

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR

Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 581 ARISTOTLE'S *RHETORIC*

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Winter 2009
M 2:30 -5:20

Office Hours: Tuesday Afternoon.

Course description:

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is a work rich in ideas and in controversies, not least of which is whether Aristotle actually wrote it. While largely overlooked by Anglo-American philosophers, it has received important attention from Continental philosophers and is widely prized by scholars of communication, argumentation, and the history of rhetoric.

As a work that fits into the body of Aristotle's practical works (along with the works on ethics, politics, and poetry), the *Rhetoric* contains important doctrines on the emotions (seen nowhere else in Aristotle), character (important to the ethics), and audience. It provides a rich model of rhetorical argument, with some complex ideas such as the enthymeme and the *topos*. It also teaches us a lot about ancient rhetoric itself, particularly in the aftermath of Plato's attack on the subject.

We will study the *Rhetoric* to gain an appreciation both of its position in the Aristotelian corpus and its role in the history of rhetoric. We will also consider some of the debates associated with it, such the question of its unity, and whether Aristotle was actually the author.

The course will be supported by a CLEW site.

Required Texts:

Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. George A. Kennedy (Trans). Oxford. 2nd edition, 2007.

Other texts will be available on Reserve in the library or on the CLEW site.

Requirements:

1. Each member of the class will be asked to introduce the class material several times over the term. This will involve talking about the main ideas in what they have read and raising questions about it that the rest of us might then take up and discuss. These introductions will comprise 20% of the grade.
2. Class-preparedness and participation: Students should be prepared to engage in discussions, and success on this level will be reflected in 10% of the grade.
3. Two short papers (@5 pages each) discussing the principal ideas in two of our readings: (i) Schiappa, "Did Plato Coin Rhêtorikê?" (due Jan 19); (ii) Leighton (1996) "Aristotle and the Emotions" (due Feb 9). Each short paper is worth 10%.

3. A major paper will be due by April 15. This can be written in drafts throughout the latter part of the course. Length and nature of the paper will depend on the topic chosen, which will arise from discussions with the instructor. The paper is worth 50% of the course grade.

Class Schedule:

January:

5: Introduction to the course: Rhetoric Now and Then.

Reading: Michael Leff (1993), "The Uses of Aristotle's Rhetoric in Contemporary American Scholarship," *Argumentation* 7:313-327. ; James Wood (2008), "Victory Speech," *New Yorker*, November 17, 2008; Kennedy's 'Introduction': 1-25.

12: Plato's View of Rhetoric.

Reading: *Gorgias*: 447a-466a; *Phaedrus*: 266c-278b;
Edward Schiappa (1990) "Did Plato Coin Rhêtorikê?" *American Journal of Philology*, 111:460-73.

19: Aristotle's Text and his definition.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book I, Chapters 1-2; Kennedy, Appendix I, D, 263-266.
Short paper #1 due.

26: The three species of rhetoric.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book I, Chapters 3-15.

February

2: *Pathos*.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book II, Chapters 1-11;
Jeffrey Walker (2000), "*Pathos* and *Katharsis* in "Aristotelian" Rhetoric: Some Implications"; Stephen Leighton (1996) "Aristotle and the Emotions."

9: *Ethos*.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book II, Chapters 12-17.
Short paper #2 due.

RW.

23: Visit by Michael Leff on the *Thursday* of this week.

March

2: *Logos*.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book II, Chapters 18-26.

9: Style.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book III, Chapters 1-12;

Paul Ricoeur (1996), "Between Rhetoric and Poetics."

16: Arrangement.

Reading: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* Book III, Chapters 13-19.

Jeanne Fahnestock (2000), "Aristotle and Theories of Figuration."

23: Who Wrote "Aristotle's" *Rhetoric* and why?

Reading: Kennedy, Appendix II, B, 306-311; Brad McAdon (2004), "Reconsidering the Intention or Purpose of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*"; Brad McAdon, (2006) "Strabo, Plutarch, Porphyry and the Transmission and Composition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Hunch."

30: *Rhetoric* Then & Now

Reading: Carol Poster (1998), "(Re)positioning Pedagogy: A Feminist Historiography of Aristotle's *Rhetorica*," Alan Gross & Marcelo Dascal (2001), "The Conceptual Unity of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*."

Select Bibliography

Fahnestock, Jeanne (2000), "Aristotle and Theories of Figuration," in Gross & Walzer, 166-184.

Freeland, Cynthia (1998) [Ed.], *Feminist Interpretations of Aristotle*. Penn State University Press.

Gross, Alan & Marcelo Dascal (2001), "The Conceptual Unity of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 34:275-291.

Gross, Alan & Arthur E. Walzer (2000) [Eds.], *Rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Leff, Michael (1993), "The Uses of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in Contemporary American Scholarship," *Argumentation* 7:313-327.

Leighton, Stephen (1996) "Aristotle and the Emotions" in Rorty, 206-237.

McAdon, Brad (2006) "Strabo, Plutarch, Porphyry and the Transmission and Composition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Hunch." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 36: 77-105.

McAdon, Brad (2004), "Reconsidering the Intention or Purpose of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," *Rhetoric Review*, 23:216-34.

Plato, (1952) *Phaedrus*, R. Hackforth (Trans). Cambridge.

Poster, Carol (1998), "(Re)positioning Pedagogy: A Feminist Historiography of Aristotle's *Rhetorica*," in Freeland, 327-349.

Ricoeur, Paul (1996) "Between Rhetoric and Poetics," in Rorty, 324-384.

Rorty, Amelie O. (1996) [Ed.] *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, University of California Press.

Walker, Jeffrey (2000), "Pathos and Katharsis in "Aristotelian" Rhetoric: Some Implications," in Gross & Walzer, 74-92.

Walzer, Arthur, & Michael Tiffany, & Alan Gross (2000), "Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Guide to the Scholarship" in Gross & Walzer, 185-203.