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Addressing the Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias: Reassessing Aristotle's Rhetoric and its Place in  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Composition Studies

by

Matthew R. Higgins

Under the Direction of Michael Harker, PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2023

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation evaluates the nature of Aristotelian rhetoric's use in early 21<sup>st</sup> century First-Year Composition (FYC) classes and proposes an alternative reading of *On Rhetoric* that portrays Aristotelian rhetoric as a theory in alignment with Kenneth Burke's portrayal of new rhetorics. Although Aristotle's ideas about rhetoric exist in their current form as a result of a complex and speculative textual history, they continue to have a significant role in the writing classroom. They persist despite attempts to provide alternative models of rhetoric that better align with Kenneth Burke's concept of new rhetorics. In 1987, Kathleen Welch proposed that this is, at least in part, due to shortcomings of textbooks. The second chapter of this dissertation demonstrates that Welch's critique remains true about the state of FYC textbooks more than 30 years later. Furthermore, it draws attention to an Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB) where FYC textbooks written to support rhetoric-centered pedagogies abandon Edward Corbett's original proposal that explicitly acknowledges several classical models of rhetoric for a summarized version of Aristotelian rhetoric.

Upon further investigation into the nature of the APB and Aristotelian rhetoric's representation in FYC textbooks, several issues become apparent regarding the representation of Aristotelian rhetoric outlined in FYC textbooks. This frequent truncation of Aristotelian rhetoric in FYC textbooks that disregards the assumed knowledge of *On Rhetoric*'s original, intended audience situates the ideas in *On Rhetoric* in a way that presents them as a guide to persuasion instead of tools that "give power to the truth" (*On Rhetoric* 1355a). Therefore, this dissertation concludes by determining that, although the APB itself is not inherently problematic, the way in which Aristotelian rhetoric is frequently represented to FYC students must change. If writing scholars indulge Ellen Quandahl's reading of *On Rhetoric* as a guide to interpretation rather than

invention, then Aristotelian rhetoric can then function as a non-modern, new rhetoric that is better aligned with Burke's description of a new rhetoric model.

**INDEX WORDS:** Aristotle, Classical rhetoric, First-year composition, Writing studies, Identification, Interpretation

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2023

Addressing the Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias: Reassessing Aristotle's Rhetoric and its Place in  
21<sup>st</sup> Century Composition Studies

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August 2023

**DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, Andrew and Earline Stricker.

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## PREFACE

Given the constantly evolving expectations of the First-Year Composition (FYC) course, there will always be a justification to reassess popular FYC pedagogies. Although it is FYC instructors' responsibility to ensure that students are prepared to write at a college-level, the FYC course has adopted several other responsibilities throughout its existence, such as teaching critical thinking, research skills, and digital literacies (NCTE). One pedagogy frequently used to teach these skills in FYC is centered around the study and practice of rhetoric. As David Fleming demonstrates, the formal reference of using rhetoric to teach the FYC course, which began in the 1960's, can be broken into two general subcategories: (1) classical rhetorics and (2) new rhetorics. The use of classical rhetoric was introduced to the discipline of writing studies by Edward Corbett and took inspiration from classical rhetors such as Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. Although he preceded Corbett, the concept of new rhetoric comes from Kenneth Burke, a rhetor of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Fleming's overview of the rhetoric-focused pedagogy in Tate's second edition of *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* is accurate, but perhaps the most profound part of Fleming's chapter is the emphasis placed on the need for FYC textbooks to adapt models of rhetoric that define "argument as inquiry, discovery, or communication" (260) instead of persuasion. Fleming acknowledges that models fitting Burke's "new rhetoric" description that abandons models of rhetoric centered around persuasion (Burke 203) were easily available to writing scholars and instructors by the early 1980s (Fleming 258). According to Kathleen Welch, however, such models of rhetoric largely remained underrepresented in newly published FYC textbooks at the end of the decade (269). Fleming's failure to explicitly acknowledge any progress or evolution of

FYC textbooks' coverage of rhetoric over between the 25 years of his and Welch's publication and his emphasis on the need for FYC textbooks to adopt alternative models of rhetoric allows readers to question whether Welch's complaint remains unresolved.

Conducting a study of recently published FYC textbooks can confirm that Welch's implication and Fleming's argument that FYC textbooks (in most cases) fail to adequately represent new theories about writing instruction and communication remains true; however, neither Welch nor Fleming attempt explain for why publishers continue to produce textbooks that have changed very little aside from revisions made to update document formatting standards or to account for technological innovation. Although Welch alludes to textbook companies as the culprits responsible for limiting the options available to writing instructors (270), such accusations are dismissible given Ken Chad's 2018 report on the rise of "e-textbooks," which highlights the continuously increasing availability of open-access e-textbooks and digital publication platforms allowing for an easier, more streamlined publication process that can provide students with a more interactive learning experience (6-7). Furthermore, Fleming suggests that teachers are responsible for this 50-year stagnation as they continue to emphasize "thesis statements and other propositions" (260). Fleming does not provide any evidence or explanation to justify his claim and instead offers his own seven-step model of rhetoric. Regardless of the usefulness of Fleming's model, it has little to do with solving the problem of FYC textbooks not adapting to serve new theories or models of rhetoric. This dissertation intends to investigate the representation of rhetoric in FYC textbooks, address the extent to the problematic nature of rhetoric models already used, and if needed, propose solutions to what Welch identifies as the decontextualization of texts within FYC textbooks (273-4).

## **P.1 The Complicated History and Use of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric***

As James Murphy points out in his article on Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* in the Middle Ages, little is known about what happened to the *On Rhetoric* text in the late classical through the early medieval period. The Aristotelian text is either unknown or disregarded due a preference to Cicero's rhetorical texts. It was not until Arab commentators reintroduced the text to western civilization in the 13<sup>th</sup> century that medieval audiences acknowledged it and translated it into Latin. (Murphy 109-10). Paul Dickerson Brandes identifies two potential textual histories of *On Rhetoric* in his special report on the composition and preservation of the text in *Speech Monographs*, but both histories of the text are compromised by Apellicon of Teos' work on Aristotle's personal collection. By the time the grammarian, Tyrannion, translated Aristotle's unpublished collection, the materials to which he had access and their condition is unclear. (486-90). As Brandes continues to point out, because of these conditions along with the many other translations the text has experienced, every part of the text must be must be given considerable thought before drawing any conclusions (491). Because of this, the attention that Quintilian gives to Aristotle's *Gryllus*, in which he gives a more negative representation of rhetoric (Quintilian 2.17.14) (Butler 333), and the likelihood that Aristotle made revisions to *On Rhetoric* throughout the later years of his life, it is very challenging to create a single, clear image of Aristotelian rhetoric.

After the publication of Edward Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* in 1965, Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* was given new life in the FYC classroom. In his book, Corbett referenced the contents of several classical rhetorical texts to compose a guide to writing for the

20<sup>th</sup> century college or university student. Although the textbook rarely saw direct use in the FYC classroom, it did contribute to the rise and establishment of what is, as of 2014 (Tate et. al.), still one of the most popular pedagogical approaches to teaching FYC. The reference to and use of models of rhetoric in FYC, however, has noticeably changed since Corbett published the first edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. These changes, which are identified in the second and third chapters of this dissertation along with Crowley's criticism of FYC textbooks' failure to demonstrate the literary history of rhetoric demonstrate a need to frequently reassess how rhetoric is understood and represented in FYC classrooms.

## **P.2 The Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias in FYC Textbooks**

In 1965, Edward Corbett published *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* which charted a course for the new discipline (Composition studies) that was already facing several challenges, one of which being the need for a systematic pedagogical approach in an environment that was relying on modernist-inspired, self-expressionist pedagogies which only benefited a small body of students (Corbett 164). Almost 60 years later, the ideas and intentions behind Corbett's pedagogical approach centered around classical rhetoric remains very present in the FYC classroom; however, recently published FYC textbooks that have adapted elements of rhetoric-focused pedagogies have, unlike Corbett, chosen to explicitly emphasize a single model of rhetoric or single rhetor. Furthermore, the rhetor they choose is almost exclusively Aristotle.

Recently published FYC textbooks that support rhetoric-centered pedagogies and rely primarily or exclusively on Aristotle, however, are not problematic because of their emphasis on Aristotelian rhetoric. Some textbooks even include explicit references to other, new rhetoric models (such as in Lunsford et. al.), but the content of such textbooks largely remain supportive

of a persuasion-focused approach to rhetoric that is given to college writing students through simplified, acontextual interpretations of Aristotelian rhetoric.

This issue with FYC textbooks using uncontextualized, simplified models of rhetoric can be observed as early as 1987; Kathleen Welch points out how FYC textbooks rely on “truncated versions of the five canons of rhetoric, and 2) the modes of discourse” (269). The most concerning problem regarding the focus of this dissertation is the “truncated” nature of the models of rhetoric used in FYC textbooks. By representing Aristotle’s model of rhetoric as it is in *On Rhetoric* without further consideration of his other works, particularly *Metaphysics*, which addresses the significance of truth and knowledge in greater detail than *On Rhetoric* does in Book I (1356a-1358a). Without an understanding of Aristotle’s process for determining what is true, the model proposed in *On Rhetoric*, despite the text’s intention to “give power to the truth” (1355a), acts as more of a guide to persuasion than what Aristotle describes as true rhetoric.

### **P.3 Resolving Current Issues with the Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB)**

As previously stated, the APB is not an inherently problematic feature of rhetoric centered content in FYC textbooks. The concerns with the explicit emphasis on simplified misunderstandings about Aristotle’s ideas about rhetoric can be resolved in most cases by properly contextualizing the model demonstrated in *On Rhetoric* using Aristotle’s other works. This would provide students with a model of rhetoric that resolves one issue observed in many of the textbooks included in the studies conducted in chapters two and three of this dissertation.

A second resolution worthy of considering is to propose an alternative reading of Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*. If FYC textbook authors are set on continuing to rely on the Aristotelian model of rhetoric, then textbooks such as Lunsford et. al. serve as one of very few textbooks that

represent and new rhetoric models. Even Lunsford et. al., however, is unable to separate rhetoric from its association with argumentation (Welch 270-1). Given how the demands of English Composition have evolved since the rhetoric-centered pedagogies were first used in FYC textbooks and courses, looking at Aristotle through a lens that is not a product of modernist thought could provide a representation of Aristotelian rhetoric that is not only a more accurate reflection of Aristotle's actual ideas about rhetoric at the time of his death and one that better aligns with Kenneth Burke's proposal for new rhetoric models that emphasize identification rather than persuasion (Burke 203). Given the modern and postmodern influences surrounding the events that brought classical rhetoric into other FYC classrooms, looking at what Aristotelian rhetoric can offer separately from his current contextualization in FYC textbooks and presenting the model of rhetoric with a better awareness of Bruno Latour's 1991 criticisms of modernism can allow Aristotle to function as a new rhetoric model.

One reading of Aristotle that presents Aristotelian rhetoric that arguably accomplishes this is Ellen Quandahl's, which proposes that *On Rhetoric* is a guide to interpretation instead of invention or persuasion. Using the evidence provided by Quandahl in her 1986 article along with etymological evidence while considering Aristotle's idiolect, an alternative reading of Aristotle that is free from failures in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to properly understand and use Corbett's initial model for using classical rhetoric to teach writing and promotes a new rhetoric ideology that the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition has been advocating for in the FYC for years (Welch 1987). The process of identifying becomes the invention process and the writing process, although separate, maintains and emphasizes what Latour would consider a network-agent relationship. If, however, instructors are soured by their experience with reinterpreting



Aristotelian rhetoric, there are countless other pedagogical approaches to teaching rhetoric (Taggart et. al. 1).

## CHAPTER ONE: A BIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW OF ARISTOTELIAN RHETORIC

This chapter reviews the organization and establishes the provenance of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. As I demonstrate in this chapter, Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* is largely a product of its textual history. To accomplish this, I explore the textual history of the text to demonstrate the context behind the current version of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* that exists in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a particular focus on the time immediately following the text's creation through the text's rediscovery in the middle ages. I also argue that *On Rhetoric*'s portrayal in present-day writing classrooms is representative of the academic climate under which classical rhetoric experienced a revival. I argue this by drawing attention to the modernist and postmodernist influence on instructors' adaptation of Aristotelian rhetoric as a pedagogical tool for teaching writing to first-year students at universities. In whole, I intend to identify several factors that affect the way in which rhetoric is represented in First-Year Composition textbooks. This will establish a justification the second chapter of this dissertation, which investigates the way(s) in which rhetoric is intentionally used in FYC textbooks. After establishing a significant bias favoring Aristotelian rhetoric, the third chapter investigates the nature of Aristotle's presence in FYC textbooks. After identifying several concerns regarding the use of Aristotelian rhetoric in textbooks, the final chapter of this dissertation will explore the potential of Quandahl's alternative reading of *On Rhetoric*, which can significantly impact the way in which Aristotle's rhetoric model can bring new rhetoric models, as described by Kenneth Burke (1951), into FYC textbooks and classrooms.

After giving a brief summary of the contents and organization of *On Rhetoric*, I then demonstrate the issues associated with non-contextualized readings of the text. Given the education the intended audience of *On Rhetoric* was expected to have, Aristotle's comprehensive

model of rhetoric cannot be fully conceptualized from reading *On Rhetoric* by itself. I demonstrate this by referencing the relativity of opinions present in both his and his contemporary, Plato's texts and by comparing Plato's and Aristotle's understanding of truth and knowledge. I then provide a textual history of *On Rhetoric* that ranges from the time immediately after the text is written to the end of the Middle Ages. These several hundred years are when present-day scholars are most skeptical of what happened to the *On Rhetoric* text. Since it was never published during Aristotle's lifetime, the centuries leading up to the Middle Ages likely situate *On Rhetoric* in one of two potential timelines. Regardless, either timeline demonstrates that although Aristotle's ideas about rhetoric were indeed influential and were eventually read by other important classical rhetors, there are also several reasons that justify some skepticism about the version of *On Rhetoric* that present-day scholars and students reference and read.

As Sharon Crowley points out, this traditional history of using rhetoric to teach writing is different from the present-day use of rhetoric in FYC courses. Therefore, I resume my history of *On Rhetoric* with examine the conditions that led to the current use of Aristotelian rhetoric since classical rhetoric began to see use in the FYC classroom. I begin by examining the modernist and postmodernist influences at work during the time in which Corbett proposed the potential usefulness of classical rhetoric in the writing classroom. Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* was first published at a time during a transition from modern to postmodern though among writing scholars. Bruno Latour (1993), however, points out the problems with modernist and postmodernist thought. The influence of modern and postmodern thought as described by Latour (10-30) on writing scholarship of the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> century explains the isolation of FYC textbooks' representation of Aristotelian rhetoric from ideas in Aristotelian texts other than *On Rhetoric* as well as the works of other classical rhetors.

## 1.1 The Contents and Organization of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*

The Aristotelian text referred to as *On Rhetoric* receives its name from Aristotle himself. As George Kennedy points out in his notes on his translation, most transcriptions and translations name the text *Tekhnē rhētorikē*, which translates to *Art of Rhetoric*. This title appears on most medieval and early modern editions of the text in western civilization. Aristotle, however, refers to the text as *Peri rhētorikēs*, or *On Rhetoric*, in section 19.2 of *Poetics* (Kennedy xiv). Aristotle is also responsible of *On Rhetoric* divided into three separate books. Further division of *On Rhetoric*, however, is mostly attributed to more recent editors and translators of the treatise. For instance, the earliest known copy of *On Rhetoric* that possesses the three books broken down into chapters was composed in the fifteenth century by George of Trebizond from Università Di Vicenza. Referencing Kennedy's translation, the first book contains 15 chapters, the second book contains 26 chapters, and the third book contains 19 chapters. Furthermore, in 1793, the Bipont edition of *On Rhetoric* added numbered sections to each chapter of each book of *On Rhetoric*.

The first book begins by defining and describing rhetoric. The introduction to rhetoric, which spreads across what most recent versions categorize as the first two chapters, identifies rhetoric as a counterpart or division of rhetoric (1354a) and formally defines rhetoric as “ἔστω δὴ ἡ ῥητορικὴ δύναμις περὶ ἕκαστον τοῦ θεωρησῆσαι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον πιθανόν” (1355b), which translates to “Let rhetoric be [defined as] an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (Kennedy 37). The remainder of the chapter mainly focuses on the three species of rhetoric (deliberative, judicial, and epideictic) and the topics that can be used in the practice of rhetoric.

The second book changes focus from introductory material and the topics of rhetoric to the means of persuasion. This is where Aristotle identifies and unpacks the rhetorical appeals available to a speaker (or in composition studies' case, a writer.) This section emphasizes *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* and their usability from the perspective of the speaker. Although the majority of book two is centered around emotion and character (pathos and ethos,) Aristotle addresses the forms of logical rhetorical appeals in chapters 18-26. The portion of the text dedicated to logos is likely brief because Aristotle addresses logic in book 6 of *Metaphysics* in his discussion on the sciences and the process of determining knowledge (1025b-28a).

The third book deviates from the means of persuasion to focus on delivery, style, and arrangement of a speech. Although the book contains 19 chapters, it can essentially be divided into two sections. The first section (consisting of the first 12 chapters) focuses on the style of the speech. The chapters consist of Aristotle's instructional notes on grammatical correctness, word choice, emphasis, rhythm, and the purpose and style of word and sentence arrangement. The second half of the book (chapters 13-19) is where Aristotle identifies and elaborates upon the essential parts of a speech. Aristotle identifies the need for an introduction, an ability to handle prejudicial attacks, a narrative to lead the audience through the facts of your argument, a proof resulting from the narrative, an interrogation that demands answers to questions from a speaker's opponent, and an epilogue.

Aristotle's three books on the practice of composing an effective speech are generally well-organized and most qualified readers interested in reading the text in its entirety are unlikely to experience many challenges regarding the organization of the text. Regardless, as Kennedy points out, George of Trebizond's division of all three books of *On Rhetoric* into chapters is now standard practice in most newer editions of the Aristotelian text. Kennedy points out by George's

intentions to improve the convenience of using the text for teachers while also addressing the problematic proposal that the chapters should be read as continuous (Kennedy xiv). Although versions of *On Rhetoric* have included further divisions since the 1793 Bipont edition of *On Rhetoric*, the Bipont approach to sectioning the text is typically favored to avoid over-dividing the text.

## 1.2 The Intentions of *On Rhetoric*

Despite the organization and readability of recent editions and translations of *On Rhetoric*, the circumstances under which Aristotle's intended the text to be read or experienced (if its contents were read out loud) have a notable effect on the meaning of the text. The most explicit evidence of this is the first chapter of book one, in which Aristotle gives a quick introduction and review for students of dialectic (1354a-55b). This subtle reference to Aristotle's intended audience establishes the work as part of his esoteric corpus, which include his works intended for a smaller, typically academic audience. Unlike Aristotle's exoteric works which were published and read by much wider audiences, Aristotle's esoteric texts often require proper contextualization to appreciate their contents. Given the limited audience for which *On Rhetoric* was intended, the contents of *On Rhetoric* cannot be read and fully appreciated by reading the text by itself.

To demonstrate the significance of recognizing *On Rhetoric* as an esoteric work in need of context beyond what its contents offer, Aristotle's texts can be observed alongside his contemporary and teacher, Plato's collected works. Given the surviving textual evidence, it is most likely that Plato and Aristotle both viewed rhetoric as worthy of teaching at their school(s), but acknowledged the dangers of presenting rhetoric as an art to the general, less-educated

public. Of the four known works that Plato composed on rhetoric, three (*Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, and *Sophist*) portray rhetoric negatively; he only refers to rhetoric favorably in *Phaedrus*.

Furthermore, regardless of the exact estimated date of publication, most composition and publication timelines created for Plato's works (such as the one composed by John Paul Adams,) agree that that *Sophist*, which portrays rhetoric negatively, was Plato's last surviving work that he wrote that addresses rhetoric. In 1998, Carol Poster pointed out that the differing opinions about rhetoric can be attributed to Plato composing the texts for different audiences (283). Given the differences in approach to understanding oratory in the texts, Poster's proposal seems fitting. In *Gorgias*, *Protagoras*, and *Sophists*, Plato was likely addressing a less educated, public audience. In *Phaedrus*, however, the intended audience was likely well educated and already understood Plato's ideas about discourse, establishing truths, and acquiring knowledge. In other words, *Phaedrus* is the only remaining esoteric, exclusive text of Plato's that directly focuses on the matter of rhetoric.

It is challenging to directly compare Aristotle's surviving works on rhetoric to Plato's because most of Plato's surviving works that address rhetoric are exoteric works meant for general audiences and Aristotle's only surviving text on rhetoric is an esoteric text likely meant for students of dialectic. Furthermore, the form of *On Rhetoric*, a proto-textbook on the subject, is very different from the style of Plato's dialogues. The first chapter in the first book of *On Rhetoric*, which serves as an introduction to rhetoric for students of dialectic, demonstrates this. Therefore, it makes sense that Aristotle intended for the audience of *On Rhetoric* to already have experience formally studying composition or speech. These experiences would likely include either reading or listening to Aristotle's other texts that give needed context and definitions to properly interpret and use the lessons in *On Rhetoric*. Furthermore, Aristotle also makes a clear

distinction between the possession of factual knowledge and the practice of persuasion in the second chapter of Book 1 (1358a). A public audience with little-to-no previous exposure to Aristotle's lessons or ideas would need more information than the contents of *On Rhetoric* to appreciate Aristotle's model of rhetoric. One example of this is readers who are new to Aristotle are unaware of his understanding of and process for identifying truth and knowledge. Although he mentions both truth and knowledge in *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle does not provide explicit explanations of these two terms nor does he give a process for discovering what is true. Plato is also guilty of this problem, particularly in *Phaedrus*. Therefore, Plato and Aristotle's other texts must be referenced to be able to properly interpret *On Rhetoric* the way in which Aristotle intended.

Although there are no significant differences between Plato and Aristotle's conceptualization of *truth*, Aristotle's ideas on knowledge are better developed. Edmund Gettier points out that Plato's reflection on acquiring knowledge is alluded to in *Theaetetus* (201a 4) and again in *Meno* (Gettier 98). Gettier then proceeds to identify flaws in Plato's understanding of knowledge (122-3) and provides two examples where Plato's methods can occasionally lead truth-seekers to acquiring false knowledge. Although he mostly agrees with Plato about *truth* and *knowledge*, Aristotle presents a more complex approach to both terms. By referencing Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (995a24) and *Posterior Analytics* (100b9) and Plato's *Theaetetus* (201a), it can be determined that Aristotle agrees with Plato that knowledge "is of what is true and this truth must be justified in a way which shows that it must be true" (Folse). Although Folse does not exempt Aristotle from falling into the same trap of which Gettier accuses Plato, Aristotle's conceptualization of scientific knowledge requires more specific verification before truths can be confidently determined, which reasonably minimizes the possibility for Gettier's criticisms of



Plato's approach to become relevant. In other words, Aristotle's resolution on avoiding Gettier cases exists, but it is not discussed in *On Rhetoric*. This is reasonable if *On Rhetoric* is interpreted as an esoteric text. Such a reading also implies that in order to benefit from *On Rhetoric*, students of Aristotle need to understand the process of identifying truth and acquiring knowledge. If they do not, the practice of the art of rhetoric becomes significantly more sophistic in nature.

Rita Copeland also points out the frustrating organization of *On Rhetoric*. She states that, "Compared with the Ciceronian rhetorics and the late-classical handbooks based on Cicero, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is not easy to understand. Its organization at times is confusing and its explanations of the topics for the various genres of rhetoric would have seemed unfamiliar." (97). This further defends my previous criticism and also justifies the consideration pointed out by Poster that *On Rhetoric* is likely Aristotle's collected personal notes on the subject that were never intended for direct publication. This, along with the considerations above and the fact that there is no evidence of an attempt by Aristotle to publish *On Rhetoric*, the text can be confidently identified as one of Aristotle's esoteric works. Furthermore, this would also suggest a unitarian approach to the study and practice of rhetoric between Plato and Aristotle: rhetoric can ethically be practiced if certain moral constructs are in place. For this to take place, however, persuasion must take place with the intent of discovering truth(s) and collecting knowledge. This is a challenging feat to accomplish, especially when addressing general audiences lacking formal education on dialectic, moral philosophy, and foundational models of scientific inquiry. Therefore, instruction in the art of rhetoric should function as a tool for already well-educated students with an expertise on a subject looking to further their or an audience's understanding of

it. To teach an audience without the previously mentioned educational foundations would encourage sophistic practices.

The major difference between Plato and Aristotle regarding communication are their processes for understandings of *truth* and *knowledge*. The inferiority of Plato's approach to identifying truth is relevant in the third chapter of this dissertation, it is relatively minor in the context of their general opinions about rhetoric. Both rhetors likely felt that if a student did not already understand the significance of and process for identifying truths and acquiring knowledge, they were not in a condition to discuss the practice of rhetoric as an art.

### **1.3 From Ancient Greece to the Middle Ages: An Early Textual History of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric***

Composing a detailed textual history of *On Rhetoric* prior to the Middle Ages is difficult given the lack of reliable evidence that exists; however, a textual history can not only provide insight to the text's historical influence but can also help recognize ways in which history has influenced the text. Both tasks are equally important in the comprehensive study of Aristotelian rhetoric, but the goal of this section is to identify ways in which the text's modification or historical events may have altered the way in which we approach the text and what scholars perceive as Aristotelian rhetoric.

Producing a textual history of *On Rhetoric* is problematic even at the start. With no date of completion or publication, the origin of the text is subject to relativity. Although scholars agree that *On Rhetoric* was composed during Aristotle's first residence in Athens, they also concur that the treatise experienced multiple revisions throughout the Aristotle's life (Kennedy 5). As E.M. Cope points out, this was likely the time in which Aristotle was most dedicated to

*On Rhetoric* due to his and Isocrates' competing schools and Aristotle's negative opinion of Isocrates' ideas about rhetoric (Cope 39-40). Paul Brandes defends this argument by pointing out that Isocrates died in 338, a year before Aristotle returned to Athens for his second residency, so it is unlikely that *On Rhetoric* would have been first composed then. (482-3). Ingemar Düring argues that *On Rhetoric* was not only composed during the earlier part of Aristotle's professional life, but Aristotle may have even began writing it while teaching at Plato's Academy (53).

Dating *On Rhetoric* becomes even more complicated when considering claims from scholars such as George Kennedy, who suggests that Aristotle "seems to have written different portions of the work at different times" (xi). This explanation, however, has faced challenges from scholars such as Richard Shute who suggests the possibility of scribes or editors adding words to the text (Shute 100-1) and Brandes, who proposes that the *On Rhetoric* text as we possess it today is an expansion of the original Aristotelian version that was potentially further fragmented than the current three books into which the text as we read it today is divided (Brandes 485). Despite the limited evidence for this argument, it is unanimously acknowledged that the text was composed and edited over a considerable length of time. This, along with Richard McKeon's claim that most of Aristotle's scientific works were composed upon his return to Athens (McKeon xiv), could, in part, explain the lack of elaboration upon terms such as *truth* and *knowledge* or any reference to his works that do elaborate on them.

Although *On Rhetoric* is regarded as one of his esoteric texts, Aristotle had, by the time of his death, established a strong enough reputation as a scholar to not only have his ideas preserved at the Lyceum, but several of his published works were received well enough to be preserved through public form from his exoteric dialogues for centuries after his death. As Murphy points out in his article on Aristotelian rhetoric in the Middle Ages, although little is

known about the fate of *On Rhetoric* in late classical through the early middle ages, Cicero was largely represented as the primary classical rhetor acknowledged by those who study medieval rhetoric who inspired medieval texts on rhetoric (109-10). Although Murphy points out that evidence to explain this transition is sparse, at least two factors undoubtedly contributed the declined use and the eventual temporary end of western civilization's reliance on Aristotelian rhetoric: lost access to *On Rhetoric* and the increasing influence of Roman rhetoric.

Little is known about the care and use of Aristotle's unpublished works and notes after his death. Three sources contribute to scholars' ability to trace the ownership of the collection: Strabo's *Geography*, Athenaeus' *The Deipnosophistis*, and Plutarch's "Sulla." Using these texts, Brandes provides two potential chains of ownership of the collection. In the first, he states that Aristotle's personal library was willed to Theophrastus, who succeeded Aristotle as head of the Lyceum. The library was then willed to Neleus, a pupil of Aristotle; however, after not being appointed the next head of the Lyceum after Theophrastus, Neleus took Aristotle's library with him to Scepsis. Neleus' family and descendants, who were not academics, neglected the collection until they sold it to Apellicon of Teos. Despite having no experience in the reproduction of texts, Apellicon attempted to restore and publish copies Aristotle's works. After Apellicon's death, the collection was taken to Rome where Tyrannion, a grammarian, attempted to revise and fix Apellicon's faulty versions of Aristotle's works (Brandes 487-8). It is at this point, however, when the ability to confidently trace Aristotle's library becomes concerning. Firstly, it is unknown what materials Tyrannion used to create his version of the texts. Although it is given that he had Apellicon's editions of Aristotle's works, it is unknown whether he had access to the original manuscripts. If he did have access, the extent to which he was able to use the original manuscripts is unclear. Furthermore, regardless of the extent to which Tyrannion

was able to produce more perfected copies of Aristotle's works, Strabo points out that booksellers using bad scribes had access to Apellicon's library, which obviously contained his versions of the Aristotelian texts. This resulted in the production of at least two versions of Aristotle's works (Brandes 487-8).

In the second potential chain, Brandes points out that Athenaeus' account differs from Strabo's. Although Athenaeus confirms that Apellicon's library did contain most of Aristotle's works, Brandes also mentions that Athenaeus states that Aristotle's library was sold to Ptolemy's ambassadors for the Library of Alexandria (Athenaeus 471). To reconcile these two seemingly conflicting statements, E.W. Sutton suggests that the already well-distributed works may have been sold to the ambassadors for the Library of Alexandria while Neleus could have later sold the lesser-known works to Apellicon later after he left Athens (Sutton 160). Despite a lack of evidence to disprove Sutton's proposal, it does not seem plausible given the completion-ist mentality embraced in developing of the Library of Alexandria's collection. Although Alexandria may have collected copies of most if not all of Aristotle's works by the time of its decline, if ambassadors did purchase part of Aristotle's collection, it is unlikely that they would have settled for a partial collection if other Aristotelian texts were available for acquisition. If not available for purchase, scribes would have been sent to copy the texts prior to the third century BCE. Furthermore, given that Alexander the Great was a student of Aristotle's, the acquisition of the Aristotelian collection would have likely been a priority for the library.

If the Lyceum began relying on adaptations of Aristotle's lectures, Neleus could have taken the entirety of the unpublished collection with him when he left Athens. Furthermore, despite the poor storage conditions of the texts, Neleus's descendants' storage of Aristotle's library would have preserved the texts from the confiscation and destruction by the kings of Asia

Minor (Brandes 487-8) as their location was relatively unknown. Although neither history of Aristotle's library completely traces the path to the ninth century Arabic gloss and commentary of *On Rhetoric* by Al-Farabi, both scenarios present plausible opportunities for Arabic scribes to obtain a copy of *On Rhetoric* to reintroduce to western civilization several centuries later.

Although no evidence exists alluding to the use of Aristotelian rhetoric in western education between the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.E. and the 9<sup>th</sup> century C.E., there is a considerable amount of evidence that shows a knowledge of Aristotelian rhetoric throughout the educated west. As Murphy points out in his article on Aristotelian rhetoric in the Middle Ages, most influential Roman rhetors were familiar with Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* (109). This includes Cicero, who was arguably the most influential western rhetor through the Middle Ages. His awareness of *On Rhetoric* suggests that Latin translation(s) of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* were available as early as the first century B.C.E. (Niegorski 40-2). Although it is uncertain which texts Cicero read and valued, we can, at minimum determine he was well aware of Aristotle's reputation, his life, and possessed knowledge of at least some of Aristotle's works. For example, in *De Finibus*, book 5.V.12, Cicero suggests that *Nicomachian Ethics* was composed by Aristotle's son. Fredre points out that Cicero likely read Aristotle's *Politics*, but identified it as a work composed by Theophrastus (81). Furthermore, Niegorski argues that Cicero was very familiar with the majority of Aristotle's exoteric, public works (41-4). It is also clear that Cicero had a very positive opinion of Aristotle given his commentary in the first book of *De Finibus* (along with his commentary on Plato.)

Although there is little direct mention of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* throughout Ciceronian-focused scholarship, an indirect consensus appears to exist that Cicero had access to *On Rhetoric*. Several parallels can be seen throughout Cicero's texts that, prior to the text, only

appear in Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. The most striking instance is arguably in *De Inventione*, which possesses strikingly similar content to Aristotle's discussion of the canons of rhetoric.

Furthermore, Richard Shute argues that Cicero likely had access to the flawed Apellicon version of the text (49). This, along with differences between Greek and Roman philosophy likely explains Cicero's revision and often misidentification of Aristotelian and Greek rhetoric.

Regardless, if Nicgorski's claim about Cicero introducing the popular use of Greek rhetoric to Rome is true, Cicero can be credited with aiding the preservation of Aristotelian rhetoric.

As Murphy points out, the fate of the *On Rhetoric* text in the late classical era is obscure (109); there is, however, evidence that suggests an awareness of and knowledge about the text continued for several centuries after Cicero. In his *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintillian discusses Aristotle's views of rhetoric. He states:

Aristoteles, ut solet, quaerendi gratia quaedam subtilitatis suae [p. 332] argumenta excogitavit in Gryllo; sed idem et de arte rhetorica tris libros scripsit, et in eorum primo non artem solum eam fatetur, sed ei particulam civilitatis sicut dialectices adsignat (2.17.14).

which translates to:

Aristotle, it is true, in his *Gryllus* produces some tentative arguments to [p. 333] the contrary, which are marked by characteristic ingenuity. On the other hand he also wrote three books on the art of rhetoric, in the first of which he not merely admits that rhetoric is an art, but treats it as a department of politics and also of logic (Butler 333).

In this passage, Quintillian not only displays an awareness of *On Rhetoric*, but he also briefly mentions *Gryllus*, another, possibly exoteric work that addresses rhetoric. Carol Poster points out that this passage from Quintillian suggests that Aristotle's *Gryllus* likely presented a

negative view of rhetoric to present to less-educated, public audiences (Poster 231-4).

Furthermore, Boethius also demonstrated knowledge of Aristotelian rhetoric as well. Murphy points out that Boethius studied Aristotle extensively, but still embraced Ciceronian rhetoric over Aristotelian rhetoric centuries later (Murphy 110-1). This demonstrates that although Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* was known by the Romans through late antiquity, it was not seen as significant or useful compared to Ciceronian rhetorical texts.

The explicit presence of Aristotelian rhetoric in early English texts is nonexistent. Although a fictional Old English letter from Alexander the Great to Aristotle exists in BL MS Cotton Vitellius A. XV, there are no apparent references to Aristotelian rhetoric in any of the surviving Old English manuscripts. It is, however, unsurprising that Anglo Saxons did not openly embrace Aristotelian rhetoric even though *On Rhetoric* was likely accessible to them after the fall of the Roman Empire. Although later speakers of Old English were likely exposed to Ciceronian ideas, Anglo-Saxon rhetoric was largely oral and relied on reputation and wisdom and less on logical appeals used in Greek or Roman courts or to persuade co-operative audiences. This emphasis on wisdom can even be seen in Old English educational texts such as the use of the *Dicts of Cato* and throughout the collected Old English literary works (to the extent that Tom Shippey identified wisdom as a genre of Old English literature.)

Although gnomic phrases are mentioned in Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, they are only done so briefly and Aristotle suggests that they are only useful in very specific contexts. Jackson Campbell identified specific instances that suggest some development or knowledge of models of rhetoric in his 1966 article on learned Old English rhetoric, the earliest known examples of English rhetoric are more Roman than Aristotelian in nature. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that these proto-Ciceronian models of rhetoric Campbell identifies were a result of Old English



speakers or writers possessing an understanding of the Aristotelian influence on Ciceronian rhetoric.

Even when looking to Latin texts and the practice and study of rhetoric in the later Middle Ages, major discussions about Aristotelian rhetoric do not appear until the thirteenth century. The reintroduction of *On Rhetoric* to western society came from the first two medieval Latin translations, the *translatio vetus* and *translatio guillelmi*. The earliest known academic mention of *On Rhetoric* in western civilization, however, occurred at Oxford in 1431 where it was listed as an alternative reading option for texts covering rhetoric. Although *On Rhetoric* appears on Oxford's statutes regarding rhetoric, it is vastly outnumbered by multiple Roman rhetors' works, most notably of which included Cicero, Virgil, and Ovid. Furthermore, Aristotle's text was only identified as an alternative reading option to Cicero. As Copeland points out, however, the relation of this list to the actual curriculum on rhetoric is unknown (102).

Furthermore, Arabic commentaries used to compose the earliest medieval Latin editions of *On Rhetoric* acknowledged the emphasis on logical appeals that Aristotle gave while also describing the function of emotional appeals in discourse; however, there is little evidence to suggest that the Aristotelian text saw any use at all among eastern rhetoric education. Considering the evidence currently available for assessment, it is more likely that the late-medieval university curriculum, at least at Oxford and Paris, both adapted Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* as a philosophical and political Aristotelian text, but not a rhetorical one. Although it was acknowledged as a text on rhetoric, it remained a resource primarily utilized by academics most interested in the general study of Aristotle. Furthermore, as Rashall Hastings points out, the University of Paris did not establish a Bachelor of Arts program until 1366 and even upon its

establishment, the program emphasized grammar, logic, and psychology; there is no evidence to suggest that rhetoric was part of the required curriculum (Hastings 111-2). Murphy points out the reason for this is likely because, in the educated west, Cicero was universally seen as an authority on writing and discourse whereas Aristotle did not have a reputation for being an authority on either. *On Rhetoric* was adapted and taught by those teaching on and studying political science and ethics (Murphy 112-3).

There are at least two other factors that contributed to medieval universities' rhetoric curriculums neglecting esoteric Aristotelian rhetorical texts. One is that, given the negative take on rhetoric that Aristotle likely portrayed in *Gryllus* and lecturers' lack of familiarity or disinterest in *On Rhetoric*, and the centuries of success using Ciceronian rhetoric to teach Latin rhetoric. The second and likely more influential factor is the Middle Ages adapted a different definition of the term *rhetoric* than the one portrayed in *On Rhetoric*. As Murphy demonstrates in his book on rhetoric in the Middle Ages, instead of serving as a counterpart to dialectic, rhetoric was used as a counterpart to writing. Furthermore, western medieval rhetoric consisted of three genres: *ars poetriae* (the art of verse-writing,) *ars dictaminis* (the art of letter-writing,) and *ars praedicandi* (the art of preaching or sermon-writing) (Murphy ix). Thirdly, medieval rhetoric texts typically focused on the creation of texts rather than the act or art of persuasion. Although *On Rhetoric* addressed topics, it was far from the primary focus of the text. These differences could easily explain medieval rhetors' disregard of *On Rhetoric* and the text's more frequent use in political science and ethics curriculums.

The emphasis on writing in the study and teaching of rhetoric remained present for several centuries. It wasn't until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when technological, religious, and social changes contributed to Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald's acknowledgment of Aristotle's

definition of rhetoric that emphasizes *all* available means of persuasion (Wright et. al. 247). Although concepts that first appeared in Aristotelian texts were used in classrooms across the curriculum (including writing curriculums) up to and throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, Aristotle was rarely if ever credited. Despite Cicero's acknowledgement that few of his writings differed much from the teachings he observed in Greek schools in *Di Officiis* (Cicero I.2) and writers such as Dante identifying Cicero as Rome's best Aristotelian (Douglas 162), references to Roman rhetoric remained most common in writing about classical rhetoric.

#### **1.4 A Modern/Postmodern Look at the Revival of Classical Rhetoric in Composition Studies**

This section demonstrates the connection between the rise in both modernist philosophy and the creation of the FYC course as well as the connection between rise of postmodernist philosophy and FYC instructors' adaptation of rhetoric-centered pedagogies. Detailed histories of the creation and early evolution of FYC can be found in article compilations such as the "Historical Accounts" part of *The Norton Book of Composition Studies* or in John Brereton's book, *The Origins of Composition Studies, 1875-1925: A Documentary History*, but the discipline of Rhetoric & Composition studies has yet to reflect on the modern/postmodern influence of the discipline's rise and evolution. These events and their significance within the field of Rhetoric & Composition studies share a strikingly coincidental timeline with the shift to and from modernism that is worthy of further exploration. To accomplish this, I refer to Bruno Latour's representation of modernism, postmodernism, and nonmodernism.

To address Latour's critics, some scholars of Science and Technology Studies (STS) argue that Latour's scholarship is out of touch or problematic. Simon Schaffer criticizes Latour's

contributions to what is now Actor-Network Theory arguing that Latour's proposal gives agency, or "purpose, will, and life to inanimate matter" (182). Latour responded to this criticism that was echoed by David Bloor in "Anti-Latour" and Mark Elam in "Living Dangerously with Bruno Latour in a Hybrid World." As Latour points out in his 1999 response, however, these claims are "part of the modernist settlement." (118) Furthermore, Latour's Actor-Network methodology is a product of ethnographical research. Critics such as Bloor who received his PhD for his work in language and human behavior conduct research that is often anthropological in nature. For most of his career, however, Latour has not hesitated to make use of ethnographic methods and methodologies so as not to limit his observational research to only human-to-human interactions. Furthermore, although his contributions to Actor Network Theory (ANT) and his critique of modernism and postmodernism are more than 30 years old, Latour's influence on STS is undeniable. Even if we look beyond the field of STS, his scholarship has already demonstrated its usefulness in the field of Rhetoric and Composition studies in Paul Lynch and Nathaniel Rivers' collection of essays (2015).

Providing exact dates to the modernist movement is controversial. As Peter Childs points out, "We can dispute when it starts... and whether it has ended... We can regard it as a time bound concept (say 1890 to 1930) or a timeless one" (Childs 10). Although Latour provides a history of modern thought, he approaches the era of modern thought as timeless and is more concerned with modernity's three general traits: (1) humanity has come to (scientifically) dominate nature (Latour 10), (2) humanity has politically emancipated itself from nature (Latour 10-1), and (3) in discourse, a separation between the first two understandings must remain separate from each other to remain successful (Latour 29-30). Childs points out that that modernism emphasized writers who produced texts that "are aesthetically radical, contain

striking technical innovation, emphasize spatial or ‘fugal’ as opposed to chronological form, tend towards ironic modes, and involve a certain ‘dehumanization’ of art” (Childs 11-2).

Although Childs’ description of modernist writing may be what Corbett is referring to in his 1963 article criticizing the “self-expressionist” nature of writing instruction at the time (164), this would not be the only connection. Sharon Crowley points out a major change in writing instruction in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that marks the start of modernism’s influence on the discipline. Using George Kennedy’s *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian Secular Tradition* and Jeffrey Walker’s *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity*, Crowley demonstrates the historical, literary connection between rhetoric that was last seen on a massive scale in the late 1800’s. In her article “Composition is not Rhetoric,” she states that this “history... ended in the late-nineteenth century, though, when ‘composition’ acquired a new meaning and a new praxis... by the Arnoldian [new] humanists who invented the first-year requirement” (Crowley). The big similarity that links modernism and the new humanist influence that created the FYC requirement is, as Childs says, “the dehumanization of art.” This reference to the end of the traditional, artistic use of rhetoric, although not Aristotelian, demonstrates the modernist mentality that Corbett’s (and Latour’s) work responded against. Therefore, Crowley’s association of the end of the relationship between rhetoric and writing instruction with the creation of the first-year writing course makes the creation of the course an adequate marker as the beginning of the modernist influence on writing studies and writing instruction.

Determining the start of a postmodernist influence, however, is slightly more complicated. According to Latour, postmodernists are “unable to believe the dual promises of socialism and ‘naturalism’... [but] are also careful not to reject them totally. They remain suspended between belief and doubt, waiting for the end of the millennium” (9). The first scholar

worth considering is Kenneth Burke. Burke's ideas about new rhetoric arguably demonstrate a critical assessment of classical rhetoric, but not a complete disregard for it. There are, however, problems with associating Burke with the start of postmodernism in writing studies. First, Burke was, at his roots, a naturalist who also acknowledged the traditional, literary relationship between rhetoric and writing that Crowley praised. His works often resist the modernist mindset by which he was surrounded, much of his work resembles an anti-modernist mentality. Furthermore, Burke's arguments about new rhetoric did not and could not directly influence the field of writing studies or the FYC course as the relationship between rhetoric and writing instruction was not rekindled until Corbett (1963)(1965). Although Burke composed a massive collection of scholarship that influenced all fields related to human communication, his contributions were not recognized by writing scholars until after Corbett and his contemporaries re-established the relationship between rhetoric and writing instruction. Within this context, Burke's ideas are therefore better described as a catalyst to postmodern ideology within writing studies rather than the event that marks postmodernism's rise.

It would then make sense to identify 1963 as the end of modernism and the beginning of postmodern thought in the discipline that was slowly becoming Rhetoric & Composition studies. The year 1963 marks the first published account of Edward Corbett's argument advocating for the use of classical rhetoric to teach FYC that was followed by his 1965 book, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. The postmodern philosophy described by Latour (9) in *We Have Never Been Modern* can be first pinpointed in Composition studies in Corbett's 1963 article in his conclusion where he admits that classical rhetoric will not solve all the problems with the FYC course, but it should be given the chance to demonstrate its potential (164). Corbett's

acknowledgement alludes to a critical, but skeptical approach to FYC pedagogy that mirrors a postmodernist approach to the matter.

## 1.5 Conclusion

Given the contents of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* and the historical reception of the text, it is undoubtedly worth re-examining how the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition studies understands Aristotelian rhetoric. Despite the undeniable influence that Aristotle had on persuasion and composition during his life over the last 2000 years, identifying a definitive summary of his views on rhetoric is not as straight forward as just reading *On Rhetoric*. Factors such as Quintilian's reference of *Gryllus*, the problematically brief nature of some parts of *On Rhetoric*, and the various (and evolving) definitions of rhetoric throughout history demonstrate a need to use caution when approaching the text.

In the *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian references the Aristotelian text, *Gryllus* in a way that alludes to Aristotle possessing another rhetorical text conflicting with *On Rhetoric* (Quintillian 2.17.14). This is likely because the two texts were meant to be read by different audiences. Reading Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* as an esoteric text explains its conflicting nature with *Gryllus*, a text with which Quintillian assumes his audience is already familiar. Furthermore, comparing Aristotelian and Platonic texts on rhetoric can further demonstrate the relativity of Aristotle's opinion about rhetoric. Of the four known works that Plato composed on rhetoric, only *Phaedrus* is identified as being intended for a more educated audience. *Phaedrus* also happens to be the only one out of the four Platonic texts associated with rhetoric that presents its practice in a positive context. Given that Aristotle was both a student and a teacher at Plato's academy in

Athens (Poster 232), it is reasonable to propose that Plato and Aristotle shared similar views about the nature of rhetoric.

The relativity of Aristotle's views on rhetoric also explains the brief and occasionally frustrating style in which *On Rhetoric* was composed. Although Rita Copeland's criticisms of the poor readability of *On Rhetoric* (97) may be accurate, *On Rhetoric*'s esoteric nature eliminates much of her criticism's value other than providing an explanation for the western survival of Roman rhetoric into the Middle Ages. The stylistic features of Aristotle's unpublished *On Rhetoric* were unlikely to be of immediate concern to Aristotle. Furthermore, explanations of foundational educational concepts were not needed as it was assumed that the students for which Aristotle prepared the text already possessed an adequate education.

To develop a present-day (2022) conceptualization of Aristotelian rhetoric, the way in which rhetoric is defined must also be considered. Although the term *rhetoric* is largely associated as a term associated with persuasion, it is worthy of noting that Aristotle dismisses this as a sophistic practice and does not account for the academic practice of rhetoric. The Oxford English Dictionary defines rhetoric as "The art of using language effectively so as to persuade or influence others, especially the exploitation of speech and other compositional techniques to this end." The focus on persuasion in the definition makes the definition tempting to associate with Aristotle, but its emphasis on a specific goal of persuasion with no association with truth or knowledge and its mention of the frequent exploitative nature of rhetoric make the definition problematic from an Aristotelian perspective.

This does not, however, mark the end of the discussion. There are still several matters regarding the implementation of Corbett's text and the influence of modern/postmodern thought on rhetoric and writing instruction that this dissertation will explore. The first, which is explored



in the second chapter of this dissertation, is the extent and models of rhetoric that are typically presented to FYC students. Although texts such as Tate et. al.'s *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* provides instructors with a long list of pedagogical alternatives than a rhetoric-focused FYC course, the pedagogy and theme of using rhetoric in FYC remains popular both in textbooks and in practice. In Corbett's editions of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, he is careful to acknowledge the historical, literary tradition of rhetoric throughout the text while frequently referring to models of rhetoric from Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. According to Crowley, however, FYC courses have, since 2003, failed to acknowledge the historical tradition of rhetoric. Therefore, it is worth investigating the extent to which rhetoric and which models of rhetoric FYC instructors continue use to teach writing.

Given that recently published FYC textbooks reference Aristotelian rhetoric model of rhetoric significantly more often than other models of rhetoric, it is then worth assessing the representation of the Aristotelian model of rhetoric that FYC textbooks provide students and instructors. As demonstrated by this chapter, the nature of Aristotelian rhetoric is complicated and requires knowledge of Aristotelian philosophy beyond the content included in the *On Rhetoric* text. Finally, given the issues identified with FYC textbooks' representations of Aristotelian rhetoric in the third chapter, it is also worth exploring potential solutions to the issues. If FYC instructors are determined to continue using Aristotelian rhetoric, it is necessary to contextualize the Aristotelian model as accurately as possible and in a way that is beneficial to students of writing. The final chapter of this dissertation will consider the potential influences on Aristotelian rhetoric's representation in FYC textbooks and propose an alternative, revised reading of the *On Rhetoric* text.

## 2 CHAPTER TWO: THE ARISTOTELIAN PEDAGOGICAL BIAS IN COMPOSITION STUDIES

This chapter explores the representation of rhetoric in First Year Composition (FYC) textbooks by considering their conceptualization of the FYC course and the extent to which they cover the subject of rhetoric. I conclude that the extent to which rhetoric is mentioned and discussed are dependent on the pedagogical goals of the text. When a textbook explicitly addresses rhetoric, the focus is most often focused on classical rhetoric. More specifically, these textbooks demonstrate a drastic favoritism towards Aristotelian rhetoric. This disproportionate representation of Aristotelian rhetoric compared to other rhetors demonstrates the existence of a bias favoring Aristotelian rhetoric in classical rhetoric-centered FYC pedagogies.

As the first chapter of this dissertation demonstrates, a comprehensive understanding of Aristotelian rhetoric requires more than an understanding of *On Rhetoric*. The text accurately describes Aristotle's ideas about the ideal practice of rhetoric but fails to adequately emphasize that idealistic rhetoric requires a speaker and an audience that is both equally motivated to discover truths and acquire knowledge and is educated enough to do so. As Adam Kotsko points out, academic discourse is one of the few instances where an appropriate environment to practice Aristotle's model for persuasion can exist. Kotsko argues that although academics try to engage in discourse with public audiences, the public is often unwilling to or uninterested in approaching topics with open minds or developing the required information literacy needed to engage with topics on the level that academic discourse requires of its participants. If Kotsko's portrayal of nonacademic audiences is accepted as generally true, then the First Year Composition (FYC) course using an Aristotelian rhetoric-focused pedagogy also becomes

responsible for ensuring that students also possess the critical thinking skills needed to take part in written academic discourse. If Aristotle's theory of rhetoric is presented and used as intended, it can, as Corbett proposes in his 1963 article, provide several useful techniques for the teaching of FYC (162).

On the contrary, as Corbett also demonstrates in his 1965 text, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* may not be able to accomplish this task on its own. Therefore, Corbett's book also heavily draws inspiration from the Roman rhetors Cicero and Quintilian throughout the text. Although Corbett's strategy of pulling from other models of classical rhetoric does not necessarily imply that instructors cannot teach FYC using ideas that only come from Aristotelian texts, but to accomplish such a task requires the use of more than just *On Rhetoric*; however, before exploring this matter, this dissertation will first prove the existence of a bias favoring Aristotelian rhetoric in FYC courses.

To demonstrate the existence of this bias, I explore ten recently published FYC textbooks to determine how each text's author(s) perceive the purpose and goals of FYC. I then identify any models of rhetoric that are explicitly mentioned in each text and the extent to which each model is mentioned or explained. After demonstrating the existence of an Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB), I also argue that, although the existence of this bias favoring classical, Aristotelian rhetoric does not necessarily have to be problematic, FYC instructors and FYC instructional materials must also accurately and comprehensively represent Aristotelian rhetoric to FYC students. This condition to my argument provides the justification for my third chapter of this dissertation in which I narrow my focus to assess the nature of the APB in textbooks that refer to the Aristotelian model.

In the introduction to Gary Tate's second edition of *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, Amy Rupiper Taggart et. al. state that "there is no single correct way to teach writing, nor... [is there] even one unified set of goals all writing teachers need to help students achieve" (1). The second part of this claim seems hyperbolic considering the National Council of Teachers of English's (NCTE) "Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing"; however, Tate's book proceeds to present readers with seventeen chapters detailing different pedagogical approaches available for instructors of FYC. Given that instructors can use any one or combination of the pedagogies to any extent they feel is needed, there are no theoretical limitations on the way in which FYC can be taught. As Charles Bazerman points out, this is one of many noteworthy strengths of the discipline. It constantly pushes the field to evolve because of its interdisciplinary nature that constantly requires instructors and scholars to reassess their understanding of what is successful writing instruction (Bazerman 19).

The strengths of allowing instructors freedom in their approach to teaching college writing, however, does not come without challenges. Ronald Sudol argues that the lack of a standardized practice results in a lack of standardized content in textbooks written for FYC (32). Sudol also points out that a FYC textbook is one of the most influential tools available to a student that is second only to the course's instructor (32-3). Some scholars even argue that the FYC textbook can prove to be even more important than the instructor when the FYC course is being staffed by "temporary instructors and novice graduate students" (Knoblauch 245) who are not yet accustomed to the conventions of FYC (Knoblauch 245-6)(Welch 271). Kathleen Welch also acknowledges this issue in her 1987 essay "Ideology and Freshman Textbook Production." Ronald Sudol's argument that FYC textbooks frequently failed to demonstrate any knowledge of recently published Composition theory became even more problematic was worsened by

Welch's reference to the overwhelming number of these problematic textbooks being published (269). Welch blamed textbook publication companies for this problem, but W. Ross Winterwoud was quick to respond with a defense of publication companies that was critical of Welch's argument. After discounting Welch (150), Winterwoud's article provides advice to potential textbook authors regarding publication companies that ultimately fails to address Welch's (and Sudol's) complaints. A better explanation, however, can be found in Donald Stewart's "Composition Textbooks and the Assault on Tradition" where he references articles such as *Newsweek's* "Why Johnny Can't Write" as the origin of a desire to cling to "traditional" writing instruction (Stewart 171). As I will demonstrate in this chapter, although 21<sup>st</sup> century FYC instructors face a different type of textbook market than Welch and Winterwoud did in 1989, the range in the quality of FYC textbooks and the oversaturated nature of the textbook market remain problematic.

This chapter contains the first of a two-part examination of ten recently published FYC textbooks. In particular, the chapter examines the textbooks by using a revised, abbreviated version William Dowie's criteria for assessing textbooks detailed in *College Composition and Communication (CCC)*. Dowie's original model provides scholars with seven categories to use when assessing and rating FYC textbooks. These include (1) range, (2) emphasis, (3) organization, (4) pedagogy, (5) evaluation procedures, (6) language, and (7) recommendations. Although all seven categories play an important role in the general evaluation of textbooks, the first half of this study is not concerned with the evaluation procedures for sample writing included in the textbooks, the language used (which Dowie describes as the quality in which the text is written) (51), or personal recommendations for the improvement of future editions of the textbook. Furthermore, although organization can play important roles in the way in which

information included in the textbook is used and interpreted, this study is not concerned with the general rating of the organization of these textbooks themselves as it does not contribute to the presence or lack of a present model of rhetoric.

Like Alison Knoblauch's approach to selecting textbooks for her article that explores definitions of argument in leading FYC textbooks, the collection of textbooks included in this study are not meant to represent the entire catalog of thousands of titles and editions of textbooks associated with FYC published within the last decade. The ten textbooks included here are merely meant to project a broad sense of how rhetoric is represented in FYC. Given the purpose of this study, however, I have increased number and range of textbooks (compared to Knoblauch's study) to better project the wide array of approaches to teaching FYC. To partially imitate Knoblauch, however, the first textbook included in the study is the most recent edition (as of January 2021) of *Everything's an Argument* by Lunsford et al. As Knoblauch points out, the well-known text, which exists in multiple editions, is Bedford/St. Martin's most popular FYC textbook (248). Therefore, this text guarantees a representation of a noteworthy portion of the textbooks used in FYC.

One way that the publisher-author relationship has changed since Winterwoud's 1989 article is the decreased vulnerability that FYC departments and authors experience when creating and privately publishing in-house textbooks. As Winterwoud pointed out, authors had little choice other than to trust the ethics of a publisher when intending to publish a textbook in-house (141). Until the Covid-19 pandemic, access to book printing services had drastically increased (Grady). Furthermore, as the 21<sup>st</sup> century has progressed, digital publication platforms have shown a drastic increase in use by institutions as publishing solutions (Chad 7). To represent the subgenre of in-house published textbooks, the 7<sup>th</sup> and "7e" editions of *The Guide to First Year*

*Writing*, Georgia State University's in-house FYC textbooks published through Fountainhead Press, will also be considered in this study. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the text was the last physically published version of the text (in 2018) and the 7e edition of the text, which contains minor edits and revisions to the printed, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, was published a year later exclusively on Fountainhead's active learning platform, Top Hat.

As Ken Chad (7) and Bob Carbough (284-5) point out, the college textbook publication model is in the mid-to-late stages of crumbling, which has motivated the publication companies to downsize their operations and encourage institutions to use digital publication platforms. Although institutions are progressively accepting these digital solutions (Chad 7), digital spaces have also given rise to projects promoting the composition and use of open access textbooks. Furthermore, Bazerman et. al. state that in their case study of open access book publishing, open access texts tend to be viewed more times by a larger, more diverse audience. Although scholarship discussing open access textbooks within the discipline Rhetoric & Composition studies is still in its early stages with several challenges to face (Edwards and Reyman 223-4), but faculty in other disciplines such as business (Feldstein et. al. 2010) and chemistry (Gregory et. al. 2013) have demonstrated success when piloting open access textbooks in their classes. Furthermore, the Libretxts organization has digitally published 33 open access textbooks for introductory English Composition classes by instructors and institutions that have used the textbooks in their classroom(s). Given the variety and number of open access FYC textbooks now available to instructors, the remaining seven textbooks will consist of open access FYC textbooks that have been used in a FYC course within the last ten years.

The fourth textbook included is text titled *Rhetoric and Composition* by Amber Kinonen et. al.. Although the original publication date and number of editions of the text is unclear, the most

recent edition of this text was published in 2021. The fifth textbook is *Successful College Composition* by faculty members at Georgia Perimeter college to use in their FYC courses. The sixth textbook is *Horse of a Different Color: English Composition and Rhetoric* by a group faculty teaching in the Maricopa Community College District. The seventh textbook is Babin et. al.'s *The Word on College Writing*. Although this textbook is free to use, unlike the other open access textbooks included in this study, there is no complete PDF copy of the textbook. Individual chapters and sections of the text must be downloaded one at a time from the LibreTexts website where it is available. The eighth textbook, which is titled *Writing for Success*, was written by Scott McLean and originally published through the University of Minnesota Libraries publishing services. The ninth textbook is *Writing Unleashed* by Sybil Priebe et. al.. The tenth and final textbook included in this study is titled *Remix: Expression and Inquiry* and is written by Chris Manning et. al. for use at Lansing Community College.

## **2.1 The Range of Material and Emphasis in Select First-Year Composition (FYC)**

### **Textbooks**

In this section, I review what Dowie refers to as the range of subject matter, or the emphasized aspects of writing covered in each of the FYC textbooks included in this study. As Dowie points out, determining each textbook's range of subject matter will help determine the authors' perception about the purpose and nature of FYC (48). Furthermore, the range of subject matter also helps identify pedagogical support that the textbook can provide FYC instructors. One issue with Dowie's article is his free use of the phrase "rhetoric texts" while making no distinction between rhetoric and composition (Dowie 47-8). It appears that Dowie perceives rhetoric in this article as a term that is interchangeable with the term composition. Although this



is not problematic for the adaptation and use of Dowie's model for assessing texts, it is important to establish that any mention of rhetoric in this (and the next) chapter refers to either a definition, model, or pedagogical approach used within a textbook to teach composition and not the act of composing/writing itself.

Out of the textbooks included in this study, only four provide direct commentary on the goals and purpose of the English Composition class. Kinonen et. al.'s *Rhetoric and Composition* and McLean's *Writing For Success* provide allusive descriptions that contribute to the conceptualization of an FYC course, but do not provide specific course descriptions. Kinonen et. al. spend the majority of their introduction explaining the differences between high school and college-level writing. Since the introduction approaches the topic of college-level generically rather than within the confines of a writing classroom (1.1), the reader must conclude for themselves that these differences are what the authors considered when composing the textbook. This suggests that Kinonen et. al. understand FYC as a course intended to help students adjust to these differences between high school and college-level writing. The textbook contains 14 chapters that cover the relationship between reading and writing, the writing process, the importance of context, the modes of discourse, and tips for conducting and using research.

Similarly, McLean's *Writing for Success* takes the same approach in the introduction to his first chapter (1.1.1). A notable difference, however, is that, prior to his introduction in the first chapter, McLean includes a forward that introduces the text, explains its organization, and summarizes the elements of writing that the text emphasizes. McLean states "Beginning with the sentence and its essential elements, this book addresses each concept with clear, concise and effective examples that are immediately enforced with exercises... With this incremental approach, [the text]... can address a range of writing levels and abilities (1). Although McLean's

claim is true in the sense that the textbook contains the content needed to teach writing by beginning looking at writing at the sentence level and then incrementally and cumulatively increasing students' abilities to compose college-level texts, the PDF version of the text that was compiled in August of 2021 is not organized to do so. The online version of the text accessible on the LibreTexts website, however, presents the chapters in the order promised in the Forward.

The physical copy of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Guide to First Year Writing* presents a more complex, multidisciplinary conceptualization of FYC. Introducing the course within the context of the general education requirements of the institution at which the authors of the text teach, the book provides a four-page introduction to the two FYC courses for which the text is used. The authors' thoughts regarding the purpose of FYC are best represented by the statement "English 1101 focuses on writing from your own perspective and exploring your personal literacies with an emphasis on primary research (using observation, interviews, and archival documents)... [and] English 1102 expects students to have absorbed the lessons from English 1101 and to be ready to write longer, more formal academic arguments with secondary, scholarly sources as well as understand the nature of visual communication and communicating in various mediums" (6). A similar introduction exists in the revised, electronic edition of the text under the section titled "Welcome to First-Year Writing Classes and Lower Division Studies in English."

The first chapter approaches FYC through literacy studies. The second chapter, however, shifts to focus on rhetoric from the writer's perspective. The discussion on rhetoric is continued into the third chapter, but the focus shifts from the speaker/writer's perspective to the audience's perspective. In the third chapter, the task of critically reading, responding, and rhetorical analysis. The fourth chapter discusses argument and evidence, the fifth chapter elaborates upon the writing process, the sixth chapter explains the processes of conducting research, evaluating,

and using sources, and the last two chapters provide sample assignments and additional readings. The electronic version of *The Guide to First Year Writing*, follows the same general structure, but contains noteworthy changes regarding arguments and rhetoric and the way in which chapter five handles the writing process. Although the most strongly emphasized topic in both textbooks is argument and rhetoric, both texts display a more balanced, inclusive textbook for writing instruction. Furthermore, although the electronic version does so to a greater extent, both texts display a strong awareness of recently published scholarship and developing composition theories.

The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument*, is the only textbook included in this study that is centered exclusively around arguments and rhetoric. As Knoblauch points out, however, it is arguably the best textbook of its kind. The first edition of the textbook quickly became a best seller and, by its fifth edition, had firmly established itself as Bedford/St. Martin's best-selling persuasion based FYC textbook (251). *Everything's an Argument* embraces O'Keefe's first definition of argument that emphasizes identification instead of persuasion (12-3). The textbook is, more or less, organized to not only act as an introduction to the study of rhetoric, but also to act as a history of rhetoric. Divided into five parts, Lunsford et. al. begin the textbook in the first part titled (reading and understanding arguments) by presenting a largely Aristotelian introduction to classical rhetoric. The textbook proceeds to explain the benefits of acknowledging several models of argument while briefly referring to countless others until the text's fifth and final part that is titled "Arguments," where the author(s) provide five chapters that discuss current issues pertaining to rhetoric in matters such as pop culture and politics.

Although Crowther et. al.'s *Successful College Composition* provides no real introduction explaining the FYC course, the first section in the first chapter of the text, the authors provide a

sympathetic reality check, particularly for those who do not enjoy writing or who are not accustomed to writing at a higher level (1.1.1). Like Kinonen et. al. and McLean, this textbook dedicates chapters to the writing process, the modes of discourse, which they refer to as “the rhetorical modes of writing” (3.0.1), and research. The authors also include a chapter dedicated to a review of grammar.

A product of faculty from the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD), the English Instructional Council (EIC), and the English division at Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC), *Horse of a Different Color: Composition and Rhetoric*, provide a more generic structure to the same approach to writing instruction taken by Crowther et. al. and McLean. The text is broken into three parts that include the writing process, the modes of discourse (which the text refers to as the “rhetorical modes of composition”) (2.1.1.), and grammar and mechanics. Sybil Priebe et. al.’s *Writing Unleashed* provides a similar model with the only difference being the inclusion of a chapter on the genres of writing.

Babin et. al.’s text, *The Word on College Writing*, takes a different approach and presents the content of the text into two main parts. The first part emphasizes the importance of reading and interacting with texts. The second part gives focus to the act of writing by focusing on topics including audience, the writing process, the successful conducting of research, and writers block. The textbook also includes appendices that cover the Modern Language Association (MLA) conventions, grammar and style, works cited page conventions, practice activities, and in-text citation conventions.

The final textbook included in this study, Manning et. al.’s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry*, is a product composed from portions of several Composition textbooks including Shane Abram’s *EmpoWord: A Student Centered Anthology, Handbook for College Writers*, and

*The Wiki Book on Rhetoric and Composition*. The textbook provides three different sections that emphasize a different purpose for writing.. The first part emphasizes technical, descriptive writing, the second part emphasizes academic, argumentative writing, and the third part revolves around the narrative.

## **2.2 Pedagogy and the Extent of Rhetoric**

In this section, I will identify and discuss the definitions and models of rhetoric that are present in the previously listed FYC textbooks. Then, I will describe the extent to which the definitions and/or models of rhetoric are discussed. As William Duffy demonstrates in his list of 50+ definitions of rhetoric, expecting the representation of a single model of rhetoric throughout FYC textbooks is impractical. It is also arguably undesirable because, as David Fleming demonstrates throughout his overview of argument and rhetoric-focused pedagogies, different models of rhetoric contribute differently to writing instruction. This aligns with one of the earliest assessments of FYC textbooks conducted by William Wood. At a time when the formal study of Composition theory was still relatively new, Wood identified four main categories of textbooks that were based on the state of popular theories on teaching Composition at the time: expressionist textbooks, language-based textbooks, rhetoric-based textbooks, and logic-based textbooks. Although Woods' study is simple, effective, and is a reasonably effective representation of the state of FYC at the time, Composition theory has drastically expanded and progressed since the 1981 publication of his assessment. With this expansion, the field's conceptualization of rhetoric has also evolved. Kenneth Burke's concept of new rhetoric and O'Keefe's distinction between two types of arguments have added systems of distinction

between the different approaches to rhetoric that were desperately needed for the disciplinary study of rhetoric to continue progressing.

As previously mentioned, Woods presented an accurate representation of pedagogical approaches to FYC during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Given the discipline's current approach to rhetoric, which is built on the claim that that all writing is rhetorical in nature (NCTE), all of the textbooks in this study can be assessed on the way that they represent rhetoric. According to Dowie's model for assessing textbooks, students deserve a clear presentation of the given model of rhetoric (51), an explanation of the theory justifying its use, and an invitation to practice it (50). One challenge worth acknowledging is that although at least one model or theory of rhetoric can be identified in each of the textbooks included in the study, several of the textbooks do not provide an explicit definition of rhetoric. Therefore, if a textbook's supported definition of rhetoric is not explicitly stated, then the present models of rhetoric must be used to identify an implicit definition.

In Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument*, the authors of the text provide the most comprehensive discussion about several models of rhetoric on both a theoretical and, as Dowie requires (50), an invitational level. The authors are quick to acknowledge the constantly evolving nature of rhetoric in the preface (12) and provide a rather unique definition of rhetoric stating that, "At its best, rhetoric is the art, theory, and practice of ethical communication" (13). Presenting elements of both old (particularly Aristotelian) and new rhetoric, Lunsford et. al. proceed to discuss multiple models of rhetoric throughout the text. It is impractical to mention every model and theory mentioned within the pages of the textbook given that they are spread across more than 1500 pages, but *Everything's an Argument* undoubtedly provides the most comprehensive coverage of rhetoric out of all of the textbooks in this study.

Although only so much can be expected from *Everything's an Argument*, the limitations of the textbook must still be addressed. Lunsford et. al. have likely composed the most comprehensive text on rhetoric that is intended to be used in the FYC classroom, but like Knoblauch points out about the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the textbook (252-7), the expansive explanation of the subject that paints rhetoric as more than just the art of persuasion is frequently undermined throughout the text by emphasizing argument and persuasion as key elements of rhetoric. The criticisms Knoblauch noted about the 5<sup>th</sup> edition's tendency to passively cling to the classical, persuasive definition of argument are still largely present in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Two of the most notable criticisms include the first part of the text's emphasis on the various kinds of arguments, fallacies, and rhetorical analysis (57-263) and chapter 7's discussion of Rogerian arguments (265-311).

In defense of Lunsford et. al., it is worth noting that there is little that can be done about these criticisms. Although some forgiveness is justified as Knoblauch fails to suggest any solutions to the issue and the fact that Carl Rogers was never hesitant to acknowledge the argumentative potential of his model (Knoblauch 256). To address the purpose of this study and potentially add to Knoblauch's criticisms of the text, however, the balance between the representation of old and new models of rhetoric disproportionately favors old rhetoric (and more specifically, Aristotelian rhetoric.) Although Aristotle's name is only mentioned about fifteen times throughout the book's 1537 pages, his ideas about rhetoric frequently appear throughout the text. This may be a result of his ideas about rhetoric simply being the oldest surviving ones to appear in a textbook-format (and not in a dialogue format,) but it still demonstrates the unavoidability of the influence of "old rhetoric" in a rhetoric-focused FYC textbook.

The physical edition of *The Guide to First-Year Writing* also manages to address two definitions of rhetoric and dedicates three chapters to exclusively covering rhetoric (chapters 2, 3, and 4) based on the definitions provided. On page 51, both Aristotle's and Kenneth Burke's definitions of rhetoric are given. It is impressive to see two definitions of rhetoric provided in the text, but Burke's model for rhetoric is drastically overshadowed by the coverage of Aristotelian rhetoric throughout the textbook. Despite Burkean rhetoric receiving a short explanation in the fifth chapter (120-1), it is contextualized within textbook's discussion on research rather than the discussion of rhetoric that began in the second chapter. Furthermore, a brief mention of stasis theory is included with a direct reference to Quintilian for his contributions to it, but this discussion is short lived compared to the textbook's coverage of Aristotelian rhetoric. Finally, are also several models of rhetoric that are briefly mentioned throughout the fourth chapter in the textbook's coverage of models for argument (92-4), the text is quick to return to using Aristotelian concepts and how they contribute to developing a successful argument.

The electronic edition of the text does not vary much from its physical edition regarding its coverage of rhetoric. One notable difference, however, is the coverage of Burkean rhetoric. Immediately after providing Burke's definition, the text states that "at its essence, rhetoric is persuasive communication, and it can be argued that all communication is persuasive" (43). Although this statement is true, its implications about Burkean rhetoric can potentially mislead students who are not already familiar with Burkean rhetoric which acknowledges the persuasive elements of rhetoric, but portrays rhetoric as more of a co-operative competition in which all contributors to the communicative act desire the correct conclusion (Burke 203). Given the drastically superior coverage of Aristotelian rhetoric compared to Burkean rhetoric in the textbook (as well as the physical version) and the minimal coverage of other models of rhetoric



or argument, the textbook does not appear to be designed with the intent of pushing students toward a definition of rhetoric beyond its classical persuasive definition.

Although they differ slightly from each other, Kinonen et. al.'s *Rhetoric and Composition*, Crowther et. al.'s *Successful College Composition*, and McLean's *Writing for Success* all possess a similar approach to covering rhetoric to an extent that they can be addressed simultaneously. None of these textbooks provide an explicit definition of rhetoric. In fact, the word *rhetoric* does not appear once in any of the textbooks. Although Kinonen et. al. and Crowther et. al. use the word in its adjectival form, the modes of discourse that received their first formal reference by Samuel Newman in *A Principle System of Rhetoric* appear to be the rhetorical model that these textbooks chose to use as their approach for writing instruction. That said, these textbooks allude to a persuasive interpretation of rhetoric. There are elements of Aristotelian rhetoric present in the text such as an explanation of the writing process, an acknowledgement of the importance of audience, and some brief, but still present coverage of stylistic considerations to make when composing different types of essays, but Aristotle's model of rhetoric is not formally presented in these texts.

*Horse of a Different Color: English Composition and Rhetoric* serves as a tool for writing instruction in several ways like Kinonen et. al. and Crowther et. al., but its explicit mention of rhetoric justifies its separate mention from the three textbooks mentioned in the previous paragraph. Unlike in the three previously mentioned textbooks, here, the authors discuss the historical use of Aristotle as a guide for effective speaking but explain the text's ability to also teach effective writing skills (0.1.1). The authors continue the discussion and point out Aristotle's emphasis on identifying and understanding all available means of persuasion. The text acknowledges a version of the "everything is an argument" mentality that differs from

Lunsford et. al.'s in the sense that the authors do hesitate to present rhetoric persuasive context. They acknowledge that the 1970s marked as a turning point for the use of rhetoric in FYC, but do not clarify that with this turning point came an increased push to embrace Kennedy's concept of new rhetoric.

In the Babin et. al.'s *The Word on College Writing*, Chapter 3.4 of the first part of the textbook covers how to speak and write effectively and persuasively. This section demonstrates an implicit view rhetoric identifies it as an art centered around persuasion, which makes Aristotle's influence essentially unavoidable. Although there is no direct mention of Aristotle in the chapter, the recommendations for analysis described in the section clearly act as questions meant to encourage writers to use Aristotle's rhetorical appeals. The text defines rhetoric as "the ways we write and speak effectively and persuasively" (3.4). Although the definition begins by acknowledging that the goals of writing and speaking do not always have to be argumentative, the remainder of the section supports the persuasion part of the definition and does little to acknowledge rhetoric as an art or act that can be a cooperative competition.

Priebe et. al.'s *Writing Unleashed* discusses the importance of the rhetorical situation, a concept identified by Lloyd Bitzer in 1968, but does not discuss the art or practice of rhetoric directly. Although situational awareness is nothing new in the practice of rhetoric, Bitzer identified general characteristics and features of a rhetorical situation to consider when preparing to take part in a rhetorical act. Even though his commentary is very critical of classical rhetors, Although Bitzer criticizes *On Rhetoric* for the poor, indirect extent to which Aristotle covers what he considers to be the rhetorical situation (2). In defense of Aristotle, however, Bitzer fails to recognize that *On Rhetoric* is not one of Aristotle's published texts and is likely a reflection of Aristotle's compiled lecture notes. Although Priebe et al. provide a description of an approach to

assessing rhetorical situations, they provide a model that contributes to what can best be described as an Aristotelian approach to analysis. There is no further explicit mention of rhetoric throughout the textbook, but the second chapter is dedicated to covering the modes of discourse the third chapter to to genre, and the fourth chapter to the writing process. The authors, however, do not elaborate on the theory, history, or rhetorical any of either of these.

Manning et. al.'s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry* provides readers with Aristotle's definition (1.2.1). This definition is complimented by two paragraphs of praise for Aristotelian rhetoric with an additional section that refers to the history of Aristotelian rhetoric's use in FYC. The section states that Aristotelian rhetoric has been used to teach writing since the 1970's (which is likely the point when Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* was established as a canonical text for the field of writing studies.) Although the textbook is not centered exclusively around Aristotelian rhetoric and elements of other models of rhetoric exist sporadically throughout the text, there is no explicit mention of the rhetorical theory, any other rhetors, or sections that discuss the rhetorical concepts use Aristotle as the foundational reference.

### **2.3 Acknowledging and Describing the Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias**

For several decades, writing scholars have acknowledged the unavoidability of bias. In the first Octalog publication, James Berlin acknowledged that "all histories are partial accounts, [and] are both biased and incomplete" (12). Kelly Ritter points out that more recent discussions about bias by scholars are more related to scholars' personal bias towards a subject that focus on the researcher or writer's relationship to the topic with which they are engaging (464). This acknowledgement of the researcher/writer's personal bias has drastically impacted the way in

which present-day scholars approach the production of scholarship; however, there has been almost no discussion about how bias of textbook authors affects the content included in textbooks and the way in which it is presented.

Like scholarly articles and books, textbooks also possess elements of both a historically grounded bias as well as the personal bias of the author. Perhaps the most apparent and undoubtedly the most relevant bias present in the collection of FYC textbooks assessed in this dissertation is the bias favoring Aristotelian rhetoric when explicit references to rhetoric are made. As previously mentioned, Corbett largely relies on ideas from Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian in *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. The field Rhetoric and Composition studies has since widely accepted his pedagogy and have proceeded to create countless teaching materials including textbooks that make use of a classical rhetoric-themed pedagogy. Although not all textbooks in this study directly mention or consciously focus on rhetoric, they did all contain what David Fleming would identify as models of rhetoric. If rhetoric was explicitly mentioned and explained, however, the model and theory of rhetoric that the textbooks used is almost exclusively the one created by Aristotle. This demonstration of what can be referred to as an Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB) suggests that if FYC textbooks are going to address the subject of rhetoric directly, they are most likely to reference Aristotle or his text, *On Rhetoric*. When looking at the implicit representation of rhetoric, however, the APB becomes somewhat less apparent. If rhetoric is as the art of writing like it was during the Middle Ages, several other models and theories of rhetoric are implicitly present throughout the textbooks; however, composing a complete list of the implicitly present theories and models is implausible. This not only because the textbook authors failed to identify the models and theories; the task is further complicated given the need to consider several definitions of rhetoric that reflect a writing-

focused, persuasion-focused, and occasionally even an identification-focused definition of the term.

Even though the APB is most applicable to textbooks that explicitly cover rhetoric, FYC textbooks do not always attribute concepts that were first referenced in classical rhetorical texts. That does not, however, mean that classical, Aristotelian rhetoric does not have a noteworthy influence on FYC textbooks that fail to acknowledge his theory and model. For instance, although Lunsford et. al. discuss several definitions of rhetoric throughout the text and reference a variety of rhetors, the text often fails to directly connect classical rhetors with the concepts about which they wrote. A prime example of this is Lunsford et. al.'s failure to directly attribute the rhetorical appeals to Aristotle in the first part of the textbook titled "Reading and Understanding Arguments." Although it does not take away from the quality of the information in *Everything's an Argument*, it is worth pointing out as it further demonstrates the drastically higher amount of exposure that Aristotelian rhetoric receives compared to other models of rhetoric.

Another example that is present in every textbook included in this study to some extent is the writing process and its association with Aristotle and the canons of rhetoric. Although Cicero is most frequently associated with the five canons of rhetoric, Aristotle was also the first known rhetor to write about all five of them in a textbook-like format. Knowing that Cicero was exposed to Aristotle (although we do not know which ones or which versions,) it is plausible that Cicero, inspired by Aristotle, merely took concepts introduced by Aristotle and reorganized them in a less chaotic presentation. This is not meant to suggest that Cicero plagiarized Aristotle, but merely that Ciceronian rhetoric is, in many ways, Aristotelian at its roots. Furthermore, Corbett references Lane Cook to point out in his first edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern*

*Student* that “the Rhetoric of not only Cicero and Quintilian, but of the Middle Ages, of the Renaissance, and modern times is, in its best elements, essentially Aristotelian.” (543-44) This claim by Cook and Corbett proposes an interesting way of interpreting rhetoric from the time of Aristotle’s death up to Burke’s conceptualization of new rhetoric. If such a claim is true, then the argument could also be made that, until (and arguably even after) Burke, an overwhelming majority of rhetoric(s) can and should be interpreted as Aristotelian in nature.

Although Cook and Corbett imply an overwhelmingly dominant influence of Aristotelian rhetoric on the discipline moving forward that can be seen in implied definitions and models of rhetoric throughout the textbooks in this study, the more damning evidence proving the existence of what can be called an Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB) can be better seen in explicit representations of rhetoric. Throughout the study, Aristotle, without competition, remained the dominating rhetor referenced by name throughout the study. His definition of rhetoric was the most frequent to be cited in textbooks. Even if other rhetors or models of rhetoric were explicitly referenced, Aristotle’s theories from *On Rhetoric* are always given the most amount of explanation. If other rhetors were mentioned at all, they were typically only given a portion of a page consisting of a few paragraphs at best. Discussions about Aristotelian rhetorical concepts, however, are frequently given entire chapters or at least multiple sections. If rhetoric is only covered in a single section of the text, Aristotle is typically the only rhetor explicitly mentioned.

This remains the case for Manning et. al., Lunsford et. al., and both editions of *The Guide to First Year Writing*. Despite Lunsford et. al.’s discussion of several models of rhetoric and the fact that the textbook is not organized with the intent of separating ideas by the rhetor who first proposed them, ideas from Aristotle’s model of rhetoric were given the most amount of space in the text compared to other rhetors’ theories and models. It dominated the first part of the text and

concepts frequently appeared throughout other parts. In both editions of *The Guide to First Year Writing*, although other rhetors are mentioned sporadically, their models of rhetoric are either not elaborated upon at all or are briefly and often only partially explained.

These textbooks that support FYC course designs that emphasize persuasion in writing are where the bias favoring Aristotle is most apparent. In Manning et. al., Aristotle is the only rhetor mentioned in the textbook, is only mentioned on one page, and is not associated with a formal definition of rhetoric. The authors are also quick to move on to discuss more recent approaches to teaching writing and emphasize a more dynamic process adapted in the 1970s that they refer to as the recursive writing process (1.2.1). The authors come up short here as they fail to explicitly reference any scholars or texts that contributed to the adaptation of the recursive writing process. Although the textbook does not appear invested in rhetoric-focused pedagogy, the explicit mention of Aristotle and the failure to explicitly acknowledge other rhetors or scholars who contributed to writing instruction pedagogy is arguably the most apparent testament to the existence of an APB in Rhetoric and Composition studies.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Regardless of whether it is explicitly or implicitly referenced, Aristotelian rhetoric continues to greatly impact the way in which college-level writing is taught today. Regarding the teaching of FYC, Corbett's resurrection of classical rhetoric's use in the writing classroom gave new life to the practice of teaching writing at a time where the formally established discipline of writing studies was in its infant stages, but was already facing challenges. Although Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* saw minimal use inside the FYC classroom itself, it

heavily influenced the way in which FYC instructors approached and continue to approach writing instruction.

Despite Corbett's reliance on several classical rhetors, Aristotelian rhetoric was the only rhetor adopted by Composition textbooks on a mass scale in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Aristotle presented a model that promoted the concept of invention unlike other models before Corbett's revival of classical rhetoric. Furthermore, although other rhetors such as Cicero and Quintilian also influenced Corbett's 1965 text, the argument that they were both influenced by Aristotle's works and produced models of rhetoric that were Aristotelian in nature make it unsurprising that Aristotle secured the status as the most influential classical rhetor on present-day writing instruction. One question worthy of further consideration, however, is whether implicit references to Aristotelian rhetoric in textbooks where no definition or statement about rhetoric is given should count as contributing to evidentiary support for the APB. Although a textbook's explicit mention of Aristotle or his model of rhetoric demonstrates a conscious decision favoring Aristotelian rhetoric, the same cannot be said for implicit references to Aristotle. Unless other clues throughout the text are given, it is impossible to tell if an implicit reference to Aristotelian rhetoric or any model of rhetoric is a conscious decision to incorporate that model or if its presence is merely coincidental.

A second concern worth exploring is that the discipline's current use of rhetoric. According to Crowley, the revival of rhetoric in the FYC classroom established a subfield of rhetorical studies in English departments that does not align with the 19<sup>th</sup> century study of rhetoric. She claims that the approach merely proved appealing and effective enough to remain in use throughout the establishment and growth of the field that is now recognized as Rhetoric and Composition Studies. Although Corbett points out that his approach was not perfect in his



1963 proposal to use classical rhetoric in FYC (164), he also claims in introductions to revised editions of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* that rhetoric must evolve as the way in which communication takes place evolves. Despite Crowley's criticism, Corbett's pedagogical approach to writing instruction continues to receive support through textbooks to some extent through any textbook that explicitly refers to the study or practice of rhetoric. As these evolutions in communication that Corbett refers to take place, however, it is also important to reconsider the effectiveness of previously accepted model(s) of rhetoric. As critics such as Crowley imply, the evolving relationship between rhetoric and writing can result in the loss of what made the relationship successful in the first place.

At least one other matter still worth exploring regarding the nature of the APB is the extent to which Aristotelian rhetoric is properly contextualized to students. If shortcomings exist, then the extent to which these shortcomings affect the quality of students' FYC experience should also be assessed. Given Crowley's criticism of the current use of Rhetoric and Poster's acknowledgements of poorly contextualized historical representations of Aristotelian rhetoric, concerns about textbook authors' understanding and abilities to adequately represent Aristotelian rhetoric are justified. An investigation of the quality of the textbooks' presentation of Aristotelian rhetoric, which will be conducted in the third chapter of this dissertation, can provide a better understanding of the nature of the APB and its effect on FYC courses

### 3      **CHAPTER THREE: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF THE ARISTOTELIAN PEDAGOGICAL BIAS**

This chapter investigates the nature of the Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB) that was identified in the previous chapter. From the investigation, I will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the ways in which Aristotelian rhetoric is currently represented in FYC courses. This will establish the premise for the goals of my next chapter which will use this diagnosis to elaborate on ways in which (Aristotelian) rhetoric-focused pedagogies can be improved. I use the same group of textbooks from my previous chapter to assess how Aristotelian rhetoric is represented in FYC textbooks to identify what textbooks say about Aristotle. This will provide insight on issues regarding the contextualization of Aristotelian rhetoric, potential issues that arise when relying on translated source texts, and the disciplinary and pedagogical issues present with the current use of the text. I will argue that textbooks that mention Aristotelian rhetoric typically fail to fully represent the complex, but potentially beneficial approach that Aristotle taught.

As stated in the second chapter of this dissertation, the APB does not have to act as a limiting influence on the way that FYC is taught. The goal of this chapter is to learn more about the nature of the bias and learn about its impact on the discipline and writing instruction. Furthermore, as Jan Swearigen states in *Octalog I*, “bias is value[able], its not always a bad thing” (29). Swearigen defends her claim by explaining that everything is biased, but these biases also show what is most valued by an author of a text. The APB is no exception to this. Crowley points out in “Composition is Not Rhetoric” that the focus on invention in FYC was an essential element of rhetoric and was arguably what made Corbett’s classical rhetoric-centered pedagogy

described in *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* stand out at the time of its publication. As the previous chapter demonstrated, however, 21<sup>st</sup> century FYC textbooks have almost completely eliminated any explicit mention of classical rhetors except for Aristotle. In this chapter, I will explore the way in which Aristotle is used to teach FYC. I will also identify several issues with the textbooks' representation of Aristotelian rhetoric.

In "Composition is Not Rhetoric," Crowley refers to Charles Baldwin's criticism of the way that modern western civilization handles rhetoric. Baldwin claims that the practice and teaching of rhetoric in western civilization has become sophistic in nature (4). Crowley downplays this statement and acknowledges arguments that such a claim by Baldwin is a reaction against the "shift in educational practice during his career," but does acknowledge Baldwin's argument that "rhetoric cannot thrive without invention, without the canon that ties it to social and public use" (Crowley). Although the concept of invention plays an important role in rhetoric's place in Compositions studies, Crowley may be too quick to discount Baldwin's claim about the teaching and practice of rhetoric becoming sophistic in nature.

Ellen Quandahl's 1986 article on "Reinterpreting Invention" unintentionally defends Baldwin's claim about rhetoric becoming sophistic in nature. Quandahl's argument that "a theory of invention assumes that composition is important in its own right [but]... a theory of interpretation assumes actors and events requiring explanation" (136) suggests that an exclusive focus on invention may contribute to the sophistic nature of rhetoric in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to which Baldwin is referring. If used in the FYC classroom, Quandahl's reading of Aristotle would present Aristotelian rhetoric in a way that is more aligned with its classical context and more fitting in a setting where pedagogies that use "new rhetoric" (Burke 203) are favored. Furthermore, if Quandahl's proposal about *On Rhetoric* is accepted as true, then this reading of

*On Rhetoric* would suggest that an invention-focused reading misrepresents the purpose of the text and the conditions under which the text's earliest audiences experienced it. As Aristotle suggests in *On Rhetoric*, a main purpose of rhetoric is to give a voice to what is true (1355a). Definitions of rhetoric that are identified as sophistic in nature, however, typically look at rhetoric as giving power to a speaker or writer. If Quandahl is correct in her assessment, then the need for a model for successful presentation can be interpreted as a sophistic act whereas reading *On Rhetoric* as a text about interpreting successful models of rhetoric maintains a level of separation from the reader.

In this chapter, I examine the representation of Aristotelian rhetoric in the same group of textbooks that are used in chapter two of this dissertation by taking a closer look at the pedagogy criteria in Dowie's model for rating textbooks. The study of FYC textbooks in the previous chapter approached Dowie's model for assessing and rating rhetoric textbooks more generally by using the range, emphasis, and pedagogy categories to demonstrate the presence of an Aristotelian Pedagogical Bias (APB). This study, however, takes an approach to assessing the collection of textbooks that focuses on the pedagogical and recommendations categories defined by Dowie. Although chapter two used Dowie's pedagogy criteria to contribute to a general understanding of pedagogies that were present in the selected FYC textbooks, this study only looks at the Aristotelian model of rhetoric and will assess the extent to which Aristotle's ideas from *On Rhetoric* are accurately presented.

Another limitation of Dowie's approach to assessing pedagogy in FYC textbooks is his emphasis and focus on the "process vs. product" model of categorizing pedagogical theories. As Quandahl states, this approach is overused (135). Although the process vs. product discussion is certainly relevant in this discussion, it is neither the only contributing factor nor does it

contribute to this investigation in the same way that it would contribute to a generic textbook review like Dowie describes. More important elements to consider within the realm of this study include the extent of Aristotelian rhetoric's use and the quality of its use. Contributors to quality include elements such as determining how accurately the rhetorical theory represented and whether it is properly contextualized.

After exploring the presence of Aristotelian-inspired pedagogical approaches in the selected FYC textbooks, this chapter will elaborate upon several concerning elements that potentially contribute to how Aristotle is represented in FYC classrooms. The first of these issues focuses on the translatability of the text by discussing scholarship that points out noteworthy scholarship that challenges current interpretations of relevant sections of *On Rhetoric*. Then, given the potential issues regarding the translation of Aristotle, this chapter will elaborate on how the incomplete or misrepresentation of Aristotelian rhetoric can contribute to the mis-contextualization of content in Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*. Finally, I will discuss the potential implications that the described nature and issues related to the APB have on Composition pedagogy and the instruction of future and current FYC instructors. These commentaries will demonstrate several ways in which the common misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Aristotelian rhetoric can negatively contribute to the effectiveness and success of rhetoric-focused pedagogies in the FYC classroom.

Unlike in the second chapter, implicit representations of Aristotelian rhetoric, unless they explicitly mention Aristotle by name within the text or refer to rhetorical concepts that are exclusively attributed to Aristotelian rhetoric, cannot be reliably used in this study. This is because of the findings in the second chapter regarding the relationship between Aristotle and the explicit mention of rhetoric. If the textbook author(s) do not mention Aristotle or the study of

rhetoric, any elements of Aristotelian rhetoric that are present cannot be confidently established as conscious attempts by the author(s) to represent Aristotelian rhetoric in their textbook.

Therefore, out of the ten textbooks included in chapter two's assessment, only the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument*, the seventh edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing*, the revised, electronic seventh edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing*, the Maricopia Community College District's *Horse of a Different Color: English Composition and Rhetoric*, Manning et. al.'s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry*, and Babin et. al.'s *The Word on College Reading and Writing* will be included in this study. Although all other textbooks arguably contain implicit representations of Aristotelian rhetoric, the authors' failure to mention the classical Greek rhetor by name or explicitly discuss any of his rhetorical theory using language that matches traditional discussions of Aristotelian rhetoric within the parameters of Composition studies disqualifies them from being beneficial to this study

### **3.1 What do Rhetoric-focused Textbooks Explicitly Say About Aristotle?**

In this section, I review the five textbooks, Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument*, the seventh edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing*, the revised, digital seventh edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing*, the Maricopia Community College District's *Horse of a Different Color: English Composition and Rhetoric*, and Manning et. al.'s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry* to provide a more in-depth look at the way in which Aristotelian rhetoric is explicitly presented and used. Dowie does not hesitate to point out that the application of pedagogical theory is a constantly ongoing activity throughout the text. Furthermore, in his study of 40 textbooks, Dowie produces strictly quantitative results that demonstrated that 40% of the textbooks included in the study were identified as having both process-oriented and product-oriented content (50);

however, he declines to provide much more details about the results from the pedagogy-related investigations conducted by participants in his study. In the context of the study taking place in this dissertation, this is problematic.

An important factor that cannot be confidently accounted for in quantitative research like Dowie's is the subjectivity that takes place in assessing textbook materials. Dowie admits this shortcoming at the end of his article (52) but fails to elaborate on the extent of the issue. His assessment of the presence and application of theories of rhetoric in the text are extremely limited. There is no distinguishing between explicit and implicit rhetoric models or theories nor is there any discussion about the quality or extent of the representation of these theories and models of rhetoric. Although Dowie discusses quality, he only does so in relation to a given theory of rhetoric and its relation to examples and assignments included in textbooks. This minimalistic approach is efficient but assumes that the theories and models of rhetoric are appropriately represented by textbook authors. Therefore, like in chapter two, combining the intentions of Dowie with the qualitative approach to assessing textbooks provided by Knoblauch in her article "A Textbook Argument: Definitions of Argument in Leading Composition Textbooks" allows for a more beneficial and relevant assessment of the textbooks of focus in this dissertation. Although Knoblauch's approach acknowledges explicit definitions of argument, it also acknowledges how those definitions are explicitly carried out throughout textbooks and assesses whether the textbook authors successfully carried out their goals of representing arguments and rhetoric as they intended. Using the qualitative approach to analyzing the presence of rhetorical theories embraced by Knoblauch, I will assess the selected textbooks mentioned above and identify how they represent Aristotelian rhetoric. This will set up the

pretense for the criticisms of how Aristotelian rhetoric is presented in FYC textbooks in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Lunsford et. al.'s use and representation of Aristotelian rhetoric is the most challenging textbook to assess in this study. The authors approach rhetoric and argument in a somewhat chaotic way. In several cases, they purposefully pick and choose parts of rhetorical theories or models of rhetoric to emphasize. Lunsford et. al. dedicate the entire first part of the book to discussing Aristotle's rhetorical appeals. Although the parts that discuss Aristotelian elements of rhetorical theory do so in a way that is morally aligned with Aristotelian rhetoric, the examples frequently alternate in nature to appeal to both academic and public audiences.

The most important part of Lunsford et. al.'s discussion related to Aristotelian rhetoric and its purpose in academic writing instruction takes place in the fourth chapter, "Arguments Based on Facts and Reason: Logos." Although the chapter is useful in its content, the examples demonstrate one of the potential limitations of the textbook; although Lunsford et. al. effectively demonstrates the use of logical appeals throughout the fourth chapter, the chapter's foundation emphasizes the current "post-fact" nature of the world (147-8). The statement and the examples of this problem that follow are accurate, but the chapter heavily relies on examples of logical appeals that do not reflect composition intended for academic settings. Furthermore, on page 149, the authors introduce and emphasize the importance of a writer being well-versed in the subject they are writing. The text then proceeds to discuss several crucial considerations when analyzing claims and references made by other scholars or journalists (150-74).

The physical edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing* by refers to Aristotle as the "father of western rhetoric" (51). The text then proceeds to break down Aristotle's definition of rhetoric and use it to provide what they allude to as Aristotle's conception of a rhetorical



situation (51-4). It then describes Aristotle's rhetorical appeals (62-7). Unlike Lunsford et. al. (who address the rhetorical appeals from both perspectives,) this textbook introduces the appeals largely from the perspective of an audience member who is analyzing an author or speaker's text or speech. After the rhetorical appeals, the authors then provide sections on the canons of rhetoric and the three branches of rhetoric, all of which appear to be attributed to Aristotle (67-9), though the text does acknowledge that later rhetors revised and republished the canons in more organized forms (67-8).

There are two major differences in the way that the physical and electronic editions of the *Guide to First Year Writing* textbooks discuss the topic of rhetoric. The first is the way in which Burkean rhetoric is addressed. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the electronic edition avoids misleading representations of Burkean rhetoric to which the physical copy falls victim. The second is the revision of the sections on the rhetorical situation and rhetorical appeals. Both are covered in the second chapter of the electronic version of the textbook titled "Rhetoric and First-Year Composition." Unlike the physical copy, the electronic version of the textbook separates the discussion of the rhetorical appeals that the writer/speaker uses in the composition process from the process of critical or rhetorical analysis, which is covered in the third chapter of the electronic textbook. Although the physical version of the text also discusses analysis in chapter three, the rhetorical appeals are presented in the physical text as tools that are applicable to both the writer and the audience.

*Horse of a Different Color: English Composition and Rhetoric* mentions Aristotle's name in two different contexts. The first is in the textbook's introduction where the authors provide a brief history of the study of writing (0.1.1). They state that "Aristotle thought that effective communication skills... can be learned and taught." Further down the page, the authors point out

that “Aristotle taught us that rhetoric isn’t just about winning arguments. Instead, rhetoric is the ability to choose from all the available means of persuasion at our disposal. Ultimately, it’s up to you to determine the best course of action, but rhetoric helps you make this a more educated process.” The first passage that emphasizes the communicative nature of Aristotelian and the quote that emphasizes the persuasive nature of rhetoric approaches Aristotle’s text from two different perspectives. The first quote approaches Aristotelian rhetoric through the lens of communicating effectively while the second quote adapts an argumentative perspective towards rhetoric. Although the second quote emphasizes the importance of process, the passage’s goal is to emphasize the end goal of persuading an audience by using “the best course of action” (0.1.1).

The second reference to Aristotle in *Horse of a Different Color* addresses the first three rhetorical appeals: ethos, pathos, and logos (15.2.1-2). The text introduces the rhetorical appeals as tools for both “writing or analyzing arguments” (15.2.1) similar to the physical copy of the *Guide to First Year Writing*. Although the authors do not address the writer’s application of the rhetorical appeals at the same time in which they address analysis and fallacies, the section’s heading which addresses the two actions as one in the same presents a situation in which the uneducated reader could easily conclude that the rhetorical appeals are also tools intended for analyzing claims and logic. At the end of this section, the authors briefly explain the importance of audience (15.2.1) and the establishment of a purpose/thesis (15.2.1-2). Although neither of these are connected to the textbook’s discussion on Aristotle, they mark what Dowie would identify as a switch from a process-focused pedagogical theory to a product-focused theory. The authors managed to discuss the rhetorical appeals in a way that emphasized their contributions to the process of invention, but it is worth noting that upon the switch from an explicit focus on

Aristotelian rhetorical concepts to material that is implicitly connected at best, the text switched from emphasizing writing as a process to writing as a product.

In Manning et. al.'s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry*, the introduction to the section on the writing process clearly draws inspiration from the same source material that *Horse of a Different Color* did, as the same passages "Aristotle thought that effective communication... can be learned and taught" and "Aristotle taught us that rhetoric isn't just about winning arguments. Instead, rhetoric is the ability to determine all the available means of persuasion at our disposal. Ultimately, it's up to you to guess the best course of action, but rhetoric helps you make this a more educated process" (1.2.1) appear in this text as well. This text, however, does not contain any references to Aristotle's rhetorical appeals like *Horse of a Different Color* does. Since there is no further mention of rhetoric (other than the mention of rhetorical situations, which the authors do not attribute to Aristotle like other textbooks in this study do,) the mention of rhetoric at the start of the text, but failure to peruse this pedagogical approach in any further capacity raises the question of why it was mentioned at all.

Although Aristotle's name is not mentioned in the first part of Babin et. al.'s *The Word on College Writing* where rhetoric is introduced, the rhetorical appeals are mentioned in the textbook's section on "Analyzing Content and Rhetoric" (1.3.4). In this section, readers are provided with a list of questions to use in analyzing texts. Several of the questions make either partial or full use of Aristotle's three main rhetorical appeals as tools for analyzing a text. Aristotle is, however, directly mentioned in the second part of the textbook in the section on appealing to an audience (2.6.3). This explicit description of the rhetorical appeals' use to writers is, however, rather brief and does not contain any written examples for readers to reference. The

text does, however, provide an embedded video and a reference to another text that provides examples of the application of the rhetorical appeals.

### 3.2 On the Translatability of Rhetoric

The remainder of this chapter will focus on matters regarding the interpretation of *On Rhetoric*. This section identifies several considerations about the translatability of *On Rhetoric* that can potentially affect current understandings and representations of Aristotelian rhetoric in textbooks. These concerns regarding the translated state of *On Rhetoric* range in significance. The first and most critical concern is Ellen Quandahl's reinterpretation of invention, but this does not diminish concerns regarding edits and revisions to the manuscript that occurred during transcriptions, the challenges scholars face when attempting to translate classical Greek texts into 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> century English, or the affect that historical figures have had on our understanding of Aristotelian rhetoric.

A first argument sparking concern regarding the translation of *On Rhetoric* is Quandahl's proposal that the traditional understanding of Aristotelian invention should be reinterpreted. In her article "Aristotle's Rhetoric: Reinterpreting Invention," Quandahl provides an approach to interpreting *On Rhetoric* in a way that contextualizes Aristotelian rhetoric as a model that ultimately allows for the Aristotelian rhetoric model to be classified as what Burke would refer to as a "new rhetoric" model. Her criticism of Cicero's influence on traditional interpretations that the topics mentioned in *On Rhetoric* make up Aristotle's system of invention (135). She then argues:

The *koinoi*, then, are not *loci* or common places in which to look for arguments, nor are they commonplaces or set premises. They are the interpretation so often embedded in

commonplaces and in figures of speech and thought. To identify them in the texts of others is the beginning of interpretation (reading) and also the beginning of composing about these texts. (135)

Quandahl concludes her article by proposing that Aristotelian rhetoric be reinterpreted as a theory of interpretation rather than a theory of invention. She refers to literary theorists to argue that the act of interpreting requires a context of assumptions and interpretations are “in one sense, a representation or translation of those assumptions” whereas invention is a more neutral act. She further contrasts interpretation and invention by pointing out that invention “presumes that one has little or nothing to say about which one is required to speak, while a theory of interpretation assumes a non-trivial problem.” Furthermore, she suggests that “a theory of invention assumes that composing is important in its own right...[but] a theory of interpretation assumes actors and events requiring explanation” (135-6). Given the problematic textual history of Aristotle’s personal library, such a reimagination of Aristotelian rhetorical theory justifies a need for the reconsideration of how Aristotelian rhetoric is categorized within the discipline.

Reading Aristotelian rhetoric as a theory centered around interpretation rather than invention resolves criticisms attached to classical models of rhetoric by anti-traditionalists. Furthermore, it accomplishes this while accounting for Aristotle’s other works. If this reading of Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric* is accepted as accurate, then the persuasion-focused representation of Aristotelian rhetoric in many FYC textbooks becomes misleading and possibly inaccurate. Furthermore, Welch’s criticism of textbooks that continue to rely on traditional instructional pedagogies and theories while textbook authors continue to refrain from making wider use of newer theories and scholarship within the discipline, or at least theories that can be classified as “new rhetoric,” becomes even more relevant (270-1). Such an interpretation would also arguably

require an entirely new reading and contextualization of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* as current understandings and arguments are made under different foundational understanding of the text.

A second translation-related concern worthy of consideration is the challenge in determining the accuracy of the version of *On Rhetoric* that we currently possess. Since Aristotle never published *On Rhetoric*, the sources from which reliable copies of the text can exist are very limited. Furthermore, scholars such as Paul Brandes argue that *On Rhetoric* is an expanded version of Aristotle's original text (485). Considering scholars' inability to determine exactly what materials were used in the construction of Tyrannion and Apellicon's versions of *On Rhetoric* (Brandes 487) and Cicero's potential influence on how we interpret *On Rhetoric* (Quandahl 135), it is hard to confidently state that the current version of Aristotle's text accurately resembles the version he referenced for his lectures. Kennedy also points out that several signs of attempted revisions to the text exist (23). Although Kennedy proposes these were made by Aristotle throughout his lifetime and references Werner Jaeger's *Aristotle, Fundamentals of the History of His Development* to defend this claim, there is little evidence to suggest that revisions weren't made by one of Aristotle's contemporaries after his death. A counterargument to consider, however is that, given the esoteric nature of *On Rhetoric*, anyone who had access to the *On Rhetoric* manuscript in the years immediately following Aristotle's death would have been very familiar with Aristotle's views on rhetoric and would not have (knowingly) made any revisions that would have drastically altered the text. This is, however, irrelevant if Quandahl's claims about Cicero are accepted as true.

Furthermore, as Copeland points out in her book on rhetoric, hermeneutics, and translation, "the terms of Roman translation theory are very complex" (10). Students of grammar were taught that translation represented a form of commentary whereas students of rhetoric

practiced translation was used to teach style and structure so students could imitate famous and successful speeches (10-11). There are issues that could result from either theory of translation. If translators' primary focus was learning and imitating Aristotle's structure, then they could more easily grammatical errors that could affect the interpretation of the text. If the translator(s) emphasized grammar and commentary throughout the text, this provides at least two potential issues. If structure was important to the text being translated, then a student of grammar translating the text is less likely to account and properly represent these structural elements. Secondly, their commentary on the text is more likely to influence how readers will interpret and possibly re-translate the text into another language. It is more likely that the copy present-day scholars reference is a copy from a grammarian given that medieval copies of *On Rhetoric* were produced from an Arabic gloss and commentary on the text. This concern along with Brandes' argument about the expanded form of *On Rhetoric* compared to Aristotle's original version presents the possibility that the version scholars reference in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is noticeably different from Aristotle's copy from which he used to lecture.

A more specific issue regarding issues with the translation of *On Rhetoric* includes the commentary on rhetoric, truth, and justice (1355a 21-4). In existing transcriptions of *On Rhetoric*, a combination of conflicting punctuation marks complicate the grammatical interpretation of 1355a, 21-4 of *On Rhetoric*, which discusses rhetoric's relationship to truth and justice. To solve the frustrating issue, Grimaldi relied on other passages in *On Rhetoric* where Aristotle emphasized the connection between rhetoric and the truth that is mentioned at 1335b 10, 1355a 17-8, and 1355a 31-8 to provide context for interpreting and translating 1355a 21-4 (Grimaldi 173). Grimaldi's translation of this passage is currently most popular grammatical interpretation of the passage as it corrected translations and commentaries on the text made by

Aldophus Roemer, Antonio Tovar, Leonardus Spengel, and even E.M. Cope (Grimaldi 174) and has since been adapted in Kennedy's translation of *On Rhetoric* (35). Although it is minor in the grand scheme of Book I of *On Rhetoric* considering Aristotle's repetitive mention of the connection between truth and justice and rhetoric, the revision that changed a centuries-old interpretation of this passage of *On Rhetoric* demonstrates the extreme caution and attention to detail that must be taken when translating these texts. Grammatical and mechanical mistakes can noticeably alter the meaning of a given passage. Furthermore, if one passage is misinterpreted and then mistranslated, scholars working from the translated edition of the text can identify what they perceive as inconsistencies within the text that are not truly present.

Another example that demonstrates the challenging nature of the task of translating classical Greek words into present-day English in a way that represents them accurately is Roger Cherry's commentary on the relationship between *ethos* and *persona*. Looking first at *ethos*, Cherry points out that the word (ἠθος) is derived from the Greek word εθος, which translates to present-day English as "custom or habit" (Cherry 387). Scholars can connect the two words using Aristotle's explanation of ἠθικη, which refers to moral or ethical virtue, in Book II of *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is crucial to understand during the process of translating sections on *ethos* because, in book II of *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle identifies three characteristics that give a speaker credibility: *phronesis*, *arete*, and *eunoia* (1378a 5, Kennedy 112). *Phronesis* is generally accepted to translate to practical wisdom and *eunoia* is typically interpreted as a speaker's (or a writer's) good will towards the audience. *Arete*, however, carries several meanings in classical Greek. The two most relevant and commonly accepted are "virtue" and "good moral character." These differences, according to Cherry, contribute to noticeable differences in translations of *On Rhetoric* (387-9). The matter is further complicated given that,



even though Aristotle is rather clear about his definition of *ethos*, he fails to provide the same clarity for the word *arete* and is documented as using it differently throughout *On Rhetoric* and his other written works.

Furthermore, Cherry also elaborates on the etymologies of *ethos* and *persona* which further complicates the task of identifying the words as synonyms. Not only does *persona* extend from literary (rather than rhetorical tradition) (Cherry 389-90), but the etymology of *persona* is also extremely complex and filled with contradictions and inconsistencies (Elliot 21). Although Cherry eventually concludes that characterizing *ethos* and *persona* as binary opposites is overzealous, he stands by his initial proposal that the two should be distinguished from each other and one should not necessarily stand in for the other given the different traditions from which they originated (Cherry 402). Although Cherry does not speak against both terms being used by both literary scholars and rhetoricians, he cautions against their interchangeable use. Cherry even argues that *ethos* is the more robust of the two terms and that *persona* does not accurately and comprehensively represent *ethos* (402-3).

### **3.3 Contextual Issues with Aristotelian Rhetoric in FYC**

This section addresses contextual issues with the way in which Aristotelian rhetoric is presented in FYC textbooks based on the results of this chapter's textbook assessment and the considerations about the challenges regarding translations of *On Rhetoric*. These concerns include a misunderstanding about the actual nature of Aristotelian rhetoric, fragmented or partial representations of Aristotelian rhetoric, the improper use of rhetorical appeals as tools for analysis, and a failure to move beyond the Justified True Belief approach to identifying knowledge.

As demonstrated in the first chapter of this dissertation, identifying which values contribute to Aristotelian rhetoric expand far beyond the contents of *On Rhetoric*. To properly interpret and understand *On Rhetoric* to the best extent possible, knowledge about Aristotle's ideas about concepts mentioned, but not explained in the text such as truth and knowledge are essential. Furthermore, understanding that Aristotle's opinions about rhetoric likely depended on the audience with which he was discussing the matter and how rhetoric was being used. As Grimaldi points out in his revised translation of the 1355a 21-4 section of *On Rhetoric*, if the practice of rhetoric results in untruth and injustice prevailing, then rhetoric should be frowned upon (176).

It should also be recognized that Aristotle's study of rhetoric was not composed as a criticism of Plato's ideas about rhetoric as the physical copy of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing* suggests (67). As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, the idea of Plato possessing a dislike for rhetoric largely stems from his text, *Gorgias*, a Socratic dialogue in which Socrates discusses the topic of sophistry at a dinner. Although this negative opinion of rhetoric is echoed in *Protagoras* and *Sophist*, it should also be recognized that these works are identified as exoteric works (Poster 221-2), which are meant for a public audience who lacked the foundational understanding of sophistry and how to differentiate it from true, idealistic rhetoric. In *Phaedrus*, however, Plato describes an approach to rhetoric similar to Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* as they both rely on idealistic conditions for the successful practice of rhetoric. Although the specific comparison of Aristotle to Plato is not required to fully understand Aristotelian rhetoric, it can emphasize the flexibility and relativity of rhetoric's interpretation and use.

A second, more frequently occurring issue is the partial or fragmented representation of Aristotelian rhetoric in FYC textbook to benefit textbook authors' intended approach to teaching FYC. Fully representing and emphasizing every element of *On Rhetoric* to the same extent that Aristotle intended is impossible given the length of the original text and the additional needed context needed to fully appreciate it. A frequent trend of authors whose FYC textbooks are included in this study is to pick and choose elements of Aristotelian rhetoric to use. None of these textbooks provide a full, comprehensive, concise description of Aristotelian rhetoric. Although some rely on Aristotle's ideas more than others and an explanation of the complete Aristotelian text is not needed, it is important to adequately contextualize tools they are borrowing from Aristotle. Despite Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* possessing traits of both persuasion-focused and identification-focused models of rhetoric, scholarship has, with few exceptions, read *On Rhetoric* as a handbook for writing a persuasive speech or text.

An example of this issue is Lunsford et. al.'s explanation of the rhetorical appeals in the first part of *Everything's an Argument*. Despite the authors' definition of rhetoric being "the art, theory, and practice of ethical communication" (13), their presentation of the rhetorical appeals is more reflective of a persuasive approach to argumentation and less reflective of a communicative one, which poorly reflects their definition of rhetoric. The discussion of the rhetorical appeals also fails to recognize the back-and-forth nature of communication in which audiences and writers/speakers can more easily engage today. This mixing of these persuasion-focused elements that are borrowed from the Aristotelian rhetoric model without recontextualizing or providing further contextualization so that they better compliment the definition of rhetoric the textbook provides negatively effects the consistency of the textbook. Although this is unlikely a matter of concern for Lunsford et. al. given the variety of models of

rhetoric they borrow from and reference throughout the text, it is worth noting that such an issue arguably undermines the new-rhetoric mentality advertised at the beginning of the textbook and pushes students towards a more argumentative conceptualization of rhetoric. This criticism is not new to Lunsford et. al. as Knoblauch draws attention to the same issue in the fifth edition of *Everything's an Argument* and argues that presenting rhetoric in such a way limits its contexts to persuasion-focused conversations is a disservice to students (263).

Another issue regarding the use of Aristotle's rhetorical appeals is their use as tools to analyze a speaker. This approach is mentioned or alluded to in Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument* (throughout the first part of the textbook), the physical edition of the *Guide to First Year Writing* (66), Babin et. al.'s *The Word on College Reading and Writing* (3.4.1), and *Horse of a Different Color* (7.2.1). Although the rhetorical appeals could be applied as tools in discourse where back-and-forth communication occurs and the role of the speaker/writer and the audience switch, Aristotle presents them as tools for the speaker. Furthermore, the hypothetical situation of conversational discourse is not acknowledged in any the textbooks identified above. Despite several of the textbooks such as *Everything's an Argument* and the physical copy of the *Guide to First year Writing* addressing the rhetorical appeals from both the perspective of the writer and the audience, this does not change the purpose or capabilities of the rhetorical appeals' as described by Aristotle.

Although Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument* undoubtedly provides the most detailed and comprehensive discussion on the analysis of arguments in this study. It includes two chapters dedicated to the assessment of arguments (one on fallacies and another on rhetorical analysis) and emphasize the importance of knowledge (131). Despite the extent to this discussion, not even Lunsford et. al. provide what Aristotle would likely consider an adequate

approach to analyzing arguments to establish truths and acquire knowledge. In the NCTE's Principles for Sound Writing Instruction, the eighth principle emphasizes an instructor's need to support learning, engagement, and critical thinking in courses that span across the curriculum in FYC. Although Lunsford et. al. discuss the requirement of possessing knowledge on a subject to write about it, the textbook proceeds to provide what can essentially be described as a list of different ways to think about an argument. Although the text provides helpful tools for analyzing arguments and texts, it fails to encourage students to critically look at materials or claims on the same level that Aristotle's approach to determining truths and acquiring knowledge does. This is likely because most representations of Aristotelian rhetoric likely rely on the contents of *On Rhetoric* for their discussion. The most significant passage on the subject reads:

χρήσιμος δέ ἐστιν ἡ ῥητορικὴ διὰ τε τὸ φύσει εἶναι κρείττω τὰληθῆ καὶ τὰ δίκαια τῶν ἐναντίων, ὥστε ἐὰν μὴ κατὰ τὸ προσῆκον αἱ κρίσεις γίνωνται, ἀνάγκη δι' αὐτῶν ἠττᾶσθαι, τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶν ἄξιον ἐπιτιμήσεως, ἔτι δὲ πρὸς ἐνίους οὐδ' εἰ τήν. (Cope 1.1.12)

which translates to:

but rhetoric is useful, [first] because the true and the just are by nature stronger than their opposites, so that if judgments are not made in the right way [the true and the just] are necessarily defeated [by their opposites]. (Kennedy 35)

Although Aristotle acknowledges the significance of possessing truths and being able to identify them, he does not elaborate on his process for determining truths and acquiring knowledge in *On Rhetoric*. Since Aristotle only briefly addressed this matter, unless FYC instructors and textbook authors have a thorough knowledge of Aristotle's collected works, it is unsurprising that this passage of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* receives minimal treatment. Furthermore, although all of the textbooks observed in this chapter (except for Manning et. al.'s *Remix: Expression and Inquiry*)

discuss ways in which a reader can determine what is untrue, none of them associate the process of discovering and identifying truths as a task associated with rhetoric. If an explanation on identifying what is true is given, it appears in sections that focus on conducting research. Even though these sections on research present students with the process for discovering and using scholarly, credible sources, they rarely identify at what point students no longer need to conduct research to confirm an argument or statement made by a writer or speaker to confirm its truthful or untruthful nature. The only exception to this criticism is Lunsford et. al.'s *Everything's an Argument*.

As Edmund Gettier proposes in his groundbreaking article, the easiest way to demonstrate the problematic nature of this issue is to point out the noteworthy differences between Aristotelian and Platonic approaches to identifying truth and what is quantifiable as knowledge. In his article "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?," Gettier mentions in his notes that Plato's reflection on acquiring knowledge is alluded to in *Theaetetus* when Socrates says to Theatetus, "οὐκοῦν τοῦτό γε βραχείας σκέψεως: τέχνη γάρ σοι ὅλη σημαίνει μὴ εἶναι ἐπιστήμην αὐτό" (201a 4), which translates to "Well, then, this at least calls for slight investigation; for you have a whole profession which declares that true opinion is not knowledge" (Fowler) and again in *Meno* (98). Using these references, Gettier proposes a potential limitation of Plato's Justified True Belief (JTB) approach to acquiring knowledge. In summary, JTB suggests that if a statement is true and an individual possesses an adequate justification for believing that a claim is true, then they possess knowledge of that truth. Gettier proceeds to provide the following example:

Suppose that Smith and Jones have applied for a certain job. And suppose that Smith has strong evidence for the following conjunctive proposition:

(d) Jones is the man who will get the job, and Jones has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith's evidence for (d) might be that the president of the company assured him that Jones would in the end be selected, and that he, Smith, had counted the coins in Jones's pocket ten minutes ago. Proposition (d) entails:

(e) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket.

Let us suppose that Smith sees the entailment from (d) to (e), and accepts (e) on the grounds of (d), for which he has strong evidence. In this case, Smith is clearly justified in believing that (e) is true.

But imagine, further, that unknown to Smith, he himself, not Jones, will get the job. And, also, unknown to Smith, he himself has ten coins in his pocket. Proposition (e) is then true, though proposition (d), from which Smith inferred (e), is false. In our example, then, all of the following are true: (i) (e) is true, (ii) Smith believes that (e) is true, and (iii) Smith is justified in believing that (e) is true. But it is equally clear that Smith does not know that (e) is true; for (e) is true in virtue of the number of coins in Smith's pocket, while Smith does not know how many coins are in Smith's pocket, and bases his belief in (e) on a count of the coins in Jones's pocket, whom he falsely believes to be the man who will get the job (Gettier 122).

In other words, although a statement is true and an individual possesses a justification for their belief in that true statement, this does not guarantee that they possess knowledge of that true statement if their justified belief is false.

Although he was a student of Plato and eventually taught at Plato's academy, Aristotle's texts exemplify a more complex approach to identifying knowledge. Aristotle, who alludes to his stance on knowledge in both *Metaphysics* (995a24) and *Posterior Analytics* (100b9), agrees with Plato in the sense that knowledge is of what is true and this truth must be justified in a way which shows that it must be true" (Folse). As Folse points out, modern approaches to ancient philosophy typically promote poorly generalized interpretations of philosophical texts and wrongly depict Plato and Aristotle as opposites. He also emphasizes the major difference between Aristotle and Plato is that Aristotle required a secondary demonstration of the truth that did not rely on reduction (Folse).

Although this approach to knowledge acquisition does not exempt its users from potentially falling into the same trap as Plato's JTB approach, Aristotle's conceptualization of scientific knowledge requires further verification before accepting claims as true. Aristotle's explanation of a proto-scientific method for determining truth and acquiring knowledge, however, is not described in *On Rhetoric*. Although he mentions knowledge in *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle does not define it nor does he provide a list of criteria for identifying it. Kennedy points out in a footnote on the first page of his translation to *On Rhetoric* that "Neither dialectic nor rhetoric assumes knowledge of any subject" (30). As pointed out in the first chapter of this dissertation, this suggests that Aristotle's students of rhetoric were in the advanced stages of their studies.



Although attempts, such as Lehrer and Paxson's proposal of undefeated-JTB, were made to discredit Gettier, their criticisms received little attention due to Aristotle's approach to identifying knowledge. Aristotle's approach was less conditional on the phrasing and adjectives used to explain knowledge acquisition. It also emphasizes the importance of multiple forms of verification of a statement before accepting it as true. Although this is addressed in some textbook in the sections that cover research, the process of assessing, identifying, and acquiring truth and knowledge is rarely connected to rhetorical theory. This also results in a failure to emphasize the tedious task that knowledge acquisition can become when working with unfamiliar information and newly discovered research.

### **3.4 Pedagogical Disciplinary Issues Involved With the APB**

This section discusses how issues related to the APB complicate Rhetoric & Composition studies at the disciplinary level. As mentioned in the second chapter, Taggart et. al.'s "there is no single correct way to teach writing" (1) mentality demonstrates one of the greatest strengths of the FYC course. This strength, however, can also be what makes working comfortably within the discipline of writing studies feel impossible. With a constantly increasing list of pedagogical theories, an endless number of definitions of rhetoric, and current theories about rhetoric's place in the FYC classroom conflicting with rhetoric's representation in many FYC textbooks, preparing new and future instructors to teach FYC in a way that avoids the issues identified in previous sections is a daunting task.

The factor that arguably contributes the most to this issue is the impossible decision of selecting pedagogies to emphasize that instructors of Composition Pedagogy courses face in teaching their class. The Composition Pedagogy course is usually either designed to prepare

graduate students to teach FYC or as a support-focused course to aid graduate students during their first semester of teaching the course. After students enrolled in the graduate-level course understand the fundamental goals of the institution's FYC course(s), pedagogical approaches to teaching writing are a common topic covered in the course. If the Composition Pedagogy course emphasizes traditional approaches to teaching FYC that, except for Lunsford et. al., are what make up a significant majority of the FYC textbooks included in this study, students face a course centered around argumentative rhetoric that likely misrepresents Aristotelian rhetoric. As Welch points out, there are new pedagogical approaches that embrace the "new rhetoric" mentality of Burke that much better align with the discipline's values about what successful rhetoric looks like (269-70). Regardless, fragmented representations of Aristotle's model persist. If Composition Pedagogy instructors dedicate time to preparing future and new FYC instructors to teach the course using Aristotelian rhetoric in its proper context, then the issue may potentially disappear as new FYC instructors obtain experience in the classroom and begin to construct their own textbooks to publish and use. Furthermore, if the Quandahl reading of Aristotle is taught, then instructors can use Aristotelian rhetoric as a starting point for discussing other models that meet Burke's qualifications to be classified as "new rhetoric."

Finally, the wide array of scholars and graduate students tasked with teaching FYC adds another layer of difficulty to teaching traditional rhetorical theory. Although graduate students specializing in Rhetoric and Composition typically possess a superior knowledge to other English graduate students specializing in Creative Writing and Literary Studies, even not all rhetoricians or compositionists possess a thorough background in classical rhetoric that qualifies them to address the problems identified in previous sections of this chapter. Although promoting new rhetoric models to FYC textbooks sounds like an appealing solution, Lunsford et. al.'s text

demonstrates the challenge of presenting new rhetoric models in a way that emphasizes identification and not argumentation.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

Although the APB is not inherently problematic, the way in which Aristotelian rhetoric has been and still is represented in FYC textbooks contributes to several disciplinary concerns. Scholars such as Dowie and Welch have, since the 1980's, pushed for the field of Rhetoric and Composition studies to embrace models of rhetoric representative of Burke's theory of new rhetoric. The implementation of such models, however, has experienced limited success. When rhetoric is mentioned in FYC textbooks a classical, argumentative model is typically what is presented to readers. This approach that was inspired by Corbett refuses to disappear. A major deviation from Corbett's initial model, however, is that FYC textbooks that make use of classical rhetoric seem to only emphasize Aristotelian rhetoric if they mention rhetoric explicitly. These representations of Aristotelian rhetoric, however, are always partial and are typically poorly contextualized. Furthermore, regardless of the poor representations of classical rhetoric provided in recently published FYC textbooks, Rhetoric and Composition scholarship has advocated for the use of theories of rhetoric that qualify by Burke's standards as new rhetoric.

With new FYC textbooks being released every year and considering that digital textbooks can be quickly revised, revising how textbooks present Aristotelian rhetoric is a first, practically accomplishable way of resolving the misrepresentation of classical rhetoric in FYC. Furthermore, classical rhetoric will also have to embrace a new responsibility that it did not bear upon Corbett's resurrection of its use in FYC: a method for acquiring knowledge. As Gettier demonstrated, current models of classical (Aristotelian) rhetoric used in FYC typically are not

equipped with the detail or supplementary material to successfully accomplish this task.

Although textbooks' sections on research skills can partially aid in this process, a more in-depth explanation about the important process of assessing information for its accuracy or truthfulness.

Another issue that will be addressed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation is how evolving rhetorical situations affect the effectiveness on models of rhetoric. As Corbett points out in his introduction to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Corbett points out that the practice and nature of rhetoric is always changing (vii). Although the model Corbett originally proposed in the first edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* and the fragmented representation of Aristotelian rhetoric that FYC textbooks eventually adapted from Corbett may have been sufficient models of rhetoric throughout the remainder of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the (relatively) new practice of digital composition justifies a reassessment of how rhetoric is used. Furthermore, given the problematic, partial representation of Aristotelian rhetoric that developed from Corbett's pedagogical theory, it is also worth investigating potential explanations of what contributed to recent FYC textbook's fragmented representation of Aristotelian rhetoric.

#### 4 CHAPTER FOUR: TOWARD A NEW ARISTOTELIAN RHETORIC

This chapter explores the ability to read Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* as a guide to interpretation instead of invention. I argue that, although scholars such as Corbett (1965), Connors (1984), and Crowley (1994) resurrected the use of classical rhetoric in the First-Year Composition (FYC) classroom, current representations of their pedagogy in FYC textbooks do not meet the needs of current (early 21<sup>st</sup> century) FYC courses. As demonstrated in the third chapter, this is partly because recently published FYC textbooks do not use classical rhetoric in the same way that Corbett did in his 1965 text. Instead of pulling from multiple rhetors, most textbooks rely primarily on an abbreviated version of the Aristotelian rhetoric model and disregard Corbett's references to Cicero, Quintilian, and other rhetors. A potential explanation for this is the way in which the expectations of the course have changed. FYC instructors at the time of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student's* publication did not have to account for the same responsibilities of current FYC instructors who are expected to teach writing, critical thinking, research skills, and occasionally digital literacy.

Furthermore, if current FYC courses approach rhetoric with an emphasis on invention, for which Corbett, Crowley, and Connors advocate, a sufficient model for composing an essay may be present, but the expectations of teaching students about critical thinking and analysis are frequently underrepresented. This chapter therefore concludes this dissertation by establishing the significance of Kenneth Burke's advocacy for embracing new rhetoric models and proposing an alternative reading of *On Rhetoric* that does this while also considering challenges that writing instructors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century FYC classroom.

#### 4.1 How Composition has Changed

In her essay, “Composition is not Rhetoric,” Sharon Crowley demonstrates the complicated relationship between rhetoric and FYC. Throughout her essay, she acknowledges that Corbett, D’Angelo, Winterowd, and Baldwin attempted to preserve the traditional, historic nature of rhetoric’s presence in writing instruction, but the relationship that the two currently share is more political. She then claims that texts such as Corbett’s *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* typically only sees use in graduate-level classrooms. In her criticism of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century rhetoric-focused FYC course, Crowley also provides a “stipulative” definition of rhetoric stating that:

any theoretical discourse that is entitled to be called ‘rhetoric’ must at minimum conceive of rhetoric as an art of invention, that is, it must give a central place to the systematic discovery and investigation of the available arguments in a given situation (Crowley).

This definition that emphasizes invention and includes the discovery and investigation into available arguments is the foundation on which most classical rhetoric-focused pedagogies in FYC appear are built.

Although this invention-focused model proved successful since its introduction in the 1960’s, the ways and places in which writing takes place has changed and the nature of the FYC course has evolved. One acknowledgement of this can be found in the changes to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)’s Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing. The first draft of principles and standards was developed at the 1989 Conference on College Composition and Communication conference and then published in the *College Composition and Communication* journal that October. The publication served as a document intended to argue the legitimacy of Rhetoric & Composition studies, discuss the role of different types of faculty in

ensuring that a quality education is provided (331-5) in FYC, and the physical environmental conditions needed for quality writing education to take place (335-6). The most recent version of the list of principles was published in 2015 and addresses a wider range of issues regarding college-level writing instruction. Although the statement by the NCTE still emphasizes a need conditions for writing instruction that are reasonable and equitable, the list of guiding principles has expanded to cover eight general issues. They insist that sound writing instruction:

1. Emphasizes the rhetorical nature of writing,
2. Considers the needs of real audiences,
3. Recognizes writing as a social act,
4. Enables students to analyze and practice with a variety of genres,
5. Recognizes writing processes as iterative and complex,
6. Depends upon frequent, timely, and context-specific feedback from an experienced postsecondary instructor,
7. Emphasizes relationships between writers and technologies, and
8. Supports learning, engagement, and critical thinking in courses across the curriculum (NCTE).

As the list demonstrates, the discipline of Rhetoric & Composition studies has drastically evolved its stance on what qualifies as sound, high-quality writing instruction. As the second and third chapters of this dissertation demonstrate, the way in which classical rhetoric is used in FYC has also noticeably changed. Cicero and Quintilian are given little-to-no explicit mention in most recently published FYC textbooks and the typical model of Aristotelian rhetoric that textbook authors published is either incomplete or poorly compiled so that important elements such as the

explanation of truth identification and knowledge acquisition are not discussed in a rhetorical context.

Furthermore, the NCTE does not explain their definition of critical thinking in their list of principles. The need for FYC instructors to support students' development of critical thinking skills about subjects across the curriculum is arguably the most drastic change in the list compared to the first publication of the principles. Although there is no explanation for what is expected of instructors here, the phrasing of the principle does provide some material to draw assumptions on how the NCTE defines critical thinking. Since the ability to think critically is not specific to any discipline, the eighth principle's emphasis on courses "across the curriculum" appears meaningless at first. The emphasis on critical thinking "across the curriculum" could possess meaning regarding the principle's emphasis on support for learning and engagement, but the principle should then read "...supports learning and engagement in courses across the curriculum and critical thinking skills." Therefore, the principle is likely meant to emphasize critical thinking as a task that requires using other/multiple disciplines to approach a singular topic.

The challenge of defining "critical thinking" is not, however, exclusive to the discipline of writing studies. Despite most curriculums' identification of critical thinking as an intended learning outcome, there is little-to-no consensus on an actual definition of the term. As Paul et. al. point out in their government funded study of teachers preparing for instruction on critical thinking, 89% of participants stated that they emphasized critical thinking in their instruction, but only 12% could provide a definition for it (19). Stassen et. al. provide the definition "the creation of arguments, the application of theory to new settings, and the identification of evidence to support those arguments or assertions" (137) which was developed by a committee of faculty at



University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Although this definition is arguably incomplete as it fails to consider evidence that contradicts arguments or assertions, it sufficiently demonstrates a central focus on the identification, assessment, and use of information to create and interact with arguments.

On a related note, the 2015 edition of “Principles for Sound Writing Instruction” also acknowledge the need to emphasize the relationship(s) between writers and technologies (in the seventh principle.) Although the 1989 list acknowledges the need to consider the physical conditions under which writing takes place, the way in which writing takes places has changed so drastically that a separate principle to specifically account for technological-related elements is justifiable. Writing is now a largely digital task and, because of this, physical representations of texts are no longer guaranteed to exist in a physical environment. To be able to satisfy this sixth principle that draw students’ awareness to a writer’s relationship with technologies, FYC instructors must possess some amount of digital literacy.

As Yorem Eshet-Alkali and Yair Amichai-Hamburger point out, however, digital literacy encompasses more than the ability to operate and navigate digital spaces (421). They reference Eshet’s framework that acknowledges five “digital literacy skills.” One of these skills includes information literacy, which they define as an ability to assess and identify subjective, biased, and false information (422-3). Given the observable failures of FYC textbooks to address critical thinking or the assessment of information in relation to Aristotelian rhetoric, this suggests that a concerning amount of recently published FYC textbooks are unequipped to support the sixth and seventh principles for sound writing instruction identified by the NCTE.

## 4.2 Comparing Readings of *On Rhetoric*

Regarding the historical representation of Aristotelian rhetoric, there are at least three noteworthy ways that make significant impacts on the implications and usability of the model of rhetoric. The first reflects the traditional understanding pulled from *On Rhetoric* by philosophers, rhetoricians, and compositionists after the Middle Ages. The second interpretation reflects Aristotelian rhetoric as it is often explicitly represented in FYC textbooks. The third interpretation, which was initially proposed by Ellen Quandahl, describes *On Rhetoric* as a guide to interpretation rather than invention. Quandahl argues that traditional, invention-focused readings of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* are misinterpretations and are products of Classical Roman rhetors' reception of the text and not Aristotle himself (135). Furthermore, although Corbett and other rhetoricians and compositionists creditable with aiding the establishment of classical rhetoric as a valid pedagogical approach to teaching FYC may have intended for classical rhetoric to be used to teach writing using a Burkean, new-rhetoric mindset, their intentions, as demonstrated in chapter three of this dissertation, are often poorly reflected in 21<sup>st</sup> century FYC textbooks.

What has, according to Crowley, come to be known as the traditional interpretation of Aristotelian rhetoric can be summarized as a persuasive-focused theory of discourse in which a speaker or writer makes use of the rhetorical appeals to persuade an audience of a given argument. A successful traditional reading of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* acknowledges the text as one of Aristotle's esoteric, private works that was never intended to be published in the current, unrevised and possibly unfinished form. It also acknowledges that factors such as the arrangement, style, and way in which a text is delivered to an intended audience can also significantly impact the persuasiveness of a text.

A successful traditional reading of *On Rhetoric*, such as the one in *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (19), acknowledges that the text is meant to serve as a guide for a writer or speaker, not an audience member. In other words, although the rhetorical appeals serve as effective tools for assessing a given audience with which a writer or reader intends to communicate, the rhetorical appeals are not presented as tools for analyzing content or other arguments presented by other writers or readers. Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and *Posterior Analytics* which cover truth identification and knowledge acquisition in more depth are better texts to address the task of analysis. One example of a successful, traditional reading of Aristotelian rhetoric is provided by Edward Corbett in his first edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* in his survey of classical rhetorics at the end of the text (536-43). Furthermore, although his commentary serves as more of a brief introduction, George Kennedy's translation of *On Rhetoric* also includes a respectable commentary that situates the text in a traditional framework.

Successful implementations of a traditional reading of the Aristotelian rhetoric model, however, are still problematic. The most frequent issue is the model's emphasis on persuasion and not identification. This presents a model for practicing rhetoric that has been the target of scholarship for more than half a century. Although Crowley points out in "Composition is not Rhetoric" that it was not always this way, the model for invention has come to resemble a somewhat sophistic approach to rhetoric. The arguably sophistic nature of a model of rhetoric most concerned with identifying the means of persuasion and inventing arguments makes a fully contextualized representation of this theory of rhetoric problematic for rhetoricians and compositionists wishing to pursue a rhetoric-centered theme in their FYC courses.

A second accessible interpretation of Aristotelian rhetoric that, based on the results from the third chapter, most frequently appears in FYC textbooks explicitly address rhetoric, but

presents a problematic, abbreviated model. Textbook authors may state that their approach to rhetoric is one that values identification over persuasion, but by the end of the section(s) dedicated to rhetoric, most textbooks have displayed many characteristics of Aristotelian rhetoric in a way that contributes to an argumentative-centered image of rhetoric. Furthermore, these models rarely make attempts to use theories of rhetoric to address critical thinking, the identification of truth, or the acquisition of knowledge. Although *On Rhetoric* is not intended to teach critical thinking skills, the importance of being able to critically think about matters on which one intends to speak or write is acknowledged both by Aristotle (*On Rhetoric* 1355a)(Kennedy 35) and by the NCTE/CCCC (2015).

A third reading of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* that situates the text in a more informed context is the one proposed by Ellen Quandahl. In her 1986 article, Quandahl proposes that *On Rhetoric* should be read as a guide to interpretation instead of invention. This is contrary to arguments made by rhetoricians such as Corbett (1965) and Crowley (2003) who emphasize invention as one of *On Rhetoric*'s most important contributions to classical rhetoric. Quandahl's reading of the parts of *On Rhetoric* covering the topics has received little attention compared to Corbett's reading within the field of Rhetoric & Composition Studies despite its potential to reframe how Aristotelian rhetoric to align with Burke's proposal about new rhetoric models.

Quandahl justifies her proposal by first using a proto-linguistic approach to looking at discourse that Aristotle provides throughout his collected works. After referencing a passage from *Metaphysics* (1027b 17ff) and alluding to passages from *Nicomachean Ethics*, *On Sophistry*, and *Topics* to establish a comprehensive understanding of Aristotle's conceptualization of discourse, she concludes the first section of her article by claiming that rhetoric, in an Aristotelian context, can be defined as "the contextual study of language"

(Quandahl 131). This is not meant to replace the “an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (Kennedy 37) definition provided by Aristotle at the beginning of the second chapter of Book I. Quandahl’s proposed definition should, in fact, be understood as providing further context to the quoted Aristotelian definition.

The second section of Quandahl’s article focuses on Aristotle’s coverage of *koinoi topoi* (common topics) in Book II. Looking first to the topic of opposition, Quandahl uses several examples of enthymemes that Aristotle provides throughout the text to demonstrate that the two different ways in which the topics can be understood. She concludes that, instead of being used as a method of logic, the *topoi* were tools to introduce a relational principle into a given contextual situation to make useful statements about that context; however, since Aristotle’s death, they have been understood as tools for discovering content for arguments. After restating that *On Rhetoric* should be read as a work about interpretation, she explains that “One reads the subject at hand (which is always a contingent issue requiring interpretation) by using one of the available “moves” provided in the list of topics—for example, considering the opposite case, dividing the issue into smaller parts, working inductively from examples to generalizations” (Quandahl 131-2).

Although Quandahl’s criticism that heuristic rules have become dull (136) is not necessarily a justification for embracing her proposed reading of *On Rhetoric*, the evidence she provides by presenting the general topics in a way that contextualizes them within the collected Aristotelian compendium gives a considerable amount of validity to her claims. Furthermore, given the textual history of Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric* covered in the first chapter of the dissertation, Quandahl’s attempt to blame Cicero’s *Orator*, which provides a “quick and rather

dogmatic review of topics” (135) as a major contributor to the “traditional” reading of *On Rhetoric* that scholars have, at least since the middle ages, embraced.

#### 4.3 The Significance of Kenneth Burke, New Rhetoric, and Networks

This section situates Kenneth Burke as a anti-modernist whose scholarship advocating for “new rhetoric” models and his model for rhetoric avoids observable signs of modernist influence and issues that rhetoric-centered FYC textbooks have experienced since, according to Welch (1987), at least the 1980’s. Burke’s definition is more specific than Aristotle’s and takes a more communication-focused approach to rhetoric. Burke defines rhetoric as “the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or induce actions in other human agents” (41). In the first chapter of this dissertation, I pointed out that the Rhetoric and Composition studies has yet to experience an investigation into the modern and postmodern influence on the discipline. In 1996, Ann George pointed this out as especially true when it came to the work of Kenneth Burke; however, this critique received a quick resolution with the publication of Jack Selzer’s *Kenneth Burke in Greenwich Village*. Selzer’s book contextualizes Burke’s early literary works as responses to modernism. Although Selzer admits to modernism’s controversial nature in literary studies (1) and its lack of coherency (4) the text reflects an ostensible desire to avoid labeling Burke as what Latour would consider an anti-modernist. This same strategy is reflected in his article on Burke’s *Counter Statement* where he refers to “the early Burke, the modernist Burke” (20).

Although an anti-modernist Burke may be easier to observe in his later works, Selzer’s conceptualization of a modernist Burke relies on an over-eagerness to read Burke’s *Towards a Better Life* as an autobiographical narrative and disregarding it as a social product. By too quickly embracing this reading of Burke, the last chapter of Selzer’s book (165-80) implies that

the supposed autobiographical nature of *Towards a Better Life* demonstrates Burke indulging a self-expressionist approach to writing the text. Furthermore, his commentary fails to comment on the alternative reading of Burke's narrative as a critique of society. Even if Selzer's assessment of the text is correct, arguing that a "modernist Burke" ever existed is still problematic as such a claim fails to, at the same time, recognize that Burke's texts consistently worked to emphasize the relationship that existed between art and humanity (Hochmuth 180). Selzer would have likely avoided this problem if he were willing to acknowledge the Latourian perspective on modernism.

In *We Have Never Been Modern*, Latour separates the ideologies of the postmodern from those of the antimodern. He explains postmodernism by referring to Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) explanation of postmodernism, which marks the end of belief in the modernist metanarrative in a technological context (Latour 46). Latour's explanation, however, proposes that a postmodernist must have indulged modernism at some point. Although this is likely how scholars such as Selzer justify implicitly representing Burke's later works as postmodern, such implications also fail to consider Burke's antimodern traits. Although Latour criticizes "antimoderns" similarly to "postmoderns," he characterizes antimodernists as opponents of modern thought who "want to defend localities, or spirit, or rationality, or the past, or universality, or liberty, or society, or God, [but]... accept the... idea of a time that passes irreversibly and annuls the entire past in its wake" (47). These traits, many of which even Selzer attributes to Burke throughout *Kenneth Burke at Greenwich*, describe Burke as more of an antimodernist than a postmodernist. Although Burke's works may have been well-received by postmodern audiences, at minimum, Burke's resistance towards the philosophical emphasis of modernism, his defense of religion because of its status as language (Henderson 20), the

universality of Burke's dramatic pentad (Rountree) identify Burke as more closely resembling an antimodernist and, at most, serves as a catalyst for postmodernism.

Beyond Burke's resistance of modernism's influence on English studies (including rhetoric and writing instruction,) he is also responsible for the proposition of embracing new rhetorics. In his 1951 article "Rhetoric- Old and New," Burke proposes that a new rhetoric is needed to repair the damage caused by aesthetic criticism (203). Burke expands upon his conceptualization of identification in *A Rhetoric of Motives*. After demonstrating the potential of the act of identification provides participants in a rhetorical interaction (xiii-xv), Burke proceeds to describe the nature of general nature and uses of rhetoric, the traditional principles associated with rhetoric, and the order of rhetoric. Burke's principle of identification serves as a complimentary tool for his dramatic pentad introduced in *A Grammar of Motives* by aiding in the discovery of previously, partially unconscious factors in rhetorical appeals, which he first mentions in "Rhetoric- Old and New" (203). for the division of a communicative action to determine the relationship of the agents involved in the action provides a model for assessment.

In 1965, Corbett commented on the current state of rhetoric's use in English classes in the December issue of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. Having published the first edition of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Corbett points out that although English instructors have narrowed their focus to Burke's new rhetoric and classical (old) rhetoric, there had yet to be a new rhetoric text published by Burke or his followers (580). More importantly, Corbett wisely acknowledges the potential that future rhetoric models may also have to begin considering visual and auroral communication as their traditional, textual culture is replaced.

Although Burke's conceptualization of new rhetoric and his theory of dramatism provide what arguably function as an improved, approach to understanding acts of communication as



well as effectively constructing them. Burke's theories do not, however, come without limitations. Although Burke was no advocate of modernism, the applicability of Burke's ideas are arguably limited by the humanist influence throughout much of his work. In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, he identifies the basic function of rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or induce actions in other human agents" (41). Although Burke's definition of rhetoric provides a solid foundation for linguistic (which Burke typically refers to as symbolic) communication, his exclusive emphasis on human agents limits the potential usability his theories. Furthermore, Burke doubles down on this by limiting the role of agent(s) to humans. (27-9). Although scholars have been unable to demonstrate Burke's claim as untrue (excluding other living creatures,) the expansive size of what Burke refers to as the unit of action can needlessly complicate the task of assessing the relationship of things.

#### **4.4 A Classical, New Rhetoric: Does Aristotelian Rhetoric Emphasize Identification?**

This section explores the plausibility of Quandahl's interpretation-based reading of *On Rhetoric* and whether such a reading can resolve historically presumed conflicts between Kenneth Burke's concept for new rhetoric and Aristotle's theory of rhetoric. Even if Burke's Pentad was free from concern regarding its ability to assess the relationship of living things and objects, it is unlikely that his model of rhetoric would experience any more use in FYC courses than it currently does. As Corbett points out Burke's scholarship so well-known to rhetoricians and compositionists that it was the only note-worthy competitor to classical, old models of rhetoric. Although no FYC textbooks designed to support Burkean rhetoric had been published at the time, Kathleen Welch demonstrated that the situation had not drastically improved at the time that she conducted her study in 1987. Given Welch's critiques and the results of the studies in

second and third chapters of this dissertation, exploring the ability to use Ellen Quandahl's reading of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* to reinterpret Aristotelian rhetoric that can function as a new rhetoric is more likely to improve the current state of FYC textbooks.

Although Quandahl's reading can be simply assessed using Burke's qualifications for new rhetoric, the question can also be approached etymologically. An etymological investigation into the relationship between the two words allows for additional context to qualify *On Rhetoric* as a Burkean, new rhetoric model. It can, however, also add credibility to Quandahl's reading of *On Rhetoric* as understanding the historical use of the words *invention* and *interpretation* can help to better gauge the intentions of Aristotle. In her conclusion, Quandahl states her inability to figure out why the term *invention* has remained separate from *interpretation* (135). In her ninth endnote, she then states that Garcia Grindal suggested that Augustine of Hippo brings the two terms very close together in the third book of *De Doctrina Christiana* (136). This footnote likely refers to chapters two through four, which consist of sections two through eight and describe instances and solutions to ambiguous phrases within scripture. The most relatable section of the text exists in chapter two where context-related issues are addressed. That said, the connection provides a mis-contextualized solution to what Quandahl presents as an etymological problem.

Quandahl's attempt to establish a relationship between *invention* and *interpretation* by using Augustine overestimates the usefulness of the antiquarian, Latin text in this context. Furthermore, her reference to Aristotle's attempt to separate himself from his contemporaries' by using terms they were discussing and "using them newly" (129) works against her as she admits that Aristotle is consciously resisting the conventions of the term's use; furthermore, when discussing the ways in which definitions of the term *enthymeme* differ between Aristotle, Cicero, Quintillian, and rhetors of the European Renaissance (132-3), Quandahl also points out the

variety of definitions that exist for the term. Although this supports her argument that Aristotle's posthumous audience read the text differently from how Aristotle intended it, it also demonstrates the challenging nature of etymologically establishing a relation between the terms *invention* and *interpretation*.

Quandahl's only shortcoming in her blaming of Cicero for the current, argumentative-centered reading of Aristotelian rhetoric is her failure to explore the etymology of the term *invention*. If she had, the difference between the Greek term *heuresis* and the Latin term *inventio* would demonstrate an opportunity for Aristotle's theory of rhetoric to be easily misinterpreted and give credibility to an alternative interpretation of Aristotelian rhetoric centered around persuasion or invention. Although Quandahl is correct in her identification of the term *heuresis* as the Greek term for invention (131), she fails to acknowledge that *heuresis* is not an etymological duplicate of *inventio*. As Carl Holmberg points out, *heuresis* refers to the discovery of what is already hidden, but still present whereas *inventio* refers to the creation of something from scratch or from prefabricated material. Furthermore, *heuresis* refers to the finding of realities whereas *inventio* deals with the artificial creation of realities (137). Given the perceived difference between the two terms, it is easy to see how Aristotle's text became associated with what Quandahl and Holmberg both identify as artificial creation given the linguistic dominance of Latin in Western Civilization through the Middle Ages. When Aristotle's works were eventually translated to Latin, readers could have easily misunderstood Aristotle's intentions with *On Rhetoric* because of a poor understanding of the contextual meaning behind the term *heuresis*. This naivety could then eventually lead to centuries of scholars and teachers misunderstanding and misrepresenting *On Rhetoric* to contemporary settings.

Qualifying Quandahl's understanding of *On Rhetoric* as one that also meets Burke's standards for a new theory of rhetoric, however, is challenging because, as Marie Hochmuth points out in "Kenneth Burke and the New Rhetoric", Burke has a tendency, like Aristotle (Quandahl 133), to use words and phrases that, in isolation, appear simple and straight-forward, but when they are used in new contexts,... [they] rely on the reader to have a respectable knowledge or understanding of his previous works (Hochmuth 144). Again, like Aristotle, Hochmuth also points out that Burkean rhetorical theory often receives criticism for its obscurity. As chapter three already established, Burke's most important requirement for a "new rhetoric" is for the theory to embrace a definition that emphasizes identification rather than persuasion. If Quandahl's initial proposal is considered separately from this dissertation's further exploration of her ideas and limitations, then presenting Aristotelian rhetoric as a theory of interpretation falls apart when it comes to the actual nature of the proposed model. Although Aristotle's definition of rhetoric emphasizes one's ability to see (or identify) the available means of persuasion, the way in which Quandahl presents the enthymeme as unavoidably combining all three rhetorical appeals to influence an audience without any further context leaves rhetoricians with a theory of rhetoric that, like many 20<sup>th</sup> century models, is still rooted in persuasion, despite a new grounding in interpretation.

If, however, Aristotle's word choice as well as the etymological considerations previously mentioned in this section are considered, a more interpretation-friendly conceptualization of Aristotelian rhetoric is realized. Although the esoteric nature of *On Rhetoric* could lead some to believe that Aristotle would not choose his words as carefully, it is apparent, especially given this interpretation-based reading of the text, that quite the opposite is true. As Kennedy points out in his introduction to Book I of his translation of *On Rhetoric*, the two books

are often read as Aristotle's means of invention (27), but it is important to note that Aristotle does not use the term *invention* at all throughout the text. At the end of Book II, Aristotle uses the word Διάνοια (1403 b), or *dianoia*. This translates to *thought*, which possesses a different contextual association than *invention*. Although Kennedy suggests in a footnote that etymologically, the term would eventually evolve into *heuresis* in later Greek (192), which translates to "invention," the emphasis on thought, which, in the context of Aristotelian philosophy, is associated with the process of interacting with truth and falsity (rather than artificial creation.) Even if Kennedy's premature association of Διάνοια with the Greek word *heuresis* is accepted as significant in this instance, the passage still reflects a conceptualization of invention that pursues the discovery of realities that are present, but often hidden instead of creating an artificial reality from nothing (Hochmuth 137).

Furthermore, Quandahl's reading of Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* not only allows for the identification of potentially useful arguments or information, but allows for writers or speakers to make endless kinds of identifications about a given matter. In "Rhetoric: Old and New," Burke begins his explanation of identification-based rhetorics by first exemplifying a deliberative act where a speaker or writer intends to identify with their intended audience (203), but Burke then quickly acknowledges the possibility for identification-based rhetorics to have a partially unconscious design. An example of this is when an individual attempts to identify themselves with "some group or other" and are not necessarily being acted upon by a conscious agent but may be acting upon themselves (Burke 203). The broad parameters Burke gave to the principle of identification leaves speakers and writers with seemingly limitless authority to identify for the sake of producing a rhetorical argument if it contributes in some way to a communicative act (regardless of whether it's a conscious act.)

#### 4.5 Conclusion: New Rhetoric and the Potential of Actor Network Theory

Although Kenneth Burke's dramatic pentad is unlikely to face criticism that will disqualify it as a valid model of rhetoric, Burke's most significant contribution to the current state of Rhetoric and Composition studies is his conceptualization of new rhetoric. Although Welch criticized publishers' failure to publish FYC textbooks that supported new rhetoric models, Burke's identification of a problem that has persisted in the field for more than 70 years later more than ten years before Corbett reintroduced classical rhetoric to FYC instructors with the publication of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* speaks to the difficult nature of persuading the discipline to embrace such changes in the way faculty teach writing or the way they understand Aristotelian rhetoric.

Regardless, the way in which Aristotle's model of rhetoric is represented in FYC textbooks needs to be revised to reflect a reading of *On Rhetoric* that accommodates Burke's requirements for new rhetorics. Considering the "Principles for Sound Writing Instruction" composed by the NCTE, a theory of Aristotelian rhetoric that portrays Aristotle's text as one that teaches interpretation rather than invention is far more fitting given Kenneth Burke's argument that rhetoric should be identification-focused and not persuasion-focused. Quandahl's interpretation-focused reading of Aristotle resolves the concerns expressed in this dissertation regarding the nature of the APB in chapter three.

In the NCTE's 2015 list of principles for sound writing instruction, the development of critical thinking skills has become an important part of FYC. Furthermore, such skills are essential elements of Aristotelian rhetoric and students of Aristotle were expected to understand critical thinking, truth identification, and knowledge acquisition prior to learning about rhetoric.

Therefore, FYC textbooks that rely on Aristotelian rhetoric often come up short when it comes to supporting students' critical thinking education. These textbooks can improve by developing sections that better address the critical assessment of texts simply by considering Aristotle's collected works instead of focusing exclusively on *On Rhetoric*.

Although Kenneth Burke's scholarship represents one of if not the most developed theory of rhetoric composed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Burke's emphasis on the human aspects of communication in his definition of rhetoric and the limitations he places on the identities of agents limits the functionality of the pseudo-network that is formed from using Burke's pentad to break down a what Burke refers to as rhetorical actions. Regarding Burkean rhetoric's applicability to digital rhetoric, the model can function sufficiently in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but is not considerate of the potential for a rhetorician to expand upon the pseudo-network they created as a result of establishing the act(s), agent(s), agency, scene, and purpose. Burke's pentad functions well when applied to singular rhetorical acts, but if a rhetorician were to identify one or multiple existing relationship between multiple rhetorical acts, the pentad loses its efficiency.

A potential alternative to Burke's pentad worthy of consideration is Actor-Network Theory (ANT), a methodological research approach initially developed by sociologists working in the field of Science and Technology studies. Unlike Burke, ANT does not underemphasize the potential rhetorical contributions of objects and animals by separating them from humanity and limiting their rhetorical potential. Although Burke's pentad functions more efficiently for single rhetorical actions, the potential for the limitations Burke places on the pentad can complicate the ability to assess the relationships between multiple, separately occurring rhetorical actions.

ANT is grounded in the rejection of the modernist idea that society can exist separately from nature. Regarding its usefulness in rhetoric, ANT takes a broader approach than Burke and

seeks to identify relationships between actors and actants instead of two human participants. Furthermore, the methodology also seeks to identify actor-network relationships which, regarding rhetoric, can be understood as the relationship between language and objects. Perhaps the most significant element of ANT is its consideration of translation. Translation establishes all existing networks as individual entities but acknowledge that they may still exist within other networks and other networks may exist within all other networks. This connectivity of networks allows for the identification of relationships with other networks or actors/actants within those networks. Although this is arguably one of ANT's greatest strengths regarding its applicability to the practice of rhetoric, it can also arguably needlessly complicate the task of identification if the Burkean pentad would have been sufficient. Therefore, ANT would likely only be able to serve as a theoretical foundation that would receive contextual parameters based on the universal disciplinary conventions of Rhetoric and Compositions studies.

Recontextualizing Aristotelian rhetoric as a classical model that demonstrates Burke's new rhetoric values provides FYC students with a better model for the increasingly digital nature of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Given the constantly evolving state digital spaces, the practice of rhetoric in a context where some model for establishing knowledge is essential. Although Aristotelian rhetoric, if correctly presented to FYC students, is likely sufficient for the current practice of rhetoric, the potential contributions help ANT can give the field of Rhetoric and Composition studies in developing a less restrictive model of rhetoric than Burke's dramatic pentad, but one that is equally as effective, is worth indulging.



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