold a given perspective when the landscape changes every day. How will I be able to conclude this project having started it in one world and

finishing it in another? For these and many reasons, I hope you will indulge in the format and processes that may shape this work.

I also need to take a moment to address the scope of this history. The perspective of this project is an analysis of the evolution of *Western* education. The invaluable contributions of non-western, marginalized, and minority academics, scholars, researchers, and educators cannot be understated. Just as I'm only able to highlight particularly influential figures from Western higher education's history and due to the limitations of this project's breadth, I'm unable to include all that have made valuable contributions to this history. It is not without some irony that my original studies concerned decoloniality and antiracist pedagogy (Condon and Young, Smith, Martinez). It also became apparent to me that when the relationships between ethics, rhetoric, and higher education are at their strongest, more opportunities and appreciation for marginalized voices can be observed (Gonzales, King et al.). Through that study and research, I learned to challenge and become critical of established Western ideals and it became the impetus of this project. I believe that this project may help provide a starting point that others, perhaps even myself, may utilize to give a full accounting of those voices and their work and influence.

I'd like to begin by conveying my perspectives on some broad subjects as a means to position myself and my thoughts and feelings before I get into the more detailed aspects of this project. When I think about society as a whole, one of the first things that make it resilient is our ability to communicate both vocally and symbolically. Our ability to communicate not only allowed for our evolution as a species but also helped shape that evolution as Daniel Dor informs us, "The process of human evolution was driven throughout by the invention and development of tools of instructive communication" (2318). I imagine that in the early stages of this phenomenon it was relatively easy to convey information to each other as, ultimately, our literal

survival depended on it. “Don’t eat that” or “Do eat this” was probably very high on the list of information to convey. The fact that we are here having this conversation today is likely representative of the ethics involved in such communications as the fabric of society is founded upon it. Someone in these early societies who was relating less than reliable information would not be welcome for very long when people started dropping dead. And I can’t imagine a person ostracized from a group would get on very long by themselves in such harsh environments. To me, the logic here suggests that ethical communication ran parallel to the evolution of human societies in general. The earliest examples of art were often animals and/or humans hunting animals. We often give mythical or spiritual values to this art as we look back at it from a modern perspective but if you were a person or society of that ancient time and wanted a more permanent method of conveying helpful information to future generations how would you go about it? Here is a picture of people hunting bison, translation: “Do eat this.” Again, my ideas on this history are hypothetical as there is no way we will ever know the reality of our pre-historic beginnings as too much information has been lost to time. After all, once “pre-historic” theory becomes accepted, it simply becomes “history”.

I formulated these ideas on communication through my studies in rhetoric and composition. A class on the history of rhet/comp is how I was led to the ideas I’m trying to convey in this project. Hopping through time and studying major figures in this field chronologically caused me to theorize how this history may have influenced modernity.

The overall intention of this thesis is to suggest that the current state of affairs in society; disinformation, demagoguery, toxic discourse, etc., may be a result of the dichotomy between rhetoric and ethics. But where to begin? When discussing the antithesis of ethical rhetoric in modern public discourse, John Duffy warns that:

> Such rhetoric has managed to undermine discourses grounded in rational argument and logical proofs, formerly considered authoritative. Our toxic public arguments have contributed to a rhetorical climate in which we no longer share common understandings of the nature of a fact, or what counts as evidence, or how to interpret what evidence may be presented. Even scientific matters, such as climate change and the safety of vaccines, are subject to rancorous, ideologically driven debate. (5)

The way I see things is a slow-moving wave of scholarship and praxis. Many people look at universities and education as the well from which we draw knowledge. Scholarship is performed, ideas and "facts" are developed, and those that are favored are incorporated into various forms in society. This process is far from instantaneous nor permanent. Just as scholarship ebbs and flows, so too does the acceptance of these ideas and concepts. As knowledge increases or reformulates, it slowly distributes into the public sphere and, normally, the stronger or more easily acceptable this knowledge may be, the further it may be disseminated.

The relationship between rhetoric and ethics has undergone various permutations over time. In the first chapter of this project, I highlight the major fluctuations beginning with the ancient Greeks as their influence on scholarship and a great many of Western institutions is hard to argue against and is easily observable from today's perspectives. I also feel that the interpretations of Plato's work on this subject bear some further explication as it is from his work that we see the beginnings of the rhetoric/ethics dichotomy. This history will journey through key figures in rhetoric such as Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, and Quintillian, and I feel the chapter on this portion of the history of this subject finds a logical stopping point at, or shortly after, Peter Ramus and the 16th century because it is at this time that the modern Western university that we're most familiar with starts to develop.

The second chapter discusses the original concepts of the American university. Initially, the model utilized a distinctly English-type college that was heavily shaped by religious influence. However, as religious ideals began to shift, so did the intent of higher educational

institutions and regardless of the religious foundations of these institutions, the demarcation between fields of study popularized by concepts attributed to Peter Ramus allowed for both religious education and secular perspectives concerning moral philosophy and ethics. This freedom of intellectualism interacted with the political discourse of the time and both would be heavily influenced by the Scottish Enlightenment and key figures such as Adam Smith. The Scottish Enlightenment would be a foundational influence in both the founding of our country and the structure of higher education.

The third chapter will continue to follow the rapid expansion of higher education related to various wartime effects and how that expansion would stimulate conversations about the place of rhetoric and composition and its shifting relationship to ethical concerns. Here we see the rise of The New Critics, The New Rhetorics, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), literacy crises, and finally the organization and disciplinary status of English educators.

Following the threads of the history of the relationship between ethics and rhetoric in higher education permits us to see not only the fluctuations that occur, but the de/emphasis on that relationship's importance within higher education and also to suggest that there are observable ramifications to its lack within various aspects of society, politics, and public discourse.

Chapter 1

When discussing the relationship between ethics and rhetoric, John Duffy defines ethics as, "that branch of philosophy given over to questions of how to live a good life. What does it mean to be a good person? What kind of person do I want to be? How should I live my life?" (10). So, we see that Duffy considers ethics a branch of philosophy and in this instance, the questions being considered may be broad, but it's a far-reaching subject that is continuously re-examined.

The reflective nature of ethics is simplistically explicated when considering Aristotle's works concerning leisure. Joseph Owens interprets Aristotle's concepts as:

> In the *Nicomachean Ethics* the ultimate goal of all human striving is located globally on two different levels of activity. Primarily it consists in the exercise of the intellect, man's highest faculty, upon its highest object. Secondarily that same goal is found in the practical activity that brings about the conditions for intellectual life. To the one goal, graded in this twofold manner, the whole life of each individual and of the entire political organization is directed. This is the kind of living for which human leisure is meant and to which it should be directed. (716)

It is important to note here that what Aristotle means by leisure is not to be conflated with recreation or entertainment. While both of these activities are integral to facilitating the conditions that make leisure possible, they primarily function as methods of physical and mental recuperation from the stresses of the activities required for life (i.e., work, labor). Aristotle suggests that the whole of human endeavors; work, play, rest, entertainment, etc. are considered positive activities, as long as they are balanced and not over-indulged, with the ultimate goal being a state of leisure. It is within this state that people are able to pursue intellectual life. Among these pursuits are philosophical considerations, scientific inquiry, and, importantly, ethical reflection.

Ancient Greek Rhetoric

Through the evolution and refinement of the activities related to simple survival, humanity has developed processes that allow time for leisure and reflection. They have time to consider the individuals' place in the world, their place in society, and most importantly, the relationships between each other. They considered the best ways to interact with each other to produce a sense of harmony. To me, this is the heart of ethics; the best behavioral practices to produce the most peace or absence of conflict. What is fascinating here is that humanity developed ethical concepts through observation alone without the use of the underlying science of psychology that we find integral in modernity. Yet so much of what was developed is still applicable today. It is these reflective ethics and their relationship with rhetoric that this project is concerned with.

I think it is important to follow the history of the relationship between ethics and rhetoric in a linear fashion. And since there is so much content available to us on this subject, I'll limit this portion of history to a few key figures whose works are interrelated and often built upon each other; Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Quintilian, and Peter Ramus. While significant conversations and influences regarding the relationship between rhetoric and ethics had taken place between the time of Quintillian and Ramus, for the purposes of this project I want to utilize Ramus as a direct response to Quintillian. These figures were not only integral to the evolution of rhetoric as a field of study but utilized their ideas in the education of others directly or indirectly. The reason I've chosen these key figures is that their work is deeply intertwined with the idea of education. For the ancient Greeks, it is widely understood that Plato was a student of Socrates and Aristotle a student of Plato. These ancient Greeks would then go on to influence Quintilian's educational text, *Institutio Oratoria*. Much of Peter Ramus's work responds to some

of these classical figures and helps him to develop his instructional texts. When focusing on the subject of rhetoric and its relationship to ethics alongside these figures it is easy to follow the evolution of ideas on this subject and how they were utilized in instruction.

While Cicero is certainly influential in most discussions concerning rhetoric, I choose to discuss his work in relation to Quintilian as it is foundational to his *Institutio Oratoria* which became prolific as James J. Murphy explains:

> Quintilian' *Institutio Oratoria* was one of the first rhetorical texts printed (1470, twice), and an even hundred editions appeared in print during the next 75 years. The work immediately ranked in popularity with the rhetorical works of Cicero and Aristotle, its precepts soon becoming a key segment of the "General Rhetoric" (*rhetorica genrealis*) of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (107)

Murphy goes on to explain that the *Institutio Oratoria* began to heavily influence rhetorical texts throughout English universities and would ultimately make its way to Harvard University in the States (107). I'll discuss the Cicero/Quintilian influence in more detail later.

To continue the narrative that I intend to put forth, there are certain liberties that I need to take concerning Socrates and his relationship with Plato. There have been countless interpretations of Socrates's teachings as they have only been related to us through others, most notably, Plato, his most famous student. Many would argue that Plato, while likely not producing fiction, has let his own ideas permeate much of the work that he attributes to Socrates.

The most relatable work concerning Socrates, ethics, and rhetoric, and one of the most influential, is the *Gorgias* by Plato. Here we may consider the varying perspectives about Socrates' thoughts on the subject of rhetoric. *Gorgias* is separated into two parts, the first being a debate between Socrates and three Sophist interlocuters, one of whom is Gorgias, on the nature of rhetoric as an art. The second part is a debate manufactured by Socrates himself under the guise of conversing with another interlocuter, Callicles. This pseudo delineation can be observed

by how expansive Socrates' dialogue becomes in the second part. Gone are the rapid back-and-forth exchanges that Socrates is known for. In the introduction to his translation of *Gorgias,* Donald J. Zeyl describes this delineation by stating, "Plato's Gorgias begins with an examination of the character and claims of oratory and ends with a passionate exhortation to choose the life of the philosopher over that of the orator-politician"(location 33). It is the first part of this work that has had the most influence throughout history. This is where we might trace such commonplace ideas that rhetoric may be empty of substance or that it is often utilized to manipulate the listener. John Duffy and Lois Agnew inform us in their introduction to *After Plato: Rhetoric, Ethics, and the Teaching of Writing*, "So does Plato [Socrates] introduce the famous division—locating philosophy, knowledge, and truth on the high side of the river, with rhetoric, ignorance, and duplicity occupying the lower, muddier bank" (3). This interpretation of *Gorgias* has had incredible staying power and is largely responsible for the perception that rhetoric is morally bankrupt. If this opinion of rhetoric is the ultimate purpose of the first portion of the work, why then, is there a second part? It almost seems that Socrates feels dissatisfaction with the results of the conversations between himself, Polus, and Gorgias. Though the negative perception of Socrates towards rhetoric has followed us over the years, I feel that most people leave the *Gorgias* without a firm description of what exactly rhetoric means to him or its relationship to ethics. It is this seeming lack of a clear definition or misinterpretation amongst readers, and perhaps Socrates, that I'd like to discuss next as I think it is influential in Plato's ideas and comes to some resolution with Aristotle.

The argument that Socrates makes that rhetoric is unethical only holds water because his definition of rhetoric is incomplete. I would argue that a crucial element of rhetoric is ethics or, as it is referred to within the text, right and wrong or just and unjust. It is a very easy argument to

make that rhetoric can be perceived as unethical if you begin the conversation by stating that it is without ethics. It also doesn't help that Gorgias' side of the debate seems to be shaky throughout and that his responses often seem to be reactionary and not well thought out. As James Doyle points out at a certain crucial part in their exchange Gorgias suggests that the persuasive part of rhetoric has the "power" to make "slaves" of people and then follows shortly thereafter with a statement that would contradict this position:

> Gorg: This is the sort of persuasion I'm talking about, Socrates: the sort that's at issue in the law-courts, and in general before large crowds of people, as I was saying just now – and it concerns what's right and wrong. (Doyle 10)

It is this type of malleable argumentation on the part of Gorgias that not only prevents a reader from a basic definition of rhetoric but also leaves an impression of a lack of conviction of the interlocutors throughout, lending credence to Socrates' opinions and perspectives. It is also this type of seemingly incomplete definition that may have led to the later shift in the format we see in Socrates' dialogue with Callicles, as though Socrates' initial argumentation does not satisfy the point trying to be made and a stronger, broader explication is required to bolster the earlier portion of the work. If, however, we are to take at face value the common opinion that Socrates viewed rhetoric as unethical and therefore unworthy of practice, why then did Plato produce a whole dialogue on the subject? In the same way that Socrates seems dissatisfied with the argument as presented in the first half of *Gorgias* and feels the need for further explication in the second half, *Phaedrus* suggests that perhaps Plato was further attempting to refine these arguments and definitions concerning rhetoric and its liabilities for abuse. One instance of the dearth of a foundational argument concerning the value of rhetoric is apparent in the assumptions that Gorgias makes within the text. In the article "Gorgias' Defense: Plato and his Opponents on Rhetoric and the Good," Rachel Barney observes this deficiency by stating:

> Gorgias' direct argument fares no better. For this hinges directly on the claim that the rhetorician provides his teaching 'to be used justly' (457b7-c1; cf. 456e3) (D1). And Gorgias never explains what this Just Use claim amounts to. There is no mention here of any concrete steps taken by the rhetorician to ensure his students' good behavior, and we have no historical evidence of any that he might be assuming. (99)

It may be that the absence of a viable explanation of the relationship between ethics and rhetoric that this observation highlights inspired Plato to construct *Phaedrus*.

Interpreting *Phaedrus* for the purposes of this thesis is quite difficult in that interpreting this work for any purpose is bound to be interrupted and can easily be drowned in a quagmire of differing ideas about Plato's intentions. Through a type of meta-analysis provided in the introduction to their translation by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff. Utilizing Plato's format of "definition through division" is helpful here in analyzing *Phaedrus* as we can simply split this dialogue into two distinct parts.

The first part of the dialogue concerns Socrates and Phaedrus' conversation about a speech given by Lysias. This section discusses the nature of *eros*, love, relationships, and an overall explication of the nature of proper composition, whether verbal or written dialogue. This section provides a preamble or grist for the conversation that takes place in the second part and the subject matter is secondary to the underlying arguments that eventually take place in later dialogue. It may have been easier to comprehend what most scholarship on the dialogue agrees is the overall point of the work—the underlying values concerning rhetorical conceptions and its relationship with truth, or ethics. Therefore, to avoid the aforementioned quagmires, I intend to deal almost exclusively with the second part of the dialogue and its focus on rhetoric.

Plato's ideas on the subject of rhetoric are multifaceted and I want to simplify them here into a few concepts. The first is his thoughts on the distinction between oral and written rhetoric. The second is what I might categorize as the aesthetics of rhetoric, which also relates to the third,

and most important to this project, the ethics or the rhetor's comprehension of the truth in a given argument or situation.

There is a common misconception concerning Plato's feelings towards written rhetoric, that he found it to be an inferior product to oral presentations (Fisher; Marin; Rinon). It is not quite that simple. Plato's main concern with written works is that they cannot be confronted or challenged. Plato fears that because written work cannot be immediately debated or explicated a couple of issues arise. First, that written work is more likely to be misinterpreted because the author is not there to explain any complicated statements or ideas. Socrates states in a later section of the discussion:

> The same is true of written words. You'd think they were speaking as if they had some understanding, but if you question anything that has been said because you want to learn more, it continues to signify just that very same thing forever. When it has once been written down, every discourse roams about everywhere, reaching those with understanding no less than those who have no business with it, and it doesn't know to whom it should speak and to whom it should not…it can neither defend itself nor come to its own support. (275D-275E)

While we now understand that, particularly in academia, published works are still open to challenges and are often revised or withdrawn, we can still comprehend the argument that Plato makes here. And second, an audience might have, "…a certain attitude towards it, an attitude which induces us to take for granted anything written, to refuse to question it, to consider it true, simply on the grounds that it has been written" (Nehamas and Woodruff xxxv). However, Nehamas and Woodruff also allude to the age-old argument of the "old versus new" medium. In the same way that many modern scholars bemoan the tragic state of communication today through the utilization of text messaging and social media, it can be argued that Plato is providing us with one of the earliest examples of that age-old argument, as the then-new medium

of the written word cannot compete with the tried-and-true communicative capabilities of the oral arrangement (xxxvi).

Socrates' "famous division" between ethics and rhetoric in *Gorgias* which was discussed earlier in this chapter, has evolved in *Phaedrus* as Plato brings them back together in a complicated manner. Here, Socrates argues that knowledge of both the types of oration and the types of listeners are integral to the style of rhetoric and its ability to persuade saying:

> First, you must know the truth concerning everything you are speaking or writing about; you must learn how to define each thing in itself…Second, you must understand the nature of the soul, along the same lines; you must determine which kind of speech is appropriate to each kind of soul, prepare and arrange your speech accordingly… (277B-277C)

Where ethics was once on the high side of the river with philosophy and rhetoric on the low side with deception, Plato re-joins them and the line between philosophy and rhetoric becomes blurred where even Socrates seems to scramble for definitions, "If any one of you has composed things with a knowledge of the truth, if you can defend your writing when you are challenged…then you must be called by a name derived not from these writings but rather from those things that you are seriously pursuing" (278C-278D). When pressed further, Socrates responds, "To call him wise, Phaedrus, seems to me too much…To call him wisdom's lover—a philosopher—or something similar would fit him better and be more seemly" (278D). However, while these two types of knowledge are familiar to any who has studied rhetoric and composition, Socrates states that they are ineffective without the rhetor having a foundational knowledge of what is the underlying truth concerning one's subject. He argues that without truth, one cannot be an effective rhetor. While Socrates does believe that the aesthetics of rhetoric are foundational to the art, Nehamas and Woodruff conclude he also believes, "The ornamentation which is an essential element of rhetoric is not directed at entertaining or manipulating an

audience: its purpose is to bring that audience as close to the truth as it can get" (xxxiv). We can now see that Plato seemed to consider composition as not inherently negative but that a rhetor who composes the written word with a strong underlying foundational knowledge is all but the same as a philosopher or orator.

This concept and similar concerns are taken up very early in Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. Here Aristotle refines the argument Plato began above:

> That rhetoric, therefore, does not belong to a single defined genus of subject but is like dialectic and that it is useful is clear—and its function is not to persuade but to see the available means of persuasion in each case, as is true also in all other arts; for neither is it the function of medicine to create health but to promote this as much as possible; for it is nevertheless possible to treat well those who cannot recover health. (1355b)

As dialectic is a tool of the philosopher, Aristotle is suggesting that rhetoric is a tool of the rhetor. However, though "the available means of persuasion" is commonly used to describe rhetoric in much of higher education, this concept is almost always truncated. Just as dialectic is used to explore the truths of a given subject, so must the available means of persuasion be considered to convey truth:

> In the case of rhetoric, however, there is the difference that one person will be [called] *rhetor* on the basis of his knowledge and another on the basis of his deliberate choice, while in dialectic *sophist* refers to deliberate choice [of specious arguments], *dialectician* not to deliberate choice, but to ability [at argument generally]. (1355b)

Here Aristotle states that a dialectician must have an overall knowledge of a given subject but may make sophist arguments (plausible but false) by choice. The rhetor must also have a foundational knowledge of a given subject and a firm grasp of the various means of persuasion. However, the true rhetor will decide on the most ethical or truthful means of persuasion through deliberate choice.

Aristotle takes the concept of ethical deliberation even further when he discusses not just the possible rhetoric of a given subject but also of the rhetors themselves:

> [There is persuasion] through character whenever the speech is spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence; for we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly [than we do others], on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt…for it is not the case…that fair-mindedness [*epieikeia*] on the part of the speaker makes no contribution to persuasiveness; rather, character is almost, so to speak, the most authoritative form of persuasion. (1356a)

Considering the importance Aristotle gives to the "character" or ethical concerns of a rhetor and the ubiquitous influence that he continues to have on the instruction of rhetoric and composition in higher education, it seems that discussions of character should be integrated into introductory composition courses as well. Of course, we cannot know the true nature of a person, but I believe that simultaneous instruction in both ethics and rhetoric/composition would help bolster the overall effectiveness of other means of persuasion as it is with ethical considerations that a person may better connect with an audience and, perhaps, achieve a mutual understanding on a given subject more easily.

Roman Rhetorics

Quintilian's most influential work, *Institutio Oratoria* (95 A.D.), was a textbook for the instruction of rhetoric and rhetorical theory. It was the crowning achievement of a life educating young orators, many of whom would become respected rhetoricians and teachers themselves. His fame would place him in a position of authority in Roman education as Hugh C. Wiese and James J. Murphy describe in their introduction to *Quintilian on the Teaching of Speaking and Writing*, "The peak of public recognition as a teacher came in A.D. 88 when, according to the historian Jerome, Quintilian was placed in charge of the 'first public school of Rome' with an annual salary paid from public funds" (xiv). This model would be influential in education for some time, and he would carry on this tradition until what is estimated to be A.D. 90 when he would contemplate his experiences and ultimately publish the *Istitutio Oratoria*.

Built largely upon the Ciceronian eloquence in which he was instructed, this work expands upon those mechanics while also providing instruction on the overall make-up of a proper rhetorician. Here, ethical considerations are integral to understanding rhetorical processes, particularly the school of philosophy known as stoicism. The fundamentals of stoicism are well stated by Arthur E. Walzer in his article, "Quintilian's '*Vir Bonus*' and the Stoic Wise Man":

> Some elements of Stoicism are well known: that the Stoics taught that the moral life involved living in conformity with nature; that for humans this meant using our unique gifts of reason and speech to achieve self-preservation and offer help to others in consistent with our selfish and social instincts. The Stoics taught that living morally, which was a matter not of will but of understanding, was the *only* good, meaning that health and wealth (in contrast to Aristotle's position in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, for example) were indifferent, not goods. (29)

While this description barely scratches the surface of the subject, I feel it is sufficient to explain that Stoicism is based on a strictly rational worldview. However, it is unfortunate that this cool rationality is often conflated with an indifference to the realities of human existence. It is important to remember that Stoicism accepts the emotional aspects of the human condition but seeks to recognize them through a rational lens. This rationality lends itself well to the systematic instruction that Quintilian's work hopes to communicate.

Philosophers of that time were hardly well-regarded (Walzer, "Moral Philosophy" 265), and it was a stroke of brilliance that Quintilian recognized the value of their ideas regardless of popular opinion. Again, this is not a work detailing the history of philosophy but its ethical implications on the instruction of rhetoric and it is its integration into Quintilian's work that is of import here. As Walzer states:

> The Stoic Wise Man would be the basis for the character of the model orator. Rhetoric would take its purpose, its social role, and its norms of ethical practice from Stoic philosophy. But as an art—as a systematic collection of techniques for speaking well in the sense of speaking effectively—rhetoric would be grounded in Ciceronian eloquence. (29)

It was in this way that Quintilian was able to build on the ideas of the ancient Greeks by incorporating aspects of stoic philosophy into his rhetorical instruction, which he deemed integral to the education of a proper orator or rhetorician, without really having to confront the negative reputation that philosophy/philosophers had at the time. James J. Murphy aptly summarizes Quintilian's intentions by stating, "The movement toward future language is the concern of an entire educational program built around rhetoric in its broadest sense but including much more than rhetoric itself" (52). Quintilian's efforts would have a lasting legacy that helped to shape Western rhetorical instruction not only for Romans but also through modernity. While it is estimated that Quintilian died around 95 AD, it would take over 200 hundred years for Christianity to become the "official religion" of the Roman Empire (Lanham and Dumitrescu 83) which would ultimately meet its end in the late 4th Century and Europe would undergo massive upheavals in societal, political, and religious institutions. Lanham and Dumitrescu make this observation:

> Two generalizations can be made about the history of education in the thousand years or so after Quintilian's death: relevant source materials are hard to find, and most of the documentation is indirect and therefore subject to differing interpretations. (86)

There are also accessibility considerations and Martin Camargo and Marjorie Curry Woods point out that, "The cost of writing materials and the complex technology of medieval textual production meant that composition was often carried out in one's head and delivered orally" (131). However, there are some noteworthy exceptions to the above statements. Utilizing Greco-Roman rhetorical writings and traditions, Augustine of Hippo (St. Augustine) produced his *De Doctrina Christiana* in the year 427 which would provide a bridge between the "pagan" rhetorics of the past and offer ecclesiastical access to a classical-style rhetorical education and made possible "a Christian theory of rhetoric" (85). This would slowly lead to schools established by

the church throughout burgeoning Christian towns in Europe. As the necessities of commerce, legislation, and religious bureaucracy evolved into the 12th century, education began its ascendance once again and in the 14th century helped to form what is now known as the European Renaissance. It was also during this time that Greek and Roman rhetorical texts became once again available and popularized. And it is partially this popularity that Peter Ramus would ultimately take issue with.

Renaissance Rhetorics

The next step on this journey through the relationship between ethics and rhetorical instruction in higher education is the introduction to a highly influential figure from the Renaissance era; Peter Ramus. When we consider the seemingly widespread influence that Ramus had on both European and American rhetorical instruction, we could expect that he'd be a household name, or at the very least there would be a great many university buildings bearing his moniker, but this is not the case. His influence can be observed in the universities of today and I'll discuss this influence in more detail in the next chapter, but what is more appropriate to this chapter is that Ramus responds directly to Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* which had a resurgence in the late middle ages alongside many other works from Greek and Roman antiquity, many of which Ramus would also challenge. However, it is his *Arguments in Rhetoric Against Quintilian* that I feel most clearly articulates his position on the separation of rhetoric and ethics.

To me, Ramus's argument is very circular. He utilizes syllogisms of his own creation to criticize Quintilian. It's as though his confidence in his own reasoning will not let him see the possibility that different subjects of study often overlap or that such differing subjects can also bolster each other to greater understanding. All subjects must be individually defined and quarantined:

> Moral philosophers speculate appropriately and judiciously on the numerous problems involving the moral virtues and the virtues of intelligence and the mind…men of learning and wisdom, not rhetoricians, discuss separately through their individual studies the remaining important branches of learning including the virtuous qualities of character. I conclude therefore: Quintilian's definition of the orator is as a result defective. (85)

This example highlights both the content and the tone of his entire argument. It is simply impossible for Ramus that a mathematician could be inspired by his work to create a painting. Or that the meter of a poem could inspire the meter of a musical rhythm. Again, his circular logic and seeming petulance when he asks, "What then can be said against this [Quintilian's] definition of an orator? I assert that indeed that such a definition of an orator seems to me to be useless and stupid: Why? Because a definition of any artist which covers more than is included in the rules of his art is superfluous and defective" (84). We can see through these examples how the lines between ethics and rhetoric can be clearly established in Ramus's works.

The legacy of Ramus' influence was consumed and co-opted by titanic shifts in European society as the Protestant Reformation began to take hold. Thomas M. Conley informs us in *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* that, "…the divorce between rhetoric and dialectic was compatible with the Puritan ideal of preaching from axioms, 'plain delivery of the Word without painted eloquence,' as one seventeenth-century divine put it" (133). Much reduced or eliminated would be the carefully crafted words of works like Augustine of Hippos' that sought to bring Christian enlightenment to its followers through careful interpretation of the Bible. The Reformation would all but solidify the separation of rhetoric and ethical considerations in the Universities of Europe and these practices would be carried within the hearts and minds of those upon the Mayflower. But before we jump the pond, there is more to discuss concerning the relationship between rhetorical instruction and the great changes taking place across Europe.

Throughout 16th and 17th century Europe, great societal changes were taking place and the whole of the continent, and beyond, was fraught with political and religious strife. Universities were cropping up seemingly everywhere established by the Catholic Jesuits. Within these universities, rhetoric was being instructed in the traditions of Aristotle, Quintilian, and Cicero. However, the relationship between ethical considerations and rhetoric became increasingly complicated to assess. There are two ways of looking at the situation of the time. The foundations of these universities and their instruction were steeped in Biblical canon so, it is easy to surmise that religious doctrine was all-consuming and all ethical considerations may be found within the Word. Yet, from a secular perspective, if the answers to all ethical considerations are to be found through the interpretation of religious doctrine, were any considerations being taken at all? If the answer is always "the scripture," is there ever really any ethical deliberation beyond textual interpretation?

Richard A. Lanham's essay "The 'Q' Question" not only discusses concepts integral to this work but also provides a history of the perceptions and instruction of rhetoric that took place after Peter Ramus' time. Lanham encapsulates this conversation by stating:

> If you separate the discipline of discourse into essence and ornament, into philosophy and rhetoric, and make each a separate discipline, it makes them easier to think about. Thus begins modern inquiry's long history of looking for its lost keys not where it lost them but under the lamppost, where they are easier to find. (159)

So as not to retread ground that Lanham has already so successfully covered, I think it would be helpful to spend some time with his essay before I begin to analyze the relationship between rhetoric and ethics as it winds its way to modernity, which is the intent of this chapter.

"The 'Q' Question" refers to Quintilian but more specifically, book 12 of his *Institutio Oratoria*. Lanham explains the "question" thus, "Is the perfect orator…a good man as well as a good orator?" (155). Ironically, as Lanham explains, Quintilian does not seem to truly answer the

question. In fact, like many theorists since, he seems to "kick the can" down the road, regardless of the fact that he is famous for describing the orator/rhetor as "the good man speaking well." Quintilian seems to understand the essential connection between rhetoric and ethics but does so in a manner that Lanham describes as "the weak defense" in which rhetoric exists in a value-free environment, and it is the onus of the purveyor in how rhetoric is utilized:

> The Weak Defense argues that there are two kinds of rhetoric, good and bad. The good kind is used in good causes, the bad kind in bad causes. Our kind is the good kind; the bad kind is used by our opponents. This was Plato's solution, and Isocrates' and it has been enthusiastically embraced by humanists ever since. (155)

However, this perception of an orator/rhetor contradicts Quintilian's famous description. Is not the "bad rhetoric" still rhetoric? In this view, one could say that any rhetoric that we disagree with is not rhetoric at all. It is important to note that "the weak defense" has largely shaped the evolution of rhetoric in practice and instruction that continues to this day, however erroneous or shortsighted this answer may be.

Lanham's "Strong Defense" is equated to the rhetoric of courts of law in which judgment is held until after presentation. Ethical deliberations and determinations are considered once the content of the rhetoric is provided. This perspective complicates a separation between ethics and rhetoric and brings rhetoric back to its roots in philosophy:

> The Strong Defense implies a figure/ground shift between philosophy and rhetoric—in fact, as we shall see, a continued series of shifts. In its world, there is as much truth as we need, maybe more, but argument is open-ended, more like kiting checks than balancing books. (156)

As the above comment suggests, The Strong Defense mandates that rhetoric's value must be considered after its composition. This may seem to be common sense, but this is not how rhetoric is currently disseminated in the public or educational spheres. For example, most first-year composition classes are completely separated from ethics classes, often with no requirement that

ethics classes be attended at all. In fact, most ethics classes are relegated to the philosophy department. So, if it takes philosophy to consider the value of rhetoric and composition, as The Strong Argument suggests, why then are these seemingly disparate—from the perspective of most university curriculum structures—presented to the faculty and student body as such? To answer this question, we must attend to the legacy of Peter Ramus that continues to influence the curriculum and departmentalization of universities around the world.

Ramus answered the "Q" question by separating rhetoric from ethics entirely and it is the codifying of this position by Peter Ramus that has helped shape not only rhetorical instruction but also the very structure of our higher educational institutions. In their article "The Quest for Method: The Legacy of Peter Ramus" Stephen Triche and Douglas McKnight describe how Ramus is largely responsible for the pedagogy and methods of instruction not only in rhetoric but a great many of arts and disciplines. They state that, "Ramus engineered the use of diagrammatic curriculum maps, attached to a corresponding pedagogical logic, that have become the standard means of planning and arranging instruction" (39). For those of us involved in education today, this all might sound very familiar, however, the thrust of Triche and McKnight's article is a criticism of this methodology. The separation of ethics and rhetoric in higher education is a result of this pedagogical framework and my criticisms are much on par with their own and for some of the same reasons as they say, "…Ramus's method became an intellectual shortcut that suppressed the metaphor of education as an intellectual journey characterized by lengthy, rigorous study and inquiry from which knowledge of self and the world would emerge" (39). I can only read "knowledge of self and the world" as ethical inquiry and how it relates to our relationship with society.

Ramus's methodology was based on a dialectic format in which everything could be reduced to its constituent parts. By utilizing this methodology, it seemed easier to formalize the process of instruction and the education, experience, and character of the instructor would be largely incidental. This methodology would continue to be popularized and almost ubiquitous:

> …during the seventeenth century, the Ramist operation of collapsing of dialectic into method gained a stronghold in the fledgling Calvinistic universities and academies in Germany, the Scottish universities generally, and in the Puritan colleges at Cambridge, at Trinity in Dublin and at Harvard College. (Triche and McKnight 53)

As Ramus's methods of instruction in rhetoric gained traction in these institutions, and as many graduate students today may frustratingly relate to you, the "dialogical pedagogy of disputation" (53) is still not consistently utilized in higher education, even today, and is relegated to the final defense process often required to graduate.

The simplification of this pedagogical methodology would have two lasting results with a host of ramifications; the separation of ethical reasoning from the presentation or invention process of rhetoric/composition and that it found purchase within religious instruction which was then imported to the United States with colonial Puritans.

The development and evolution of rhetoric and its relationship to ethics can be traced from ancient Greece to colonial America regardless of its permutations throughout. However, the separation of ethics and rhetoric that was refined by Peter Ramus and developed throughout Europe would ultimately be the foundation of not only rhetorical instruction in the US but also have a lasting effect on the structure of higher education which will be the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 2

In the previous chapter, I analyzed the relationship between rhetoric and ethics as those two concepts established themselves in ancient Greek culture and then began to be disseminated through educational practices. I then began to follow that relationship in its ebbs and flows throughout Western societies as institutions of higher education began to become more formalized and take on a shape that is more familiar from a 21st-century perspective. As was discussed in Chapter 1, throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, Catholic Jesuits were founding universities across Europe. Ellwood P. Cubberley informs us in *Public Education in the United States* that, "Very early (1636) an English-type college was founded in the Massachusetts Colony, partly by colony action, but more by the gift of John Harvard, that 'the tongues and arts' might be taught and learning and piety maintained" (15-16). However, alongside the colonial evolution and ultimate independence, so too would institutes of higher education. Changes in societal values, politics, and evolving global economics would also help to play a part in the founding and structure of universities. In this chapter, I will continue to follow the relationship between rhetoric and ethics in American institutions of higher education to describe that relationship through the 18th century and ultimately how that relationship may have affected the dramatic expansion of universities throughout the 19th century.

The Idea of the American University

Some early colonial universities were reliant on public funding and thus subject to much public opinion when it came to how they were organized and, more importantly, what the curriculum would entail (T. Miller 36). The public's influence on the structure and content of universities increased as the public itself became more diversified in its values and religious ideology, much of which can be attributed to traveling preacher George Whitefield, on whom I

will elaborate more below. This evolving influence was a recognizable shift from the "insulated English universities" that so highly influenced colonial institutions. In his book *The Evolution of College English: Literary Studies from the Puritans to the Postmoderns,* Thomas P. Miller states, "New Englanders looked to public education to perpetuate their values amidst the perceived barbarism of the frontier…" (36). It is important to also note that the first American college, Harvard University (1636), was founded on the idea that it would be, "an 'English-type college' to train potential clergy" (Wright et al. 251). This structure and intention would, inevitably, shape the content of rhetorical instruction which consisted largely of, "transcribing dictated lectures and engaging in recitations" (251) in which the ethical considerations and moral philosophy of the Greek and Roman eras were almost completely absent and Puritan theology was foundational while within Catholic institutions, "Moral philosophy became a mode of inquiry, and debates that utilized ethical and pathetic appeals…" (252). We can see that the methodological process championed by Peter Ramus had taken firm root in foundational American higher education and the character of both instructor and student would be largely incidental. It may seem strange to say that the values of the potential clergy being instructed in these early institutions are of little consequence, but the Puritan interpretation of scripture was fundamentally consistent and left little room for deeper analysis. Therefore, the education system, "…was primarily the scripting of an oral performance…" and "…a form of literacy that worked well in the eighteenth century with the Puritanical control on social diversity and information" (251). However, it will be religion itself that will begin to reshape the content of rhetorical education in America.

Religious Influence in the Colonies

As colonies started to populate the new world, institutions of higher education were developed. These institutions were almost exclusively religious (though there were some public institutions as I'll elaborate on later), and the overriding intent was to educate ministers who oversaw the congregations of colonies as they were established. Religion thus played a key role in the shape of higher education in the Colonial U.S. In their book *Under the Cope of Heaven: Religion, Society, and Politics in Colonial* America, Patricia U. Bonomi states, "Clergymen, along with other community leaders, were expected to set the tone of eighteenth-century public discourse and to indicate by their own example the limits of acceptable behavior" (174). Bonomi goes on to say of the Scotch-Irish settlements that:

> As soon as a Presbyterian congregation was formed, it requested recognition and the supply of a minister from the local presbytery. Often the presbytery could provide only a probationer or itinerant preacher for the Sabbath, and many settlements were fortunate to hear a sermon one or two Sundays a month. The congregations nonetheless proceeded to elect elders, deacons to care for the poor and sick, and trustees to oversee the collection of tithes for the minister's salary. The governing "session" comprised of elders and ministers, functioned as a kind of court, hearing charges and ruling on a variety of matters, including disputes between parishioners over land or debt, domestic difficulties, and church doctrine. (147)

What is important to note is that these ministers were heavily involved in the political affairs of these colonies, often acting as a type of pseudo-mayor to handle minor legal situations and conflicts. Here the ethical considerations of these disputes were assumed to be founded on scripture and since the populous were also heavily religious, it only makes sense that a local minister would be considered an authority figure. However, as the larger conflicts concerning the authority of the British Monarchy and the hierarchical structure represented by the church and localized ministers began to plague the colonies and the seed of independence began to grow, a shift in the foundational purpose of institutions of higher education began to take place as well.

Due to the overwhelming savagery visited upon the indigenous peoples of America during King Phillip's War that ended in 1678, colonial settlers began to feel more confident in spreading further from New England (Wright et al. 252). Without the constant judgmental gaze and authority of the Puritan clergy, these settlers recognized a sense of independence that was, likely, stimulated by evangelist George Whitefield who preached of a spiritual "awakening" in which religious independence blossomed throughout the mid-18th century. As E. A. Wright et al. inform us, "The colonists, accustomed to didactic sermons, welcomed the Whitefield option, and earlier rhetorical education began to give way to inductive reasoning that used earthly experiences as evidence" and that, "Moral philosophy became a mode of inquiry, and debates that utilized ethical and pathetic appeals replaced scribal literacy's syllogistic disputation that prescribed rote dictation of lines of logic that assumed the students' ideological subscription to the logic and therefore did not need to persuade" (252). Whitefield promoted an internalized relationship with scripture founded on the idea of man as already "fallen" and that society as individuals or as communities should consider their moral shortcomings through this lens. Whitefield's interpretation of scripture was that Christ had already atoned for our sins and acceptance of Jesus was the only requirement for salvation, a perspective that has continued to be foundational even in today's Christian ministries. There was much controversy on this subject as it seemed to contradict the authority of the established Puritan theocracy in which only by good acts and striving to live in the lord's image could one receive the eternal reward. The controversy led to many disputes within religious communities and hierarchies by essentially taking the interpretation of the scripture out of the hands of an elite clergy and into an individual responsibility, granting the faithful an independent relationship with God. In one of the most heated conflicts of the time, Whitefield wrote a letter to a "friend" published by his friend,

Benjamin Franklin, in which he takes on the Puritan Archbishop Tillotson's interpretation of the scripture. Whitefield says of Tillotson's written sermons:

> Any spiritual man that reads them, may easily see that the Archbishop knew of no other than a bare historical Faith: And as to the Method of our acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, and our justification by faith alone (which is the doctrine of the scripture and the Church of England) he certainly was as ignorant thereof as Mahomet himself. (4)

This type of controversial and often hyperbolic rhetoric would land Whitefield in disputes with various religious sects, friends, and even the Church of England. All of this is to say that these divisions amongst early colonial religious authorities would allow for differing perspectives in the makeup of university curriculum and it is with some irony that the compartmentalization of fields of study developed by Peter Ramus that was championed by the Puritans of the time would also be the means by which secular ideals concerning education would gain a foothold that would inevitably reconfigure the curriculum of higher education. By separating subjects like moral philosophy, science, and rhetoric from religious study, early colonial institutions would not have to concern themselves with the security of theological study. Confident in their religious principles, religious institutional administration thought the demarcation of subjects would only strengthen their religious instruction as other ideas and philosophy would always be less than. However, with the influence of Whitefield's internalized and independent theological concepts, students would not necessarily seek or require their relationship with scripture to be granted them from the pulpit/lectern. Universities were just a microcosm of the larger discourse taking place throughout the colonies, so I'll take a moment to elaborate on how Whitefield's controversies were just a more visible reflection of the larger conflicts taking place.

As I discussed earlier, our common historical perspective is that America was founded by Protestants escaping religious persecution and I'll not dispute that here, but it is important to realize that it was not their intention to establish a country of religious freedom, it was likely

quite the opposite. In the article “The Contribution of the Protestant Churches to Religious Liberty in Colonial America”, Perry G. E. Miller gives an accounting that suggests it was the very act of religious intolerance that would ultimately lead to religious freedom. P. Miller begins by stating, “There is no way to deny—and as far as I can see, no use in denying—that Protestants coming to this country in the seventeenth century were almost unanimous in their conviction that [religious] toleration was a dangerous and heathen notion” (1). However, with the influx of so many migrants of various religious sects entering colonies that desperately needed the labor they could provide, the religious leadership would often find themselves unwillingly engaging in tolerance for practical and economic reasons (P. Miller 3). We can imagine this period as one of extreme hardships, particularly in settlements reaching further from established colonies. And just as within those established colonies and the toleration that was required for their development, intentional or not, so too would more distant settlements be required to rely on each other regardless of their religious orientation. It would have been a matter of basic survival. As this is not the intention of this work to recount the details of the colonial project, I’ll again use P. Miller to emphasize that the bold experiment of America and its forms of freedom were, likely, not intentional as he succinctly relates:

> I can find very little evidence that the Protestant churches ever really entertained the conception of complete liberty as their ultimate goal, or that they often moved in that direction unless forced to do so by the pressure of events or by the necessities of the social environment…the contribution of the majority of the Protestant churches must in the final analysis be described as inadvertent. (3)

We can see that there were many disparate sects throughout early settlements and colonies in various permutations and it only stands to reason that the make-up and curriculum of institutes of higher education would reflect these realities. And while there were continued controversies similar to those, I described concerning George Whitefield, the compromises and toleration of

religious variation within communities would be reflected in the founding documents of the United States not as a bold and forward-looking way of expanding individual liberty but as a simple matter of practicality. The following section describes how the attitudes toward liberty and religion helped shape American universities.

Religion and Education

The freedom of religion afforded by the newly minted U.S. Constitution allowed for various sects of Christianity to begin to influence the structure and makeup of colleges as E. A. Wright et al. explain, "Shortly after the United States ratified its Constitution, the First Amendment's guarantee of religion allowed for the development of Catholic Schools throughout the country, because…the Protestant religions were not the only ones who valued rhetorical education" (Wright et al. 254). Until this period, most learning institutions were financially supported by the social and economic elite and therefore attended by their children. However, a burgeoning middle class began to evolve comprised of many religious perspectives. One thing they could all agree upon was the value of higher education, and rhetorical education in particular, in raising one's socio-economic status as, "This interest [in education] may have been furthered by the view, advocated by the popular rhetoric movement, that rhetoric was a key skill in the professional and social arenas" (250). The heightened attendance put a strain on many previously established institutions and these differing religious sects would begin to develop their own colleges as Wright et al. further explain, "One of the most prolific supporters of academies and institutes during pre-twentieth century United States history was the Catholic Church" (254). All of this is to say that while religion would still produce institutions in the Ramistic tradition that then allowed the "compartmentalization" of both religious studies and moral philosophy as Thomas Miller points out, "…enabl[ing] Calvinists to be classicists without

having to confront the contradiction between their studies in the humanities and their belief in humanity's fallen nature" (38). This compromise could not hold, however, and in time, "The rise of moral philosophy in the curriculum was pivotal to the transition from deductions from established beliefs to inductive inquiries that looked to experience as a source of knowledge" (38). Ramism allowed the seed of secular ethical inquiry to be planted within these religious institutions as their authorities were so sure of its methodology to protect its biblical principles and therefore, they could not foresee that it would one day take over the garden. A significant shift in the attitudes of the leadership in higher education had already taken place at the turn of the century when the more progressive, John Leverett, became president of Harvard in 1707. It's not so much that the schools were becoming more secular in their appearance but that the veneer of religious adherence allowed for more diverse forms of study as George M. Marsden explains, "In Leverett, there is a general shift to the "liberal" spirit of truth-seeking, rejecting (though still respecting) the ancients as authorities in favor of the modern scientific method. Nonetheless, the new learning like the old is still to be surrounded by Christian liturgical, behavioral, and theological dictates" (44). This shift was fertile ground for the secular inquiry that would shape higher education in America into the 21st century.

The men who would ultimately shape the course of the American experiment began to reconsider the fundamental purpose of institutes of higher education in which the foundational intention was similar to the European model of religious instruction. However, colonial education was distinct in its intentions to not only educate the clergy, but then have its graduates oversee the theological, and often legislative, needs of new colonial settlements. This would help ensure that settlements would still be connected to already established society while allowing the church to maintain its authority, however far the settlements were from other population centers

geographically. The underlying influence of the church on the curriculum had begun to diminish and those in a position to affect the direction universities would take begin to debate these ideas. A notable example can be perceived when the newly formed Princeton's charter of 1748 stated that it, "guaranteed that students 'of any religious Denomination' could enjoy the full privileges of the college, regardless 'of his or their Sentiments in Religion, and of his or their being of a Religious profession Different from the said Trustees of College'" (Marsden 51). The overarching position was that these schools should be utilized to develop what they considered the ideal citizen; those who could better help direct a nation in its infancy.

The Scottish Enlightenment and Education

To truly try to follow the thread of the relationship between rhetoric and ethics, there are many strings that I must weave together which include aspects of the Scottish Enlightenment and its influence on the founding fathers of America, how those concepts permeated colonial society, and the production of the United States Constitution, and how all of this would inevitably help to structure the American University. My hope is by combining these seemingly disparate strings I'll be able to bring us to the overall ideas that I'm trying to convey.

Attitudes towards a reconsideration of higher education were very welcoming to the type of education taking place throughout Great Britain inspired by the Scottish Enlightenment. Marsden informs us that it:

> …boast[ed] scholars such as Francis Hutchenson, Thomas Reid, David Hume, and Adam Smith…the Scottish Enlightenment was situated primarily in the universities. In part this was possible because Scottish universities were dominated by Presbyterian Moderates who combined Presbyterian zeal for learning with a determination to demonstrate the compatibility of Christianity with the latest cultural and scientific trends. (53)

These same types of academies had also found a foothold with the Scotch-Irish who would eventually introduce their education system throughout American settlements and colonies.

Marsden states that, “outside of New England the Scots were the educators of eighteenth-century America” (53). While attending William and Mary and under the tutelage of the Scotsman William Small, a mathematician and moral philosophy instructor, Thomas Jefferson, “attributed to Small his own intellectual awakening to modern science and learning” (Marsden 54). Through this Enlightenment influence, we can begin to see the effects it would have on the education of those who would shape the new world.

The Scottish Enlightenment and the revolutionary era of the United States occupy many of the same historic and intellectual spaces. Some even name the revolutionary era “The American Enlightenment”. In the article “Why the Scottish Enlightenment Was Useful to the Framers of the American Constitution” Daniel Walker Howe states that, “These intellectual connections are not surprising in view of the many commercial, social, cultural, and institutional ties between Scotland and America in the eighteenth century, ties that have also been thoroughly documented by historians” (573). Howe lists the many parallels between the Scottish Enlightenment and the revolutionary era but what is important here is the concepts and ideas being discussed in public and educational corridors. Now that religion had become a sort of foundational ether that permeated all things yet no longer made the demands it once had on intellectual discourse, science was free to evolve, and the Scotts imported much of it to America. By suggesting that all human endeavors could be quantified, various fields of study developed from political science and moral philosophy to economic theory.

In 1776, the same year America claimed its independence, Adam Smith published his seminal work *The Wealth of Nations*. Many people are familiar with Smith as his name and his concept of “the invisible hand of the market” is foundational in American economics. Ironically, Smith was not an economist, he was a moral philosopher. His first published work was *The*

Theory of Moral Sentiments, a work in which he tries to describe the reasons why and how we make ethical decisions. I wanted to discuss Smith and his influence on American history and higher education for a few reasons. First, he was a great influence on the founding fathers of the United States as Samuel Fleischacker tells us in *Adam Smith's Reception Among the Founding Fathers, 1776-1790:*

> Jefferson included the book [*Theory of Moral Sentiments*] in a 1771 list of titles recommended for a private library, and John Adams devoted a chapter of his *Discourse on Davila* to a long excerpt from it. Benjamin Rush quoted the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* during a 1774 lecture on American Indians, and Wilson seemed to allude to it in his 1790-1791 lectures on American Law. (898)

Second, and most related to this project, *The Wealth of Nations* is an intellectual continuation of his first work *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* though almost exclusively those that quote Smith or preach his economic theories have never heard of, and certainly never read, or studied *Sentiments*.

We begin to see that the founders of our country and political enterprises were influential in the shift from religious foundations in higher education to more secular values. These founding fathers were intent on developing students who were better equipped to further the values of capital regardless of whether they strictly promoted the public good. What is important to note is that for these influential founders' capital and public good were often one and the same. This can likely be attributed to the works of Smith. In *Rhetorical Style and Bourgeois Virtue Capital*, Mark Garrett Longaker takes great care to explicate many of the ideas and theories of Smith and how they would influence the government and its policies.

Longaker informs us that Smith believed that a free market capitalistic society could only function if it had a rigorous ethical foundation that he referred to as "probity". Smith believed that probity should be applied to rhetorical practices as well. In doing so, Smith would build his

concepts on classical ideas of stoicism with the caveat that, “Smith…took up ancient ideas when they served his theory of an honest rhetorical style” (Longaker). That is to say one may not necessarily refer to Smith as a “stoic” or “neo-classicist”. Smith felt the honest rhetorical style referred to above should be applied to both composition and commerce. It might be important to note here that Smith believed that his ideas transcend a certain time and place and that society should shape its morality as, “An honest style should display the orator’s character and should reflect the era’s mores. The critic should judge the composition by attending to the rhetor and to his society” (Longaker) and that, “…this quasi-Stoic belief that the rhetor’s character should reflect the interpenetration of rhetorical style, individual character, and social-historical ethos” (Longaker). While the above lays the foundation of some of Smith’s beliefs concerning rhetoric, I will now attempt to show how these beliefs might be applied to commerce.

As was exemplified, Smith believed that his idea of probity would evolve and change with the times. This is important to note as I believe Smith’s definition of capitalism is far different than what it has become in modernity. That being said, his ideas seem almost naive from a modern perspective and though I can’t place myself in his position Smith’s theories do not account for the complexity of modern commerce, government, and jurisprudence. Simply put, Smith believed that the same probity that is essential to rhetoric was just as essential to a functioning capitalistic system and served to properly direct the hand of the free market. In describing these ideas, Longaker states:

> Occasionally, he [Smith] trotted the dishonest merchant [a rhetorical figure] alone onto the stage to showcase his duplicity. Merchants conceal a difference between a commodity’s “natural price” (the cost of producing and bringing the good to market) and its “market price” (the amount most consumers will pay). But this benign duplicity cannot last since “their great profit would tempt so many new rivals to employ their stocks in the same way, that, the effectual demand being supplied, the market price would soon be reduced to the natural price” (*WN* 77). (Longaker)

Smith is essentially saying that each merchant is an independent entity that would never collude with one and other to manipulate pricing otherwise the free market would become unstable. Therefore, probity would win out and reduce a good to its proper "market price".

When it comes to explaining the "natural price" of a good which includes labor costs, Smith believed that, "since workers must afford necessities to support themselves and their families, wages must exceed 'a certain rate which it seems impossible to reduce, for any considerable time.' (*WN* 85)" (Longaker) because if reduced wages and high priced goods, "…are frequently resisted by contrary defensive combination of the workmen" (Smith 84). As I've said above, Smith could not possibly have predicted the complexity of modern markets. However, Smith was not wholly ignorant of corruption and manipulation when he observed that, "The free market for labor and for goods disciplines dishonest merchants and manufacturers. When they collude with politicians, however, insincere capitalists wreak havoc that the free market cannot rectify" (Longaker). All of this is to say that Smith believed that a capitalist free market could not survive without foundational probity. While it's not pertinent to discuss here, in many ways, the free-market system that Smith championed has little to do with the capitalist system of today. Though the verbiage utilized to discuss modern commerce may be the same, the definitions and moral foundations have evolved in many of the ways that Smith suggested they would but, perhaps, not in ways that he would agree they should. All of this is to say that Smith had a greater influence on the founding fathers and their ideas concerning American society, economics, and academia than he's often given credit for as, "…there is clear evidence that *Wealth of Nations* was read by many political leaders in America before 1786 and influenced American political debates throughout the 1780s" (Fleischacker 901) which are some pretty compelling dates when you consider the writing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and

then the United States Constitution in 1787. It has even been suggested that Benjamin Franklin was influential in the development of *WoN*. At the very least, Thomas D. Eliot informs us that:

> Franklin was sent to England twice on missions to Parliament…from 1757 to 1762, and again from December 1764, to 1775, inclusive. It was said that he went to Scotland to see Smith, with a view of persuading him to write a treatise on colonial policy: or, at least, that when they met, Franklin urged such a task upon him. They were said to have been close friends, and in frequent communication with each other. (67)

Though much of their communications have been lost to time, at the very least, we can surmise that there was considerable mutual respect and influence between the two during Smith's tenure as The Chair of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow University where many of the ideas that would end up in *WoN* were expressed through his lectures. Transitioning from Universities abroad to educating in America came with a distinctive set of challenges as well as an interesting evolution within academia as:

> From its origins, college English has taught aspiring provincials how to distinguish themselves by adopting cosmopolitan tastes. Before they could formalize polite proprieties for their students, Scottish professors had to teach themselves how to speak English with propriety. In their studious sefl-fashionings lie many telling lessons on how instruction in literacy works to instill representative forms of self-governance. (T.Miller 223)

It is also important to note that, "Adam Smith … was one of the first to teach college English Courses." (223), and the "consummate man of print, Benjamin Franklin, was instrumental in establishing the college in Philadelphia that included the first professorship devoted to teaching English" (221).

Universities Take Shape

The College of Philadelphia is often cited as the first American University though this claim has long been debated. However, it is important to note that it is one of the first institutes of higher education that was established with private funds. While the college shouldn't

necessarily be considered secular, it was certainly non-sectarian in its philosophy as Franklin himself states in his autobiography:

> Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of *any preacher of any religious persuasion* who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in the building not being to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service. (115)

This is a somewhat radical shift in ideology when compared to previously established, state-funded institutions, such as Harvard, that were founded deliberately to educate Puritan clergy and to promote and safeguard Puritan ideology. Variations in the founding, funding, and curriculum of institutes of higher education began to grow exponentially during this period.

To provide some further context, this is also the period where primary and secondary educational institutions began to be founded and, as with higher education, controversy and debate surrounded their underlying purpose and curriculum. For example, Massachusetts enacted laws that mandated free education for all white children. Even such a simple concept was not without its complications as, "often even with such a free education, many could not be admitted because the schools would not accept students who could not already read and write, a skill those who could pay gained from tutors or at a dame school" (Wright et al. 257). Thus, Boston would establish "infant schools" that eventually evolved into the more familiar primary schools. I provide this context as this is where we begin to see the shape of traditional secondary school or "high school" develop and observe arguments similar to those concerning higher education as Wright informs us that, "high school's main purpose was increasingly to prepare students for higher education, a purpose many railed against, and a purpose that may have led to the creation of the pejoratively termed current-traditional, or formulaic, rhetoric" (Wright et al. 259). It was also around this period that printing became much more affordable, and a larger literate public

began to evolve. As is easy to imagine, the vast majority of these new publications were in English to allow for a wider readership and make the study of the classic languages even less important to those involved in shaping the curriculum of higher education. Being a printer himself, Franklin's perspective shifted as well and was of the opinion that this, "new learning made learned languages 'absolutely unnecessary' for 'acquiring knowledge' (*Works* 10:113)" (T. Miller 84). T. Miller clarifies Franklin's position and the period by stating, "While Franklin was not entirely successful in breaking from classicism, he provides a historical alternative for thinking about English studies as a practical discipline concerned with preparing students for public life" (84). While we can see that the continuing expansion of available written works is tied to the English language and that the classism of higher education is beginning to be reduced, the curriculum of these infant universities would try to maintain the liberal education that was a hallmark of classicism by ensuring that, "Composition, rhetoric, and the oratorical literature of the time were set out as a program of study that was closely related with studies of modern history, politics, and science to create a curriculum that responsive to the needs of a broader public" (84). During this same period, John Witherspoon, president of Princeton (1768-94) would be spending his time not only designing a curriculum that, "drew upon rhetoric's civic vision to develop a more synthetic philosophy of liberal education," (84) but would also be defending that position to the parents of students. The picture this paints of the period is a rising bourgeoisie concerned with higher education as a means of advancement in public life and wealth, and institutions still concerned with the character of its graduates. While the curriculum would require rhetoric as part of its overall program, we can see the compartmentalization of these classes begin to take a more firm hold.

The early history of American higher education and more specifically the place of ethics and rhetoric within it, was complicated not only by the influence of religion but also by the developing political discourse and movements taking place. America was evolving in ways that began to separate itself from England in some of the most important and consequential aspects of colonial society. The influence of the Scottish Enlightenment and its dedicates promoted, if not the policies of, at least the concepts of self-governance and determination. These concepts had begun being propagated and disseminated within newly established universities and rhetorical instruction founded in the ethics of moral philosophy alongside public discourse and among influential public figures. With the increasing accessibility of texts in English as printing became more affordable, education became even more in demand and the proliferation of universities continued. The exact shape these fledgling universities would take remained to be seen, but the diversity of thought and the initial foundation of rhetorical education as a site of ethics, moral philosophy, and civic virtue leaves one with a sense of optimism.

Chapter 3

As the population of the US continued to expand and the commonly held belief that education could help provide a better quality of life, it's no wonder that there would be an increasing desire for institutions of higher education as, "The number of colleges rose from 9 after the Revolution to almost 250 at the start of the Civil War, with the sharpest increases in less-developed provincial areas" (T. Miller 89). What is important to distinguish amongst this incredible growth is that the content of the curriculum in these new institutions had a utilitarian bent as they focused more on agricultural, industrial, and scientific advancement. Universities were becoming engines of industry not only to help produce capital but also to advance military concerns. The desire for heightened literacy did not necessarily hold the same values that the foundational American institutions favored and the divide between moral philosophy/ethics and rhetoric became more pronounced.

The Land Act and University Expansion

One of the most foundational reasons for the exponential growth of higher education and its shift to more utilitarian concerns was the signing by Lincoln of "An Act Donating Public Lands to the Several States and Territories Which May Provide Colleges for the Benefit of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts" in 1862, commonly known as the Morrill Act named after its congressional sponsor, Vermont Rep. Justin Morrill (Lee and Ahtone). The act was utilized for not only the founding of some of the country's most storied institutions but also for their continuing financial stability. However, great swaths of land were being stolen by the Federal Government from indigenous peoples and used to construct and support fledgling universities. These institutions would be the seedstock of developing industry and bolster the evolution of American-style capitalism. While most of these new institutions were founded for scientific and

agricultural instruction and research, many were explicitly developed in support of the Civil War, the overriding reason that President Lincoln signed the act into law (Lee and Ahtone). However, other traditional institutions are also beneficiaries of these "land-grab universities". The disheartening and criminal history of so many of America's universities is worth much more attention than I'm able to discuss here, but what is salient to this conversation is to show the growth and content of higher education in US history and how, perhaps, some of these major events have led to institutional evolution. "Manifest Destiny" was not just an idea but an ideal. Early American attitudes towards Indigenous peoples founded in racism and xenophobia ultimately justified a myriad of atrocities including extra-judicial land appropriation. Essentially, the demand for formal education outweighed any moral or legal concerns that may have been broached at the time. The appropriation of land from indigenous peoples was predicated on the idea that the land would be better utilized by providing space for institutions to benefit settlers' desire for an education.

As one might expect, the influx of those seeking an education would lead to changes in how students could be educated. Hierarchies became more defined as "Professors" distinguished themselves from "teachers" as Thomas Miller states, "By denying that they taught for a living, professors could treat teaching as an informal process that required no professional expertise" (127). Academics proscribed to this delineation to retain the prestige and accessibility to perform research and that:

> This conservative tendency is evident in how English departments have divorced their professional purposes from their basic institutional functions in ways that have reduced introductory courses to mechanics, there by undercutting the standing of teaching, and marginalizing the more expansive potentials of the discipline's power base. (127)

Educational expansion required more and more educators, and the position of teacher became increasingly accessible to marginalized groups, "as academics distanced themselves from

practitioners" those, "practitioners were more likely to be women, members of the working class, or people of color" (127). Education itself would evolve due to this influx of students and questions about the role of primary and secondary education would be continuously debated. The end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century would also begin to see higher education relying more on entrance exams which, of course, would influence the purposes of primary education as assessment-driven curriculum began to proliferate. This led to the formalization of curriculum to meet the underlying needs of an increasingly educated public and the overarching need for educators. Here we also see divisions in types of composition classes. An important aspect of these divisions is described by T. Miller when he states, "Writing for public audiences would be further incapacitated by the disabling dualism of technical and creative writing" (129). These divisions would also affect educators themselves as, "Practitioners were discouraged from seeing themselves as teachers and writers who are involved in local communities and institutions in the ways that antebellum academics were" (129), a foundational element of rhetorical education that goes back to ancient Greece as discussed in chapter 1. Composition courses in higher education would be further diminished in their scope as even the belles-lettres-centered curriculum of the 19th century found itself being undermined as, "Teachers were struggling to negotiate institutional pressures to concentrate on utilitarian applications and expressed concerns that instruction was moving away from 'culture and toward mere vocation' (College and High School Section 55)" (136). These concerns and conversations led to the establishment of the National Council of Teachers of English in 1911 that, it could be argued, tried to identify the needs of pedagogy and composition's place in higher education. What was not as recognizable is that by setting boundaries to English course instruction and trying to elevate the literary aspects of curriculum, fault lines were strengthened and, "By identifying literature as a higher calling

and writing as a basic skill to be tested, the profession made part of its work a mystery and the rest merely methodical" (136). With the expansion of institutes of higher education, also came the matter of accreditation which would also help diminish the breadth of English educational content and as Ryan Skinnell states, "it is commonly accepted that the majority of composition instruction, at least in the first-year course, stagnated for several decades until it was revitalized mid-century" (78). This utilitarian approach to the teaching of composition would have little effective opposition as those most likely to acknowledge the need and the ability to produce effective reform, those doing the actual work of teaching, were inundated with an overwhelming workload leaving little time for research, communication, or organization. Throughout the first quarter of the 20th century these divisions first established themselves in East Coast research institutes and then disseminated throughout the country as, "Instruction in rhetoric virtually disappeared as composition courses became relentlessly mechanical, with courses in argument offered by fewer than 20 percent of the seventy-one colleges in [a] 1925 sample" (T. Miller 154). This seeming stalemate in the varied opinions on the position and purpose of English in higher education would continue into the second quarter of the 20th century and the relationship between rhetoric and ethics would continue to suffer until a new form of Progressivism began to gain a foothold.

Progressivism, Dewey, and The New Critics

The most radical political shift to the left in the history of the United States took place in the early decades of the 20th century and has yet to be matched since. While not necessarily residing under the umbrella of a given political party, "'Progressivism' served as a unifying but ill-defined ideology for coalition building among educators, journalists, social workers, and activists who ranged from socialists to reformers simply seeking to check the excesses of

capitalism" (T. Miller 159). Perhaps, one of the most influential progressives of the time was John Dewey whose democratic ideals and their relationship to rhetorical education and ethics would have an immense impact on higher education. In his introduction to *Democracy and Rhetoric: John Dewey on the Arts of Becoming*, Nathan Crick informs us:

> Of Dewey's considerable contributions to the intellectual tradition of humanism, his greatest achievement is to leave behind a corpus of writing that embodies the virtue of intelligent imaginative vision. It is and always has been the task of the greatest rhetoric to translate idealistic hope into social praxis, to turn visionary word into practical deed and thus bring forth a better world over time. Dewey points us toward such an art. (14)

As it seems with all matters related to higher education, the entrenched beliefs and habits of established academic institutions are slow to adopt ideas like those brought forth by progressives like Dewey. One of the largest detractors of progressivism would be academia itself and the rise of New Criticism. The New Critics were antithetical to progressivism's inherent inclusion and became increasingly dismissive of rhetoric, and inevitably its relationship to ethics, as an outmoded form of English instruction. In many ways, the New Critics were Platonists in their definition of rhetoric. For them, a literary work is an absolute as it sets the boundaries for all of the ideas and concepts within a given text so that the words and ideas used within that text are defined *by* that text leaving no room for ethical considerations that are not explicit to that text. During a conversation about New Criticism, one of its proponents, Allen Tate, summarizes this concept when he states, "If you have a novel by James T. Farrell you get people from the South Side of Chicago. I don't think that a sociological discussion of the South Side of Chicago is particularly important except as the South Side appears in the total structure of the novel" (228). The South Side of Chicago has consistently been an economically depressed region and Tate suggests that this has no bearing on how one should perceive Farrell's work. This approach suggests that a reader analyzing the text must separate any notions they might have about the

South Side of Chicago to appreciate the work appropriately. This absolutism is antithetical to the Aristotelian concept of rhetoric that Kenneth Burke subscribed to that suggests words and concepts can and must be analyzed within a larger context. As this relates to education, the New Critics believed that their strict sense of formalism would allow for a scientifically methodical approach to English classrooms which would allow even the most inexperienced instructors to perform the duties of early classroom instruction as much of poetry and prose could be analyzed objectively. Whether the New Critics truly believed that literature could be viewed as completely objective or whether they were just attempting to further delineate their positions in academia is a matter of debate. However, when you consider their reaction to Kenneth Burke, who came from within their ranks, it is easier to believe that the New Critics were heavily invested in securing their positions and defining their discipline.

Kenneth Burke was an anomaly of the New Critic movement as he attempted to marry both the objectivity of the New Critics and the multiplicity of perspectives that were foundational to the progressives and that:

> Like the Progressives, Burke developed an interdisciplinary perspective concerned with the social sources and political uses of interpretation, and "symbolic action" more generally. Like the New Critics with whom he was sometimes identified, Burke was concerned with how formal elements of texts embody psychological and cultural dynamics of interpretive experience. (T. Miller 170)

It would seem that what Burke intended was to take a step back from the dogmatic positions of the New Critics and the Progressives to allow a broader view of both literary criticism and rhetoric and how they might interact with each other for the betterment of both. Again, the contributions of Kenneth Burke to numerous fields of study and higher education cannot be enumerated here, but when we consider the confluence of Burke, Dewey, the New Critics, and the Progressives we can begin to get a better sense of the conversations and structures of

rhetorical education and its relationship with ethics within higher education as we move into the mid-century and the significant impact that World War 2, and specifically the G. I. Bill, would have on rhetorical education and Universities throughout the rest of the 20th century as instructors had to contend with an unprecedented increase in students and therefore a diversity of perspectives and academic competency.

The G.I. Bill was one of the most transformative programs in US higher education and was more successful than even its most strident supporters had expected and due to that success, the conversations above concerning rhetorical education became even more pronounced as institutions struggled to provide instruction and instructors to an increasing student body. However, the Bill's intent was not as altruistic as it might appear in hindsight. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his advisers were immensely concerned about the influx of millions of soldiers returning from active duty and the likelihood that a vast majority would struggle to find employment as, "The persons responsible for the legislative enactment of Roosevelt's suggestions explicitly indicated by their statements and testimonies that they felt the primary postwar problem was the economy, not the veterans" (Olson 598). No one had predicted how successful the program would be with the most generous estimates of veteran college enrollment topping 700,000. However, those estimates were based on the idea that veterans held a disdain for education and would not make very good students anyway but those assumptions were proven incredibly inaccurate as, "At the college level alone a total of 2,232,000 veterans utilized their G.I. Bill, with over a million veterans crowding on American campuses during the banner year of 1947-48" and "Veterans also astonished educators with the quality of their academic work and general decorum as students" (602). Veteran's academic quality in both grades and in the likelihood of fulfilling their degree requirements would earn them the moniker of "D.A.R.'s"

(Damn Average Raisers) by non-veterans at Stanford University (605). So, it is easy to see that no one was prepared for the success of the program or that it would lead to the expansion of universities as enrollment significantly increased. The increasing growth of US higher education overwhelmed much of academia and as the focus turned to expansion and accreditation composition classes continued to assume a mechanical role as Ryan Skinnell relates in *Conceding Composition*, "composition instruction was a necessary evil but not a site of intellectual energy for the first half of the twentieth century" and that, "it is commonly accepted that the majority of composition instruction, at least in the first-year course, stagnated for several decades until it was revitalized mid-century" (77-8). One significant development that would stimulate a sea change in rhetoric and composition was the founding of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in 1949.

Getting Organized

In his article "Freshman English, Composition, and CCCC," David Bartholomae gives a detailed history of the CCCC and its immeasurable impact on English instruction from the mid to later twentieth century. It does not serve the purpose of this project to simply reiterate the important work that he has produced in this article but to point out the areas where we most see the interactions between composition, rhetoric, and ethics and their relative value to those that helped shape the conference, and therefore, the evolution of those interactions over time. At this juncture in university English instruction, first-year and introductory classes traditionally focused on a literature-based model, and rhetoric and composition concerns were evaluated in their relationship to that subject matter. However, it became immediately clear that this traditional format of instruction could no longer serve the needs of an increasing and increasingly diverse

student body. Bartholomae describes the opinions of those involved at the time regarding those traditional practices as:

> The "common enemy," that is, was a version of English [instruction] represented by an attenuated humanistic tradition that placed literature (a Norton-anthology-like unified body of texts) as an unquestionable center of value, and that placed the professor, who could demonstrate acceptable ways of using and responding to those texts, as the primary representative of English. (41)

Not only was this untenable from a simple logistical point of view—the huge influx of post-war students and the availability of instructors to accommodate them—but it also placed, "dramatic and unprecedented demands on introductory courses (courses they [GI's] were said to be 'unprepared to take') and requiring the creation of a new faculty to do a teaching for which their English PhD's had not prepared them" (41). To complicate matters even further, once it had become apparent that the status quo in English instruction was unsustainable, the immediate question became, what would this new English look like? To succinctly encapsulate this period and mindset, I again turn to Bartholomae who states:

> Given these threats to the freshman course, and given the desire to do something with English and do something for students for whom the old English was an inadequate or inappropriate form of instruction, there was good cause to band together, pool information and resources, and (1) develop an agenda to give status and recognition to those teaching freshman English, (2) revise the graduate training of prospective teachers of English, and, most importantly, (3) work on developing this course, freshman English, a course without a proper subject or history—one whose name, freshman English, was an open term, indeterminate and, therefore, both inspiring and frightening. (41)

I would suggest that that third point is the most salient to this conversation as it implies a level of autonomy amongst these instructors in which ethical and moral considerations become implicit as traditional English instruction was focused almost explicitly on canonical literature and instructors had to consider what would be most beneficial for students moving forward, however, "this was simultaneously CCCC's greatest problem—to give standards, unity and definition to this course—and its greatest attraction, since it put its members in a position to make up English

as they went along" (42). These would be the opening conversations for the newly formed CCCC whose members likely had no idea that these conversations would be indefinite and continuously evolving.

During this same period, the New Critics that were introduced above were also challenging traditional academic ideals and practices where strict adherence to a Western canon of literary studies was the mandate in most English classrooms. These new perspectives interacted with each other in many beneficial ways and, by the very nature of their subject matter, certainly had moral and ethical concerns as utilizing various critical lenses requires ethical considerations when relating to works from another's perspective. The effect these concepts would have is described by Bartholomae as:

> The opposing term for composition, then, is not literature but a version of literary study threatened not only by composition but by other critical movements in the discipline: women's studies, black studies, gay studies, critical theory, culture study, studies of working-class language and literature, pedagogy. CCCC provided a site where English was open for negotiation (or renegotiation). (42)

The analysis and synthesis of these "new" perspectives required not only a place to engage with each other but also their relationship to composition and English classrooms more broadly. CCCC became a melting pot of ideas and a place for them to interact. However, it is important to note that the above critical movements require an empathetic perspective in one's ability to engage and analyze them. And so moral and ethical considerations are inherent in these conversations and practices. At the same time that these differing perspectives were being considered, T. Miller tells us that, "the postwar growth of general education programs enabled the profession to expand and consolidate its institutional position" and to facilitate their ability to educate an increasing student body and provide more educators, "The formalism of New Criticism provided methods for handling less literate students without having to come to terms

with the challenges their experiences posed" (177). All of which is to say that this conversation became increasingly nuanced and as you might imagine, formalism and the utilitarian trend in English and composition courses would become the norm as the modern research universities began to evolve.

The influx of students and the proceeds of their tuition in post-war universities became the fuel on which research universities and their tenured staff began to rely to further their endeavors. General education with English classes at its heart is succinctly summarized by T. Miller:

> Intellectual and institutional resources generated by general education enrollments were invested in building up a research mission that lacked the external sources of support that other disciplines drew upon. In their absence, English and other humanities disciplines came to depend upon cheaply delivered general education courses to support research workloads for selected faculty. Those faculty formed the leadership of the profession and shaped its sense of purpose through their control of graduate programs, journals, and the rest of the profession's articulation apparatus. (177).

The old guard of literary studies that formed the upper echelon of the university hierarchy would help shape the structure of the utilitarian functions of early general education English and composition classes while displaying, "an anti-utilitarian stance that identified literary studies as the real work of the discipline" (178). The attitudes on display here are almost monarchical in their dissonance. The structures of power and the needs of students become even more pronounced as the social movements of the 1960s and academia interact.

While much of the argument I've been making throughout this project is founded on the idea that academia in general and the relationship between ethics and rhetoric specifically influence society and public discourse, this influence does not necessarily promote progress or regression. The classism and hierarchies within the institutions of higher education may have contributed to the social upheaval that took place in the public discourse of the 60s and 70s as the

students navigating these systems became the loudest voices of protest amongst various social institutions and class structures. The relationship between these students and the forms of rhetoric and public discourse cannot be understated. One of the rallying cries of the counterculture movement was directly related to higher education as people were admonished to "Tune in, turn on, and drop out!" and while that message came to take on a whole host of meanings, "in Leary's first public utterance of the phrase at the Human Be-In at Golden Gate Park in 1967, drop out meant, well, drop out: 'Turn on, tune in, drop out. I mean drop out of high school, drop out of college, drop out of graduate school'" (Joseph). The counterculture movement had an undeniable mastery of various forms of rhetorical modes and composition that flew in the face of the utilitarian and traditional formats popular in higher education including music, cinema, classical arts, and even literature. This challenging of traditional values and methodologies in public discourse, academia, and rhetorical and compositional pedagogy offered a fertile audience for the release of the 1969 English translation of Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* as a general attitude of challenging status quo and norms were pervasive regardless of the work being, in many ways, a return to rhetorical traditions of the past.

Originally published in French in 1958, *The New Rhetoric* was well received as it spoke to ideas and concepts concerning rhetorical pedagogy that were already part of ongoing conversations within United States Academia. Moreover, these ideas have been circulating since they were first articulated by Aristotle. *The New Rhetoric* is not so much new as it is an old perspective on rhetoric for a new time and helps re-articulate foundational concepts that rhetoric and composition instruction that were discussed at the beginning of this project. While *The New Rhetoric* may not, initially, be directly related to English classes in higher education, its

perspectives can be appreciated and will ultimately align with later concepts in rhetoric and composition instruction. As for its relationship to contemporary social discourse, When we consider the utilitarian and formalistic structure of English instruction of the mid-century, the hierarchies of higher education, and the social upheaval of the 60s, it's not difficult to see how the concepts that challenge traditional wisdom within *The New Rhetoric* would garner large appeal. In an early review of the book, John Kozy Jr. states:

> Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca believe that the essential problems involving questions of a moral, social, political, philosophical, and religious order by their very nature elude the methods of mathematical and natural sciences, and thus scorn and reject all the techniques of reasoning characteristic of deliberation and discussion is not reasonable. (249-50)

The argument being made in this treatise is that while empirical evidence and scientific methodologies are effective in a great many areas regarding the search for truth and fact, there are many concepts and ideas that do not lend themselves to such methodologies. Early in the introduction to their treatise, Perelman and Olbrecths-Tyteca summarize this idea by stating, "The domain of argumentation is that of the credible, the plausible, the probable, to the degree that the latter eludes the certainty of calculations" (1). With the perspective that not all things can be evaluated through rigorous scientific study and mathematical methodology, a whole host of critical perspectives become available; the very concept of 'intersectionality' could not exist or at the very least, not be taken as a credible perspective and analytical tool. And if these critical perspectives are credible, empathy becomes a component of argumentation. Ethics, once again, has a demonstrable relationship with rhetoric and composition. James E. Porter elaborates on that idea by stating that, "*The New Rhetoric*—[is] a bold, innovative effort to recover a broader, more positive view of rhetoric and its civic role" (15). To that end, we come full circle to the beginning of this project and my discussion concerning Aristotle as it was there that the idea of a

mutual and beneficial relationship between ethics and rhetoric was first elaborated. This perspective permeates *The New Rhetoric* and while the focus of that work objectively concerns itself with argumentation, the relationship between ethics and rhetoric is fundamental to that conversation. But, as I have stated before and have attempted to navigate throughout this project, the streams of both ethics and rhetoric wind close at times and separate at others and will continue to do so for as long as these types of conversations are taking place and we will continue to see the effects of these conversations in not only the structure and content of higher education but also in the effect those institutions may have on the public and it's discourse. I'm reiterating these ideas here because we come to another turning point in the conversation of ethics and rhetoric. Many of the ideas discussed above begin to proliferate through institutional instruction and it seems that a broader, more diverse acceptance of ideas had been gaining ground on the formalistic instruction that had traditionally been utilized as Michelle K. Bolduc and David A. Frank inform us in their 2010 article:

> Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's work had the greatest influence on rhetorical theory in the twentieth century. Indeed, we believe the post-World War II rhetorical turn is best codified in *The New Rhetoric*, as it responds to the postwar crisis of reason with a rhetorical system designed to extend reason into the *vita ativa*, grant the role of tacit knowledge and commitment in knowledge, display the importance of argumentation as a counterpart to formal logic, and bridge the separation Ramus made between rhetoric and logic. (308-309)

However, as always seems the case, the interactions and conversations that take place between higher education and public discourse are about to (re)encounter another, though familiar, "crisis" relating to the "purpose" of the English classroom.

While the conversations concerning literacy and composition standards have and will always be fluctuating and evolving, it is not within the scope of this project to document the entire history of that conversation. However, I think it is important to highlight one of the most

controversial and famous of these "crises" so that the connection between these conversations and their relationship to ethics and rhetoric can be explored.

Poor Johnny

In a December 1975 issue of *Newsweek*, Merrill Sheils published a seemingly alarming article titled "Why Johnny Can't Write." Within the article, we are introduced to the issue with dire-sounding statistics concerning the decline in literacy skills amongst both high school and college students. We then receive a barrage of opinions from academic royalty such as Canadian philosopher and English professor Marshall McLuhan who exhorts we're witnessing the "long-term impact of television" (Sheils 58). While much of the language and tone of this article might sound like hyperbolic fearmongering by modern standards, it seems as though at the heart of this issue are the fears it invokes from big business, our capitalist economy, and the political establishment concerning America's place on the world stage and its sense of exceptionalism as:

> The cries of dismay sound even louder in the halls of commerce, industry and the professions, where writing is the basis for almost all formal business communication. Computer print-outs and the conference call may have altered forever the pace and nature of information exchanged, but transactions for the record--from interoffice memorandums to multinational corporate contracts all depend on the precision and clarity of the written word. (58)

I'm utilizing the above excerpt as I feel it exemplifies many of the concerns that are the root of this article. "The cries of dismay" that seem to be the loudest in the halls of commerce are worried that their bottom lines may be negatively impacted, and the concern seems to omit whether the education students are receiving will leave them in a position to more easily make a living. We should also note that this excerpt seems to imply a perspective that suggests that writing and communication are inherently foundational to overall financial success instead of success in a specific field of employment. If we ask the simple question, 'What is writing for?'

the article answers, “Writing is the basis for almost all formal business communication.” Now we can see that the author is decrying a lack of education for a *specific style* of writing.

Another interesting assumption being displayed here is the idea that the English language and the instruction in that language will be the most effective language when utilized in “multinational corporate contracts”. Certainly, America’s global economic dominance has led to the English language being utilized in much international business and even the sciences, but then we can ask, who is better equipped to engage with international English as a second language speakers, those who are experts in formal business communication? Or those that are practiced in various forms and modes of communication?

Finally, the author also alluded to technological advancements when stating that, “Computer print-outs and the conference calls may have altered forever the pace and nature of information exchanged”. Again, I ask, who is better suited to an ever-evolving technological world, those educated within a specific and stringent mode of writing? Or those that understand and can communicate in a multiplicity of formats?

The popularity and ensuing hysteria brought about by the aforementioned *Newsweek* article has brought about a litany of “Why Johnny” articles and op-eds. It is still discussed five decades later! Less than a year after its publication, linguist Suzette Haden Elgin provides an astute refutation in an article titled "Why ‘Newsweek’ Can’t Tell Us Why Johnny Can’t Write” and she begins with observations concerning the ubiquity and hysteria inspired by the article:

> But I don’t see the problem going away. I do see reprints of that article circulating in enormous quantities through every English department, every ESL department, and every education department I visit. I see it at PTA meetings. I see it quoted in local newspapers. I see teachers and administrators and officials and parents waving it…It has now become very clear to me that the December 8th article is being used to determine educational policy, and that students all over the United States are going to have their lives affected by it. (30)

It is easy to see through Elgin's seeming exasperation the proliferation of that article pervading much public discourse concerning education and how that discourse and educational policy and structures begin to interact. Most of the rest of the article refutes the specific quotes from experts in the field that the *Newsweek* article utilizes to bolster its argument. While Elgin's criticisms here are certainly valid, it is the resolution of the article that is most important to this project. With the variety of positions that have been explicated above, it is difficult to ascertain the most appropriate perspective but the point of this portion of this project is to simply highlight the fact that these conversations have and will always take place. However, it seems that a position of flexibility and inclusivity would tend to lead to better learning outcomes and this is expressed by Elgin when she states:

> Linguists will accept, however reluctantly, the idea of a Standard of sorts. What they object to is the use of that Standard to beat little kids (or college students, for that matter) over the head. It's one thing to tell a child that he does not speak like Walter Cronkite or write like William Buckley…It is another thing entirely to say to that child that his language, and the language of his family and friends, is "not correct" and "not good" and "must be improved." (35)

Elgin is trying to express that perhaps standardization is less effective as an instructional tool and system of evaluation than if it is utilized to *inform* instruction and promote various means of meeting students where they are. This is not to say that Elgin and other like-minded instructors have solidified any methodology within English programs and as this article discusses students as both "children" and "college" students, the conversation becomes even more complicated as not only the curriculum and its content is being debated but where the responsibility of that curriculum falls. As in, whatever it's decided the 'how' of student abilities in composition should be, where and when should that instruction take place? How prepared for college should students be? I chose to dissect this infamous crisis because the assumptions, language, and perspectives it highlights will continue to be foundational in these types of "crises" each time they are raised. In

a 2007 article “From Crisis to Crisis: The Evolution Toward Higher Standards of Literacy in the United States” author Robin Varnum informs us that, “The continued decline of Scholastic Aptitude Test scores made headlines every year from 1963 to 1980” and “In 1983 alone, over a dozen major reports of vastly differing merits were published, documenting a crisis in confidence in American education” (145). These conversations and the hysteria that sometimes surrounds them have been taking place as far back as Socrates excoriating the written word as being a less effective means of communication than oratory. While there are a multitude of reasons why there is a continuous perception of inadequacies in student literacy, Varnum believes that:

> Accurately speaking, there are only three reasons why a literacy problem may legitimately be said to exist. Within a particular educational system, literacy standards must be shown either to have declined relative to a previous era, or to be inferior to a standard attained in a different national system, or to be lower than what society has come to need and expect. In the case of the most recent U.S. literacy crisis, as well as of the several crises which have preceded it, the prevailing assumption has been that standards have declined, whereas in actuality it would seem more correct to say that expectations have been raised. (145)

In the broadest of terms, I don’t disagree with this assessment and that’s why it’s included here, however, there is a lot of heavy lifting in the above statement. We also have to consider more nuanced realities such as significant population growth, instructor availability and access to universities, and the education that future instructors require. I would also provide a caveat to the last portion and say that it is not so much that “expectations have been raised” but, perhaps, expectations have been ‘altered’. This is to say that as populations increase, the diversity of student populations and their communities will certainly have differing expectations of learning outcomes. I would also suggest that from a historical perspective, it might seem that expectations have been raised, particularly as it relates to advances in technology, media, and medium, but being born into such environments and navigating them from a backward-looking perspective is wholly different. Consider how most pre-teens navigate these environments as opposed to most

octogenarians. Varnum's article provides a brief overview of the continuous debate and the various crises concerning English instruction, literacy, and composition and gives a fair assessment of the types of conversations that will likely continue into the foreseeable future. However, where those conversations take place and who the participants will be remains fluid.

Hope Springs Eternal

The post-war period was marked by various institutional transformations that sought to define the responsibilities of early undergraduate English instruction. The debates over instructional content led to the solidification and departmentalization of instructors to protect their 'turf' and as T. Miller tells us, "Some professional recognition was granted to composition, and New Criticism came to demarcate the discipline's distinctive methods and objects of study" (228). While this type of recognition was gaining traction, there was yet another perspective taking place in which teachers were taking up their own enterprises.

Seemingly as a response to many of the shortcomings being cast upon educators within universities and the complications taking place there as outlined above, grassroots efforts were being established by educators for the simple objective of becoming more effective and communicating best practices to others. A worthy example of this effort was the organization of the National Writing Project (NWP) in 1974 (Gold and Hammond 293). The NWP can succinctly be described as teacher training programs, "by teachers for teachers" (293) and continues to be a source of inspiration and information to educators throughout American schools and universities. As one could imagine, the diversity in perspectives from organizations like the NWP allowed for various approaches to rhetoric and composition instruction, however, these conversations were less adversarial, and efficacy-focused as opposed to many departmental and societal arguments. The efficacy of the research being performed by instructors themselves

and their organizational practices to not only disseminate writing instruction but to also be self-reflective when doing so led to respectability in the field and:

> Rhetoric and composition studies at the college level in the last quarter of the twentieth century dramatically changed as the field attained disciplinary status. In colleges, administrative support for writing instruction was a response both to the literacy "crisis" and demands of the workplace, where changing technologies began to require writing ability to a greater extent than ever before. (Gold and Hammond 294)

This disciplinary status would allow departments and their members to become more introspective in their approaches to the structure, function, and content of rhetoric and composition classes that focus on various criticisms, perspectives, and practices that inherently involve ethical considerations. The debates taking place on the subject became more internalized within universities with varying degrees of public discourse into the 21st century where debates and controversies concerning the content and purpose of higher education would take on broader contexts and "new crises" would be focused on universities as a whole.

Conclusion

I'd like to end this project by returning to where it began for me by discussing John Duffy and Lois Agnew's *After Plato: Rhetoric, Ethics and the Teaching of Writing* one of the many works that I became aware of through my original studies in decoloniality and antiracist pedagogy. This book was transformational for me. Not only was it the impetus of this project; it was foundational in the *why* of this project. I could have written about a great many subjects, but Duffy and Agnew's work was such an inspiration to me. The content of this project is the history of the relationship between ethics and rhetoric in higher education and through the writing of this project I believe I've strengthened that relationship with the analysis of the concept and perhaps contributed to further discourse; rhetoric and composition as praxis.

While I'd like to provide the complete introduction to *After Plato*, I'll limit myself to sharing a question asked in their introduction that has stuck with me and is likely the direct inspiration for this work, "How do we understand the relationship of rhetoric and ethics at a moment when objective truth is under assault, reason is derided, racism is intensifying, conspiracies are rampant, and authoritarianism is on the rise in the United State and Europe?" (4). How indeed?

Throughout many high school and early college composition classes we run immediately into ideas put forth by Aristotle such as the rhetorical triangle utilizing logos, ethos, and pathos. However, his contradictory position (to Socrates and Plato) regarding the importance of the relationship between rhetoric and ethics is markedly absent. I'll not rehash here why that may be, but I'll simply say that the ancient Greeks certainly have some staying power and that seemed a logical place to begin my research. Though Aristotelean concepts often permeate composition classes, "After Plato, rhetoric was construed as the opposite of productive activity, as in the

headline ‘governor calls for action, not rhetoric.’” (3). The separation between rhetoric and ethics that we most often attribute to Plato has followed both education and public discourse to a greater and lesser extent since his time. I thought it important to analyze what was meant by both rhetoric and ethics since that ancient time and follow the threads of both through history and see how their definitions and localities have changed over and their place in higher education. This allows for a historical perspective that can help to define where these relationships stand today and the ramifications they may have on contemporary public discourse.

On the opposite side of the Platonic opinion of rhetoric and its ethical considerations, are high-minded ideals of what ethical rhetoric should look like as James Porter states, “The purpose of rhetoric is not just to make a symbolic artifact: a speech or a piece of writing, a Web page or a weaving. That constructed symbolic entity is expected to *do* something” (16). This gets to the crux of this conversation and how the relationship between ethics and rhetoric can be utilized for not only a specific purpose but also the public good. But some essential questions must be asked. Should there be a strong relationship between rhetorical education and ethics?

When looking at the modern composition class in early higher education, I suggest this is the closest that most students come to a class dedicated to rhetorical analysis to a greater or lesser extent. Often these classes are focused on argumentation and how to produce an essay that persuades the reader. As we know “all available means of persuasion” is a common definition of rhetoric in these classes. However, to speak to a specific audience, a key form of persuasion is to understand that audience, which requires a sense of empathy and empathy, is inherently related to ethics and morality. These persuasive and argumentative papers usually require a person to defend a position and, “because rhetoric aims ultimately at some improvement, some change in the state of things, it invariably involves a judgment about what that good should be, and that

decision requires ethical reasoning" (Porter 16). So, even in these introductory college courses, we run headlong into ethical considerations. So, the answer to that initial question is not an opinion so much as the natural state of conditions in compositional education.

The English classroom is usually where we find the relationship between ethics and rhetoric to varying degrees. It's inherent to composition. If we agree to that premise, and since these types of classes are fairly mandatory to the university curriculum, it follows that almost all students, regardless of their area of study, will be educated in these courses and what they learn—or don't learn—within those courses will likely influence the rest of their education. Does it then not seem logical that understanding how to communicate ethically should be paramount to the content of these classes? After all, these students will one day be members of society so it's not as though their education takes place in a vacuum. I believe it is through these gateway classes that we can help shape not only more ethical students but also future members of society.

However, as I've discussed throughout this project, the consistency of the relationship between ethics and rhetoric in higher education ebbs and flows. Often that relationship is diminished as a reaction to political and public pressures and the various crises that arrive periodically. Other pressures such as those that were discussed concerning the place of education during the Civil War and the emphasis on a utilitarian mode of education for research purposes focused on the production of capital, the military, and agricultural advancement, detracted from that relationship. We can also see those pressures when we consider the dramatic influx of students taking advantage of the G.I. Bill after WWII and the limited number of educators available to serve that influx.

However, it is important to also note when those pressures strengthen the relationship between ethics and rhetoric. As when the societal upheaval of the '60s and '70s led to the

organization of educators' ability to have more influence on the content and perspectives of their classrooms. These organizational advancements coincided with academic advancements such as The New Rhetoric which allowed for those new organizations to reflect on the content and intentions of their classrooms moving forward.

While it is certainly promising that the content of classrooms is influenced by the educators providing the education, as this project has shown, there is never a permanent measure of stability within these systems. Fluctuations in financing, politics (within and without academia), and public discourse will continue to have an impact on the purpose of rhetoric and composition classes in higher education. Thankfully, as the above history indicates, rhetoric and ethics often meet and regardless of the many fluctuations that may take place, that meeting usually provides a positive advancement that is carried forward or reintroduced time and again. This is not because of some altruistic or progressive intention but simply because anytime education in rhetoric and composition takes place, ethical considerations are already there or, as John Duffy describes:

> I do not mean by this that we *should* teach rhetorical ethics in our classrooms, or that we are *obliged* to do so. Rather, I am suggesting that as teachers of writing we are *always* and *already* engaged in the teaching of rhetorical ethics; that the teaching of writing *necessarily* and *inevitably* involves us in ethical deliberation and decision-making. (11)

This perspective should be foundational and front of mind in any rhetoric and composition class. Denying the inherent relationship between rhetoric and ethics is not only a disservice to academia and students but may have long-lasting ramifications on the quality of education, the efficacy of public discourse, and the character of society.

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