

A PHYSIOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF STYLE: SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND WOMEN'S  
WRITINGS IN THE EARLY AMERICAN REPUBLIC

BY

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## Abstract

The world of the early American Republic was surprisingly inter-connected: ideas, people, and text traveled in the name of Christianity. This curious combination of rhetoric and science in the service of God during the early American Republic is the heart of my dissertation project. My dissertation brings together early American evangelical Protestantism, Enlightenment rhetoric, and Benjamin Rush's physiological psychology in an analysis of transatlantic religious writing, speaking, and reading practices in the Atlantic world. Using Methodist women's spiritual journals, copybooks, and correspondence as my primary sources, I argue that the mental experience of persuasion is in fact a bodily one. I thereby question current assumptions about Enlightenment rhetoric, namely that it fostered no real changes or improvements to rhetorical theory. I contend that Enlightenment rhetoric did indeed effect deep changes in rhetorical theory. Based on evidence of the early American Republic's understanding of Enlightenment rhetorical and scientific theory, we can see 1) rhetoric as *epistêmê*, or a system of knowledge, rather than *technê*, skills or craft, 2) a deeply body-dependent concept of the mind that comes to light in evangelical Protestantism's practice of enthusiasm, and therefore, 3) a canon of style that was essential (and continues to be essential) to cognition. Thus, I redefine what the canon of style *does*, rather than what style *looks like*, in practice in early America.

Recently, scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have renewed the field's interest in style and stylistics. The field largely ignored style for the past two decades, and marked those historical periods of rhetoric that were invested in the canon of style as lacking "rhetorical theory." In consequence, contemporary scholars of rhetoric have blamed Enlightenment rhetoric for the prevalence of current-traditional rhetoric, the period of rule-driven linear writing from the

latter half of the nineteenth-century into the twentieth, in modern writing education. Positioning Enlightenment rhetoric as a scapegoat for the existence of current-traditional rhetoric robs the Enlightenment of its unique contributions to rhetorical theory, namely style and rhetoric as “the science of communication.” With early American Methodists’ religious writings as a case study, my research leads me to contend that style is not the “dressing-up” of thought or “ornament” of ideas already conceived, but rather is the canon that facilitates cognition.

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## Introduction

### Style: The Elephant in the Discipline

What *is* style? What does style *do*? In rhetorical studies, unsatisfactory answers for both dominate our literature. We can say that style is the third canon of rhetoric; we can also say that style involves tropes and figures, the Asiatic or Attic, or the low, middle, or grand. However, there is little else we agree on. Alternately, scholars in rhetoric have claimed that style is meant to make emotional and bodily connections between the speaker/writer and the audience (Bizzell and Herzberg), to make a text stand out in the reader's mind (Butler, Heilker), to help the speaker/writer explain his or her argument more thoroughly (Horner), or to create argument (Fahnestock, Newman). Style, of course, may be all of these things. Nonetheless, the disparity between these definitions calls out for a reworking of our discipline's concept of style.

In a field that has enthusiastically returned to style and stylistics after a twenty-year hiatus, a definition is greatly needed. This is especially true in light of certain conceptions of style which persist decades or more after they have been invalidated by leading scholars. In particular, the idea of style as the "value-added"<sup>1</sup> and "ornamental" canon of the five classical canons of rhetoric pervades, even as scholars resist it. Accordingly, Edward P.J. Corbett and Robert Connors's definition recognizes the pre-conceptions non-specialists have of style in their textbook, *Style and Statement*. "One notion of style that needs to be erased at the outset," they write, "is that style is simply 'the dress of thought'" (Corbett and Connors 2). Corbett and Connors do not deny that style can, at times, be ornamental, functioning as another "available

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<sup>1</sup> Sara J. Newman uses "value-added" to refer to specific categories of tropes and figures in *Aristotle and Science*; I have adopted this term to more accurately describe our field's image of style.

means of persuasion” (2). Corbett and Connors stress that style’s primary purpose is not ornament; nor is style, in any part, the dressing of thought. In fact, Corbett bemoans the coarse understanding of style modern students possess in comparison to the sophistication of rhetoric students from ancient times up through the Renaissance. He writes that Renaissance schoolboys “could tell you that style represented the choices that an author made from the lexical and syntactical resources of the language. Style represented a curious blend of the idiosyncratic and the conventional” (Corbett, “Teaching Style” 210).

An accepted narrative in Rhetoric and Composition states that an excessive focus on style, spurred by the explosion of dictionaries and writing and speaking manuals in the eighteenth century, lead directly to current-traditional rhetoric in the twentieth century. This narrative casts both style and stylistics as superficial to the meaning of texts. Serious scholars avoid style work (Vivian 223), and teaching “style” is controversial. As a result, style has become “the elephant in the classroom” and in the discipline (Johnson and Pace, *Refiguring* vii). Specifically, Communication scholar Brad Vivian blames Toulmin’s and Perelman’s re-orientation of rhetorical studies to argumentation for the decline of style studies. Because of this re-orientation, Vivian believes “the aesthetic capabilities of rhetoric have received scant attention from modern rhetoricians, who resign consideration of style largely to supposedly regrettable episodes in the history of the discipline” (223). Additionally, Tom Pace suggests this decline of style studies comes from a historical misunderstanding of rhetorical studies, in which the discipline has “supplanted” current-traditional<sup>2</sup> rhetoric with social constructivism and critical pedagogy (Pace, “What Happened” 1). And, as Johnson and Pace point out, current-traditional

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<sup>2</sup> Within the dissertation, current-traditional demarcates rule-driven composition theories that occupied the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writing instruction.

rhetoric is associated with everything bad in the discipline—particularly those “empty, tedious classroom exercises” (Johnson and Pace, *Refiguring* ix-x).

Even though Robert J. Connors marks 1985-1986 as the end of Golden Era of stylistic study (Butler, *Out of Style* 17), and the end of work by scholars such as Richard Lanham and William Walker Gibson, current scholars have rallied to bring style to the forefront. Paul Butler’s *Out of Style* argues for an engagement of Rhetoric and Composition scholars with the public’s interpretation of style. Likewise, T.R. Johnson and Pace’s edited collection, *Refiguring Prose Style: Possibilities for Writing Pedagogy*, encourages writing scholars and writing instructors to move beyond and question divisions between form and content, as well as between composition and literature (x). Jeanne Fahnestock’s prolific work, including her most recent book, *Rhetorical Style*, continues to argue for style as inherent to argumentation, as does Sara J. Newman’s book *Aristotle and Style*, while Heather Graves’s *Rhetoric (in)to Science* argues for style as invention. Nevertheless, the issue of “dressing up” remains unresolved, and continues to be a popular and influential view in the discipline.

This dissertation defines style not by what it *looks like* (what tropes, figures, diction, etc., appear in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century texts), but rather what style *does*. I hope to spur reconsideration of what, as scholars, our twenty-first century preconceptions are when we say “style.” By revisiting these centuries, I also hope to break down the association of style and current-traditional rhetoric that we have in Rhetoric and Composition, while simultaneously working against the vilification of the canon of style in theory and pedagogy. In seeking a new definition of style, I have turned to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, centuries scholars have traditionally conceived of as putting forth no new rhetorical theory. Yet, this period was full of avid rhetorical practitioners, a changing model of the body, religious

enthusiasm, social mobility, economic endeavor, and rhetoric as "the science of communication." I contend that the Enlightenment did put forth significant rhetorical theory; in addition, I contend that this rhetorical theory, tied to models of physiological psychology, gives us a definition of style as 1) essential to cognition and as 2) *epistêmê*, rather than *technê*. Using the reciprocal transatlantic movement of people, texts, science, and religion, I argue that the religious writing practices of American Methodist women and the physiological psychology of Edinburgh-educated American physician Benjamin Rush during the early American Republic shed light on the impact of Enlightenment models of the mind and body on style.

After all, it seems in the end that our current perception of the canon of style as an independent, "valued-added" canon, with added (and arguably un-needed) embellishment and ornamentation occurring after the initial thought,<sup>3</sup> a perception which scholars such as Jeanne Fahnestock, Sara J. Newman, Brian Vickers, James Kinneavy, Edward P.J. Corbett, and Robert Connors have worked against, may be blamed on the problem of translation. There are two separate problems of translation; according to Jeanne Fahnestock, the first problem of translation is with "ornament" or ornamentation. Fahnestock writes:

Several historians of rhetoric have pointed out that the traditional conception of ornament as embellishment, or quite literally as embroidery, probably misses an essential meaning in the original term (see e.g., Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* 314). The Latin *ornamentum* also means furniture, apparatus, and equipment, so that "ornament" may be more closely related to the notion of essential gear or

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<sup>3</sup> See Jeanne Fahnestock's description of value-added figures and tropes (*Rhetorical Figures in Science* 22).

“armament” than it is to adornment. (Fahnestock, *Rhetorical Figures in Science* 18)

The second problem of translation comes with *embellishment*. Fahnestock questions the translator’s use of the word embellishment in Cicero’s works as the actual meaning is closer to light and illumination. This is a significant difference. She writes “To embellish something is to add to its surface, but to illuminate can mean to shine through as well as on something, to make it bright from within, in effect bringing out or expressing its inherent nature” (Fahnestock, *Rhetorical Figures in Science* 28). And while Fahnestock’s purpose in *Rhetorical Figures in Science* is to show the extent to which scientific arguments are inherently rhetorical and full of tropes and figures, her more immediate purpose is to extend the same importance of metaphor to other figures, and for the figures of speech to be seen as essential to the cognitive process. Fahnestock argues, “it [the value of metaphor] needs to be extended to the other figures so that they are no longer seen as decoration on the plain cloth of language but as the fabric itself” (Fahnestock, *Rhetorical Figures in Science* xi-xii). Indeed, too often in rhetorical studies we have separated language from argument, imagining argument and thought as independent from, rather than dependent on language.

Fahnestock’s argument that “ornament” is more closely related to apparatus or armament and that “embellishment” is more closely related to illumination speaks well to style’s historical treatment. In Rhetoric and Composition we may cast aside the canon of style in fear of being aligned with current-traditional rhetoric. Yet, in doing so, we forget that rhetoric had a long history before current-traditional rhetoric. We also forget that while the demands of Greek and Latin speaking and writing instruction required a great amount of rote memorization, along with exacting imitation of canonical works, creativity nonetheless flourished. We can see this even at

the most elementary level, with the *progymnasmata* of the Roman Empire and the *copia* of Renaissance Humanism. Throughout history, many writers learned by rote, by repetition, and by imitation; this did not seem to inhibit the creative output of writers, but rather gave writers a strong technical understanding of craft.

My characterization of Rhetoric and Composition's problem with style is similar to, though perhaps more expansive than Sara J. Newman's, in that I argue for style as integral to knowledge production. In *Aristotle and Style*, Newman points out that style inevitably tends to be concerned with proper uses, yet at the same time, the categorizations of these proper uses disciplinarily "have mattered less than their message that the figures are linguistic afterthoughts. Because this perspective opposes style, style is ancillary to argument, accessory to knowledge production, and subjective and poetic in nature" (Newman 1). Adding to Fahnestock's work, Newman also notes that the only "figure" deemed not to be a "linguistic afterthought" is metaphor (Newman 1). Newman is particularly interested in how style plays into disciplinary boundaries and how "understanding style in broader terms can inform ongoing discussions about rhetoric's disciplinary status and its roles both in knowledge construction and in hermeneutic analysis" (Newman 262). I hope to meet Newman's call in these pages, turning my focus from what figures and tropes existed, how they were used, or the differentiation of styles, to the treatment of style as a disciplinary scapegoat. In doing so, I press an interpretation of style that is all too under-acknowledged: one that places style as integral to mental processes.

### ***Methodology***

Why craft? Why the canon of style? And why look to the early nineteenth century America for an understanding of Enlightenment rhetoric? First, with regard to craft, I believe as rhetoricians we have moved away from a concrete and critical practice of writing. Writing

practice is essential to informing our analysis both of the text and the theory that surrounds it. Without a critical writing practice, we tend to view style as "skills" or "tools," rather than as a craft—craft, in the sense of how creative writers use the term. Craft is not merely skills or tools but a craft-system that builds knowledge. While this may seem an inconsequential difference, it's the difference between conceptualizing writing as the hammer to pound in a nail or conceptualizing writing as the entire process of building a house and the knowledge that comes out of this process. In other words, viewing writing as "skills" and style as "value-added" reduces writing from a system of knowledge, or *epistêmê*, to, ironically, *technê*.<sup>4</sup> We can see this "valued-added" skills emphasis even in Paul Butler's definition of the canon in *Out of Style*, in which Butler argues that the process movement was interested in style, viewing it as the canon that serves invention (Butler, *Out of Style* 56). Butler writes, "If we view 'style' as a set of language resources for writers to exploit, then the general absence of style in the field has arguably deprived writers and teachers of an important reservoir of conscious knowledge about these resources and how to cultivate them" (Butler, *Out of Style* 12-13). Here, style is "a set of language resources for writers to exploit" and is part of "conscious knowledge," even as Butler acknowledges an organic style, with "form and content inseparable" (Butler, *Out of Style* 2-3).

In order to press against Rhetoric and Composition's dominant preconceptions of style, I have turned to the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a transatlantic period vested in Scottish Enlightenment rhetoric. Early nineteenth-century America is, I believe, an over-looked era for research in Enlightenment rhetoric. The study of Enlightenment theory in the early

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<sup>4</sup> George Kennedy identifies *technê* as knowledge, and *empeiria* as "a facility gained from trial and error." However, a commonly accepted definition is *technê* as skills or craft and *epistêmê* as scientific knowledge, or a system of knowledge.

American Republic is essential for two reasons. To start, there was transatlantic trade in ideas. This transatlantic community leads me to question the artificial divisions we have placed between European and North American rhetoric. Next, the early American Republic offers us a new and different, yet historically linked, context in which to evaluate Enlightenment work; by examining Enlightenment theory outside of a Scottish or English setting, we can break away from a linear analysis of eighteenth-century style to current-traditional rhetoric, instead appreciating Enlightenment rhetorical theory and its broader historical implications holistically.

Early American Methodism tenders us with a physical example of mental processes. I do not suggest in this dissertation that the bodily persuasion of American Methodist enthusiasm was caused by the rhetorical theory of George Campbell, Hugh Blair, and Joseph Priestley, or the scientific and theological theory of David Hartley. What I do suggest is that early American Methodist enthusiasm provides a physical example of mental processes within a new model of the body. As the model of the body transformed from humoral to material and mechanical,<sup>5</sup> so too evangelical Christian mysticism (referred to as “enthusiasm” in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries) moved from a body leaking spiritually, whether leaking blood or tears or another substance, to a body convulsing. This coincides with the period’s interest in decorum. Again, I do not propose a cause-effect relationship here. But I do contend that early American Methodism gives us a relevant case study for how the body, the mind, propriety, and the canon of style come together with physiological psychology.

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<sup>5</sup> Humoral refers to a model of the body in which fluids flow through and govern the body. In contrast, the material or mechanical model posits the body as a solid made up of muscle and nerve fibers.

This project began in the basement archives of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. At the time, I was simply interested in cataloguing the breadth of the archives, small in of itself, but the second largest archive of the United Methodist Church when combined with the Lovely Lane Church archives in Baltimore, Maryland. As an active member of the United Methodist Church at the time, I was drawn to materials I connected with on a personal level: periodical articles from the earliest era of the Methodist Episcopal and Methodist Protestant churches, written by or about women. This coincided with my burgeoning interest in rhetorical history.

As the project progressed, my archival research continued at the archives of the United Methodist Church in Madison, New Jersey, where archivist Dale Patterson introduced me to Catherine Livingston Garrettson, an American woman of the early national period, who, while challenging few gender boundaries, was integral to the success of the American Methodist movement. Her correspondence and spiritual diaries are, by far, the largest collection of women's writing in the Methodist archives from this period. It should be noted, however, that Garrettson does not represent the average woman of the era—her economic background and her education far outstripped most women's. Nonetheless, her spiritual journals are representative of Methodist women's religious writing practice.

The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and the Library Company of Philadelphia supply supplementary material. Benjamin Rush's medical lectures, book inventory lists (particularly of scientific and rhetorical works) of Philadelphians, and books owned by women are just some of the information these collections provide. Such information allows me to create a broader picture of the early American Republic outside of the evangelical Methodist

movement. After all, no matter how pervasive Methodism was in early decades of the nineteenth century, the experience of Methodists does not represent that of all Americans.

Combining my archival research with Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch's notion of critical imagination, I am able to better comprehend how women and men of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries understood the connection between mind and body, even in light of inconsistent documentation. Royster and Kirsch's 2012 book *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies* highlights the difficulties of Feminist archival research even more than a decade after Andrea Lunsford's seminal collection *Reclaiming Rhetorica* asked if there was (and is) a distinctly feminine rhetorical practice, and if so, how should we then study this practice. Royster and Kirch's text adds to this discussion by calling for the development of more thorough archival methodology through the use of "critical imagination" and "strategic contemplation." They define critical imagination as first, gathering the available evidence, and second, speculating or meditating methodically on what is probable—rather than what can be proved.

We use critical imagination as a tool to engage, as it were, in hypothesizing, in what might be called "educated guessing," as a means for searching methodically, not so much for immutable truth but instead for what is likely or possible, given the facts at hand. (Royster and Kirsch 71)

This, of course, does not mean that Royster and Kirsch wish scholars to present likely or possible cases as definite fact; however, as feminist archival research is often limited by the amount of material available, much more so than archival research into men, there is a need for feminist scholars to use what resources are available, searching and comparing many different kinds of texts and documents in order to ascertain what, where, and when women practiced rhetorically.

Furthermore, Christine Mason Sutherland's comments in the afterword of *Reclaiming Rhetorica* support the notion that we need to be careful to place historical figures in the culture of their time period, rather than in a framework of our own understanding. This is a real risk in archival research—as Sutherland notes, “We are so anxious to make common cause with these women that we tend to underplay views and values that differ significantly from our own” (328). Of course, it is important to use critical cultural relativism, to borrow a term from the field of Anthropology, rather than simply cultural relativism. Ethical scholarship not only involves examining a culture within its content and self-understanding, but also analyzing the culture with the benefit of current scholarship. Although Catherine Livingston Garrettson and other American Methodist women were actively involved in the growth of the Methodist Church (Indeed, it depended upon them), this does not mean that Methodist women did not meet gender barriers. It bothered some women, but not others; from our viewpoint two centuries later, we can see that in some cases women may not have possessed the ability<sup>6</sup> to be bothered by gender roles.

I have actively chosen archival materials that represent women who neither openly rebelled against the dominant culture, nor passively accepted it. These women may have had greater economic advantages than others of their time, but they are fully products of the period—critical of their social circumstances, yes, but also a part of it. However, I should note here that I differ from Catherine Livingston Garrettson scholar Diane Lobody in my characterization of Garrettson as accepting of the dominant culture. It is true that Garrettson rebelled against her family in her choice of religion and of a mate; nevertheless I would point out that Garrettson, while refusing to back down from her choice, did not run away and elope with her husband-to-

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<sup>6</sup> I use “ability” not to demean these women, but rather to point out that social structures, and especially economics, may sometimes limit people's concepts of their own lives.

be. Rather, she waited years for her family to relent and give permission to marry. In this way, Garrettson defies easy definition as a “rebel,” critical of social codes, yet abiding by them.

All of the case studies in this dissertation refer to evangelical movements after 1780 and before 1830, unless otherwise noted. This period spans the end of First Great Awakening and the majority of the Second Great Awakening, the definitions and the dates of which scholars debate. Undeniably, the trajectory of the First and Second Great Awakenings is a complicated one. In fact, Thomas Kidd and Jon Butler doubt that an eighteenth “Great Awakening” existed; Butler refers to this First Great Awakening as an “‘interpretative fiction’ invented by nineteenth-century historians” (Jon Butler qtd. in Kidd xvii). Rather, Kidd, Butler, and even Mark Noll see the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, post-Jonathon Edwards and the landing of Methodist evangelist George Whitefield in 1739, as a period of sporadic bursts of evangelical revival, with a small pause in evangelical fervor towards the end of the eighteenth century before the country passed again into an evangelical firestorm (Kidd 321).

Still, despite the murkiness of the definitions, or even the act of defining the Great Awakenings, the terms continue to be used and to be useful for historical work (and will be referred to throughout the dissertation). In short, the First Great Awakening(s)<sup>7</sup> can roughly be thought of as periodic revivals starting in the 1730s and continuing up until the Revolutionary war (Butler et al. 156). The Second Great Awakening, in contrast, can be thought of as starting in 1801, with the Cane Ridge revival in Kentucky, and continuing until about 1820 to 1830 (Gonzalez 245).

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<sup>7</sup> Whereas the Second Great Awakening typically refers to decades of religious fervor, the First Great Awakening, or Awakenings, refers to several shorter bursts of religious revival.

Unlike earlier decades of revival, the Second Great Awakening operated actively. In addition, women witnessed a period of respect and relative freedom within the revival system; the traditional hierarchy within older churches was failing, and as Joyce Appleby argues in *Inheriting the Revolution* (2001), young Americans, especially, broke free from the expectations of their parents. This is a time when Methodism in particular transformed from a small sect with a “paltry 20 churches” to the largest Protestant denomination (Kidd 322). At the same time, traditional sects, such as Congregationalist (Puritan), Presbyterian, and Episcopalian, experienced great declines in attendance. South Atlantic Episcopalians, for example, dropped from 27 percent of church attendants to 4 percent nationally (Wigger, *Taking* 9). This aligned with a change in revival philosophy; during the eighteenth century revivals, conversion and God’s grace was received passively. During the nineteenth century revivals, particularly with the influence of Arminianism and the Methodists, a convert had to actively accept God’s grace (Butler et al. 172).

### ***Chapter Summaries***

Throughout the history of rhetoric, rhetors have disputed (and continue to dispute) the aims of rhetoric, and which aims are more important than others. To name just a few, rhetors have wondered: Is rhetoric meant to inform? To instruct? To morally improve? To move the audience’s emotions into alignment with the rhetor’s? To manipulate the audience into doing or believing what the rhetor wants the audience to do or believe? These at times contradictory aims greatly influence both our interpretation of theory within the historical period and our discipline’s current scholarship. Thus, this dissertation opens with the changes the new rhetoric and new science inspired in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century rhetorical theory; these changes forged the way for our current understanding of communication as the transmission of ideas and

rhetoric (and particularly style) as ornament. *Good* rhetoric as the “science of communication” has its aim as the transmission of knowledge.<sup>8</sup> Next, the dissertation visits transatlantic concepts of mind-body and style, first in American Methodism, and second in American medicine. Last, the dissertation explores the presence of new rhetoric and new science, as well as transatlantic concepts of mind-body, within George Campbell and Hugh Blair’s rhetorical theory. It asks what this means for first, our understanding of the historical period’s theory, and second, our understanding of our discipline’s current rhetorical theory and criticism.

Chapter 1, “God and Natural Philosophy,” begins with clergyman, scientist, and rhetorician Joseph Priestley’s experiments in electricity. Priestley was incredibly interested in how the body was physiologically altered by foreign elements; in the case of dogs and frogs, how electricity passed through the body and how the body’s tissue was effected. In the case of mice, Priestley wanted to know how gases, applied (or taken away) in a vacuum, would impact the body. His experiments with mice under a glass would be the beginning of work with phlogiston, or, as chemist Lavoisier would later term it, oxygen.

The chapter continues by examining incidents of the body in Priestley’s rhetorical work and his belief, directly influenced by the theological work of physician David Hartley, that the environment shapes the sensory information a body receives, and that the mind and body are a physiological unit. From its inception, Hartleian theory is inseparable from religion; thus our analyses of rhetorical theory influenced by Hartley must account for religion, or, rather, “science in the service of God.” Next, I move to a discussion of induction as vital to empiricism, as well as to the new rhetoric. Last, I argue that Priestley’s rhetorical and scientific work has greater connections to the early American Republic than we have previously recognized.

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<sup>8</sup> According to Locke, bad rhetoric has as its aim the movement of an audience’s emotions.

Chapter 2, “Catherine Livingston Garrettson and Methodist Women's Rhetorical Practices,” investigates American Methodist material practice during the years of the early American Republic. This chapter establishes the early American Republic as 1) transatlantic in nature, even as it was locally and regionally fragmented, 2) greatly invested in rhetorical practice and study, 3) more widely accepting of religious Enthusiasm than its former colonizer, and 4) encouraging of women’s religious bodily experience.

British Methodism and American Methodism developed into two distinct, self-governing bodies after the death of founder John Wesley and the ordination of newly American bishops Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. However, the reading and writing practices put forth by John Wesley in the eighteenth century continued to be followed by Methodists on both sides of the Atlantic into the early nineteenth century. Both women and men strove to gain spiritual knowledge through writing; in fact, these reading and writing practices formed their own *epîstemê*. Through writing, it was understood that a Methodist convert (or a would-be Methodist convert) could gain personal knowledge and intimate experience of God. Catherine Livingston Garrettson’s spiritual journals and correspondence represent this tradition of literacy and rhetorical practice, while at the same time demonstrating the reality that women’s spiritual journals during this time were more frequently reflective and analytic than men’s. Likewise, American Methodist periodicals represent an interest in amateur science at the missionary level (as missionaries operated as amateur anthropologists and botanists, etc.) and an interest in rhetorical theory, while Mary Garrettson’s journals and correspondence represent the frequency of women’s writing and the exposure of Methodists to Enlightenment authors, such as Hugh Blair. Additionally, using Jane Donawerth’s concept of conversational rhetoric, I analyze the style of a “women’s tradition” of rhetoric within these documents.

Chapter 3, “Benjamin Rush and the Transatlantic Mind-Body,” takes the vampire doctor<sup>9</sup> as its central figure. Rush, a Philadelphia physician educated in Edinburgh, was perhaps one of the strongest proponents of Hartleian theory in America. As a professor of medicine at University of Pennsylvania in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Rush taught physiological psychology to his students. What’s more, as a child of the First Great Awakening, Rush advocated in his prolific writings for physiological psychology as the answer to a young country in throes of becoming (Rush hoped) the New Israel. By structuring the environment around those most at risk of moral ill, Rush sought to alleviate social problems and transform the country into a New Israel.

The third chapter also documents what Enlightenment texts were available to Americans, especially as book shipments were fraught with complications and printing presses were few and far between. Yet, a print culture existed, and far more information about medicine and science (whether “expert” or “amateur”) was distributed than history of the book scholars have indicated. Folk medical pamphlets alone constituted a burgeoning site of medical and scientific knowledge—while it is true that many upscale texts were most likely not a part of the average woman or man’s reading practice, home remedy texts would have been, whether read by the individual or read to her or him. Finally, this chapter examines the curious combination of the literary, the scientific, and the evangelical in the medical classroom, where Rush was likely to name the functions of the body sublime. I suggest in this chapter that the resurgence of Longinus’s *On the Sublime*, particularly in a period of great evangelical fervor, is unsurprising, as the sublime and enthusiasm function similarly upon and within the mind and body.

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<sup>9</sup> Rush’s historical nickname is due to his tendency, in any medical situation, to bleed his patients, and bleed them heavily.

The final chapter, “Style in Campbell and Blair,” returns to style theory in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This chapter resists the common narrative, found in the works of scholars such as Sharon Crowley and Robert J. Connors, of Enlightenment rhetoric as the impetus for the rigid and rote current-traditional rhetoric to come. Rather, I purpose that by setting aside concerns of current-traditional rhetoric for the time being, we might better appreciate Enlightenment rhetoric on its own terms and within its own culture—a culture that saw dramatic changes in social, political, economic, and religious structures at the same time as empiricism mapped a new, mechanical and material world, made not out of fluid, but of bone, fiber, and nerve.

In examining style in these two popular rhetorical theorists (or, in the case of Blair, widely popular in his own time and for half a century afterwards, but ignored among those in Rhetoric and Composition today), I claim that representing Enlightenment style only as a reaction to shifting social and economic systems ignores an equally viable explanation of style: the need for style to keep association operating smoothly. Style, in this way, functions quietly, making sure the path from sensory information to idea to more complex ideas is not barred by inappropriate word choice, or the wrong length of a sentence—anything that may jar the reader or listener’s mental process. Likewise, style also attempts to re-create for the reader or listener the author’s own mental process; metaphorically, it attempts to paint a picture of his or her thinking. Again, if inappropriate style is used, cognition breaks down and persuasion cannot take place.

Style is so essential to communication that Campbell spends two-thirds of his book spelling out stylistic problems in minute detail. In much the same painstaking way, Blair critiques fellow writers’ styles sentence-by-sentence, and sometimes word-by-word. Again, this

work may, at times, appear pedantic when compared to rhetorical theory heavy in invention strategies. But the Enlightenment had a different set of concerns. With Empiricism, invention came from within, or from God, and rhetoric operated not as a *technê*, but as *epistêmê*—an organized, empirical system of knowledge.

### ***Conclusion***

I believe that early nineteenth century America offers a stronger example than late eighteenth century Britain of how popular psychology and scientific models of the body met in rhetorical practice, particularly as so much of rhetorical, scientific, and religious theory were transatlantic in nature. The British Methodist movement never met the intensity that the American Methodist movement did in the early nineteenth century, just as literacy among women and men grew drastically in response to the civic Republicanism and the expectations of evangelical denominations that expected reading and writing as an integral part of religious practice. According to evangelicals and political idealists alike, to be a good Christian citizen, one needed to be able to participate in a rising textual culture. Thus, written, in conjunction with spoken, rhetoric became vastly important in the early American Republic.

Formal education of the early American Republic was deeply vested in the rhetoric of Hugh Blair, George Campbell, and, later, Richard Whately. However, informal rhetorical education, like that of the American Methodist, also followed Enlightenment rhetorical theory. It was also an intellectually curious era for both women and men. This, paired with the rhetorical practice of the Second Great Awakening and the new Republican government creates a unique environment for studying Enlightenment rhetoric, a period in which highly motivated women and men practiced rhetoric for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Additionally, a good deal of transatlantic travel and text trade was religious in nature, with religious periodicals even

in the eighteenth century reaching across the Gulf Stream (Snead, "Print" 94). Transatlantic travel was scientific in nature as well, with Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush carrying Enlightenment ideals from Europe to the Americas. Indeed, the science that Benjamin Rush, the eminent physician Methodist Catherine Garrettson refers to in a letter to her husband, Freeborn, teaches at University of Pennsylvania in the early 1800s is Enlightenment science. His *Lectures on the Mind* in particular uses association psychology, faculty psychology, and even a Burkean sublime to discuss phrenology.<sup>10</sup>

In sum, the purpose of this dissertation is three-fold: 1) to offer a functionally cognitive definition of the canon of style in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in which style is part-and-parcel of knowledge production, 2) to establish the interaction of physiology, early American evangelical Protestantism, and Enlightenment rhetoric, and 3) to position Enlightenment rhetoric as *epistêmê*, rather than *technê*. Through the use of early American Methodist women's religious writings as a case study, my research argues that style is not the "dressing-up" of thought or "ornament" of ideas already conceived, but rather is the canon that facilitates cognition: without proper style, the body cannot take in the sensory information necessary for the mind to associate the correct complex ideas. Thus, without style, cognition does not occur.

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<sup>10</sup> Rush did not mean phrenology in the way that we most often understand it, as the mapping and feeling of the head to predict certain deficiencies of the mind; rather, Rush used the term phrenology to mean physiology.

## Chapter One

### God and Natural Philosophy

On a June day in 1766 (Schofield xiv), Joseph Priestley, best known to us today as the chemist who discovered oxygen, began a set of electrical experiments on animals. He had constructed a battery from glass tubes set in a wooden box, with metal rods and wires strung across the top. This battery was “of considerably greater force than I have yet heard of” (Priestley, *History* 253), and a far cry from the puny charges seventeenth and eighteenth-century natural philosophers<sup>11</sup> gathered by rubbing amber or glass and sealing wax against their coats until enough of a charge built to be put to paper, feathers, and, as Priestley refers to them, “other light bodies” (*History* 86). Priestley spent the month of June shocking cats, dogs, vermin, frogs, and fowl with batteries in sizes ranging from three square feet to sixty-two square feet, directing the voltage to the skull. In one instance, the charge Priestley directed to a cat’s skull passed down along its spine and out its tail—the cat convulsed, its hind legs suddenly paralyzed, a rattling sound coming from its throat. Not yet dead, Priestley shocked the cat again; this time, after a few moments of rapidly pulsing breath, it died (*History* 255). Priestley progressed the same experiment to a larger animal, a dog. The dog was able to walk thirty minutes after being electrocuted, but saliva dripped from its mouth and what Priestley calls “a flux of rheum” filled its eyes (*History* 256). He shot the dog and extracted its eyes, looking for visible damage from the electricity. He found none. In this, he seems disappointed—he found the parts of the eye transparent, and, “as far as could be judged, in their right state” (*History* 256). At the end of June, Priestley decided that he, and the animal life around him, had had enough. While Priestley

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<sup>11</sup> Natural philosophers refers to scientists.

wanted to know more still about how an electrical charge changed the biology and chemistry of bodies, he decided “it was paying too dear for philosophical discoveries, to purchase them at the expense of humanity” (*History* 259).

When Joseph Priestley was at work, it was not in his relatively sedate and book-filled study that the popular early Romantic poet Anna Laetitia Barbauld describes,<sup>12</sup> with old books, Plotmeyer the First’s globe, maps, sermons, and jars full of lightning, but rather Priestley in the kitchen or in the back garden shed, a plank table in front of him, a frog pinned, the skin and muscles of its thorax cut open, peeled back to expose the lungs (*History* 257). Priestley placing the node of a battery to the frog’s head, the lungs, heart, and intestines jerking from its body while the heart beat and the lungs inflated a few last times. Priestley, the Dissident theologian, the rhetorician, and the disinterested gentleman scientist, not preaching or founding Unitarianism or even teaching grammar to his young students at the Daventry or Warrington Academy, but at work with his scientific experiments, wondering at the effects of electricity on the body, dissecting the blue-filmed eye balls of the earlier mentioned dog, to understand how a sensory organ like the eyes might be biologically and chemically connected to the rest of the body (*History* 256).

Remembering Priestley’s experiments with electricity on animals may be a particularly unappetizing way to enter into our discussion of style, but with this gruesome moment of eighteenth-century science, we can see the interest of in bodies—particularly what happened to bodies when they were plied with other substances—electricity, gases, poison. In the process of identifying phlogiston, today what we recognize as oxygen, Priestley trapped mice and other animals underneath jars, created a vacuum, and watched and recorded when and how the animals

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<sup>12</sup> “An Inventory of the Furniture in Dr. Priestley’s Study” by Anna Laetitia Baurbauld.

died. This process is the subject of yet another Anna Laetitia Barbauld poem,<sup>13</sup> one that invited critique from Samuel Taylor Coleridge for sentimentality, as the poem personifies a mouse pleading for mercy from underneath the glass (Bellanca 48). Science in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was an endeavor of self-study, invention, engineering, gentlemanly curiosity, and some cases, the destruction of bodies. Yet, this destruction wasn't for the perverse pleasure of animal torture; while Anna Laetitia Barbauld felt moved enough by the jarred mice Priestley used in his experiments to write a poem, she did not feel compelled to stop it. Likewise, fellow chemist and protégé Humphry Davy submerged minnows in nitrogen-infused water to understand the biological and chemical makeup of minnows and the atmosphere (Davy 80). And while it's obvious to us in the twenty-first century that minnows would not thrive in mercury-infused water, Davy and his contemporaries had no such understanding: what seems like a waste of life now, then seemed necessary to even the most basic understanding of biology and chemistry.

We revisit these summer days in which Priestley conducted his experiments in electricity on animals because what Priestley displays in these experiments is an eighteenth-century ideology of physiology, in which the body and the mind are a mechanical unit, operating in response to the external stimuli of the world. In his description of how he constructed his batteries, Priestley wrote “chemistry and electricity are both conversant about the latent and less obvious properties of bodies” (*History* 79). Chemistry and electricity, in other words, helped Priestley understand those physiological properties of animal and of human bodies that he could not physically see.

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<sup>13</sup> “The Mouse’s Petition” by Anna Laetitia Barbauld.

My definition of style—what is *does*, rather than what it *looks like*—rests on these eighteenth-century physiological properties that amateur scientists such as Priestley wanted desperately to understand. While the specifics of physiological psychology will be addressed in Chapter 3, “Benjamin Rush and the Transatlantic Mind-Body,” this chapter establishes a definition of the new rhetoric and its relationship to the new science and logic. Keeping with the theme of empiricism, the chapter then moves to Thomas Sprat and the desire for a restrained writing style. This call for simplified language is one that John Wesley, Methodism’s founder, carried to his followers, simultaneously flirting with electrical experiments and enthusiastic practice. Before going into an analysis of Priestley’s rhetorical theory, I argue that although the members of the Royal Society joined science to religion in order to lessen accusations of atheism, it is nonetheless essential to recognize that religion, science, and rhetoric existed side-by-side. Indeed, the new science helped re-direct religious rhetoric, orienting preachers and exhorters towards the reaction of the audience (George 93). Last, I will explicate Priestley’s rhetoric and its connections to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century models of the body.

### ***Key Terms***

Several key terms frequent this chapter: empiricism, rhetoric, communication, and *epistêmê* and *technê*. As with any term, meaning fluctuates; or, similar meanings may be represented with different terms. Benjamin Rush, Joseph Priestley, John Locke, John Wesley, George Campbell, and Hugh Blair all had their own nuances in mind when using words such as “empiricism,” or “communication.” I strive here to point out some of the varying uses of empiricism, rhetoric, and communication throughout the dissertation.

There are two strains of empiricism in this dissertation. One strain is John Locke’s, as he conceived of empiricism. The other is Lockean empiricism, as conceived by Methodism’s

founder, John Wesley. Jules David Law offers the categories of “classical empiricism” and “literary reflection” to explain the subtleties between these two strains in *The Rhetoric of Empiricism: Language and Perception from Locke to I. A. Richards*.<sup>14</sup> While Law is more interested in designating modern empiricism (twentieth-century empiricism) from classical empiricism than he is the nuances between Lockean empiricism’s many iterations, his categories are nonetheless useful. Law notes that all empiricism is invested in “experience,” “self-evidence,” and “self-observation” (57); I would add “method” to this list. In addition, reflection is essential to empiricism as “a self-critical procedure, in which perpetual correction and revision (of impression, of language, and of judgments) are more important than the establishing of permanent categories or conditions of knowledge” (Law 14).

Literary reflection, in comparison to classical empiricism, is intentionally informal and indirect, even as it uses experience, self-evidence, self-observation, and method. As Law notes, this is meant to “avoid the dogmatism of schematic investigation” (62). Locke’s empiricism entails stringent methods of recording experience, of judging self-evidence, and of reflecting on self-observation. In contrast, John Wesley’s Lockean empiricism is purposefully more informal and more reliant on internal self-evidence and self-observation (recording dreams, for example) than on external and supposedly reproducible self-evidence and self-observation. In practice, these two forms of empiricism often existed side-by-side in writing practice or blended together, as the scientific and the “literary” were not yet distinct categories.

During the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, there was much debate about the merits (or perhaps more aptly put, the demerits) of rhetoric. Locke’s comments on rhetoric represent this debate well. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he writes,

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<sup>14</sup> I have adopted and adapted Law’s categories here.

“‘Tis evidence how much men love to deceive, and be deceived, since rhetoric, that powerful instrument of error and deceit, has its established professors, is publicly taught, and has always been in great reputation” (214). He likewise calls rhetoric “artificial and figurative application of words” which insinuates, misleads, and cheats the listener or reader (Locke 214). For Locke, to put it mildly, rhetoric is “suspect” (Hudson 47). Whereas rhetoric deceives with the artful use of words, communication transmits knowledge. Edward P.J. Corbett outlines Locke’s communication this way: First, communication’s primary purpose is the transmission of knowledge (“Locke” 425). Much as a computer outputs information into a USB, communication makes known a man’s thoughts to another without any elaboration. Second, it should so smoothly and clearly, with the goal of adding to knowledge (“Locke” 425). Thus, communication in the Enlightenment was akin to, though not quite equal to, the pure transmission of ideas from one person to another for the purpose of knowledge. Rhetoric, for Locke, was communication’s opposite, interested only in moving the audience’s emotions for the rhetor’s personal gain.

An extensive definition of *epistêmê* and *technê* follows next. However, I would like to acknowledge that with regard to these two terms, and with regards to definitions of style and Enlightenment rhetoric, I have found Communication to have a much richer understanding than Rhetoric and Composition. Indeed, Communication scholars such as W.S. Howell, Brian Vickers, Arthur Walzer, among others, have had a perceptible influence with regards to my argument, in, first, offering up *epistêmê* as an alternate (and in Communication, a dominant) interpretation of rhetoric, and second, in grounding eighteenth-century rhetoric within the rhetorical tradition, a tradition with which Joseph Priestley, George Campbell, and Hugh Blair were intimately familiar.

### *The New Rhetoric as Epistêmê*

In defining style as physiological in nature and not as mere ornament, I differentiate the new rhetoric as *epistêmê*, a scientific knowledge, rather than *technê*, an art or a craft.<sup>15</sup> I argue that Enlightenment rhetoricians such as Priestley, George Campbell, and Hugh Blair formulated their rhetorical theory empirically, as a scientific system of communication, not as a means of communication production (much as a windmill makes wind). *Technê* is possibly the more familiar of these two terms: after all, Plato and Gorgias famously squabble over whether rhetoric is a knack (*empeiria*) or an art (*technê*) in the *Gorgias*; likewise, George Kennedy comments in his introduction to Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* that "Modern scholars have tended to attribute to Aristotle the view that rhetoric is a productive art" (16), production, in this case, referring to *technê*. Kennedy feels that Aristotle's true view of rhetoric is more than just a *technê*, and is in fact a mix of the five intellectual arts. However, what concerns us is the first of the five intellectual processes that Aristotle names (the second of which is *technê*): *epistêmê*, or scientific knowledge (Kennedy, *On Rhetoric* 288-289). *Technê* can support and be a part of *epistêmê*; there are portions of the handbook tradition in Joseph Priestley's, George Campbell's, and Hugh Blair's rhetorics. Nonetheless, I turn our focus away from these sections and toward rhetorical theory as a whole. With the new science and the new logic came a new rhetoric as well, one that was inductive, empirical, and systematic in its approach toward the psychological.

In Great Britain, the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries represent a golden-era of scientific endeavor: Robert Hooke and the microscope; Robert Boyle and the air pump; Isaac Newton and the refraction of light; John Arbuthnot and air pressure; Priestley's

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<sup>15</sup> Kelly Pender gives five definitions of *technê*: besides the first definition (a handbook or manual); Pender defines *technê* as variations of the capacity to make something (16).

rival, Antoine Lavoisier and oxygen; Humphry Davy and the voltaic pile. The period was actively engaged in scientific work, and the recording and explaining this scientific work wasn't deductive, as was Aristotle's science or even the science of Renaissance Humanism, using principles and categories to come to larger principles and categories, but instead inductive in nature, rising out of experiment and self-experience. This meant, in a rhetorical example, finding inspiration in one's own experience in order to brainstorm ideas for an oration (induction), rather than to use the classical system of commonplaces to work through possible topics (deduction). With the advent of the seventeenth century, science sought to break away from deduction and Aristotelian taxonomies, or categories of classification. And even though some seventeenth-century scientists continued to use deduction, the writing, so to speak, was on the wall: science was to lean more and more toward the inductive (Markley).

The distinction between induction and deduction did not much factor in to logic (and therefore into science and rhetoric) before John Locke. Previously, induction was just another approach to logic: a lesser-known logic. Lisa Jardine notes in *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* that sixteenth-century method and even Francis Bacon's theory of induction resemble portions of deductive logic—whether an emphasis on universal principles or accessibility of principles (3). Nevertheless, Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*, John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and David Hume's *A Treatise on Human Nature*,<sup>16</sup> would push induction into the spotlight, calling for the rejection of deduction and the syllogism. Locke's work in particular would set down new aims for rhetoric, aims that identified communication as the primary (and perhaps only rightful role) of rhetoric. Locke's rhetoric made

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<sup>16</sup> To name just a few of the influential texts of these authors.

the speaker's thoughts known to the audience, conveyed knowledge, and did so efficiently (Howell, *Eighteenth-Century Logic and Rhetoric* 501).

As George Kennedy argues in *Classical Rhetoric in the Christian and Secular Tradition*, the stress on rhetoric as communication (instead of, for example, developing the understanding of the speaker as well as the listener) matched the needs of modern science (261). On top of reconfiguring rhetoric as communication above all, the new rhetoric turned towards empiricism and away from older models of logic. George Howell identifies seven ways in which the new logic contrasts with the old (*Eighteenth-Century Logic and Rhetoric* 261): however, for our purposes, only the orientation of new logic to scientific inquiry, empiricism, induction, and experiments and observation is relevant. The new rhetoric, claimed by Adam Smith, George Campbell, Hugh Blair, John Witherspoon, and in lesser forms by David Hume, John Lawson, and Joseph Priestly (Howell, *Eighteenth-Century Logic and Rhetoric* 697) used empiricism, particularly observation and experience, as a way to perceive and make sense of the world. However, this was a somewhat flexible world, in which principles and man were not fixed. G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter describes the Lockean understanding of empiricism as man constantly becoming, rather than as man fully shaped from the moment of birth; in this model, man changes and evolves based on experience.

Lockeans denied man was born naturally endowed with a full complement of innate ideas and moral understanding. Experience was all, and experience was derived from the senses and was mediated by the highly somatic mechanism of pleasure and pain. (Rousseau and Porter, "Toward a Natural History" 29)

However, without innate ideas and moral understanding (Thomas Reid would bring these back into Enlightenment rhetoric with his work on commonsense philosophy) the work of the orator

and the writer became much more difficult; the orator/writer could not guarantee a shared moral understanding with his or her audience.

In the new rhetoric, ideas largely came by way of induction, through a person's senses and then through that person's perception and interpretation of sensory information. Enlightenment rhetorician George Campbell explains the difference between induction and deduction below in a passage from *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*.

Logical truth consisteth in the conformity of our conceptions to their archetypes in the nature of things. This conformity is perceived by the mind, either immediately on a bare attention to the ideas under review, or mediately by a comparison of these with other related ideas. Evidence of the former kind is called intuitive; of the latter, deductive. (35)

The new rhetoric took inductive logic, a logic brought about through empiricism and self-perception and interpretation rather than comparisons between things, as its means to communication. Added to the use of inductive logic, new rhetoric also stressed simple language and a higher standard of argumentation—one that moved away from comparisons such as the syllogism. Thus, the new rhetoric is inductive in reasoning, is simple in language, and is empirical in understanding.

Science and rhetoric had integrated purposes in the eighteenth century. While today the popular characterization of science is as hard, indisputable facts, and with rhetoric as the political manipulation of emotion and ideas, in contrast, the eighteenth century understood rhetoric as essential to science. For Priestley and other natural philosophers, to experiment and then to keep the resulting information to oneself was useless. Rather, the point of natural philosophy was communication. In this way, by sharing what they had found, by repeating and adjusting past

experiments, by questioning and coming to new conclusions, natural philosophers could build a body of knowledge. And for this body of knowledge to be possible, and to be accurate, communication was necessary.<sup>17</sup> Rhetoric, in this era, became more than the classical *technê*, becoming instead *epistêmê*: rhetoric as the “science of communication.” However, before rhetoric could become the science of communication, it first had to be decided what the standards of communication were.

### ***God and Natural Philosophy***

The English Civil War ended in 1660, marking the beginning of Restoration; seven years later, clergyman Thomas Sprat (who was not a scientist himself) published the *History of the Royal Society*, a text that Brian Vickers labels “propaganda” (*English Science* 170).

Nevertheless, whether or not it operated as propaganda for the Royal Society, the *History* would mark the future of scientific method and writing. Sprat’s essay reads like a how-to guide for science; he names what, who (only a gentleman), and how natural philosophers should set up experiments, use method, and write up their results. Sprat even concludes the text with a note to the reader that if science fails, it is not his fault—he provided a sound method for natural philosophy, and “They will have reason in all times to conclude That the long barrenness of *Knowledge* was not caus’d by the corrupt method which was taken” (181). Indeed, Sprat says, the old philosophy was limited and “could only bestow on us some barren Terms and Notions,” but the new philosophy will expand scientific knowledge to everything in the world (182).

Not merely a chastisement of extravagance in language, or a proposal for scientific method, the *History* represents, according to Vickers, a practice in placating the Church of England. In talking of Sprat’s text Vickers argues, “we see the Baconian injunctions, endlessly

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<sup>17</sup> See Priestley’s discussion of Franklin’s letter to Collinson (Priestley, *Experiments* 59).

repeated by all adherents to the New Scientists in the seventeenth century, that knowledge of reality must be initially be read off from the external world through sense, to the understanding, and not invented by the imagination” (“Royal” 5). These injunctions are paired with a careful insistence by Sprat (and previously by Francis Bacon) that science is, at best, an attempt to better comprehend God’s world, not man’s (Vickers, “Royal” 5).

In the seventeenth century, it was a danger to even hint at atheism. Aphra Behn’s 1688 translator’s preface to Fontenelle’s *A Discovery of New Worlds* demonstrates the care that writers and editors took to distance themselves from any suggestion of heresy in scientific works. Behn’s preface discusses problems of consistency between Christian scripture and Copernicus’ system. After arguing that the religious matters should be attended to by the church, while matters of science should be left to scholars who can somehow reconcile scripture and natural philosophy, she writes, “I intend no Reflection on Religion by this Essay; which being no Matter of Faith, is free for every one to believe, or not to believe, as they please” (Behn). Similarly, Bacon in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries calls for science in the service of God, partly to ward against accusations of heresy, as religious tension lessened theology became repressed into science (Markley 184). G.S. Rousseau and Roy Porter characterize the Enlightenment as being “almost for the first time” a period in which scientific thinking could and did slide very near to atheism (“Toward a Natural History” 31-32). And by the time of the Romantics in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, natural philosophy becomes, among some populations, a substitution for God. However, among others, such as Joseph Priestley, the link between God and natural philosophy remained strong.

Whether or not science should serve God, and whether or not science should be separate from theology were points of tension. Yet, even as natural philosophers acknowledged the value

of empiricism over mystical evidence, they also blurred the lines between science and religion in others. William Whiston, whom Richard H. Popkin characterizes as a “scientific theologian” in his preface to *William Whiston: Honest Newtonian* (xiii), was Newton’s contemporary and an anti-trinitarian.<sup>18</sup> He argued for the superiority of natural, empirical data over miracles in addressing unexplained phenomenon (51). At the same time, miracles had a place in Whiston’s scientific system. Both Whiston and Newton applied empirical principles to religious texts, with Whiston particularly interested in corroborating God’s ultimate control over all natural phenomena. Likewise, George Cheyne, physician and author of *The English Malady*, combined his pietist beliefs with an empirical outlook, creating a sort of Newtonian mysticism (Gibbons 23). And then there’s William Robertson, a member and leader of the Presbyterian church, who operated out of a “human science” model. Robertson wrote histories of Scotland and America (Withers 153) and was intensely interested in the nature of the “savage.” And although these men practiced natural philosophy alongside their religious beliefs and often integrated the two, these nonetheless existed in a delicate and uneasy relationship.

In much the same way as Behn’s preface gently argues for a separation between matters of religion and natural philosophy while at the same time acknowledging that religion is paramount, Sprat’s *History* “was a sound way to remove from science the stigma of prying into God’s secret ways” (Vickers, “Royal” 62). Sprat’s experiment-driven clear prose model is familiar to any of us, who, in elementary school, had to add water, drop-by-drop, above the rim of a glass in order to understand surface tension, or to swing a pendulum at different lengths and weights, writing all of our observations into descriptive, precise sentences. Sprat lays out an

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<sup>18</sup> Whiston believed that there was little Biblical support for Christ, God, and the Holy Ghost as one entity and as separate equal entities (Force 2).

experimental method for amateur gentlemen scientists as well as a way to communicate the experimentation method used and the results of it. In doing so, extravagance and ornament were to be avoided.

They [natural philosophers] have therefore been most rigorous in putting in execution the only Remedy that can be found for this *extravagance*: and that has been a constant Resolution to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style, to return back to the primitive purity and shortness when men deliver'd so many *things* almost in an equal number of *words*. (Sprat 171)

Reading from outside of the context of the late seventeenth century, Sprat seems to indicate a complete rejection by natural philosophers of any style other than the plain style and of rhetoric in general. Sprat describes the scientific writing style as “Rational, experimental, coherent, balanced, clear, easy, solid, fruitful” (Vickers, *English Science* 12); but, as Brian Vickers points out, the style of science writing at the time was anything but clear, easy, and coherent. Rather than a depiction of contemporary science writing, Sprat’s *History* represents the ideal of scientific communication, an ideal that was yet to be. Part of this ideal was the plain style, a style ironically to be equally touted by natural philosophers and religious enthusiasts.

Whereas Sprat embraced the plain style for clarity in scientific communication (this clarity is essential to a natural philosopher’s ability to replicate and verify another’s experiment), evangelicals embraced the plain style for the greater number of converts it won. When it came to preaching, John Wesley believed in a plain style and an avoidance of enthusiastic display. He also believed in an empirical introspection that would take place orally (in class meetings, camp meetings, and one-on-one) and textually. Chapter 2 will explore the textual practice of this empirical introspection, termed “spiritual literacy,” by Vicki Tolar Burton. In contrast, these

paragraphs explore Wesley's, and early Methodism's, relationship with empiricism. This relationship, which David Hempton characterizes as "tense," was one of Enlightenment, Lockean empiricism and what, at surface level, appeared to be an undisciplined religious fervor—that is, enthusiasm.

David Hempton, Henry D. Rack, and Phyllis Mack all name Wesley as an Enlightenment thinker deeply invested in empiricism. Yet, Rack qualifies his characterization in *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*, noting that Wesley's empiricism did have limitations (33). Wesley's Lockean empiricism is of the "literary reflection" variety, more informal and indirect, especially when it comes to the spiritual writing practices he encouraged in his followers. Some examples of how Wesley's empiricism appear in Wesley's *Primitive Physick*, a home medical manual similar to those published in the American colonies and later in the early American Republic. Rack notes that the manual primarily offers receipts (home remedy recipes) without mentioning or speculating on potential causes of disease (344). Indeed, in examining Wesley's larger body of work, Rack observes that Wesley describes, but does not explain. Wesley seems comfortable with ending his empiricism with description, believing that science's purpose is to admire and adore God's works (Rack 348), but not to necessarily explain the mysteries of these works. Wesley and his followers sought to see and know God's works, but not to unravel them.

For Wesley, the essential component of empiricism was sensible experience. To know God meant to have sensory experiences of God. These sensory experiences did not have to be outwardly physical religious displays of enthusiasm, but rather could be inward and intimate: dreams, sensations, or sudden overwhelming emotion. In his discussion of Methodist textual

practice, particularly the “ubiquitous” journals and memoirs, Hempton remarks that the structure and practice of the dissident group came about through empiricism.

The characteristic features of Methodist spirituality—its tendency to morbid introspection, its ruthless self-examination, and its compulsion to share and tell—are all products of its Lockean emphasis on sensible experience. (Hempton 52)

Hempton argues that the joining of empiricism and religion was possible because of the Methodist belief in divine, daily intervention (54). Methodists expected God to be sensibly present in their lives; from this sensory experience, it was then Methodists’ responsibility to know God and to understand His Will through oral and textual practice.

It would seem, at least in some ways, that John Wesley worked at cross-purposes with his predecessor Thomas Sprat. Both believed in the value of plain speech and writing, but whereas Sprat and The Royal Society aligned themselves with the Church of England to protect themselves against charges of heresy, John Wesley fully believed science’s only purpose was God’s works. Science and religion existed together in an uneasy relationship, often arguably contradicting one another. Yet, Francis Bacon, Puritan Americans, and David Hartley all saw science as being in the service of God: science exposed to us more clearly the Will of God than reading alone could. Once the Will of God was understood, it was our responsibility to share this Will with others; and, in an era of Protestant evangelicalism, rhetoric was the means to sharing this will. Likewise, the founding of religiously-based universities and the development of their scientific curriculum in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries was meant for one purpose: understanding God’s Word.

### *Priestley's Rhetoric and Models of the Mind/Body*

Whereas John Wesley linked empiricism and spiritual enlightenment in religious practice, other religious figures of the time practiced empiricism, but did not necessarily seek to spread this practice to their congregants. Nonetheless, the purpose of science remained focused on God. For all of these clergymen, as well as for evangelical Christians, science could be the means to understanding God's Will, with rhetoric being the way to communicate and persuade this Will to others—the very job of the preacher. In Great Britain, Joseph Priestley was a Dissident preacher, rhetorician, and chemist; Hugh Blair was a Presbyterian minister, rhetorician, and an amateur linguist; George Campbell was a Presbyterian minister, rhetorician, and what we would think of today as a cognitive psychologist. In North America, evangelical leader Jonathon Edwards more than dabbled in science, while his grandson Timothy Dwight was a Presbyterian minister, rhetorician, the President of Yale, and an amateur scientist interested in light and the phenomenon of vision.

This section examines a particular Enlightenment religious, scientific, and rhetorical figure, Joseph Priestley. For Priestley, science was subordinate to religion; he was interested in how science could make for a more Christian world. As Isaac Kramnick notes, “Priestley approached the polity, or Howard prisons, or Percival hospitals, or Wedgwood factories, as problems of mechanics in which active intervention through scientific manipulation of circumstance—in other words, education—could produce ‘improvements’” (85). The theory behind this “scientific manipulation of circumstance” was the same theory that would shape Priestley's rhetoric: the materialist psychology of physician and theologian David Hartley. This section uses Priestley and Hartley to show how the boundaries of mind and body blurred in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, in science and rhetoric.

Aside from Debra Hawhee and Cory Holding's 2010 *Rhetorica* article on Priestley, Gilbert Austin, and material rhetoric, little work on Priestley acknowledges the importance of the mind and body (and their relationship) in his rhetoric. Ann George's work considers association theory and faculty psychology but does not address issues of the body. Michael G. Moran's work includes association theory as well as what contributions Priestley made to rhetorical theory, particularly to scientific writing. But again, Moran largely leaves out the body. Similarly to Moran's work, Charles Bazerman's considers Priestley's impact on scientific (or technological) writing and argumentation. Isaac Kramnick's *Republicanism and Bourgeois Radicalism: Political Ideology in Late Eighteenth-Century England and America* investigates the relationship between reform, Hartleian psychology, and education. Kramnick does recognize thought as mental and bodily, but his analysis of this ends with reform. Indeed, these texts, besides Hawhee and Holding, do not see monism (a model in which the mind and body both configured into the mental processes) as inherent to Priestley's rhetorical theory. However, Priestley presents in his rhetoric an empirical body; made up of matter (a matter from crystallized lattices of particles) and sensory. This body would be integral in the arousal and association of the passions as well as in the association of ideas, both "mental" processes. In other words, Priestley's rhetoric erased the division between mind and body.

Priestley believed in "the penetrability of matter" (Hawhee and Holding 269), a belief that structured his work in science and in rhetoric. Eighteenth-century science imagined matter as being mechanical and corpuscular in nature, with bodies having automatic reactions to the minute particulate that both made up matter and moved through it—thus, electricity could better help Priestley understand how particles passed through the aetherial matter of the atmosphere to animal bodies; once it entered the body, Priestley could better know how the body, as a

mechanism, reacted. Perhaps the best way to understand eighteenth-century ideas of matter is to use the heated iron example from David Hartley's description of Newton's work. When an iron, hot from the blacksmith's fire, glowed, it wasn't because of a chemical reaction in the metal brought on by heat, but rather because the iron was emitting light particles (Allen 94). Similarly, Hawhee and Holding argue, "matter is incorporated by sense" (279); however, Hawhee and Holding position matter as passively being emitted and received, but also actively moving through and into bodies. Robert E. Schofield contends that David Hartley was not a materialist; for Hartley, matter was passive and incapable of sensation (55). As Priestley avidly celebrated Hartley's theories, I question to what extent matter might be active in Priestley's rhetoric.

In their discussion of Newton's observations of coal, they report that in the instance of seeing burning coal "the seer's constitution changes with coal light" (Hawhee and Holding 279). Hawhee and Holding reference the idea that light was held, at least temporarily, by a body or object it encounters. Priestley, for example, explains the image of a flame which stays impressed into your vision for a moment after you close your eyes or extinguish the flame (Hawhee and Holding 278). For Newton and Priestley, bodies, whether the sun or a human body, emitted and received. In this way, the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century experience of the world was one of constant reciprocal give and take by bodies—what Rousseau and Porter refer to as "the two-way traffic between the mind and body" ("Towards a Natural History" 18).

Priestley, like other eighteenth-century reformers, stressed the importance of work and a healthy moral environment for those at a lower social level. His rhetoric represents both the practicalities of attempting to teach young boys and girls the basics of sentence-level

composition, as his textbook for the Warrington Academy,<sup>19</sup> the *Rudiments of Grammar* does, and the more theoretical concerns of oratory and writing with his *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*. Yet, as practical as Priestley might be in advising his young charges that using Latin categories and rules for English vernacular writing is problematic, especially in a language so unfixed as English (Priestley, *Grammar* vii), or in his declaration that although good breeding is important and should be adhered to, women should not be afraid to read impolite texts, Priestley's larger rhetorical theory hinges on the complex and intricate Hartleian theory of mind.

Priestley was highly influenced by the association theory of physician David Hartley's *Observations on Man*, so much so that Priestley, with his condensed edition of Hartley's work, single-handedly brought Hartley's work back into popularity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century after a short waning of interest (Allen 376). Priestley streamlined Hartley's original text, but the essence is the same: Hartley believed, in the Lockean tradition, that ideas came from an intake of sensory information that was carried through the body by the vibration of nerve bundles. In the process of moving from nerve bundle to nerve bundle, sensory information would have to make an associative leap. These leaps allowed the body to create ideas physiologically within the mind. In other words, cognition, or the process of creating knowledge and understanding, was in fact a process of the body. Michael G. Moran, in claiming that "Perhaps the most important theoretical basis for Priestley's discussion of style comes the work of David Hartley" (1), describes Hartleian associationism this way:

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<sup>19</sup> The Warrington Academy's purpose was to educate the children of Dissenters; at this time, those who did not belong to the Church of England could not attend Oxford or Cambridge or many primary schools.

When an object acted on the senses, this action caused vibrations of infinitesimal medullary [the inner part of the brain, the spinal marrow, and the nerves] particles, and these vibrations conveyed sensations to the brain. Repeated sensations leave in the mind vestiges, types, or images of the object, and these vestiges become the simple ideas of sensation that the mind uses to create complex ideas. Once the mind is supplied with ideas, associations can begin. (Moran, “Psychology of Style” 3)

Put into context with corpuscular science, the process works like this. An object, any object, would emit particles to a sensory organ (perhaps the eye or the ear); when these particles reached the eye or the ear, the nerves would begin to vibrate. Sound and light were physical particles rather than sound and light waves, as we know them to be now. Once these vibrations reached the brain, they became an idea, and as this idea went from bundle to bundle of nerves within the body, it became associated. In this way, the mind and body are linked as a mechanical unit, with the body as the vehicle for the creation and experience of ideas.

Unsurprisingly, Priestley’s rhetorical theory represents a model of the mind and the body that can likewise be affected by outside elements, in which the mind and body are a physiological unit. Priestley even moves through his discussion of style by telling us that “We have hitherto examined what we may call the bones, muscles, and nerves of a composition; we now come to the covering of this body, to describe the external lineaments, the colour, the complexion, and the graceful attitude of it” (*A Course* 72). Later in Priestley’s 1777 edition of *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism*, Priestley references association theory: he writes “according to Dr. Hartley’s theory, those sensations [passions and pleasures of the imagination]

consist of nothing more than a congeries or combinations of ideas and sensations” (Priestley, *A Course* 72-73).

Just as David Hartley asks how ideas formed from sensations over the span of a lifetime in *Observations on Man*, Priestley considers the questions the changing state of belief from birth to death in *A Course*. He notes that vivid ideas and emotions produce stronger associations, and are likely to be taken for reality; yet fairy tales, full of vivid ideas and emotions become less believable with age. Priestley provides a mechanically based explanation for this contradiction, arguing that youth have a “stronger association with truth” than with falsehood. Thus, “in reading them [fairy tales], therefore, there is nothing to prevent the object from being conceived to be *ideally present*, and their unexperienced passions are excited mechanically, as by the presence of the like real objects” (Priestley, *A Course* 89). Priestley additionally supplies a cause for the feelings that occur from an individual’s situation, but in reaction to another’s situation.

From the principle of sympathy, which is natural to the human mind, we universally feel ourselves disposed to conform to the feelings, the sentiments, and everything belonging to the situation of those we converse with, and particularly of all those persons who engage much of our attention. (*A Course* 109)

In these two passages, Priestley ponders changes in belief over time and how belief occurs through one particular means, that of sympathy. Priestley returns again to Hartley’s work in order to explain the functions of the mind. Belief, for Priestley, rests on a mechanical and associational model. We believe (and believe more strongly) because our passions “are excited mechanically” and because we associate a set of ideas with real or false objects. Likewise, we feel sympathy through association, molding our beliefs to the beliefs of those around us.

We can likewise see the overtones of Hartleian theory in Priestley's guidebook for his young students, *The Rudiments of Grammar*, as well. In the book's final section, one on style, Priestley instructs his students that:

The correspondence between every person's thoughts and language is perhaps more strict, and universal, than is generally imagined: For since there can be but few perceptions or ideas existing in the human mind, which were not, in their very rise, and first impression, associated with the words that denote them; it is almost impossible, but that ideas and the symbols, or expressions of them, must arise in the mind at the same time; and if any person will but attend to his own mental operations, he will be conscious that, even when he hath no use for words, he cannot so much as meditate or think without them. (46)

For Priestley, language cannot be divorced from association. Nor did Priestley think that the operations of the mind could be divorced from the body.

Moran admits that *A Course of Lectures* "consists of little more than lecture notes not fully fleshed out" ("Joseph Priestley" 184). Yet, Priestley's "lecture notes" would belie not only what Moran refers to as "one of the most important statements of rhetoric based on association psychology in the century" (184), but a rhetoric in which "the body and mind mutually define and co-constitute" (Hawhee and Holding 264). This emphasis on a linked mind-body is so strong that it appears in Priestley's *Grammar* for his young students. For just one example, Priestley uses a passage from Hume, supposedly called "Delicacy of Taste," a passage that positions the body as essential to the development of fine literary taste.

A greater or less relish of those obvious beauties that strike the sense, depends entirely upon the greater or less sensibility of temper; but with regard to the

liberal arts and sciences, a fine taste is really nothing but strong sense, or at least depends so much upon it that they are inseparable. (Priestley, *Grammar* 71)

Hume notes that the capacity for taste can vary from person to person, but he nonetheless goes on to say that the mental process of taste is equivalent to the bodily act of sense. Of course, within this model, association psychology is the means to any idea of taste; just to make a decision of taste, the body, association, and the mind must kick be engaged.

Robert E. Schofield characterizes Priestley as a “practical, working scientist” (50) who had “a quick mind, but not a profound one” (45). As a practical, working scientist, Priestley believed foremost in the value of observation and the superiority of empiricism over art. The opening of Priestley’s *A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* is our first hint that Priestley conceives of rhetoric empirically. As he introduces oratory and its purposes, he notes that great oratory can come from study and observation, not art.

The art of oratory can only consist of rules for the proper use of those materials which must be acquired from various study and observation, of which, therefore, unless a person be possessed, no art of oratory can make him an oratory. (2)

Priestley combines art and observation in this passage. He also addresses the relationship of art and science in *The Rudiments of English Grammar*. Priestley advises his students that language is more art than science. He writes, “Language partakes much of the nature of art, and but little of the nature of science” (58), explaining that language changes with fashion, but science is steady—“the same in all places” (58). Although this statement in the *Grammar* may seem to indicate rhetoric as *technê*, rather than *epistêmê*, this statement is about language in itself, not rhetoric as a system. A few pages later, Priestley critiques the ancient tradition, noting that the Greeks and Romans had to focus on the “arts of Grammar and Rhetoric;” philosophy then was

unsophisticated (61-62). Priestley then goes on to praise “true science,” reminding his young charges that rationality is bound up with science, rather than the changeable and limited nature of art.

Priestley, like other eighteenth-century rhetoricians, began to think of style, the third canon within the classical oratorical system of invention (coming up with ideas), arrangement (the ordering of ideas), style (embellishment), memory (mnemonics), and delivery (methods of projecting an oration), not in terms of the classical “adaptation of suitable words and sentences to the matter devised,” as pseudo-Cicero tells us in the *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* (I.II.3) but in terms of the integrated and mutually dependent persuasive means of association, and in particular, faculty psychology, with imagination, passions, will, and understanding working together to create persuasion. The canon of style wasn’t a mere means of *copia*, in which the same thing could be said hundreds of different ways, but rather the canon that facilitated cognition,<sup>20</sup> and therefore, persuasion. Simply put, eighteenth-century rhetoricians like Priestley felt that a poorly said statement or poorly written sentence could stop persuasion in its tracks. Style wasn’t a canon that added embellishment; it was essential to the very act of communication. Indeed, the term communication denotes a lack of embellishment; with rhetoric as the over-abundance of unessential tropes and figures, style in communication meant supplying the appropriate signs for the transmission of knowledge.

As it was for Thomas Sprat, so too communication was the foremost concern for Priestley. Morality and Republicanism were even tied up in communication. In the passage below, taken from Priestley’s *History of Experiments*, Priestley discusses predicting effects from

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<sup>20</sup> I am using cognition in the 18<sup>th</sup> century sense, in which “cognition” stands for the mental processes.

causes or causes from effects. He does not directly address communication in this portion of the text; yet, he does direct the reader that natural philosophy is about providing society with new and useful information (and hopefully solutions as well).

By this means, the true philosopher, knowing what will be the result of putting every thing, which the present system exhibits, into a variety of circumstances, is a matter of all the powers of nature, and can apply them to all the useful purposes of like. Thus does knowledge, as Lord Bacon observes, become power; and thus is the philosopher capable of providing, in a more effectual manner, both for his own happiness and for that of others; and thereby approving himself a good citizen and a useful member of society. (Priestley, *History* 12-13)

Priestley felt that effective communication was a civic duty. I should add here that communication needed to be accurate and effective. In the shadow of the English Civil War, political instability was a real threat. Sprat's call for plain, accurate, and effective language was meant to circumvent instability, an instability that dissident groups such as Priestley's Unitarianism (according to those in the orthodox church) fomented. Nonetheless, Priestley's conception of communication is in the tradition of Sprat.

As with his experiments on animals, Joseph Priestley's interest in Hartleian association stems from how humans biologically and chemically come to have ideas and to imbue these ideas with meaning. For Priestley, the mind and body were an integrated system, so much so that he believed the soul was housed in the body (Schofield 65). This at the time controversial belief would eventually drive him from his homeland. After a series of property damage and protests outside his London home, Priestley and his family immigrated to the supposed utopia of rural Pennsylvania in 1794.

## ***Conclusion***

When I think of Priestley's understanding of physiology (the biological and chemical makeup of the body) I picture myself back in elementary school science, peering at particles and cells under a microscope with the enthusiasm of Robert Hooke, the engineer of that spectacular piece of equipment enjoyed by many an amateur ten-year old scientist, who wrote in his *Micrographia* that "Our microscope will easily inform us that the whole mass consists of an infinite company of small Boxes or Bladders of Air" (118). And while Hooke spends a great deal of time in his *Micrographia* obsessing over the beauty and intricate detail, at the microscopic level, of a fly foot, or the "proturbent eyes" of an ant he had doused in brandy (129-131), it's science at an even smaller level that concerns Priestley's rhetoric. Back in our elementary science classroom, we're looking at particles under a microscope that, like atoms, repel one another, and in repelling each other, make all other particles vibrate. And while Priestley and his mentor, David Hartley, couldn't see these particles, they imagined these particles and the nerve bundles that they comprised as being the means to how sensory information became ideas within the body.

What do Priestley, his rhetoric, his religion, and his science have to do with early nineteenth-century America? Much more than we might think. While we cannot trace a direct link between Priestley's rhetorical theory and early American rhetorical education, Priestley's rhetorical theory and his championing of physician David Hartley's association theory did impact the Romantic movement, Benjamin Franklin, and the famous early nineteenth-century American physician, Benjamin Rush. Rush would teach association psychology at the University of Pennsylvania medical school in the early 1800s (Allen 2). In addition, while Priestley's

rhetorical work was not widely read in early nineteenth-century America, the rhetorical work of Priestley's fellow Enlightenment rhetoricians, Hugh Blair and George Campbell were. Rather Priestley, his science, and his rhetoric make useful tools for showing the interaction of religion, science, and rhetoric. Priestley, in short, was the most obvious appropriator of Hartley's *Principle of Association* in his rhetoric, though not the only one.

Rhetoric in the early American Republic, both at the post-secondary level and in self-study, was largely the rhetoric of the Scottish Enlightenment. Americans read full texts of Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, as well as adaptations and compilations, along with George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Rhetoric was not a subject merely studied in secondary school or in college, but was a subject for all Christians, working to persuade others of their religious convictions. Indeed, while a high number of American women and men were illiterate at the start of early nineteenth century, this drastically changed by 1830 (Kerber 193). Both church and state during lauded rhetorical learning, with religious denominations creating special schools to teach literacy and rhetoric to both the young and the old; as a result, it is no surprise that by 1830 we see a drastic increase in the production and preservation of women's writings. Under the influence of the religious revival of the Second Great Awakening and early American Republican values, women and men became active readers and writers, working for God and for country.

A reluctant American by the end of his life, Joseph Priestley, though little read in terms of rhetoric in the early American Republic (though his *History of Experiments in Electricity* was adopted at Yale for classroom use in the 1780s) (Schofield xxxix), was nonetheless influential on the early American Republic. Isaac Kramnick writes "[Thomas] Jefferson's millenarian vision of science and scientists was derived in part from Priestley's works," in addition to Priestley's

education theory being “influential in Jefferson’s planning of the University of Virginia” (Kramnick 72). A dead Priestley also unwittingly was the fuel for the fire of Adams’s and Jefferson’s feud beginning in 1813, when his letters referencing Adams and Jefferson were posthumously published (Johnson 207). Yet despite these American connections, my purpose in using Priestley’s rhetoric and science is not to argue that Priestley’s rhetoric was an American rhetoric, but rather to comprehend how eighteenth-century European rhetoric, particularly Scottish Enlightenment rhetoric, connected the mind with the body. In looking at Priestley’s rhetorical theory and his experiments with animals, I am interested in cognition, what I define in the eighteenth-century sense as mental processes.

Priestley’s scientific work, his rhetorical theory, and his commitment to Hartleian theory shape my approach to the rhetoric of George Campbell and Hugh Blair. Read without an understanding of an integrated mind-body and association theory, Campbell and Blair’s catalogues of potential style problems may seem superficial. Yet, set beside Enlightenment models of the body and Hartleian psychology (also referred to as physiological psychology), their emphasis on small details makes sense. After all, if communication is dependent on sensory information and chains of association, much can go wrong. Sensory information might be the wrong kind, or it might be presented in an incorrect order. This will then create unintended chains of association, perhaps leading the hearer or reader to ideas that either aren’t persuasive or aren’t what the speaker or writer intended.

This chapter explored several themes pertinent to my definition of style. First, that the new rhetoric, which includes the work of George Campbell and Hugh Blair, operated as *epistêmê*, a scientific system for communication, rather than as *technê*, a craft or an art. This new rhetoric was both a way to make an argument, in the case of Campbell, Blair, and Priestley, and

to come to a realization, in the case of Wesley. Second, although Sprat and Bacon linked science to religion in order to divorce science from charges of atheism, others such as Priestley continued to subordinate science to God. Priestley and Benjamin Rush both believed that Enlightenment science could and should aid God's millennial vision, and built their ideologies of education around Hartleian theory. Last, the mind and body operated in concert, building ideas from sensory information.

## Chapter Two

### Catherine Livingston Garrettson and Methodist Women's Rhetorical Practices

It could have been a better start to Methodism in America: what is not openly marked in the archive,<sup>21</sup> but is openly acknowledged within the United Methodist church is that John Wesley, the founder, was prone to women troubles. While on mission with his brother Charles in the state of Georgia, Wesley became enamored with a young Miss Sophia Hopkey, later to become Sophia Hopkey Williamson; she refused him. In turn, Wesley refused her holy communion. Incensed, the community ran Wesley and his brother Charles out of town (Hammond 267). Wesley wrote in his journal that “In my return to England, January 1738, being in imminent danger of death and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief and that the gaining a true, living faith, was the one thing needful for me” (Wesley 36). Wesley would never return to America. Instead, it was through his vast writings, his brother Charles’s hymns, and his ordaining of Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke as bishops that John Wesley cast the shape of what was to become, in the early nineteenth century, America’s largest Protestant denomination (Wigger, “Taking Heaven” 168).

The previous chapter introduced a definition of the new Enlightenment science and rhetoric and proposed Scottish Enlightenment rhetorical theory as *epistêmê*, a system of knowledge, in addition to exploring the connection between scientific writing and the plain style and amateur natural philosopher, clergyman, and rhetorician Joseph Priestley’s relationship with physician-theologian David Hartley’s association psychology. This chapter jumps chronologically and geographically to women’s religiously-influenced rhetorical practice, a period in which, as we shall see from Chapter 3, early America was rife with Scottish

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<sup>21</sup> It is referred to in the archival record, rather comically, as his “failed mission.”

Enlightenment ideals: propriety, physiological psychology, and empiricism. It makes this jump on the one hand, to trace the two most influential sets of historical documents for this definition of style: Joseph Priestley’s rhetorical and physiological theories and early American Methodist texts. Indeed, these two sets of documents sparked my interest in the physiological and what it might have to do with style. On the other hand, this jump emphasizes the transatlantic, reciprocal trade in ideas during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In examining transatlantic notions of physiological psychology and Enlightenment style slowly through several chapters, I hope to create for the reader a “thick description” of the scientific and religious ideologies that both shaped and were shaped by lived experience.

This chapter does not seek to create a linear relationship between the European Enlightenment and evangelical American Methodist rhetorical practice. Rather, in examining the relationship of mind and body within this period’s evangelical rhetorical practice, the integrated and mutually serving nature of the Enlightenment mind and body becomes clear. I proceed by arguing that rhetorical practice, for women, as well as men, was common in the early American Republic; in addition, treatments of style appeared in Methodist periodicals sold on horseback to local converts. Next, using Jane Donawerth’s concept of a women’s rhetorical tradition, I map the common stylistic features of women’s rhetorical practice in written correspondence. Moving to larger religious practices of reading and writing, I take the concept of *epistêmê* and apply it to John Wesley’s empirical spiritual journaling, in which Methodist converts were directed not just to record results—their experiences, dreams, and visions—but to use empirical evidence, by way of rhetorical practice, to come to knowledge. Last, I then purpose that Methodist enthusiasm exhibits the mind-body connection present in physiological psychology.

Catherine Livingston Garrettson, an eighteenth and early nineteenth century American Methodist woman, acts as the central case study for this chapter. With her prolific unpublished journals and correspondence, Garrettson is one of the best records we have of women's religious rhetorical practice in the early American Republic. Well-educated and the wife of itinerant Methodist preacher, Freeborn Garrettson, Garrettson is the touchstone for us of what rhetoric and religion would have been like in this period; for a woman, and even for men of the era, Garrettson's education and literacy were unique. However, her spiritual experience was not. For biographical information, as well as transcripts of her early spiritual journals, I rely on Methodist historian Diane Lobody's dissertation, "Lost in an Ocean of Love: The Mystical Writings of Catherine Livingston Garrettson." Like for many women of the early American Republic, religion was Garrettson's vehicle to an intellectual, active life. What's more, Methodism called her to it.

Garrettson is an unusual woman. Indeed, Diane Lobody feels that Garrettson is a woman who would break through gender boundaries, no matter what the age: "Had she reached maturity only a few generations after she did," Lobody writes, "chances are likely that she would have been building mission schools in Burma, or smashing up saloons in Kansas. The problem for Garrettson was that for a woman of her place and time, opportunities to stretch beyond the boundaries defined by gender did not abound" (Lobody 43). Unlike Lobody, I am wary of characterizing Garrettson as a woman who sought (or would have sought, given greater opportunity) to actively defy gender boundaries. Nonetheless, it is clear that Garrettson desired something different than her pre-defined role in life; the daughter of an elite family, she turned away from a comfortable life to practice her chosen religion and to marry a man of whom her family disapproved.

Although Garrettson was the product of an unusual education for women of eighteenth and early nineteenth century America with her classical education and extensive breadth of reading, her work nonetheless exhibits what Lobody calls “the religious tendencies of the early American Republic” (Lobody 3). Garrettson forms the central example of my study simply because the archival record of the late eighteenth and very early nineteenth century is limited when it comes to women—Garrettson’s collection, preserved most likely both out of deference to her own works and the enormous influence of her husband, Freeborn Garrettson, on the astounding spread of American Methodism, consists of spiritual journals, correspondence to family and friends, dream and travel journals, miscellaneous writings that included funerary speeches, and quote books is un-matched even by her male contemporaries. There is no doubt that early on Garrettson’s family’s prosperity aided her in her writing practice; however, after her marriage, her writing continued, though curbed by the time-consuming responsibilities of marriage, motherhood to daughter and future author Mary Garrettson, and hostess to the East Coast’s itinerancy system (Lobody 67).

Part of the difficulty of doing research in the early American Republic is the dearth and selectivity of preserved material culture—prior to the 1830s and the American printing and publication boom, our knowledge of texts (particularly texts by women) is scant.<sup>22</sup> Thus, a great

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<sup>22</sup> Several scholarly texts form my basis of understanding when it comes to the early American Republic; Linda Kerber’s *Women of the Republic*, Joyce Appleby’s *Inheriting the Revolution* were particularly helpful in establishing the larger political and economic context of women and men after the years of the Revolution and before 1830. John H. Wigger’s *Taking Heaven By Storm*, Nathan O. Hatch’s *The Democratization of American Christianity*, and Lisa Shaver’s *Beyond the Pulpit* provide Protestant evangelical sects’ material and oral practice during the

deal of scholarship that addresses material practice or women's rhetorical practice in the nineteenth century works with archival and published texts after 1830—for example, Richard Brodhead's *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth Century America* treats literacy and authorship largely after 1840. Likewise, Catherine Hobbs's *Nineteenth-Century Women Learn to Write*, as well as David Paul Nord's *Faith in Print* and *Communities of Journalism*, largely treat material practice after the print culture boom of the 1830s. Thus, for much of my knowledge of early nineteenth-century American religious writing practice, particularly with regard to women, I turn to Vicki Tolar Burton's<sup>23</sup> work with eighteenth-century English Methodist writing, and Lisa Shaver's work on women's rhetorical practice outside of "public" settings.

In comparison to their British counterparts, American Methodists may seem lacking in intellectual breadth. While John Wesley and his followers were surrounded by the intellectual curiosity and industrial development of the European Enlightenment, American Methodists outside of urban population centers had little opportunity for such influence. Nonetheless, I contend that intellectual thought was extant in the early American Republic, and the evidence of this is located in this period's material and rhetorical practice. American Methodist intellectual activity ranged from complex theological discussions to mystical experience and to global

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Second Great Awakening. Adding to this specialized knowledge of Protestant evangelical material practice, Trish Loughran's *The Republic in Print*, Cathy Davidson's edited collection *Reading in America*, and Hugh Amory and David D. Hall's *The History of the Book: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* catalogue the publication, distribution, and reception of texts in early America.

<sup>23</sup> In her early publications, she is listed as Vicki Tolar Collins.

geography and new scientific discovery; this activity, while imbued with evangelism, was hardly simplistic in nature. This perceived “lack” is most likely a result of, first, limited literacy for women and men of any color as Americans entered the nineteenth century, and, second, a vernacular rhetorical practice that mixed high and low culture, the spiritual and the bawdy (Hatch). Using “no-holds-barred appeals, overt humor, strident attack, graphic application, and intimate personal experience” Methodists would convert a half million by 1830 (Hatch 57, 3). Concurrently, the literacy rate would grow to 90 percent for white women and men (Kelly, *Private* 10). After all, as Lisa Shaver notes, “American Methodists inherited their commitment and many of their approaches to publishing from John Wesley” (10); thus, their material and rhetorical practice took on, in effect, Enlightenment principles.

British and American Methodism are often presented as being separate entities from the ordaining of Coke and Asbury onward.<sup>24</sup> This is true at a fundamental level: on its own continent, and in its own historical, economic, and political context, American Methodism became its own governing body, discrete from British Methodism after the death of John Wesley. The nineteenth century saw British Methodism and American Methodism as two sister denominations bound not through matching theology, but through the Wesleyan tradition of writing and reading. With the rise of periodical printing in the early American Republic, Methodist journals and magazines re-printed articles from British devotional periodicals.

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<sup>24</sup> Elizabeth Kimball writes “Methodism’s founder John Wesley never intended that it would be become a separate denomination; he saw Methodism as a revival movement within the Anglican church, and dependent on the tradition of apostolic succession, while providing opportunities for itinerant lay preachers to organize and energize working class people across the countryside.”

Between 1801 and 1819, American publishers printed forty-three works with John Wesley listed as the author, including his sermons, his thoughts on dress, extracts from his journal, and a particularly interesting volume titled *Christian correspondence being a collection of letters written by the late Rev. John Wesley and several Methodist preachers ... to the late Mrs. Eliza Bennis with her answers*.<sup>25</sup> In addition, while book trade between the United Kingdom and America (or between any nation and America, for that matter) was fraught with triple shipments as a stopgap against piracy or lost or destroyed boats, the early nineteenth century saw a shift for the better: according to David D. Hall, beginning with the mid-eighteenth century, printer competition increased, government, civic, and religious organizations began their own presses, and newspaper circulation increased dramatically.

Although British and American Methodism developed into two distinct denominations, when it came to the Wesleyan tradition of rhetoric and the transference of intellectual and spiritual knowledge, the former colonizer and former colony continued to be intricately bound, as often is the case. Thus, when it comes to a discussion of early nineteenth-century American Methodism and what it can tell us about the canon of style, we need to start with John Wesley. We need to start with him, as, even though Wesley was marginal in American Methodism's history (with the Georgia mission, he was more a hindrance than a help), the active literacy and rhetorical practices of Methodists came from Wesley's idea that each individual had his or her own spiritual experience of God that could, and would, inform others. Wesley encouraged Methodist men, and even talented Methodist women, to preach, to exhort, to expound, and to share their personal narratives of conversion and experiences of God with one another. As Vicki

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<sup>25</sup> Shaw, Ralph R., and Shoemaker, Richard H., compilers. *Early American Imprints. Series II, Shaw-Shoemaker (1801-1819)*. CT: Readex, 2004. Web.

Tolar Burton has identified, Wesley encouraged both genders to be active readers and writers, believing in the premise of self-education, and drafting reading lists for his English followers. From Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Wesley built an idea of a rhetoric of experience, in which sensory experience would lead to inner and outer spiritual experience, a rhetoric that, as Vicki Tolar Burton sees it, "brought plain-style, gospel-based, heart-centered preaching delivered by passionate, plain-speaking, gospel-reading men, and [. . .] by passionate, plain-speaking, gospel-reading women as well" (111-112). Working out of the psychological rhetorical tradition of the Enlightenment, based in the senses, Wesley encouraged followers to test scripture against their own experiences (Tolar Burton 149). Such rhetorical practice would find its place not only in the oral traditions of preaching, exhorting, and expounding, but also written spiritual journals, correspondence, and printed periodicals.

The archival record reflects this calling of early American Methodism to share conversion experiences in a heart-centered rhetoric and to gain knowledge in a multitude of disciplines. In addition to correspondence, itinerant preacher's travel journals and sermon notebooks, and spiritual journals, we have the breadth of Methodist newspaper circulation in the early American Republic: *The Methodist Journal*, *The Wesleyan Repository and Religious Intelligencer* (short-lived, from 1821-1824), *The Methodist-Protestant* (published in response to *The Methodist Journal*'s refusal to take on controversial subjects) (Tolar Burton 84), and *The Christian Herald and Advocate*, which at one time became the periodical with the highest global distribution (Godbeld and Queen 1581).

The material in these publications should not be ignored. Though, for practical reasons, early in the nineteenth century these periodicals focused mostly on conversion narratives<sup>26</sup> and conference reports of finances, the educational and theological content found in them is nonetheless impressive. Take, for instance, the early issues of *The Methodist Protestant*, which, along with publishing lengthy discussions of appropriate dress, published advice on composition and even a treatise on the defects in preaching. For just one example, here is a selection from an article on descriptive writing in the Critical Essays section, most likely penned by the editor, which directly addresses the canon of style:

It is the observation of an eminent rhetorician that “in descriptive writing much depends on a judicious selection of particular circumstances.” So much truth is in this remark, that one line will frequently convey a more complete and impressive conception of a scenery, than a whole page, embellished with the richest imagery and all the beauties of style. Never does a writer display more energy and comprehensiveness of genius, more delicacy and discrimination of taste than when, by the depeinture of a few properties, he can disclose at once the whole nature of an object, or, by the narration of a single effect, tell the character and efficiency of a cause.<sup>27</sup>

Not all early Methodist publications had a similar preoccupation with written and spoken composition; however, the breadth of information they do represent is striking: local and international news, missionary reports with accounts of native life, a random physical science

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<sup>26</sup> Conversion narratives were mostly, but not always, written about women by their male relatives (a husband or a brother) after the woman’s death.

<sup>27</sup> *The Methodist Protestant* No. 5 February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1831.

piece, arguments over proper behavior for both genders, and advice corners for women and youth. From our contemporary vantage point, the mix of national and international is astounding; yet, as Jennifer Snead finds in her study of the eighteenth-century London publications, *The Christian's Amusement* and *The Weekly History*, religious periodicals did have a transatlantic reach. What's more, "Early evangelical periodicals were public forms that attempted to render print itself concrete, emotional, and physical in their representations of affective, non-secular experiences of individuals who participated in the religious public sphere" (Snead 114-115). Indeed, Snead argues against the theories of strict secularization of the eighteenth (and I would add here, the early nineteenth) century; while it is undeniable that by the end of the late nineteenth century, colleges and universities had been ripped of their religious backgrounds, ironically by the very science that these institutions adopted to save them (Marsden), in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, education and literacy through religion was key.

Neither press nor newspaper records fully represent the breadth of texts available to Methodists at the time, nor do shipping and bookseller records fully represent the transatlantic nature of intellectual and theological knowledge. Rather, we have to remember that with people came texts, and, for all that travel was difficult, it happened nationally and trans-nationally. In fact, it could be said that transatlantic trade and travel were easier or perhaps more manageable than national trade, especially when it came to trade in texts. As Trish Loughran points out in *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870*, American national and regional text trade had a different set of obstacles to surpass than transatlantic text trade; instead of shipments lost at sea, American national and regional text trade had to negotiate "printers, booksellers, carthaulers, and ferrymen (not to mention the frozen ports, icy rivers, muddy roads, barter relations, and illiteracy)" (39). Add to this the abysmal state of roads in the

early American Republic and in-fighting between states and regions and a print trade is created in which “Even in 1800, most Americans lived beyond the reach of any printed matter that was not produced by their own local printer or privately sent to them through personal connections” (Loughran 20). Tracing the print and distribution history of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, as well as the *Federalist Papers* (among other texts), Loughran dismantles the myth of a Republic unified by a national book or text culture in *The Republic in Print*, arguing that the early American Republic was instead fragmented by trade difficulties and regional print. Indeed, not until the antebellum period and the invention and widespread use of the cylindrical steam press would there be such national unification through print (Loughran 2).

While I agree with Loughran that there was not a national book or text culture that created a fully coherent, unified Republic, and that the representation of a unified polity is inaccurate, I nonetheless do see a nation that is surprisingly inter-connected, whether from region to region or from colony and new nation to its brethren in the British Isles. Much of the Republic was still frontier, “unsettled” and populated by indigenous cultures, while urban areas had little infrastructure in the way of roads, hospitals, libraries, schools, and public works. Even the practice of “clipping” which Loughran discusses in her argument for a fragmented print culture, represents this inter-connectedness. Loughran describes this practice as “passing printed items along piecemeal and then reprinting (some of them in an endless process of inclusion and exclusion that made the circulation of information not only nonuniversal but highly uneven and unpredictable” (Loughran 110). Nonuniversal, yes, in that there did not yet exist an Associated Press to pass on a steady supply of consistent national and international information, and in that no codified rules existed as to what information should be reprinted and what should be passed aside; nevertheless, what we find in these early periodicals is not an isolated representation of

one region, but clipping that brings news and ideas from all over the United States, as well as from England.

Yet another aspect of Methodist intellectual culture was the tracts and pamphlets produced en masse in the early American Republic, with the American Tract Society publishing “over four million tracts” in a ten-year period (Neuberg 107). Joyce Appleby notes that “By 1827, thirty religious newspapers were sending 7 million issues annually to 60,000 households”; these include periodicals such as the *Christian Discipline*, *Christian Examiner*, *Christian’s Magazine*, *Christian Messenger*, *Christian’s Watchmen*, and *Christian’s Spectator* (218). Itinerant preaches then distributed these texts on horseback to local communities (Shaver, Hatch).<sup>28</sup> We also know that Methodists in the early American Republic created their own texts, whether male or female: in 1810, Freeborn Garrettson tells his wife, Catherine, that his pamphlet is out;<sup>29</sup> 17 years later, in 1827, he writes “You may tell my Daughter, that my sermon is in the press, and likewise her three tracts, and her piece on education is out.”<sup>30</sup> Mary Garrettson had a distinct interest in education—she was busy at work with infant Sunday schools, and her father writes to her about the grammar education he’s witnessed while traveling.<sup>31</sup> It may seem odd to

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<sup>28</sup> Hatch documents that by 1840 *Western Christian Advocate* subscriptions numbered fifteen thousand (p. 126).

<sup>29</sup> Freeborn Garrettson. Correspondence to Catherine Garrettson, 1791-1813. 1080-5-1:15 United Methodist Archives.

<sup>30</sup> Freeborn Garrettson. Correspondence to Catherine Garrettson, 1815-1827. 1080-5-1:16 United Methodist Archives.

<sup>31</sup> Freeborn Garrettson. January 19, 1821. Correspondence to Catherine Garrettson. 1080-5-1:16 United Methodist Archives.

us today to think of women writing and *publishing* during the early decades of the nineteenth century. After all, literacy for both women and men had been low just a few decades before. Mary Kelley reports that in the new republic, “approximately 90 percent of the adult white population, men and women, entered the literate category” (*Private Woman* 10). In addition, “Nearly all of the early American Republic’s women writers made their own way into print” (Kelley, *Learning to Stand* 56-57).

In the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War, women writing history published more than 150 narratives. In addition to the typical literature, they seeded history into fiction, biography, poetry, drama, and literature. They availed themselves of the political essay, the didactic tract, and the religious treatise. (Kelley, *Learning to Stand* 193).

Just two decades after Freeborn Garrettson tells his daughter of her soon-to-be tract publication, women were the majority in publication, “writing nearly 75% of all novels published” (Ripley 17). Mary Garrettson herself would join the ranks of mid-nineteenth century women fiction writers, producing *A Winter At Wood Lawn* in 1857 and *Little Mabel and Her Sunlit Home* in 1860 (Simpson).

Mary Garrettson was part of the vanguard of change in print culture. A child of parents who had lived through the Revolution, she would experience an upbringing that was significantly different from that of her parents’. Thus, Mary Garrettson’s writings, though not as extensive as her mother’s, offer us an amazing view into the informal education, the intellectual nature, and the rhetorical practice of American Methodists. While Catherine Livingston Garrettson’s spiritual journals and correspondence are a thick collection, daughter Mary Garrettson’s slimmer collection contains writings not only correspondence, but also copy books and lecture notes, as

well as an autobiography of her mother which most likely Mary Garrettson transcribed and edited. In fact, copied into Mary Garrettson's notebooks, circa 1811,<sup>32</sup> are selections from rhetorician Hugh Blair's *Sermons* and from James Macpherson's now-infamous *Poems of Ossian*.

This change from spiritual journals and correspondence as the main forms of writing to an arguably more public rhetorical practice (in the archived letters, Freeborn Garrettson mentions only Mary's publications, never referring to any of Catherine's writing in publication) reflects the transition Joyce Appleby describes in *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans*. Appleby argues that children born after the American Revolution experienced a world that was vastly more connected, more educated, more literate, and more open to professional opportunities and social advancement for women and men. This world was also financially and politically fraught. It was also in this period that "women formed the majority—frequently a large majority—in their societies: a full half of husbands of Methodist women did not share their wives' beliefs while only 15 percent of the wives of converts remained outside the church" (Appleby 183). In a religious tradition imbued with literary practice, we must look to the majority of Methodist believers to understand the fullness of rhetorical practice: we must look to the rhetorical practices of women.

Rhetorical and composition has yet to settle the question of a whether women's tradition of speaking and writing, identifiable from a men's tradition, exists. Texts such as Andrea Lunsford's edited collection *Reclaiming Rhetorica* and Jane Donawerth's survey of women's texts on conversation and communication, *Rhetorical Theory by Women Before 1900*, offer us inroads to this question. Whereas Jane Donawerth argues in her most recent book for a distinct

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<sup>32</sup> The notebook is actually dated 18011.

women's tradition, one that "composed rhetorical theories based on a conversation as a model of discourse" (1), Lunsford's introduction to *Reclaiming Rhetorica* does not insist on a "deliberate" gender distinction when it comes to a women's tradition (6-7). Donawerth collects and analyzes women's texts she defines as rhetorical theory; Lunsford and others, such as Carol Mattingly, are more broadly interested in women as rhetorical practitioners.

As American Methodists in the early republic experienced a softening of rigid gender boundaries, I am wary of a women's tradition, easily distinguishable from a "male" tradition, particularly in regard to rhetorical theory. Nonetheless, I see a women's tradition as one of the "varying rhetorical lenses" that scholars use and have used in the face of limited material (Mattingly 2). Using the concept of a women's tradition, I strive to highlight what Andrea Lunsford refers to as traditionally unrecognized "forms, strategies, and goals used by many women as 'rhetorical' " (6) and move away from equating "public" writing and speaking (i.e., writing and speaking that was meant for an audience outside of the home) as the only legitimate rhetorical practice.

Studying women is an apt way to access the physical experience of persuasion, namely because women, along with children, were so often seen as ready vessels for God. The 1816 tract *The Happy Death of Mary Ann Clapp* (misspelled on the cover but correctly stated as Clap inside and in later versions) by Joshua Bates, pastor to the young Mary Clap, wrote of her deathbed peace with God in a style typical to this genre "I know it will be said, all this apparent happiness have been the effect of thoughtless delirium and a heated imagination; and all these professions of humility, love, desire, resignation, and benevolence, the result of mechanical instruction: but it will not be said by those who saw and heard for themselves" (Bates 20). Early Methodism is rife with death-bed confessionals of women, as recorded by their male relatives. Part funeral oration,

part religious witness, many an article in the early issues of *The Methodist Journal* describes a dying woman's true and fervent last experience of God. Diane Lobody likewise argues that women's spiritual relationships with God were more developed than male itinerant preachers, simply because women often had more time to reflect and write than their male counterparts (17).

Women's rhetorical practice spanned spiritual journals, copybooks, published tracts and meeting notes, published articles, autograph albums, and most prolific, correspondence. Women's evangelical correspondence followed a particular form in both the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. After all, as Jane Donawerth notes, a women's tradition "privilege[s] consensus, collaboration, and collectivity over competition" (12). Thus, in women's correspondence to women, not much exists in the way of tension or drama, and problems are glossed over. Men's letters, however, might reference incredibly dramatic experiences, such as an itinerant preacher and his converts wrestling an Anti-Methodist from his knife. Rather, women's writing largely represents "domestic communication," centering on the family and the home.

Though Vicki Tolar Burton's work follows British Methodist writers, her assessment of the genre matches that of American Methodist women writers. She notes, "A primary goal of the letters is to persuade the addressee of his or her close connection to the letter writer" (Tolar Burton 182). Most often this happens in the salutation (Tolar Burton 182), where the writer chooses an informal and intimate greeting, such as "My dear Maria." Tolar Burton then identifies a secondary rhetorical function of these letters, in which the addressee is advised to follow Jesus, resist Satan, and to work towards spiritual perfection (183). Yet, what is even more intriguing is how in these letters with "an effusive and overflowing style" (Tolar Burton 186) what Tolar

Burton terms as “bodily and spiritual health” becomes the chief concern. Likewise, the bodily and the spiritual go hand-in-hand in women’s spiritual journals, where spiritual ecstasy is combined with bodily experiences—tears, pain, or a “melting” of the heart, just to name some of the many bodily experiences. The writing mimics these experiences. Again and again, Garrettson calls “Oh! Lord” in her journals and finishes her ecstatic statements with exclamations. This style, while perhaps overly effusive, nonetheless accurately represents the bodily experience of Garrettson during spiritual moments.

Garrettson was, from a modern perspective, undoubtedly a rhetorical practitioner. In speech and in writing, Garrettson urged conversion on her family, her friends, even passersby, just as she urged God for forgiveness and of her good intentions. Garrettson was convinced that her family would fall from Grace if they did not convert; an irony, since, as Lobody states, “the Livingstons were not irreligious people. They were moderate, genteel women and men, who embraced a liberal faith that somehow, in that wonderfully American style, included elements of thoughtful Calvinism, comfortable Anglicanism, and pleasant Enlightenment philosophy” (Lobody 59). Yet, in spite of, or perhaps because of this, Garrettson saw her family’s faith and “daily duties” as little salve to the greater need of salvation. This, and her marriage against her family’s wishes to Methodist itinerant preacher Freeborn Garrettson, would be a life-long tension between her and her close-knit family.

Garrettson’s interactions with God in her spiritual journals can be easily illustrated by her own writing:

My petitions to heaven were that my burdens might be lessened, and that removed. I was then struck with dismay at my bold request not knowing how it might please infinite Wisdom to realize all my fears by answering my prayer. My

heart was melted and the Tears which fell from my eyes were some relief to my severe distress.<sup>33</sup>

God's reply, it seems, was felt just as deeply as Garrettson's own rhetoric: she writes a few lines later, "Great and Good God! how are thy Judgments mingled with tenderness and love."<sup>34</sup>

To modern eyes, such correspondence about the bodily and the spiritual is mundane. Catherine Livingston Garrettson spends much of her letters cataloguing the recent afflictions of friends and family, apologizing that too much time has passed since she last wrote, and hoping that the addressee's body and soul is in a better state than Garrettson's. In the example below, taken from a November 1791 letter to Janet Montgomery, Garrettson apologizes for her slow reply to Montgomery's correspondence.

I began a letter in answer to your favor; but not having an opportunity to send the letter I did finish it. Since this I have been so much employed, as scarcely to find leisure to write as I would wish. I am thankful for your proposal. I will endeavor, as God shall be pleased to enable me to write to you on divine subjects.<sup>35</sup>

Garrettson lived in a time when even minor illnesses could become life-threatening; however, as Phyllis Mack notes, Methodism "encouraged them [women] to develop communities of friendship sustained by letters, and it created in them a consciousness of new possibilities for spiritual authority" (26). Women built a community out of letters, giving each other mutual

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<sup>33</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. January 19, 1788.

<sup>34</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. January 19, 1788.

<sup>35</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Correspondence to Janet Montgomery. November 25, 1791.

1080-5-2:23 United Methodist Archives.

support in domestic and spiritual affairs. In the following example, Garrettson relates the unexpected death of a fellow Methodist woman, a wife and mother of nine.

There was in the city last week the most sudden death I ever heard of. Mrs. Cromline, a daughter of Joe Depoysters. In the afternoon she drank tea out, in the evening returned home, ate her usual supper with her husband and children, went to bed in perfect health. At eleven in the night awoke screaming for mercy [. . .] How strongly these things show this is not our rest and point us to a better world. What presumption in the face of such uncertainty to live and act as if we had everlasting lease for life.<sup>36</sup>

And throughout this rhetorical practice, women informally followed the same stylistic guidelines: effusive, overflowing sentences, a stress on the closeness of the relationship between the writer and the addressee, references to the writer's guilt for not responding to correspondence immediately, and the body of the text dealing with bodily and spiritual illness.

The physiological nature of the Methodist experience of rhetoric, particularly Methodist women's experience of rhetoric, can teach us much about the physiological nature of Enlightenment rhetoric. Indeed, just as G.S. Rousseau and Roy Porter propose that Methodist enthusiasm can help us to better understand eighteenth-century popular psychology (*The Ferment of Knowledge* 197), I likewise propose that nineteenth-century American Methodist "enthusiasm" has much to teach us in terms of Enlightenment rhetoric, particularly the canon of style. This is so for several reasons: First, and most important, the Methodist experience offers us the outwardly physical description of what often is a hidden process. Second, Methodist bodily

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<sup>36</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Correspondence to Margaret Tillotson. March 11, 1814.

1080-5-2:22 United Methodist Archives.

responses to rhetoric were qualified in the Enlightenment as “madness,” with the body responding to a mental disease brought on by preaching. Third, in conjunction with a vernacular tradition, American Methodists used Wesley’s Lockean heart-centered rhetoric as well as Scottish-Enlightenment rhetoric. Last, Methodists practiced rhetoric avidly and fervently, whether orally or in writing, as evidenced by Catherine Garrettson’s untiring attempts to convert her already religious (but not Methodist) friends and family.

As Tolar Burton’s study of literacy in eighteenth century British Methodism points out, John Wesley actively encouraged his followers to pursue a spiritual journal, as well as a daily course of spiritual reading. Catherine Garrettson did, and she mentions on Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1787 that she’s been reading “Mr. Wesley’s journals.”<sup>37</sup> In Wesley’s Preface to his abridgement of Thomas à Kempis’s *The Imitation of Christ* (the same edition Catherine Garrettson would later read), he gives this advice: “First, assign some state time every day for this employment [reading religious work]; and observe it, so far as you possibly can, inviolably.” He goes on: “Second: prepare yourself for reading by purity of intention, singly aiming at the good of your soul, and by fervent prayer to God, that he would enable you to see his will and give you a firm resolution to perform it.” His next two paragraphs continue with advice on reading and on the writing that best accompanies religious reading practice. In reading “be sure to read, not cursorily or hastily, but leisurely, seriously, and with great attention, with proper pauses and intervals, that you may allow time for the enlightenings of the divine grace” (Wesley 22). And in writing, “labor to work yourself up into a temper correspondent with what you read, for that reading is useless which only enlightens the understanding without warming the affections” (Wesley 23).

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<sup>37</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. December 9, 1787.

For Wesley, and his followers, it was not enough to be an active, engaged reader, nor to simply understand the Will of God. As Lisa Shaver states, “Keeping a spiritual journal was a practice Wesley used for his spiritual self-examination and one he encouraged all Methodists to adopt” (45). Belief did not come only from understanding, but communion and physical intimacy born out of God’s affection. In prayer, each Christian was to be his or her own practitioner of rhetoric to her or himself and God, and in the world, each Christian was to be a practitioner of rhetoric to others. Each Christian was meant to be an evangelist. And in evangelizing, Methodists would transform American material culture.

Evangelism, in our contemporary culture, often carries a negative weight to it. Our ready analogy for evangelism is Jehovah’s Witness knocking on doors or leaving pamphlets in apartment stairwells; yet, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries evangelism was, in many ways, America. The First and Second Great Awakenings, in the space of a less than a century, dramatically altered the landscape of American religion, from Puritan Congregationalist to a slew of burgeoning Protestant denominations, among them Moravians, Quakers, Methodists, Baptists, and Lutherans. And with the Second Great Awakening, and Methodism, came a call for individuals to share their spiritual experiences with others, to evangelize, to exhort, to convert: to practice rhetoric.

Schooled during the Enlightenment, John Wesley’s brand of rhetoric was empirical in nature, in that Wesley’s rhetoric drew from sensory information, not first principles. In spiritual journals, correspondence, and in evangelical tracts and articles, Methodist women and men sought to create a rhetoric of experience.

For Wesley, the rhetoric of experience begins with the perception of the inner and outer experience (which he describes using rhetorical language as a kind of

testimony to the self from the senses. Next, in a pseudoscientific move, Wesley advises the individual to test the experience in light of Scriptures and reason, looking particularly for the ‘fruits’ of the experience in the person’s life. (Tolar Burton 24)

Phyllis Mack, another scholar of Methodist rhetorical practice, stresses the self-discipline that was inherent in this kind of self-analysis, one in which self-discipline (the modification of emotion and impulse) was also a rhetorical act (23). Likewise, Tolar Burton emphasizes that Wesley believed that the process of writing, not the product (the tract or death-bed confessional or journal entry), was paramount. Indeed, “he considered that reading and writing could be spiritual experiences themselves” (Tolar Burton 27) and could teach Christians how to identify God’s blessings in their everyday lives. In other words, Wesley saw this rhetoric of experience as a system that would sort empirical information into knowledge—that is, *epistêmê*.

Whereas Wesley encouraged his followers to record and understand their sensory experiences, he did not outwardly approve of enthusiasm, or ecstatic language and bodily movements. This isn’t surprising. Methodists and other dissenting religious sects of the time were at risk of being labeled mentally unstable or sexually forward. Garrettson, while not sexually forward, felt mentally unstable; she “reported mood swings, alternating doubt and joyfulness in her spiritual state” (Lawrence 67). Even more dramatic, during her conversion period, it was not unknown for her to end up weeping in a family member’s arms. And while Wesley spent much time distancing himself from visible signs of enthusiasm, Anna Lawrence reports, “by 1739, he had become convinced that enthusiasm was a true expression of the Spirit of God in the believer” (36). Enthusiasm’s influence in Methodism was only to grow. With the

influence of African Americans, “crying, shouting, singing, and stamping,” along with dreams, visions, convulsions, and falling down as dead, were to become regular fare in religious practice.

Scholars continue to link enthusiasm and sexuality. Diane Lobody, the Catherine Garrettson scholar, sees Garrettson’s writing as an erotic theology, the repressed sexuality of an eighteenth-century woman funneled into the recording of her conversations with God. Lobody argues that Garrettson’s spiritual journals<sup>38</sup> represent “a spirituality of desire,” in which “she [Garrettson] yearns for union with God, to come to know and receive God in the most intimate way conceivable” (8). Likewise, Phyllis Mack characterizes enthusiasm as a venting of “emotional an sexual frustrations” (7). Garrettson’s writings, whether her spiritual journals or her dream journal, do record and evoke strong physical feelings of the body; however, while Lobody and Mack feel that such physical feeling in eighteenth and early nineteenth century women’s writing represents eroticism, I do not. Rather, I see the physical experiences that Garrettson records as the bodily experience of rhetoric, born out of Enlightenment science.

I agree with Lobody that Garrettson’s experiences of God were intense and physical, but I contend that these experiences could be more appropriately categorized as sensual, rather than sexual. “My actions, and language I know were those of a frantic Bedlamite,” Garrettson writes on Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1787, recording one the of the rare instances where she went to her mother for comfort after a physical experience of God (Lobody 49); “I got alarmed at my situation: and recollecting I might do some act of violence in my frenzy that might cast me from my Blessed Savoir forever.”<sup>39</sup> Along with Anna Lawrence, I see enthusiasm as sensual, not

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<sup>38</sup> Lobody refers to these as “diaries;” I term them “spiritual journals,” in deference to the Wesleyan tradition and genre of spiritual journals.

<sup>39</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1787.

sexual or erotic. Lawrence's critique is an apt one: she writes that labeling enthusiasm as "erotic" "dismissed religious yearnings as essentially sexual" (124). Rather than couching this experience in sexuality (I would argue, a dangerous move, when we are so removed from the cultural values and context and when the figure we are sexualizing cannot speak for herself), I see Garrettson and her writings in the tradition of 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century rhetoric, science, and religious experience, in which the body was an integral part of the cognitive process.

Garrettson's physical experience of God and her rhetorical practices were wonderfully consistent throughout her life until her death in 1849. Garrettson recorded not only her own personal experience of persuasion and God; she was also an apt recorder of the behavior and reactions of those around her. In an October 1805 letter to her husband, Freeborn, she describes the love feast that took place recently.

Half after eight the love feast began. The preachers had little to do but look on, and give Glory to God. For such a work I never before saw at a quarterly meeting. The first person I saw struck down was old Mrs. Bresheyer[?] <sup>40</sup> after she had lain some time, she sprang up and jumped several times, claped her hands, and raises[?] glory, glory. After, several other aged women feel. Then Susan Gonklin[?] and Anne Steward came forward to be prayed for, a daughter of the Squires[?] from Canada. And temple fell upon their knees and began to agonize in prayer for theirs sister and friend in the meanwhile Steward came forward to raise his life. The Christians enterprised and brought him on his knees in prayer for himself. At length Susan was brought thus; and immediately turned to her husband, began to exhort him, and pray for him. His Brother in law Pomery [two

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<sup>40</sup> The question marks are my own; I am unsure of Garrettson's spelling.

words illegible] was also pouring out his soul in and out prayer. Thus in a little group were six of one family all calling upon the Lord. The work went on in various places numbers were struck down, others so filled their faces shone. The love feast lasted three hours. We then broke up.<sup>41</sup>

There's no doubt that early American Methodists had incredibly physical experiences of God. However, it should be noted that these physical experiences were vastly different than those of the First Great Awakening; preachers such as George Whitfield and Jonathon Edwards caused their listeners to fall into dangerous fits or, in the case of Edwards, their listeners to commit suicide (Yarbrough and Adams 88). Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century evangelical Protestants seemed much more sophisticated in dealing with bodily experiences. In short, while they may have become overcome or animated, we have no evidence that the same extreme physical self-violence that characterized the First Great Awakening carried on into the American Methodist tradition.

Indeed, Fanny Lewis describes a relatively tame camp meeting (compared to the revivals of the First Great Awakening) near Baltimore in 1803, filled with love and excitement rather than fits and despair. Lewis writes to her father in descriptive, almost romantic language, bemoaning her inability to re-create the scene perfectly in writing: "It would take an Addison or a Pope to give you even an idea of the lovely grove, particularly in the night, when the moon glimmered through the trees, and all was love and harmony" (150). Lewis seems intent to include her father in her religious experience at the same time as she insists, just as we do today, that you had to be there to understand it.

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<sup>41</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Correspondence with Freeborn Garrettson. October 25, 1805. 1080-5-2:19 United Methodist Archives.

Such indeed, my dear father, was our meeting, and I can but lament my inability to give you an account of it; but it was better felt than expressed. Sometimes you would see more than one hundred hands raised in triumphant praise with united voices, giving glory to God, for more than one hour together, with every mark of unfeigned humility and reverence. (Lewis 150)

Sadly, besides this letter, contained in *Extracts of Letters, Containing Some Account of the Work of God Since the Year 1800* and sandwiched between Wilson Lee's account of camp meetings and quarterly meetings in Leesburg and John Pinnel's account of a camp meeting in Gilboa (Dix 87-89),<sup>42</sup> little else is known about Fanny Lewis.

Nonetheless, the bodily experience of rhetoric Catherine Garrettson describes again and again (and which many American Methodist men and women describe), is an intense one, one that is interior and physiological in nature. In fact, what Garrettson and other Methodists sought was an intimate relationship with God, a closeness that was spiritual as well as physical. Garrettson describes it this way on a particular Sunday where she was less than attentive during service: "I got nothing and might perhaps have been better out of church. But God knows my intention in going, tis not of form, custom, or superstition; but to offer up intimate worship to the only true God."<sup>43</sup> The physicality of this intimacy is aptly described in Garrettson's 1800 journal:

I fell to the floor blessing, praising, and adoring God, and clapping my hands in an ecstasy. After I arose, a hymn was sung, and I opened my mouth in prayer. I

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<sup>42</sup> Pinnel refers to a camp meeting that's between 5-1500 people.

<sup>43</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Sunday, March 24. 1080-5-2:06 Journal, March 1793-March 1795 United Methodist Archives.

felt particular enlargement of heart for Nancy Garretson, I thought that the Lord was willing and ready to bless her.<sup>44</sup>

For Garretson and other Methodist women and men, intimacy with God came as a physical feeling of the heart and body during the reception or the practice of rhetoric, often as “ecstasy,” or as a “melting” or “enlargement” of the heart. Thus, this intimacy was one brought out of rhetorical practice, either as a result of listening to oratory, reading writing, or brought out of rhetorical practice itself.

Ann Taves observes in *Trances & Visions: Experiencing Religion and Explaining Experience from Wesley to James* that within religious enthusiasm, “The cultural histories of physiology, disease, and gender meet” (29). Taves’s discussion of bodily religious experiences includes, from the years 1740-1820, “dreams, trances, visions, and various involuntary vocalizations and bodily movements” (4). Indeed, “By the end of early eighteenth century, educated persons thus associated weak minds, and in the most advanced formulation, weak *nerves*, with women and, in the extreme cases, with madness” (Taves 29). Taves goes on to outline three thought practices that underline this belief (as seen in Charles Chauncy’s critique of enthusiasm): the first is the ancient Greek and Roman ideology of the soul, the second is Mechanism, and the third is “the post-Lockean science of nerves and nervous disorders” (25). Taves argues that British society, in particular, sought to contain religious enthusiasm and political rebellion by scientifically labeling the physical experience of religious rhetoric as madness. However, what is particularly relevant to this discussion is that the American scientific

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<sup>44</sup> Garretson, Catherine Livingston. Sunday, May 12, 1800. 1080-5-2:07 Journal, April 1797-May 1810; August 1817 United Methodist Archives.

view of enthusiasm and the relationship between mind and body stayed constant from the mid-eighteenth into the mid-nineteenth century.

### **Conclusion**

The constant rhetorical practice of American Methodists, and the recording of the outcomes of rhetorical practice in spiritual journals and itinerant preachers' notebooks, gives us a unique view into Enlightenment rhetorical theory. What's useful to us in understanding the canon of style as cognition is that Methodism allows us to see induction, or internal reasoning, *physically*. Even the style of women's rhetorical practice mimicked the physicality of cognition. Using an effusive style, women re-created the bodily experience of internal emotional and mental processes. To put it plainly, we can outwardly see the mind-body connection, one that so terrified eighteenth-century Brits that there came to be an association between Methodism and madness. While colonial and early American Methodists fared better than their British counterparts, no doubt in part due to the vast religious revival of the First and Second Great Awakenings, more conservative denominations nonetheless found Methodist worship odd.

According to W.S. Howell, as we move out of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth-century, rhetoric and logic move from the deductive to inductive, from syllogism to experience. Methodism's founder John Wesley picked up the concept of experience and applied it to spiritual rhetorical practice, believing that reading and writing in a systematic way, built out of sensory experience, could create knowledge. In this way, Wesley's rhetoric of experience operates as *epistêmê*, a system of knowledge. Methodist women, whose rhetorical practice has been hidden by a lack of archival records, were thought to have a greater capacity for spiritual sensory experience. Thus, in Methodist women's texts, we see recorded a physiological psychology of enthusiasm, in which the body and the mind are tied together.

### Chapter Three

#### Benjamin Rush and Transatlantic Notions of Mind-Body

For her first major travels with her new husband, Catherine Livingston Garrettson probably wanted better. Certainly, at the very least, she would not have wanted disease and death to accompany them. Having waited four years to marry, Catherine rejoiced as she and Freeborn were finally united.

Sunday June 30, 1793. I was united to Mr. Garrittson. A strong persuasion that this union was of God, have possessed my mind for four years past, the objects of my relations had prevented its taking place before. [...] O may the fruits of this marriage be been in a holy living. (Garrettson qtd. in Lobody 293)

Catherine and Freeborn would leave Rhinebeck soon after the wedding, traveling south down the East Coast and visiting the many towns and cities within Freeborn's Mid-Atlantic itinerancy. Philadelphia was the major city under Freeborn's domain, but, as Catherine writes, in 1793, "A dreadful visitation from above, afflicted this place in the form of a fearful epedemic fever"(Garrettson qtd. in Lobody 293). Newly married, the Garrettsons skirted the city for the less effected countryside.

Just one of the many epidemics in Philadelphia during the 1790s (Kopperman 539), the 1793 outbreak of yellow fever would cause the deaths of nearly ten percent of the population. (Miller 134). Yet even as Catherine Garrettson and her husband carefully bypassed the city of Philadelphia in their summer and fall travels, traveling only to "within thirty miles of Philadelphia" on September 29, 1793,<sup>45</sup> physician Benjamin Rush was staying put in the city.

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<sup>45</sup> Catherine Garrettson. Travel Journal. 1080-5-2:17 United Methodist Archives

This epidemic would build his notoriety, with Rush attending up to 125 patients per day (Toledo 62). A third of the population would flee the city (Eisenberg 552). It is the return of this third to Philadelphia that Catherine remarks on later in her travel journal, as she and Freeborn made their way back north. She writes, “The disorder is so much abated that business is going on as usual and people are moving into the city.”<sup>46</sup>

Rush, honored during his lifetime, merits a reputation today that alternates between Founding Father, educational reformer, early psychiatrist, dedicated doctor, and venesection machine—an older man, too tired to scientifically question his own methods, clinging desperately to dangerous methods. The Garrettsons would have another near brush with the “vampire”<sup>47</sup> physician nearly two decades later. From Rhinebeck, New York, Catherine Livingston Garrettson wrote to her husband Freeborn about his “continued indisposition.”<sup>48</sup> Freeborn was circuit riding through Delaware and Pennsylvania in 1810, traveling on horseback from town to town, relying on the hospitality of local Methodists, visiting new Methodist congregations—spreading the gospel and the Wesleyan way. “Why did you not consult Dr. Rush,” Catherine’s letter continues, “I think he might find out the source of your complaint. It would be very gratifying to me if you consult some eminent established physician.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Catherine Garrettson. Travel Journal. 1080-5-2:17 United Methodist Archives.

<sup>47</sup> Brodsky 29.

<sup>48</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Letter to Freeborn Garrettson. March 4, 1810. 1080-5-2:20 Correspondence to Freeborn Garrettson, 1810-1827. United Methodist Archives.

<sup>49</sup> Garrettson, Catherine Livingston. Letter to Freeborn Garrettson. March 4, 1810. 1080-5-2:20 Correspondence to Freeborn Garrettson, 1810-1827. United Methodist Archives.

Catherine Garrettson knew well the risks of illness for itinerant preachers; as a circuit rider, Freeborn would ride uncovered through all weather, sleeping in fellow Methodists' homes, if he could find them, and outside if he couldn't. While Freeborn would travel to Philadelphia that March, there is no indication he decided to take up his wife's concerned advice. This was perhaps all for the better. Considering that Rush believed that "the human body contained 25-28 pounds of blood, about twice the actual amount" (Kopperman 551), and that it was safe to bleed an ill patient of the majority of his or her blood, being Benjamin Rush's patient could be just as deadly as it could be prestigious.

Catherine Garrettson's knowledge of Benjamin Rush and her desire for her husband to consult with him shows an integrated early American Republic. Separated by terrible roads, a weak postal system, and wild terrain, Americans in the early national period nonetheless were connected at large not only by the means of Republican ideals spurred by Enlightenment economic theory, but also by the means of hospitable evangelist hostesses and determined circuit riders. What communication there was worked; Sarah Knott observes that the postal service reached from New York to Virginia by 1750 ("Patient's" 649). Before the boom of periodicals, local peddlers and lending libraries brought transatlantic texts to rural and urban areas alike and with these texts, transatlantic notions of the mind-body.

Rush is an ideal case study for how religion, science, and rhetoric blend in the early American Republic, for, as William Wade notes, "Though Benjamin Rush never wrote a formal treatise on rhetoric, his medical lectures and social reform essays constitute an important site for the reception of Scottish philosophical rhetorics in Revolutionary America" (55). Indeed, Rush found himself more than intrigued by the Enlightenment philosophies he would encounter in Scotland, London, and Paris; he carried back to the then colonies in 1769 not only his medical

degree and new knowledge of chemistry, pharmacology, and anatomy (D'Elia, *Rush* 51), but also the empirical seeds for a New Israel—what was to be the Christian promised land of the early American Republic.

In exploring what transatlantic notions of mind-body existed during the late colonial and the early national period, and the evangelism that took these notions into practice, this chapter will engage with the question of what scientific texts were available at the time, from the elite texts in Benjamin Rush's or James Logan's<sup>50</sup> personal collections to the folk medical pamphlets. Using Sarah Knott's observation that patient correspondence letters mimic the medical case study without the writer's explicit knowledge of the scientific genre, I argue that the style present in such folk texts provides evidence of how Enlightenment knowledge permeated the late colonies and the early American Republic. Next, I move to the vampire doctor himself, Benjamin Rush, to discuss how David Hartley's theological physiology and its conception of the mind-body worked as a blueprint for a Christian Republic. Last, I address the curious blend of the literary and the medical in Rush's physiology classes, a blend that, on the one hand, speaks to the sublimity of science, and on the other, renders the corporeal (rather than imagined) body as part of reasoning.

Whereas in the last chapter, Garrettson and American Methodist rhetorical practice demonstrated a physical example of the integrated mind-body, along with an empirical writing system, in this chapter, I look to Rush to demonstrate his use of theory to pick apart physical manifestations of mental operations. Rush dedicated himself to this charge: within transatlantic notions of mind-body, he believed there was the moral salve for a corrupt populace. By his account, the application of scientific principles of physiological psychology would make for a

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<sup>50</sup> William Penn's secretary and amateur natural philosopher (Wolf xlvi).

moral, Christian Republic. While the first chapter of the dissertation gave a general summary of association psychology and physiology; this chapter moves to the practical applications of association psychology, whether curing the insane or drafting morally-upright educational curricula for youth. Just as Joseph Priestley, George Campbell, and Hugh Blair were interested in moral improvement through language, Rush applied his evangelism to creating moral improvement through a physiologically and psychological sound environment. However, before entering into Rush's formal distribution of mind-body theory in the medical school classroom, I document its informal distribution through medical knowledge passed casually from household to household.

When travel took place, whether regional or transatlantic, Enlightenment ideas passed throughout the early American Republic. A primary example of this is the reading habits of Americans and American colonists themselves: as James Arnt Aune noted in his introduction to the Rhetoric Society of America's 2012 panel on John Locke, Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* was a best-seller in the American colonies and early American Republic, second only in sales to the Bible. Book sales alone do not represent the totality of texts available. Nonetheless, educated immigrants such as James Logan bemoaned the lack of intellectual culture and ready texts. In fact, in the late years of the eighteenth century Joseph Priestley would also find himself an immigrant in Philadelphia, wanting desperately to re-create the intellectual exchange he took for granted in London and Birmingham.

Unlike Priestley, James Logan, Benjamin Rush, and others took their frustration and invigorated Philadelphia's intellectual scene. Logan's early set of books lost, he would begin to strategically build up a book inventory and make plans for *Bibliotheca Logania* upon his death (a public library in his name), open every Saturday to British subjects (Wolf xlvi). The Loganian

Library opened on October 30, 1760 (Wolf xlix); the Library Company of Philadelphia, founded by Benjamin Franklin, was a separate, but similar lending library operating thirty years after the Library Company opened its doors. Logan's library catalogue reads like a who's who of medicine and science in the European Enlightenment. His inventory includes George Adams's *Micographia Illustrata* (1746); Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum*, among other works; Herman Boerhaave's *Elementa Chemiae* (1732), as well as *Institutiones Medicae* and *Materia Medica*; Robert Boyle's *New Experiments and Observations Touching Cold, Or, An Experimental History of Cold, Begun* (1683), with six other Boyle titles; Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1632); Humphrey Ditton's *The General Laws of Nature and Motion* (1705); Thomas Gibson's *The Anatomy of Humane Bodies Epitomized* (1684) and *Syntaxis Mathematica*; Stephen Hales's *Stastical Essays: Containing Vegeal Staticks*, volumes one and two (1731 and 1733, respectively); and Francis Hauksbee's *Physico-Mechanical Experiments on Various Subjects* (1709). This is only a partial selection of Logan's medical and scientific texts—many more are included within the collection.<sup>51</sup> Alongside these medical and scientific texts are ones more familiar to us as rhetoric scholars: many works by Aristotle; Demosthenes; Erasmus; Thomas Farnaby's *Phrases Oratoriae Elegantiores* (1664); Thomas Hobbes's *Elementa Philosophica de Cive* (1669), as well as *Leviathan*; Peter Ramus's *Grammatica* (1596); eight texts by Joest Lipsius; and John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1700), along with five other Locke texts.

Rush's extensive collection likewise represents a wide breadth of Enlightenment knowledge. Rush had a variety of interests, and to give a small sampling, his inventory lists texts on dancing, painting, architecture, agriculture, and sermons. As a physician, Rush's book

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<sup>51</sup> There are most likely additional Latin titles I did not recognize as science texts.

inventory contains a much higher number of medical texts than Logan's; in addition, it contains a number of style, grammar, and elocution texts not present in Logan's collection. Rush's book inventory includes texts owned by his son, James Rush, also a physician, so I have limited the listed texts to the years before 1830. Rush died in 1813. I have assumed that texts with publication dates of 1813 and later were purchased by his son, James. These texts became new additions to the collection bequeathed to him by his father.

Rush's and Logan's book inventories share several texts. Son James Rush must have added the 1818 New York edition of John Locke's *On the Understanding*. Rush also owned many works by Herman Boerhaave, the Dutch physician. Additionally, there's Robert Boyle's *On cold* (1683) and *Medical Experiments* (1694), John H. Gibbons's *De vestitu laneo* (1786), a text by John Friend, and the works of Francis Bacon. Besides the texts that Rush and Logan held in common, Rush acquired a plethora of medical texts essential to the Enlightenment understanding of the mind and body. Some must have been purchased during his time overseas, whether in Scotland, London, or Paris, or were imported; others are of American origin. Just a few easily recognizable texts include J. B. Winslow's *Anatomy* (London 1749); Joseph Priestley's works on chemistry and phlogiston; W. Gibson's *Diputation physica* (Edinburgh 1809); William Cullen's *Nosology* (Philadelphia 1793), *Materia medica* (Philadelphia 1812), and *Clinical lectures* (London 1797); William Stokes's *Practice of medicine* (Vienne 1776); Charles Bell's *Anatomy* (New York 1809); and Joseph Black's *De humore acido* (Edinburgh 1754).

Much in the same way that his medical and scientific texts indicate a representative range of Enlightenment (and early nineteenth century) medical and scientific knowledge in the early American Republic, so too Rush's style, elocution, and grammar texts indicate a range of

rhetorical theory.<sup>52</sup> This partial listing of texts runs the full gamut of neoclassic, elocutionist, psychological-epistemological, and belletristic rhetorics: Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (London 1823); John Walker's *Rhetorical Grammar* (Boston 1822); George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Boston 1823); John Holmes's *Art of Rhetoric* (London 1754); Cicero's *De oratore* (1814); Thomas Sheridan's *Art of reading* (London 1798); Thomas Hobbes's *Rhetoric* (London 1681); Hugh Blair's *Rhetoric abridged* (1818); Bernard Lawry's *La rhetorique* (Paris 1688); Thomas Farnaby's *Index rhetoricus* (London 1692); Charles Rollin's *Belle Lettre* (Paris 1755); two works by Abbe Batteux; and William Enfield's *Speaker* (Philadelphia 1817). It seems that, at the very least, the elite and educated of urban cities such as Philadelphia would have had direct exposure to Enlightenment rhetorical theory.

While late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century America leaves us with little in terms of records of library use, or even literacy, I posit that responsible application of critical imagination allows us to see the ways in which these kinds of texts and the ideas contained within them presented themselves in the larger, and less elite, society. As I will argue in the paragraphs to come, this does not mean that those not directly exposed to these texts would not have absorbed the ideas contained within them. Rather, the existence of such texts within the early American republic supports the permeation of European Enlightenment concepts of mind-body and rhetoric throughout the broader culture, just as American Methodist women's writings and enthusiasm reflect a physiological, rather than humoral model of the body. At the same time, the presence of these texts in the Rush and Logan collections indicates that the scientific and

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<sup>52</sup> I name these texts as a partial representation both because Rush presumably did not acquire every available text and because these texts are largely formal texts.

social circles of these two men would have been directly influenced by these Enlightenment works.

Folk medical and scientific texts abounded in the early American republic. Mixed in with folk texts offering little more than questionable home remedy recipes, were, as Sarah Knott terms them, “self-help guides” (“The Patient’s Case” 650). Knott records that these self-help medical guides were popular; the Edward C. Atwater Collection of American Popular Medicine and Health Reform<sup>53</sup> verifies the popularity of all medical texts during this time period. What follows is an extremely limited selection of the many available folk medical texts. Along with many editions and versions Edinburgh physician William Buchan’s *Domestic Medicine* are George Cheyne’s *An Essay of Health and Long Life* (London 1725); the sex-education manual, *Aristotle’s Works*; Increase Mather’s text on inoculation (Boston 1721); the popular text, John Tennet’s *Every Man His Own Doctor: or, the Poor Planter’s Physician* (Williamsburg 1734); Samuel Auguste David Tissot’s *Advice to the People in General, with Regard to Their Health* (London 1765); an essay on drunkenness by Benjamin Rush; and, unsurprisingly, John Wesley’s *Primitive Physic: or, an Easy and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases* (London 1788). The last listed text, Wesley’s *Primitive Physic*, includes George Cheyne’s rules for preservation of health within its preface (Hoolihan 2004), and operates largely out of the vein of description. In much the same way as his empirically-oriented heart rhetoric, Wesley sought to empirically catalogue disease, but not necessarily understand the causes behind it.

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<sup>53</sup> According to the University of Rochester’s Medical Library, Atwater’s collection includes self-help medical manuals up until the First World War (2012). My information on titles and their contents is not from Atwater’s archival collection, but Christopher Hoolihan’s 2001 annotated catalogue of the collection.

While Wesley's *Primitive Physic* operated out of Enlightenment understandings of science and the body, other folk texts operated out of a mix of humoral and physiological models of the mind-body (Knott, *Sensibility* 70). On the part of formal education by way of doctors, Rush, William Cullen, and William Shippen all spread a monist mind-body to their pupils at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. In many ways, Rush's teaching epitomizes the blending of Enlightenment scientific principles and evangelism that existed not only during the transitional period surrounding the American Revolution, but also the years leading up to and during the Second Great Awakening. This blend is present not only in the methods and purposes of Evangelism, in which evangelicals used "scientific" principles to interpret the Will of God, but also the social and textual culture of the time. For example, Sarah Knott argues in her case study of correspondence medical treatment "The Patient's Case: Sentimental Empiricism and Knowledge in the Early American Republic" that "Americans were as full participants in a 'culture of sensibility' as their European counterparts, indeed perhaps more so" (675). Knott notes that patients exhibited both sensibility and empiricism in their accounts of their illnesses, crafting case studies that fit the genre even though these patients did not read medical journals. Likewise, Enlightenment principles, blended with evangelical purposes, were intrinsic to rhetorical and scientific practice of the early American Republic.

On the part of popular culture, Knott hypothesizes that the physiological model and the empirical medical case study were, for the former, caused by transatlantic book trade and transatlantic travel (*Sensibility* 25), and, for the latter, caused by either the common law litigation model or the 'curious' medical case columns of eighteenth-century periodicals ("The Patient's Case" 658). Whatever the cause, observation is central to these texts. In fact, one of the patient's

(or patient's friend or family member's) duties was observation. Tissot advises his patients of the following in the final section his 1771 text:

It has frequently happened to myself, after examining peasant who came to get advice for others, I did not venture to prescribe, because they were not able to give me sufficient information, in order for my being certain of the distemper. To prevent this great inconvenience, I subjoin a list of such questions as indispensably require clear and direct answers. (292)

Comically enough, the first question Tissot wants to know the answer to (and didn't necessarily always get) is the age of the patient. Tissot also advises information on general health, how the sickness began (in what manner), pain, whether the pulse is hard or soft, bowel movements, cough, breathing, and whether or not the patient has experienced this distemper previously (293). The list continues, including special questions for women and children. Thus, with directions such as Tissot's available, it is perhaps predictable that Americans would adopt a medical writing style that was acutely observant and resembled formal medical case studies.

Rush's impact, for a young country with few medical schools, was broad. At the University of Pennsylvania medical school alone, Rush would pass his Enlightenment learning on to over 2,000 students over the many decades of his medical teaching career (Kopperman 573). There, Rush would be *the* faculty member invested in physiology (Knott, *Sensibility* 81), and how a physiological psychology could return the early American Republic from the vices it had fallen into to a moral New Israel. While his students may or may not have been aware of Rush's deep commitment to physiological psychology as a mode of reform, these medical students would nonetheless continue the tradition of physiology, returning from one of the only

institutions of medical learning in the early American Republic to their hometowns (Knott, “Patient’s” 651).

Coming of age during the First Great Awakening and the struggle for believers between New Light and Old Light Presbyterians, Rush witnessed first hand the power of American evangelism. During the course of his young life, Rush was exposed to the evangelism of Jonathon Edwards, his teachers Finley and Tennet, and even, in 1765, the Methodist preacher George Whitfield (D’Elia, *Philosopher* 19). Rush’s evangelic roots could very well have made him more receptive to the Enlightenment. After all, the Enlightenment offered Rush methods and reasons for revolution, and even more importantly, for the New Israel that Rush already knew to be America’s purpose. Although Thomas Kidd and Jon Butler disagree with Mark Noll on revival leading to revolution, what is important to take away from these scholars is that while some did not bring religion and politics together, others *did* combine Christianity and Republicanism (Kidd 289). However, most eighteenth century figures did not bond religion and civic life quite as tightly as Rush did. Or, rather, most eighteenth century figures did not bond religious, civic life, and Enlightenment science as fully as Rush did. Rather, the connection between religion and civic life—the Christian Republic—built slowly into the nineteenth century, coming on the heels of periodic evangelical revival.

Indeed, William Wade argues that Rush’s vision for the colonies and later, the young nation, “is as much a product of the Great Awakening as it is of the Enlightenment” (69). Many scholars have noted this sacred/secular blend of evangelism and Enlightenment scientific principles in the larger culture as well: Mark Noll devotes an entire chapter to American theology’s adoption of scientific methods and moral philosophy in his 2002 book *America’s God*, whereas Nathan Hatch argues that Republican values became synonymous with Christian

values in *The Sacred Cause of Liberty* (14). I would add, as Noll would, that these Republican, Christian values of the early American Republic, were to be scientifically implemented. Using moral philosophy, as well as natural philosophy, Rush and others believed that the New Israel could be formed only by ridding Americans of old “customs and habits of mind” (D’Elia, “Psychology” 113).

While historical scholars of the Enlightenment period in have difficulty delineating exactly what characteristics differed between the American and European Enlightenments, there nonetheless exists an agreement on what *kinds* of characteristics existed in America, rather than Europe.<sup>54</sup> Robert Ferguson offers early American scholars a useful starting point for sorting out how European Enlightenment ideals were adapted and adopted (and reciprocally influenced Europe) in the Americas. He describes in *The American Enlightenment, 1750-1820* a tendency in the colonies and the early American Republic towards sharing religious evangelism (particularly the “rhythms and patterns” of it) with Enlightenment ideas (Ferguson 42). Ferguson feels that early Americans seeking political change capitalized on popular evangelical beliefs, taking salvation, progress, the soul, and the virtuous Christian citizen and tying this to Enlightenment principles (42-43). In short, the first distinct kind of characteristic of the American Enlightenment is a religious one.

Rush’s acquaintances from his medical training in Edinburgh, London, and Paris read like a who’s who of the eighteenth century. He would cross paths with chemists William Cullen

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<sup>54</sup> For example, Carlson et. al notes that “Despite his indebtedness to English and Scottish thinkers, Rush’s psychology has a peculiarly American flavor.” They then go on to state that the combination of European Enlighten philosophers and American desire for reform and revolution, “the combination is not always easy to disentangle” (4).

and Joseph Black, David Hume, and the anatomist William Hunter, just to name a few. Rush's new environment and his new associates would deeply challenge his worldview; religious historian Donald J. D'Elia characterizes it as a clash between evangelism and "progressivists, skeptics, and liberals of the Enlightenment" (*Philosopher* 19). Yet, the young Rush did not seem concerned with this clash. Rather, coming from a world in which Wesley and Whitfield, Jonathon Edwards and Charles Finley, competed for (and often, shared) converts, but all worked toward the vision of a New Israel, Rush found his answer to reconciling these two seemingly antithetical viewpoints in the work of physician-theologian David Hartley.

One of the most apt descriptions of the relationship between Rush's thinking, Hartley's theories, and the America's Enlightenment is D'Elia's indication that "Rush's and Hartley's physiological psychology, in the American revolutionary's view, was the physics of moral reform, the ultimate science of the Enlightenment" (*Philosopher* 74). For Rush, Hartley's system of physiological psychology was foremost in his understanding of how people (and more particularly, the mind) works, from child development to formal education, from criminal rehabilitation to treatment of the mentally ill, and, from Republican civics to a Christian Republic. And with its origins not only as a theoretical model of the mind and body, but also as a theology, Rush and Hartley's psychology were, forgive the pun, a match made in heaven.

Before returning to Rush's physiological psychology and its treatment in his *Lectures on the Mind*, and even more specifically to his "Three Lectures Upon Animal Life"<sup>55</sup> contained in the volume, I would like to re-visit the work of David Hartley and his "bulldog," Joseph Priestley. And although in rhetorical history Joseph Priestley sits on the sidelines while rhetorical

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<sup>55</sup> Published in 1799, these lectures comprise Rush's own system of Hartleian physiological psychology.

education (and the work of Hugh Blair, George Campbell, Adam Smith, and Richard Whatley turned into the work of Alexander Bain) moved into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Priestley had a profound impact on the future of psychology and New World intellectualism. First, Priestley's championing of David Hartley's work and simplification and republication of Hartley's *Observations on Man* caused a text that may have otherwise dropped out of popularity to re-surface again in importance towards the end of the eighteenth century. Second, as Robinson notes, "Priestley's thorough commitment to Hartley's psychology, combined with Priestley's own influential position within the intellectual life of the New World, fills out the Hartleian project" (179).

Perhaps the most important change to come with Hartley and other seventeenth century philosophers, and a shared transatlantic conception, is the shift from an Aristotelian and Scholastic model of the body to a "mechanical" one. To quickly sum up the difference between the two models, the Aristotelian/Scholastic model 1) imagined the body as made up of fluids, or humors, and 2) placed the body (as well as animals and objects) as immaterial until creation. Richard Allen gives a good metaphor for this second characteristic of the Aristotelian/Scholastic model: he directs us to "imagine a lump of dough and a collection of cookie cutters; the dough is not any 'thing' until cut into shape, and the cookie cutters are idle until they are put to use cutting dough" (85). With the Aristotelian model, matter could not be anything (not even matter) until it had a shape or a category—there simply was no conception of it as something that existed. In contrast, the mechanical or corpuscular model Hartley embraced 1) imagined the body (as well as everything on earth) as made up of tiny particles of matter which other particles could and did pass through or into, and 2) placed the body as material. The material model is familiar to us in the twentieth-century; in this model, the particles that make up bodies are present even before a

body comes into being. For a modern-day example with something inanimate, think of water. The elements that make up water (hydrogen and oxygen) exist before water does; when these elements are configured correctly, these elements become water.

Next, even though Americans were skeptical of materialism, feeling that it verged on atheism, or at the very least subordinated God to scientific principles (Knott, *Sensibility* 208), like their British counterparts, the mechanical model nonetheless was the paradigm for early American medicine and psychology. Hartley adapted the idea of mechanism and its emphasis on cause and effect from Newtonian science (Sullivan 335); from John Locke, he adapted association. Indeed, Hartley's dependence on Newtonian science and Newton's work with optics leads Robinson to characterize *Observations on Man* as "a systematic application of Newtonian principles to a mental science now recast as an essentially physiological science" (179). And while this Newtonian-influenced recasting of mental science into physiological psychology may cause us to place Hartley in the materialist-atheist category, it is important to remember that *Observations* is as much a theology as it is a theory of physiology and psychology. For Hartley, science definitely was in the service of God: once again, it is no surprise that Americans, so familiar with evangelism, would find the combination of religion and science a natural one.

This is not to say that Americans accepted Hartley's theory without question. With association in particular, it is easy to see how American colonists and later, citizens, might have found Hartley's physiology to border on the sacrilegious; in fact, Rousseau and Porter note that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, doctors were generally regarded with suspicion. Doctors had a reputation for materialism, and worse, they were thought to be disbelievers when it came to God (Rousseau and Porter, "Toward a Natural History" 33). This is curious: John Locke did not ascribe association theory solely to materialism in his *Essay Concerning Human*

*Understanding* (Rousseau and Porter, "Toward a Natural History" 29). However, in the hands of David Hartley, and later Benjamin Rush, association would become firmly aligned with material physiology. Eric Carlson, Jeffrey Wollock, and Patricia Noel's introduction to Rush's *Lectures on the Mind* not only gives a concise description of the doctrine of associations, but also makes it clear how Hartley's theory in some ways did reduce the body and cognition to a reaction to the environment.

His [Hartley's] doctrine of associations traces all workings of the mind to an origin in the simple impressions of external objects of forces upon the nerves. The resulting vibrations, translated into the mind via the brain and kept in motion by some conjectural mechanism, combine and recombine in endless variety, gradually evolving in complexity and culminating in the highest levels of abstract thought. (Carlson et al. 34-35)

Thus, the process of thought was one in which an object or phenomena was seen, touched, tasted, smelled, or heard. The sensory image (or sound, etc.) would travel along nerve fibers to the brain, creating an idea in the mind through association. As more sensory images brought in more information to the brain, ideas associated again, becoming more and more complex.

While the mechanical or material model had its critics, and continued to have its critics into the nineteenth century, not all felt that this model was either godless or were troubled by the passive role in which it seemed to place both mind and body. Samuel Taylor Coleridge clearly respected Hartleian theory (He named his son David Hartley Coleridge), yet he worried this placed the human mind in a passive role, as a well as a contemporaneous one, in which the environment controlled the mind and thought (Allen 137). However, this did not bother Rush in the least. Rather, Rush rejoices that we are mechanical bodies reacting to stimuli and describes

his physiology in “Three Lectures upon Animal Life” as proof of the dominion of God over humankind.

It is in every respect as truly mechanical, as the passage of a ship from the impulse of winds or tide. But this theory does more it prostrates in the most humble posture the mind and body of man at the footstool of divine power. (Rush 190)

These lectures begin with the divine as well: at the start of his lectures on physiology at University of Pennsylvania, Rush would remark, “Gentleman, In entering upon the physiological part of our course, therefore I feel as if I were about to enter into a temple of the Deity” (Rush 67). Rush goes on to describe how humans were made in Christ’s image, and are the sole creature on earth that can sleep on its back or can reason. For Rush, human physiology was awe-inspiring, and he refers to each human being in the way Scottish Dr. Cheyne did. To Cheyne, we are all “an infinitesimal part of God” (69). Thus, Rush saw his material and mechanic theory of physiology as compliant with Christian values, rather than as a challenge to the very existence of God. For Rush, and others such as Cheyne, physiology showed the presence of divinity, not the absence.

The two main works treated in this section of the chapter are “Three Lectures upon Animal Life” and “Lectures upon the Mind.”<sup>56</sup> “Three Lectures upon Animal Life” elucidates Rush’s concept of human physiology, while “Lectures upon the Mind” deals mostly with the minds’ faculties. Over the course of the next several paragraphs, I will discuss the context of these two works, physiology’s central importance (at least for Rush) of all the sciences, the issue

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<sup>56</sup> Refers to the essays titled “Lectures upon the Mind.” These are found in the larger collection *Lectures on the Mind*.

of monism versus dualism, commonsense faculties' use and place within Rush's physiological system and how excitability, habit, and sympathy worked to form thought. Last, as I transition to the final section of this chapter, I will look at Rush's treatment of taste as a faculty of the mind and Rush's use of the word "sublime" in "Lectures upon the Mind"; this will then lead to a discussion of the sublime and its role in cognition.

In looking at the entirety of Rush's work on the mind and body, Carlson et al. report that Rush's *Lectures on the Mind* formed out of two origins (14). First, his formal teaching at University of Pennsylvania's medical college, and second, his work at the Pennsylvania Hospital, a hospital treating the mentally ill (Carlson et al. 14). Rush's training, both in his formal European education and in his apprenticeship to Dr. Redman, would expose him to a number of influences seen in these lectures: Herman Boerhaave, whom Rush read while yet an apprentice, William Cullen's teachings at the University of Edinburgh, John Brown's work on sleep and dreams, and, of course, David Hartley.

In his lectures, Rush declares phrenology "the most useful of all the sciences" (407). For a physician, the knowledge of phrenology "is useful in an eminent degree, for the diseases of the mind are as certainly objects of medicine, as of those of the body; and these cannot be known nor cured without a knowledge of the faculties and operations of the mind" (Rush 407). Rush goes on to explain to his pupils, "In the cell of a hospital, in a fever ward, and in his intercourse with the sick, the science of phrenology will be alike necessary and useful to him" (Rush 407-409). This statement bears true to Rush's hopes for physiology: with it Rush thought to find relief of everything from drunkenness to mental illness to ignorance and, finally, to civic instability. Indeed, he goes on to say, "It is interesting to the divine, the statesman, the philosopher, the scholar, and to all persons who have anything to do with the duties, the government, the interests,

the health and happiness of men” (Rush 407). In addition to phrenology being the most useful science, Rush claims it is the most “certain.” This is surprising to us in the twentieth century; Rush claims to be able to know the mind and body in their entirety, and that the functions of the mind are as knowable as the body. Rush also taught his students that the same laws governing the body governed the mind. To know the mind, one only had to know the rules of the body.

In content, Rush’s “Three Lectures upon Animal Life” focuses largely on the definition of physiology (for Rush, the science of the mind), that the mind is located in the brain, and the importance of stimuli to animal life. For Rush, stimuli act on muscles, nerves, and the brain (182). Without stimuli acting upon the muscles, the nerves, and the brain, the body would cease to function.

Yes, Gentleman, the action of the brain, the contraction of every muscular fibre, the diastole and systole of the heart, the pulsation of the arteries, the peristaltic motion of the bowels, the absorbing powers of the lymphatics, secretion and excretion, hearing, seeing, smelling, taste, and the sense of touch, nay more, thought itself; all depend upon the action of stimuli upon the organs of sense and motion. (Rush 87)

Animal life, in fact, is based on stimulation. Indeed, the sum of Rush’s argument in these lectures is that stimuli produces sensation in the body, which then produces thought in the mind. For example, the tongue is stimulated by a slice of lemon; this stimulation makes sensation on the nerves of the body. The motion from this sensation travels to the mind, creating perception, judgement, or reason, or all three together, to produce thought.

Later, Rush also visits each part of the body, as well as the brain itself, giving a breakdown of each part’s physical makeup. For example, he writes, “Hairs take their rise in the

cellular texture, from a bulb from which they proceed and perforate the skin” (Rush 246). While this may seem to repeat material most likely covered in anatomy class, which Rush points out is not the purpose of his lectures, Rush describes the physical makeup of each part of the body in order to arrive at how the body, and thus the mind, senses.

Having established in “Three Lectures upon Animal Life” what stimulates and how, “Lectures upon the Mind” examines the faculties of the mind. Rush is clear in what distinguishes stimuli from faculties. Whereas stimuli act upon the body, faculties only occur in reflection. Indeed, faculties “are always first excited into action by impressions upon the body which have been mentioned, after which they react upon the body” (Rush 104). In other words, stimuli make impressions on the body, which is followed by the mental faculties then reflecting on these impressions. However, Rush also notes that faculties of the mind are similar in nature to external<sup>57</sup> stimuli at times, especially in that both faculties and external stimuli most often work together. As a human being will use instinct, memory, faith, and perception at one time, so too a human being most often smells, tastes, and sees at the same time, rather than just using one sense.

Rush defines ideas in “Lectures upon the Mind” as well. Not only are ideas “the effects of certain motions excited in the brain, and communicated in the mind” (Rush 486), but complex ideas are associated sensations and associated ideas. Rush describes it this way:

The renewal of ideas must be sought for in some new cause, and that cause is association; that is, by an impression upon some other part of the brain

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<sup>57</sup> External stimuli occur on the outside of the body, such as touch and hearing. Internal stimuli occur inside the body, such as the stimulation of the digestive system or of the bowels.

communicating motion to the part of the brain in which the renewed ideas was originally formed. (Rush 487)

Because ideas are dependent upon impression and association, they are dependent upon the body. Ideas happen only by way of stimuli; stimuli create sensation (impression) on the nerves; this sensation or impression then travels to the brain to associate. As more stimuli acts upon the body, and travels through the body as sensation and impression, association creates ideas, and then more complex ideas. Without stimuli, and without the body as a vessel for stimuli, thought cannot happen.

Thomas Reid and faculty psychology also surface in these lectures, leading the volumes editor's to observe, "In effect, Rush took Reid's entirely metaphysical faculty psychology and immersed it in a matrix of Hartleyan materialism" (Carlson et al. 27). Though Rush used faculty psychology in his physiology, he went beyond the four faculties of Imagination, Passions, Will, and Understanding. On page 426, he names the faculties as "instinct, memory, imagination, understanding, will, passions, the principles of faith and the moral faculties." Rush adds that Taste and intuition can be considered faculties, but are "doubtful" faculties (426). Sixty-odd pages later, Rush lists the operations of the mind, giving his students a handy acronym to remember them by, although judgement and volition seem out of place in this mnemonic. He gives his students the method of ISPAIR, or impression, sensation, perception, association, judgement, reason, and volition, with volition the one principle operation of the mind that can happen out of order (481).

Although Rush's lectures are tedious for the modern reader, his painstaking descriptions and minute categorization of the body, the mind, and mental faculties and operations had practical application. Rush, after all, was working as the head of the local mental hospital; as

such, he felt that only by understanding the makeup of the mind and how it functioned, could physicians begin to treat, and hopefully even cure, mental disease. Yes, for just one example, it was important to understand how pleasure and pain differed, as well as what caused them, because an over- or under-abundance of either could lead to mental instability, but even more importantly, in treating a patient with mental illness, the physician needed to understand association, as well as all the other operations and faculties, to even begin to provide some relief.

In the text below, Rush refers to the circumstance of place which influences association. Rush lists sixteen circumstances which influence association in his “Lectures upon the Mind,” including place, time, pleasure, pain, words (with many variations on this), signs, sound, heat or the lack of it, odors, and custom and habit, among others.

It is of great consequence for a physician to attend to these acts of association in the mind. In the cure of diseases, great benefit may be derived from a knowledge of them. Thus, in curing melancholy it is of the first consequence, to remove a patient from the room, the house, or the society in which he contracted the disease. (Rush 504)

Rush describes in this passage the act of removing a patient from his current “place,” in order to change the associations of the mind. In bringing the patient out of the room, the house, and even out his group of friends and family, the patient moves away from those stimuli that create an association of melancholy.

In practical application, Rush’s lectures seek to prepare future physicians for the treatment of mental, alongside bodily disease; nonetheless, Rush’s ultimate goal was to make good Christian citizens. Rush saw this not only as his calling, but the calling of his students as well. As we have already established, Rush saw his Hartleian-influenced physiology as the

methods and means to a new Christian Republic, putting doctors on the front lines of this endeavor. Using the very methods of physiology they were taught in class, medical students were to go on not to become simply physicians, but rather physician-educators, who were to physically shape the minds of the young (Haakonssen 206). In addition, as physicians, they were to embody the role of a Republican Christian gentleman, in act as well as in thought.

In sum, Rush, like his teacher, William Cullen, believed that medicine should be about the communication of ideas (Haakonssen 192). Rush wanted the interaction between physician and patient to be one of understanding and politeness. Yet, what's more, is that Rush sought to use the understanding of physiology in everyday patient interactions, creating in his medical lectures, ethics for the polite Christian physician, and thus, the Christian republic (Haakonssen 200). Armed with the mental and bodily science of physiology, and a strong dose of medical ethics, physicians were to be both "patriot and a Christian republican" (Haakonssen 200). In this way, medical science spanned both secular and sacred, serving the needs of a new political system and the health and longevity of an American New Israel.

For those of us living in the twenty-first century, it may seem strange that Rush included a discussion of aesthetic terms, such as Taste, in his medical lectures. But for Rush, these terms were as integral to knowing the mind as blood is to understanding the body. And there is evidence that Rush wasn't the only physician who blended the literary and the medical—Knott reports that "Vide Tristram Shandy" appears on student notes from fellow Philadelphia physician William Shippen's nervous system lecture (*Sensibility* 82). What frames Rush's Hartlian understanding of physiological psychology is one question: How do humans perceive? Or, in the case of Taste, how do humans like things? How do humans dislike things? Indeed, Rush, in defining Taste, states, "It acts before the memory and understanding have time to unite, so as to

form a separate act of judgment” (477). Even before understanding is present, Taste takes place as judgment, and inherent in Taste is “a sudden or prompt perception of beauty or deformity, and of propriety or impropriety, in works of nature and art” (477). What’s more, through Taste, we understand the experiences of pleasures and pains—a sublime experience or an ugly experience of a piece of artwork is guided by the “discerning sense” of Taste. To restate, in this way, Taste, as a kind of act of judgment, pre-filters perception, moving a sensory experience to either a pleasure or a pain.

Rush ties the sublime, or what Hugh Blair termed pleasure through the imagination, more solidly to the body than he does Taste. Whereas Rush calls Intuition the sublime faculty, a term he is happy to assign to many faculties in his lectures,<sup>58</sup> later on in his lectures, he names the sublime as the music-making of the human system.

In a word, our bodies may be compared to a violin: the senses are its strings, every thing beautiful and sublime in nature and art is its bow; the Creator is the hand that moves it; and pleasure, nearly constant pleasure, their necessary effect.  
(587)

Although in the above example, the body is the violin, with sublime objects the bow used to play the violin, Rush directly places the sublime in effect the body in his lectures as well. In discussing the pleasures, Rush brings in examples of classical poetry and mythical reactions to them.

The pleasure which belongs to taste, has been, in some cases so exquisite in nature as to produce syncope.<sup>59</sup> Octavia fainted in hearing those verses in the

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<sup>58</sup> For example, Rush also refers to the “sublime operation of reasoning” (515).

<sup>59</sup> Fainting.

sixth Aeneid of Virgil, in which he foretold the future glory of her son. Many other examples of physical effects of sublime passages of poetry on the body, might be mentioned. (Rush 606)

However, it is important to note that in earlier lectures the sublime is not associated with beauty in art or nature, but rather with God's creation. The sublime is how God creates out of God's own substance; humans also carry the capacity for sublimity themselves, in their acknowledgement of a Supreme Being and their commitment to religion (Rush 464). Thus, within these medical and scientific lectures, the sublime is defined as Hugh Blair and George Campbell defined it: pleasure through the imagination. This pleasure thus is a physical and mental effect that happens simultaneously with a sensory experience of something beautiful, and both God and the capacity to know God and worship God.

In moving towards the fourth chapter, in which the central issue of defining style will be treated, along with vivacity, Taste, propriety, and decorum, I propose here that the Burkean sublime, presented here in Rush's lectures, in many ways mirrors the mind-body pleasure/pain of religious rhetorical practice. Longinus's *On the Sublime* surfaced from obscurity during the Enlightenment, rising to great popularity. I find it unsurprising that religious enthusiasm coincides with the resurgence of the sublime; for Joseph Priestley, as Jan Golinski notes in his 2011 Whitney Humanities Center lecture, experimental science brought forth "rules" of nature. Thus, experimental science is sublime in that it comes from a divine order and moves humans away from ignorance. Religious revival also sought to move humans out of the darkness and into the light. After all, as Mark Noll points out, the desire for revival in the Great Awakenings is what drove evangelism and conversion (Kidd 323); in the same way the sublime creates a momentary, elusive, and hauntingly desirable mental and bodily sensation, ecstasy in evangelism

creates an almost drug-like and addictive pleasurable and simultaneously painful experience of intimacy with God. Likewise, Vanessa Ryan remarks that Burke's sublime has been characterized as "mental swelling," (220); she argues that Burke sees the sublime as a sort of "psychological hygiene," and a workout for the nervous system (225). Burke's sublime also operates as social utility, aligning an individual with a community's moral system. In much the same way, religious enthusiasm spurs the individual and the community to collective values. Ultimately, this sublime does not allow individuals to transcend, but, in the mode of enthusiasm, to recognize their limitations while simultaneously experiencing pleasure from sensation.

As Barbara Warnick illustrates in *The Sixth Canon: Belletristic Rhetorical Theory and Its French Antecedents*, the sublime, while differing in explicit definition among the French rhetoricians, as well as British and Scottish rhetoricians Joseph Priestley, Hugh Blair, and George Campbell, found common ground in the emotional and the cognitive. Indeed, Warnick argues that "Describing its [the sublime's] workings enabled Priestley and Campbell to explain how discourse worked upon the mind; their accounts of the psychological impact of rhetoric were thus furthered by the Sublime" (94). Priestley, Blair, and Campbell may have disagreed on the best way to create the Sublime, but all believed that the Sublime occurred in the imagination, and was dependent upon association. In this way, the Sublime was dependent on the faculties and operations of the mind, but also upon the body itself, which senses the initial object of the Sublime, and which takes in the sense impressions through the nerves.

Unlike Immanuel Kant's sublime, which was to take precedent during the Romantic era, the sublime of the late eighteenth century is corporeal. Alan Richardson argues that unlike Kant's sublime, often described as erasing the body, Edmund Burke and Joseph Priestley's sublime were located within the organ of the brain and within the nervous system of the body

itself. Indeed, the sublime of both Burke and Priestley were both conceived of as stretching or enlarging the nervous system (26). This sublime, which Richardson calls “constitutive” rather than “ornamental” (77), comes about through the mind-body working together. In other words, this sublime is physiological; what’s more, it creates cognition. Likewise, American evangelist rhetoric in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries took advantage of stylistic practices that lead to mental and bodily affect. Just as Octavia fainted at the sublime in the *Aeneid*, so too American Methodists collapsed, convulsed, and shouted out during moments when preaching or writing overtook them emotionally. And while we would not typically characterize these kinds of reactions as an experience of the sublime, Catherine Garrettson, like many Methodists, felt a melting of her heart and ecstasy at the grandeur of God in these moments. What, then, is such a reaction, other than a religious experience of the sublime? After all, as Benjamin Rush describes it, God is the sublime.

### ***Conclusion***

In sum, Benjamin Rush, as a historical figure, epitomizes transatlantic knowledge in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. His phrenology combined the evangelical with Enlightenment science, and set Scottish commonsense philosophy within the framework of Hartleian theory. Therefore, Rush shows Enlightenment science was present and active in the early American Republic, at least within medical contexts, and he shows religious belief could and did underlie scientific, as well as educational and rhetorical theory. Rush also presents the mind and body as a physiological unit; while the two are separate entities, they work in sympathy for knowledge production.

Book inventories of Logan and Rush and catalogues such as the Atwater Collection indicate the presence of formal, expert medical and scientific knowledge and informal, folk

medical and scientific knowledge. I do not claim that citizens were regularly and directly exposed to expert knowledge, in which the model of the body was physiological, or even to folk knowledge, in which the model of the body was in transition, at times physiological, at times humoral, and often both. Rather, I claim that such texts represent the presence of an integrated Enlightenment mind-body in the early American Republic, a presence that becomes physical in the case study of Methodist enthusiasm in Chapter 2.

Careful attention to the historical connections between science, religion, and rhetoric illuminates Enlightenment rhetorical theory. At first glance, Enlightenment rhetoric may seem to be only about elocution, thoroughly uninterested in invention or even logic. It may also seem that “Rhetoric as a mode of inventing an argument of discovering a truth had fallen out of favor” (Madden 246); yet, as Etta Madden points out, Enlightenment rhetoric is actually a system invested in the new science. Unlike cursory embellishment, this system sees persuasion not as passive reception, but as a complicated process of rhetorical practice on, and within, the mind-body.

The next chapter returns to the task of defining the canon of style. In doing so, it draws on the concepts of the previous chapters. The first chapter, in establishing the new science as the foundation for Enlightenment rhetoric, identified connections between natural philosophy and religion. More importantly, it argued for Arthur Walzer’s claim of rhetoric as *epistêmê*, not *technê*, to be expanded to rhetorical theories beside George Campbell’s. The second chapter presented American Methodist women’s rhetorical practice as a case study of rhetoric as empirical—as *epistêmê*—and as a physical example of an integrated mind-body. This chapter established the presence of a transatlantic Enlightenment mind-body and the physiological psychology and evangelism behind it. The chapter to follow traces these concepts at work within

the rhetorical theories of two men who would have a profound impact on the rhetorical education of Americans, Hugh Blair and George Campbell.

## Chapter Four

### Style in Campbell and Blair

In his 1999 *Quarterly Journal of Speech* article, “Campbell on the Passions,” Arthur Walzer praises Barbara Warnick’s caution to scholars who label the eighteenth century as an era of superficial style-work. Walzer describes Warnick’s gentle chiding of rhetorical studies as critical of the field’s discomfort with style: “[She] maintains that while scholarship on the eighteenth century has hastened to lament the loss of the classical system of topical invention, it has failed to appreciate eighteenth-century theory’s distinctive contribution to rhetorical theory—its focus on aesthetic appeal” (Walzer, “Campbell on the Passions” 73). As such, this chapter brings aesthetics to the forefront, dealing with the treatment of the canon of style by George Campbell in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* and by fellow Scot Hugh Blair in *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. This chapter looks to decorum, or what George Kennedy has referred to as “propriety as a virtue of rhetorical style” (136), to abrade the notion of style as only ornament. Additionally, this chapter addresses the stylistic concern of vivacity, a concern particular to Campbell during the eighteenth century, but not unfamiliar to rhetorical history.

The previous chapter employed Scottish-educated American physician Benjamin Rush and his medical lectures on the mind as an entryway into Enlightenment and early American Republican model of how the mind and body functioned. As a great believer in Hartleian physiological psychology, and an active part of the Great Awakenings, Rush asserted that by designing the environment around an individual with moral influences, one could remake the individual, and therefore society could reform social ills. Additionally, the last chapter catalogued the many Enlightenment medical and science texts that were available to readers, whether from a local peddler or print shop or from Rush’s and fellow Philadelphians’ libraries.

Such texts range in intellectual complexity from Newton to home medical remedies.

Surprisingly, a “lack” of scientific and medical texts (at least in comparison to the European booktrade) did not cause a complete dearth of scientific and medical knowledge. As Sara Knott notes in her work, even without exposure to “scientific” texts, Americans in the early national period nonetheless knew and practiced the genre of medical case studies in their correspondence. Furthermore, the previous chapter proposes that it is no coincidence that the same era that witnessed religious enthusiasm in the home country as well as the colonies also was host to the popularity of Longinus’ work on the sublime. I contend that changing models of mind and body not only altered the physical and mental affectations of religious ecstasy, as discussed in Chapter 2, but also paved the way for the return of the sublime to rhetoric and literature.

This final chapter treats style in Campbell and Blair as much a product of amateur scientific exploration as it is a product of the social need for polite Christian gentlemen. As other scholars have established the relationship between style and politeness (Goring; Longaker; Potkay), I do not discuss it here. However, I would be amiss not to acknowledge Enlightenment and the early nineteenth century’s concern for social and economic improvement. The hunger for dictionaries, writing and behavior guides, and elocution lessons, belies the very real importance of adhering to a polite, cultivated ideal. In no way do I disagree that the Enlightenment emphasis on style surfaced from social and economic need. Even in the early American Republic, style and social mobility went hand-in-hand. As Joyce Appleby has documented, these years were one of re-invention for those born during or after the years of the American Revolution. Part of this re-invention meant class mobility spurred by increased literacy.

Although I acknowledge that social and economic need played a part in shaping the canon of style, I contend that this is only one side of the story. As evidenced by Chapter One,

faculty psychology and David Hartley's association theory figured greatly into the work of rhetoricians, such as Joseph Priestley. Likewise, Priestley, as an amateur scientist dissecting animals in his wife's kitchen, was intimately aware of the body. Priestley's work, and the work of many others before him, would drastically change how the English, the Scottish, and Americans conceived of the body. Just as women rhetorical practitioners' bodily manifestations of enthusiasm were ordered by the mechanical and materialistic model of the body, so too was rhetoric quietly (or less quietly, in Priestley's case) influenced by it. Ultimately, it is through a physiological understanding of the mind and body that we, as scholars of rhetoric, may more fully come to know what style *does*. As the part of rhetoric that either allows or disallows association and the spurring of the faculties, style facilitates cognition, making the movement of sensory information and ideas within the body and into the mind smooth and untroubled.

My goal in this chapter is to treat the work of Campbell and Blair on its own terms, rather than part of a larger evaluation of rhetorical theory. After all, the wide use of Campbell and Blair's texts in Europe and North America testifies to the value of their work, a value that has unfortunately been, at times, overlooked or mischaracterized. In tracking Enlightenment rhetoric only as the unfortunate pre-cursor to current-traditional rhetoric, we have labeled it as an era of no or little innovation in rhetorical theory. We have additionally failed to notice the wariness that Enlightenment rhetoricians expressed towards style. As Vincent Bevilacqua explains, "Little wonder then that despite the widely professed distrust of stylistic ornamentation historically expressed by rhetorical writers from Aristotle to Blair, the ornamental or stylistic capacity of rhetoric was frequently taken to be its primary concern" ("On Eloquence" 20). In particular, I find the tracking of Enlightenment rhetoric to current-traditional rhetoric in the work of scholars such as Sharon Crowley and Robert J. Connors creates a false sense of this period's rhetorical

gains and losses. The scholarly history of Rhetoric and Composition supports my argument; as Arthur Walzer notes in *George Campbell: Rhetoric in the Age of Enlightenment*, while in the 1950s scholars in speech communication were building on Douglas W. Ehninger's work on Campbell, thirty years later, Rhetoric and Composition would use this same work to understand the origins of the first-year writing course (127). While it is important to know the history of composition courses that often occupy the majority of our teaching, orienting the majority of our Enlightenment and early nineteenth century research towards the origins of this course directly shapes how we comprehend rhetorical theory in this era.

Yet, even as we recognize our tendency to focus on current-traditional rhetoric, we continue to have difficulty breaking away from this narrative. A prime example of this is our treatment of Hugh Blair, early America's most influential rhetorician. However much Barbara Warnick may feel that as a field we have under-valued the Enlightenment's interest in aesthetics, she nonetheless joins other scholars in her criticism of him. While W.S. Howell and Warnick laud Blair's popular teaching style, both disdain his work as unoriginal—an amalgamation of, as Linda Ferriera-Buckley describes it, the neo-classic, the enlightened, and the Romantic ("Our Noble Past" 3). Likewise, Robert J. Connors and Edward P.J. Corbett place Blair at the zenith of the downward fall of rhetoric, away from the canons of invention, arrangement, memory, and delivery, until the role of rhetoric narrowed to style. Or, that is, "style" as understood by late nineteenth-century current-traditional rhetoric. But no matter what our modern assessment of Enlightenment rhetoric is, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries embraced Scottish rhetoricians.

Bevilacqua characterizes our field's past perceptions of Enlightenment well in his essay "On Eloquence." This characterization, despite its age, holds true forty years after its initial publication. Reflecting on the history of rhetorical studies, Bevilacqua comments:

For it was an almost universal conviction among the rhetoricians of the mid eighteenth century—one prompted by the ancients and corroborated by Ramus, Bacon, and the distinctly psychological view of the belles lettres characteristic of Scottish literary thought—that the distinguishing concern of rhetoric was in fact style, embellishment, and elegance of expression: in short rhetorical 'eloquence' in its largest and historical application. (30)

Here, Bevilacqua notes that Peter Ramus's work, in which Ramus infamously stripped rhetoric of dialectic, "corroborates" rhetoric as style, and only style. I would add that the eighteenth-century is unfortunately sandwiched between the work of Ramus and the current-traditional leanings of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the popularity, especially in colonial American education, of Ramus's "style-only" rhetoric (popular for its interest in method, rather than its style-centricity), and the popularity of current-traditional rhetoric to come casts a shadow over what came in-between. For, as Howell describes in *Eighteenth Century Logic and Rhetoric*, European intellectuals—particularly Aristotelians—had had enough of Ramus when the seventeenth century rolled around (19). It is no wonder: Ramus divorced form from style and delivery, as the Sophists had, and his mathematics and logic left much to be desired in terms of accuracy. But what was to be the solution to the problems of Ramism and of a faulty language system? The answer: the New Rhetoric. Therefore, when we consider the work of Campbell and Blair (and Priestley, as well), we need to recall that their rhetorical theory operated in response to a particular set of needs.

In the introduction to this dissertation, I offered several definitions of style. Style as argument (Fahnestock), style as invention (Graves), style as linguistic resource (Paul Butler), style as an idea in a variety of outfits (Heilker), and style as the man (William Walker Gibson). These definitions represent only a portion of a larger number, with definitions as varied as Richard Lanham's somewhat unhelpful, tongue-in-cheek definition of style in *Analyzing Prose* (2003): " 'Style' usually means the game-and-play part of the message, but sometimes the competitive or the playful part of the message really *is* the message and so style becomes content" (7). To these varied definitions of style, I add my own—style as the canon that facilitates cognition.

This chapter analyzes the rhetorical theory of Campbell and Blair, but leaves out that of Adam Smith (although I use Stephen J. McKenna's discussion of Smith's rhetorical theory in my section on Blair). The simple reason for this is that while Campbell and Blair's work would have a lasting transatlantic reach, Smith's rhetorical work would not. Smith had his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* burned as a stipulation of his death, and it wasn't until the 1950s that some of Smith's students' rhetoric notes surfaced (McKenna 15). Thus, I treat Smith solely in relation to Blair; after all, many have pointed out that Smith's influence on Blair's text was great, possibly to the point of plagiarism.

To place Campbell and Blair solely as rhetoricians and clergyman leaves out an important role they played in Enlightenment philosophy. Both operated as amateur scientists during their lifetimes, with Campbell fascinated by the "principles of the mind" (Bitzer, "Introduction" xix), and Blair so carried away with his linguistic studies in folk groups that he painfully misadvised James Macpherson on their publication. Campbell's rhetoric susses out, sometimes in excruciating detail, the wheres and whys of how the mind is affected by language,

in much the way of a modern cognitive psychologist; Blair's work offers case studies of primitive languages in a pre-cursor to linguistic anthropology and folklore studies. Campbell and Blair, while not obviously scientific in the sense that Priestley is, nevertheless operated as amateur scientists, just as missionaries in foreign lands operated as amateur anthropologists, sending home case studies of the indigenous populations they encountered.

Subsequently, consideration of their rhetorical theory must acknowledge the influence of empiricism on and within the text. In addition, while Nan Johnson, Michael G. Moran, and W.S. Howell classify Campbell's work as psychological-epistemological and Blair's as belletristic, I would argue these are not exclusive categories. Indeed, Bevilacqua categorizes Joseph Priestley, George Campbell, and Hugh Blair as "major epistemological rhetoricians of the period" ("Philosophical Assumptions" 153). As such, there's a useful analogy to Priestley's work with animals. Priestly used a knife instead of philosophy to cut open his amphibians and mammals all in the name of biology, but all these men operated from the same empirical impulse. Just as the biologist picks apart the sinews of the mind, through faculty psychology, through association theory, Campbell and Blair sought to pick apart the complexities of the mind.

### ***Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric***

Though scholars may approach Hugh Blair's work with chagrin, bemoaning the lack of originality in his widely published and read *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, their reaction to George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* is much more positive. In fact, it is celebratory. Howell refers to Campbell's text as one of the two best in rhetoric at the time (with Adam Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* as the best) ("John Locke" 326). According to Howell, in contrast to Blair, who "[does] not stand out as an original thinker," Campbell was invested in creating a unique philosophy ("John Locke" 331). And what would

stand at the crossroads of this philosophy would be human nature; or, in our contemporary nomenclature, psychology.

After providing some general background on Campbell, this section proceeds by 1) demonstrating how Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* functions as *epistêmê*—that is, a scientific system of knowledge, and 2) analyzing the style qualities of decorum and vivacity through the lens of physiological psychology. Moreover, I maintain that behind each style decree was psychological intention. In this way I counter common perceptions of the canon. For even some of rhetorical scholarship's canonical texts, such as Thomas Conley's *Rhetoric in the European Tradition*, still place style<sup>60</sup> in the eighteenth century as "a matter rather of elegance of appearance, of 'looking good' " (224).

Campbell was born into a period of relative stability when set beside the violent political upheavals of the seventeenth century. However, the eighteenth century feared continued instability. In turn, the New Rhetoric reflected this fear. Thomas Sprat's insistence on clear, concise prose to describe experiments and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' call for a universal language reflects an attempt to quell miscommunication. But besides clear, concise prose, how were orators and writers to guarantee that their audiences would truly comprehend their messages? For Campbell, the answer came in the form of an empirical psychology. In his quest for a stable, scientific system of rhetoric, even in the face of his religious calling, Campbell would engage empiricism, seeking to quantify how and why the human mind reacted the way it did to an oration or a written text.

Early Methodists were not the only population juggling the demands of empiricism with expectations of religion. Presbyterian Scots faced this difficult task as well. Throughout his life,

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<sup>60</sup> Conley refers to style as *elocutio*.

Campbell remained devoted to religion *and* empiricism. As a minister of the Presbyterian Church, Campbell would have to juggle his religious beliefs with empirical knowledge. Nonetheless, even in rhetoric, religion was foremost in his thoughts. Campbell begins his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* with the following comment.

All art is founded in science, and the science is of little value which does not serve as foundation to some beneficial art. On the most sublime of all sciences, *theology* and *ethics*, is built the most important of all arts, *the art of living*. (1)

Indeed, during his lifetime Campbell's most easily recognized text was not his rhetoric, but his response to David Hume's "Of Miracles," *Dissertation on Miracles*. As Lloyd Bitzer has noted, this work gave Campbell his intellectual seal of approval ("Introduction" ix) to Scottish Enlightenment thinkers, as well as to the wider world. As much as empiricism ordered intellectual thought, however, "religious was a ubiquitous and salient presence" (Caughron 6). Bitzer, as well, notes the delicate mental balancing act between science and religion in Campbell's introduction to *Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Joseph Priestley nor George Campbell could divorce God from natural philosophy; likewise, God could not be divorced from rhetoric.

Moreover, although Campbell was born after Thomas Sprat's call for simplified language and clear method in scientific writing, the desire for an empirical approach to communication frames Campbell's work. Just as Joseph Priestley believed that the imperative part of science was not experiments, discovery, or methodology, but communication of acquired knowledge, Campbell too felt that all was worthless without communication. Commenting on Priestley's favorite topic, the association of ideas, Campbell declares, "Language is the sole channel through which we communicate our knowledge and discoveries to others, and through which the knowledge and discoveries of knowledge are communicated to us" (259). What is key here is the

emphasis on “others” and “communicated to us.” Campbell would return to the social nature of language again and again, locating rhetoric (and therefore philosophy) not as a solitary act, but one whose success hinged upon social interaction—and this social interaction, in turn, hinged upon style.

In comparison to Blair, Campbell visibly sought an empirical rhetoric. Campbell presents this at the end of his introduction, right before he begins the body of his text with a reference to faculty psychology. The third sentence reads, “All the ends of speaking are reducible to four; every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will” (1). What follows are two references to empiricism. First, Campbell addresses the need for methods gained not through just art, but through observation and criticism.

From observing similar but different attempts and experiments, and from comparing their effects, general remarks are made, which serve as so many rules for directing future practice; and from comparing such general remarks together, others still more general are deduced. (lxxvi)

What is most interesting to note, however, is that Campbell goes on to say that on this empirical methodology, in which observation makes for larger conclusions, “all the physiological sciences have been reared” (lxxvi). In this way, Campbell posits his rhetorical theory as a physiological science, using observation of the principles of the mind to come to what Campbell calls “comprehensive truths” (lxxvi).

Campbell sought out empiricism for its ability to concretely observe and analyze the ephemeral functions of the mind. Campbell brings together faculty psychology, Thomas Reid's commonsense philosophy, and the physiological in order to do so: while Campbell searches for

what first principles are applicable to the mind, he categorizes the physiological and psychological reactions of the body and mind by way of the faculties. Considering the objects of persuasion, Campbell muses:

The imagination is charmed by a finished picture, wherein even drapery and ornament are not neglected; for here the end is pleasure. Would we penetrate further, and agitate the soul, we must exhibit only some vivid strokes, some expressive features, not decorated as for show (all ostentation being both despicable and hurtful here), but such as appear the natural exposition of those bright and deep impressions; made by the subject upon the speaker's mind; for the here the end is not pleasure, but emotion. (5)

In this selection, Campbell describes how sensory information in an oration impacts the mind. Psychologically, in a less-persuasive medium (such as a painted picture), "The imagination is charmed," and the goal is pleasure. With oratory and writing, however, the goal is not just to charm the imagination; rather, Campbell illustrates the importance of rhetoric impacting the totality of a person: mind, body, and soul. Rhetoric is meant to "agitate;" it is also meant to mimic the impressions and the exposition of these impressions into ideas within the speaker's brain. In reaching beyond superficial pleasure to touch the emotions, rhetoric, has a holistic impact upon the mind-body, spurring not simply a reaction of pleasure, but through sense impression of the body, to re-create the trajectory of the speaker's own thinking into the hearer's mind.

Campbell clarifies this relationship between mind and body in his explanation of the relationship between sense impression (a sound or a word, for example) and expression. Campbell refers to soul and body, rather than mind and body, but he calls the soul "the living

principle of perception and action," and leaves out any mention of what the mind might do. It seems, for Campbell, at least, the soul and mind are intricately tied, if not analogous. Second, Campbell stresses the psychological importance of rhetoric: "In speaking there is always some end proposed, or some effect which the speaker intends to produce on the hearer" (1). These effects, of course, are meant to be in concert with the faculties of the mind. And for a speaker to effectively communicate with his listener, a speaker must ideally stimulate all of these faculties.

Campbell stresses again and again that the speaker must consider psychology of the hearer. Early on in the *Philosophy*, Campbell explains to his reader, "Eloquence not only considers the subject, but also the speaker and the hearers, and both the subject and the speaker for the sake of the hearers, or rather for the sake of the effect intended to be produced in them" (33). Campbell wants the orator to go beyond a simple consideration of the subject and the speaker; rather, he conveys that the speaker and hearer have a delicate relationship, one in which persuasion does not simply act upon the hearer, but acts "in them." In this way, rhetoric is not just a matter of fleeting psychological influence, but is a physiological and psychological effect within the hearer's body and mind. What's interesting is that the psychological effect is not a matter of a speaker manipulating the hearer's emotions. Campbell instead sees the speaker as re-creating the physiological and psychological impact of thought within the hearer or reader.

Campbell notes much later on in the *Philosophy*, "If he [the orator] does not propose to convey certain sentiments into the minds of his hearers, by aids of signs intelligible to them, he may as well declaim before them in an unknown tongue" (216). "[S]igns intelligible to them" is key in Campbell's rhetoric. Without signs matched to the expectations of the audience, the orator will inevitably fail in his or her persuasion. And it is style that guarantees such signs will be

intelligible, and therefore that the thoughts of the speaker will be carried into the mind and body of the hearer.

The effect as he proposeth to produce in them by means of language, which he makes the instrument of conveying his sentiments into their minds, he must take care in the first place that his style be perspicuous, that so he may be sure of being understood. (Campbell 215)

Style, or, to be exact, the lack of a proper style, breaks persuasion, producing signs unintelligible to the hearer or reader. Likewise, good style makes persuasion possible, allowing for the easy passage of sentiments from the speaker's mind to the hearer's body (through sensory information) and then to the hearer's mind, where ideas and passions will be associated.

It is because of style's role as the lynchpin of persuasion that Campbell spends the majority of his text on rhetorical theory explaining in detail possible stylistic defects. Keep in mind, however, that Campbell warns the reader early on that "correctness" only goes so far as the audience's idea of it. Campbell notes in his section on standard use, "this very acknowledgement shows that many terms and idioms may be common, which nevertheless, have not the general sanction, no, nor even the suffrage of those that use them" (142). This is termed "reputable usage," and while Campbell clearly holds a disdain for common, fashionable idioms, he nonetheless advises the orator to meet the hearer where he is. Campbell explains later on in the *Philosophy* that grammatical "correctness" does not equate with rhetorical efficacy.

A sentence may be a just exhibition, according to the rules of the language, of the thought intended to be conveyed by it, and may therefore, to a mere grammarian, be unexceptionable; which to an orator may appear extremely faulty. (Campbell 215)

Likewise, Campbell advises against overly fancy language. He cautions against the stylistic error of barbarism, in which an obsolete word, an entirely new word, or a new form of a simpler word is used by the orator (171). Concerning the first form of barbarism, he warns the rhetor, “Obsolete words, though they once were English, are not so now” (Campbell 171). Thus Campbell situations style in the audience’s conception of what “correct” style is; style is not a detached set of rules, but is entirely dependent on audience psychology.

Of the triad of perspicuity (purity, propriety, and probability), problems of propriety<sup>61</sup> surface the most frequently in the *Philosophy*. Campbell is vague as to the definition of perspicuity, and commits that fallacy of defining a term by part of its definition. In Book I, Chapter 1, Campbell defines eloquence and its ends; he also pauses to remind us of his disdain for mathematical demonstration. But, he goes on to say, what the orator can appreciate in mathematical demonstration is its perspicuity. With mathematical demonstration,

Perspicuity here results entirely from propriety and simplicity of diction, and from accuracy of method, where the mind is regularly, step by step, conducted forwards in the same track, the attention no way diverted, nothing left to be supplied, no one unnecessary word or idea introduced. (Campbell 2)

The movement of the mind from one piece of sensory information to another, without interruption, is the goal of perspicuity—a goal that comes about through purity, propriety, and probability.

Campbell’s use of the stylistic notion of propriety is best understood as “immediate signs of his thought” (Campbell 266), rather than as social nicety. While purity ensures that a

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<sup>61</sup> For this reason, I favor propriety in this analysis, and leave purity and probability to later projects.

speaker's oration grammatically represents his thoughts, propriety ensures that the orator does not apply "the signs of the signs of his thought" (Campbell 266), and leave the speaker to figure out a relationship between ideas that is two or three levels removed from the original sign. Speaking of the impropriety of metaphors, Campbell notes that this stylistic problem occurs "when a person, instead of adopting metaphors that come naturally and opportunely in his way, rummages the whole world in quest of them, and piles them one upon the other" (266). A good way of understanding propriety in this sense is through a contemporary adage in creative writing: essentially, signs should come from the natural *scene* of the poem. If the writer situates a poem on a farm, smog would be a strange occurrence metaphorically unless there is a city or another smog-producing apparatus mentioned in the poem. The writer should instead gather figurative language from what naturally occurs in the setting; she should not "rummage the whole world" for a metaphor. In this way, the writer preserves her language as signs of immediate thought, rather than signs of signs.

Failure to provide proper signs means that the hearer's mind will fill in any gaps with previous knowledge, rather than the signs of the speaker. This is a dangerous proposition, and in typical Enlightenment mistrust of language and rhetoric, Campbell warns his reader that improper signs can cause the hearer to sink into "falsehood."

The consequence is, that an unusual application of any term is instantly detected; this detection breeds doubt, and this doubt occasions an immediate recourse to ideas. The recourse of the mind, when in any degree puzzled with signs, to the knowledge it had of the thing signified, is natural, and on such plain subjects perfectly easy. (Campbell 265-66)

Towards the end of the *Philosophy*, Campbell acknowledges the futility of rhetoric without proper style. He wryly notes, “Without perspicuity words are not signs, they are empty sounds; speaking is beating the air, and the most fluent declaimer is but as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal” (336). Without propriety, without style, rhetoric is utterly ineffective—a small, hollow sound in a large and busy world.

Whereas propriety promises that signs naturally and immediately represent a speaker’s thoughts, and must be included in every rhetorical act, vivacity enlivens our thoughts, and may be applied as needed. Characteristically, Campbell does not give much of a definition of vivacity; he states that vivacity comes from words, word number, and arrangement, and that it is a liveliness of ideas. Lloyd Bitzer emphasizes vivacity’s importance to the *Philosophy* in his definition, describing vivacity as “an idea’s compelling power, the quality chiefly responsible for assent” (“Hume’s Philosophy” 150). Arthur Walzer’s definition does little to clarify; he writes, “vivacity is the term for general rhetorical salience, effected by word choice, figures, and syntax—is the primary way to achieve this effect in the hearer’s imagination” (“Campbell on the Passions” 79). With Walzer’s examples set beside his definition of vivacity in *George Campbell: Rhetoric in the Age of Enlightenment*, I interpret vivacity in this text as the stylistic means for achieving resemblance in sense impression (not liveliness or *enargeia*). Therefore, vivacity is a stylistic tool linked to the passions, which, in conjunction with imagination, makes ideas more forceful and moving. Thus, we might define vivacity as the quality of style, which, transferring through the association of ideas, agitates and arouses ideas. In addition, vivacity is created through an orator’s choice of words, the number of words, and arrangement.

Vivacity is meant to transfix the listener. While it may seem counterproductive for liveliness to transfix someone’s attention, Campbell means vivacity to be both movement and a

sort of *enargeia* (a lively, sometimes emotional visualization). In his treatment of proper nouns and pronouns, Campbell tells us vivacity of words “ariseth from the same principles that whatever tends to subject the thing spoken of to notice of our senses, especially of our eyes, greatly enlivens the expression” (291). Following the vivacity principle of proper names over generic stand-ins, *Benjamin Rush* is preferable to *that vampire doctor*, and *that vampire doctor* is somewhat more preferable than *he*. *Benjamin Rush* brings one man before the eyes, while *that vampire doctor* or *he* brings a number of blood-fixated doctors or a countless number of boys and men, respectively.

Campbell returns to the visual of fixing the eye in Book III, Chapter III. Throughout Book III, Campbell moves locally to globally, from words, to word numbers, and finally to the arrangement of sentences. This last method of producing vivacity depends on the placement of words within a sentence, and Campbell encourages his reader to think of the arrangement as narrative—but as a visual as well.

The placing of words in a sentence resembles, in some degree, the disposition of the figures in a history piece. As the principal figure ought to have that situation in the picture which will, at the first glance, fix the eye of the spectator, so the emphatical word ought to have that place in the sentence which will give it the greatest advantage for fixing the attention of the hearer. (353)

Continuing his treatment of personal pronouns, Campbell provides the reader with two sentences: “Your fathers, where are they?” and “Where are they, your fathers?” Campbell wants the reader to recognize that the most familiar sentence structure is not always the best; for vivacity, “the end of speaking is not to make us *believe*, but to make us *feel*” (364). He goes on, “It is the heart and not the head which ought to be addressed. And nothing can be better adopted

to this purpose than first, as it were independently, to raise clear ideas in the imagination” (364). Thus, Campbell acknowledges the intricacy of persuasion with emotion and the ability to raise ideas in the imagination.

Arthur Walzer’s treatment of the *Philosophy* identifies it as indebted to Hume and as *epistêmê*, rather than *technê*. In fact, Walzer claims that Campbell rejected *technê* altogether. He writes, “Campbell never intended to produce a handbook. His work is theory, involving an account of belief relevant to a theory of rhetoric” (*George Campbell* 137). Largely, this theory is reception-based, comparatively more interested in the needs of the audience than classical rhetoric. It is a theory that examines the inner workings of the mind and body and that wonders how thought is made.

Within this empiricist psychology [Campbell’s rhetoric], what characterizes the way the mind processes sense impressions becomes paradigmatic of the cognitive process, for the sense impression is both the origin of ideas and the basis for their validity. (Walzer, *George Campbell* 31)

For Campbell, *technê* was the way of the past (Walzer, *George Campbell* 4); *epistêmê* was the way of the present. And while Walzer’s argument for *epistêmê* ends with Campbell’s work, I extend Walzer’s categorization. Not only does the *Philosophy* operate as *epistêmê*, a scientific system, but so does Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*.

### ***Blair’s Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres***

In contrast to Campbell, who is praised as one of the two greatest rhetorical theorists of the Enlightenment, Presbyterian minister, rhetoric professor, and literary critic Hugh Blair is often declaimed as one of the many eighteenth-century black spots on rhetorical history (along with rigid speaking and writing rule books). At best, he is said to be a popular lecturer with

nothing new to say, at worst a plagiarizer of Adam Smith's similarly titled lectures. Thus, Linda Ferriera-Buckley and S. Michael Halloran, Blair's editors, found it important to qualify the rhetorical theory in *Lectures* with this statement: "Little if any theoretical material in *Lectures* is original" (xxv). Nonetheless, this "pedestrian" and "unoriginal thinker" was remarkably successful, publishing in America, as well as Britain, and even as far off as Hungary (Carr 82). Blair's publication was not only widespread, but also widely popular, selling well in unabridged, abridged, and compiled versions. Stephen Carr's 2002 careful analysis of American editions of *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belle Lettres* counts a "circulation that outstrips Campbell, Kames, and even William Enfield's *The Speaker* all put together" (79). Carr also argues that previous publication estimates of Blair's work represent only half of actual circulation (75). In sum, Blair's *Lectures* carried Enlightenment rhetorical theory throughout Europe and across the Atlantic.

Blair's *Lectures* is a more enjoyable read than Campbell's *Philosophy*, less interested in explaining the faults of the syllogism and mathematical demonstration, and more interested in showing, line by line, how a text works (or doesn't work). This certainly somewhat accounts for the greater popularity of the *Lectures*, as well the popular Blair's *Sermons*, over Campbell's *Philosophy* and religious writings. In Great Britain, Blair's "Collections of sermons enjoyed brisk sales," with students of all ages using sermons as models for rhetorical practice, whether in speaking or writing (Ferreira-Buckley and Horner 175). Blair's work was equally popular in the early American Republic. As noted in Chapter 2, Mary Garrettson, daughter of Methodist itinerant preacher Freeborn Garrettson, copied portions of Blair's *Sermons* into one of her notebooks, along with passages from the *Poems of Ossian*.

Fitting with the preceding section on Campbell's *Philosophy*, this chapter section approaches rhetoric as communication—for both Campbell and Blair, the hearer was just as important as the speaker; knowledge could not be created without recognizing this relationship. Throughout, I work against scholarly conceptions of Blair as interested only in the correct use of language and classification, drawing attention to why Blair felt the correct use of language was so essential to persuasion. To examine Blair's investment in how language works at a micro level, I showcase Blair as an amateur scientist in his own right—a linguistic in our contemporary conception of the term. The chapter then moves to Blair's definition of style, which I refer to as "painting the mind." Last, in treating perspicuity, I argue that Blair was greatly wary of style as "ornament."

Blair begins his *Lectures* with a nod to rhetoric's critics, second only to his definition of rhetoric. While Blair's *Lectures* are the product of Enlightenment Scotland and Britain, he could easily be speaking to a contemporary audience. Below, Blair addresses the value of rhetorical and literary study, finishing with the comment that those who undervalue rhetoric show "the criticism of pedants only."

As rhetoric has been sometimes thought to signify nothing more than the scholastic study of words, and phrases, and tropes, so criticism has been considered merely the art of finding faults; as the frigid application of certain technical terms, by means of which persons are taught to cavil and censure in a learned manner. (6)

Blair feels the need to justify the study of rhetoric as well. In defining rhetoric as mutual communication, he states, "What we call human reason is not the effort of the ability of one, so much as it is the result of the reason of many, arising from lights mutually communicated" (Blair

3). This is a weighty claim: Without rhetoric, human reason could not exist. Indeed, rhetoric functions as *epistêmê*, a scientific communication system through which knowledge is gained. Blair goes on to say that an effectively persuasive oration or written text cannot be intellectually empty.

Knowledge and science must furnish the materials that form the body and substance of any valuable composition. Rhetoric serves to add the polish; and we know that none but firm and solid bodies can be polished well. (Blair 4)

Blair's definition of rhetoric as the mutual communication of knowledge aligns with Campbell's. However, Blair adds a caveat; rhetoric is the mutual communication of knowledge and "the intercourse and transmission of thought [. . .] that we are chiefly indebted to for the improvement of thought itself" (3). Thus, unlike in Campbell's definition, rhetoric serves double-duty: it transmits knowledge and it improves the mind (and therefore, the character).

Although Blair would not approach rhetoric with the same overtly empirical methodology, he nonetheless supports and clarifies his rhetorical theory through experience and observation. Blair devotes four chapters in the *Lectures* entirely to linguistics, cataloguing the history and structure of language in ancient and contemporary practice. In Lecture VI, "The Rise of Language," Blair defines language through the mind and the body—language is the expression of ideas brought about by the mechanism of throat and mouth. He writes,

Language, in general, signifies the expression of our ideas by certain articulate sounds, which are used as the signs of those ideas. By articulate sounds, are meant those modulations of simple voice, or of sound emitted from the thorax, which are formed by means of the mouth and its several organs, the teeth, the tongue, the lips, and the palate. (Blair 54)

As well as defining language as the expression of ideas through the mechanics of the throat and mouth, throughout the lectures on language, Blair stresses that language is an arbitrary and artificial sign system, only cursorily linked to real objects. In his discussion of the origins of writing, Blair argues for the first symbolic written representations of ideas as literal signs (i.e., a spear would mean a spear, or maybe violence, but not a more abstract concept, such as “fear”). Commenting on early writing in Central America, Blair notes, “to signify that one man had killed another, they drew the figure of one man stretched upon the earth, and of another standing by him with a deadly weapon in his hand” (69). Likewise, earlier in the lecture, Blair theorizes that the earliest sound language systems most likely closely resembled the thing they represented; for a twentieth-century example, a loud noise is a “boom.” For our purposes, what is key is that Blair, as an amateur linguist, recognized language as an artificial and arbitrary system. Style, too, was artificial and arbitrary; its use comes in that it helps oil the engine of communication.

Blair claims language is a “Divine original;” nevertheless, language is not a perfect system (55). Although Blair believes that modernity and civilization have led to “the highest perfection” of language’s artificial system, English is irregular and a-systematic. Nonetheless, an intimate understanding of the structure of the English language allows the writer to avoid obscurity and other stylistic problems, creating a smooth stream of sensory information to the reader, which Blair imagines as a kind of transference of the speaker or writer’s thoughts to the hearer or reader. Blair opens his discussion of style with the definition that follows.

It is not easy to give a precise idea of what is meant by style. The best definition I can give of it, is, the peculiar manner in which a man expresses his conceptions, by means of language. (Blair 99)

Blair ends this definition by noting, “Style always has some reference to an author’s manner of thinking” and that style “is a picture of the ideas which arise in his mind, and of the manner in which they arise there” (99). Style, therefore, has the responsibility of transferring the thoughts of one person to another, creating a “picture of ideas” in the hearer or reader’s mind in *the manner in which they arise*. Here, Blair’s definition of style fits well with the associative and mechanical model. Style has the responsibility of re-creating the sensory information and the associative thought patterns of the speaker/writer’s mind within his audience.

Style, and particularly the stylistic concept of propriety, has long been connected to mental visual imagery. The Greek term *to prepon* generally equates to appropriateness or stylistic propriety; it also refers to bringing-before-the-eyes (McKenna 26), in which the hearer or reader can visually “see” an image with his or her mind due to the detailed description of the composition. Indeed, propriety and the visual are “intimately related” (McKenna 28). For the hearer or reader to be able to have an image “brought before the eyes,” propriety must be in place. Successful propriety has:

- (1) its origins are in the cosmic or natural order;
- (2) it is associated with clear perception through the senses, especially vision;
- (3) it occasions a pleasurable aesthetic response in hearers;
- and (4) it results in conspicuous social appearance for the speaker. (McKenna 28)

As Smith and Blair’s rhetorical theory shares many similarities, I draw upon propriety and the visual in McKenna’s analysis of Smith to understand the connection between propriety and style as painting a picture of ideas in Blair. In choosing language whose origins are part of the “natural order” of the subject, whose description fully uses the senses, and whose impact is pleasurable a

speaker or writer can achieve bringing-before-the-eyes. In this way, a speaker or writer could bring his or her own thoughts visually to his or her audience.

Linda Ferriera-Buckley and Herman Cohen place Blair's definition of style as an emphasis on individualism and genius; however, Blair's discussions of language and style indicate that this individualism and genius is more about "mode of expression" than thought. Blair clarifies the relationship between genius and style in Lecture XVIII, "Figurative Language." Blair vehemently disputes the association between style and meaningless ornament in this lecture at the same time as he argues for style as coming naturally from the subject.

[T]he real and proper ornaments of Style arise from Sentiment. They flow in the same stream with the current of thought. A writer of genius conceives his subject strongly; his imagination filled and impressed with it; and pours itself forth in that Figurative Language which Imagination naturally speaks. (Blair 196)

Again, Blair places emphasis on smooth mental process, in which style prevents breaks in the stream of thought. Genius, in this passage, is about fully conceiving the subject so that all figures come from within the subject and "the same stream with the current of thought." As mentioned in a previous section, Campbell likewise felt all figures should originate within the subject. It is about full expression of the subject. Likewise, Blair acknowledges that while "I observed being the copies of our ideas, there must always be a very intimate connection between the manner in which every writer employs words, and his manner of thinking [ . . . ] These distinctions [of style] carry, in general, some reference to an author's manner of thinking, but refer chiefly to his mode of expression" (197). Thus, style is not, as often perceived, "the man," but the man's mode of saying things. This may seem a small, paltry difference. However, it is the difference between

style as a re-creation of the man himself (his character, etc.), and the re-creation, through signs, of the man's thought patterns.

Blair is careful to emphasize to his reader that style is not ornament. In fact, Blair disparages the over-categorization of tropes and figures, saying that this "has often led persons to imagine, that if their composition was well bespangled with a number of these ornaments of speech, it wanted no other beauty" (147). Blair finds it so important to differentiate between style and ornament that much of the introduction is taken up by it. He begins with this concession:

Indeed, when the arts of speech and writing are mentioned, I am sensible that prejudices against them are apt to rise in the minds of many. A sort of art is immediately thought of, that is ostentatious and deceitful; the minute and trifling study of words alone; the pomp of expression; the studied fallacies of rhetoric; ornament substituted in the room of use. (Blair 4)

The goal of Blair's lectures, however, is far from "ornament substituted in the room of use." Rather, he contends that, "If the following Lectures have any merit, it will consist in an endeavour to substitute the application of these principles in the place of artificial and scholastic rhetoric; in an endeavour to explode false ornament" (Blair 4). A few pages later, Blair qualifies this statement with admission of a love for minutiae, at least when it comes to appropriate ornament. However, he nonetheless feels that there has been too much emphasis on tropes and figures for the sake of tropes and figures, and speakers and writers, are "often more careful of polishing style, than of storing it with thought" (Blair 6). Within Blair's rejection of superficial ornament, or ornament for ornament's sake, we see again the emphasis of thought. Blair claims that style belongs with thought, a theme he returns to again and again, not only with his definition, but also with his descriptions of perspicuity through propriety and precision.

Blair establishes perspicuity as the “fundamental quality of style.” As with Campbell, Blair defines perspicuity as having three parts: purity, propriety, and here he differs from not, for example, adding in obsolete or archaic words (100). Propriety means the correct matching of sign to the meaning intended to be expressed: “Propriety is the selection of such words in the language as best and most established usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express by them” (Blair 100-101). In contrast, precision is using no more than that correctly matched sign. Blair states this difference most clearly, writing, “The words which he uses are proper; that is, they express the idea which he intends, and they express it fully; but to be precise, signifies, that they express that idea and no more” (102). Therefore, perspicuity, the fundamental quality of style, centers on providing the correct sign (and no more than that) to the audience.

The relationship between style and the eighteenth-century model of the mind becomes clear in Blair’s explanation of precision. He equates the function of precision to the cognitive capacity of the mind, explaining that a greater number of signs than absolute necessary creates confusion in the mind.

The use and importance of Precision, may be deduced from the nature of the human mind. It never can view, clearly and distinctly, above one object at a time. If it must look at two or three together, especially objects among which there is resemblance or connection, it finds itself confused and embarrassed. It cannot clearly perceive in what they agree, and in what they differ. (Blair 102)

Blair’s reasoning in terms of style theory comes not from what emotions he wants the audience to feel, nor how he wants the audience to react. Instead, Blair’s concern is ensuring that the correct signs are supplied to the hearer or reader’s mind, and no more than the correct signs necessary to reproduce the thought patterns of the speaker/writer.

While Blair's rhetorical theory has been presented as nothing new, an amalgamation of the neoclassical and Adam Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, continued readings of Blair's text set beside physiological psychology reveals style as essential to the mental processes of the mind. Through perspicuity, a speaker/writer could ensure that his words or text would paint a picture of his thoughts, supplying the hearer/reader with the correct signs to reproduce the speaker/writer's thought patterns in the hearer/reader's mind. This, of course, all occurred through the gateway of the body. Only by way of sensory organs—the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the skin, the nose, could the mind receive language signs. And it was through the body as well, that these signs traveled to the mind, in which they would be associated into ideas, creating vibruncles of thought patterns within the mind itself.

Through his *Lectures*, Blair reminds us that style is not about superficial argument, and that common usage and best use must be considered, rather than “correctness,” when it comes to supplying the right sign. Yet Blair also imparts that aptly-chosen language makes for moral improvement of the speaker/writer and hearer/reader. As Warnick notes, “he was so motivated by a belief that the thoughts we have and the words in which we express them are so closely related that we can improve the quality of our thoughts by improving the quality of our expression” (Einhorn et al. 301). Proper style facilitates cognition, in essence visually placing the speaker or writer's thoughts into the mind's-eye of the hearer or reader. Proper style additionally ensures that the thoughts being placed there are of the highest order. Just as Benjamin Rush sought to make moral citizens by surrounding people with the correct environment, Blair seeks to make thought moral through stylistic propriety.

### ***Conclusion: Style and Cognition***

This chapter presented George Campbell and Hugh Blair not only as clergymen and rhetoricians, but also as amateur scientists. Reading Campbell and Blair's rhetorical theory by way of physiological psychology, the New Science, and the New Rhetoric places Enlightenment rhetorical theory as *epistêmê*, rather than *technê*. Through language, these men sought to systematically pick apart the complexities of mind and soul. And in contrast to frequent characterizations of Enlightenment rhetoric, and particularly belletristic rhetoric, Campbell and Blair did not fixate on rigid or meaningless correctness. Correctness, propriety, perspicuity, even vivacity—these were all vastly important, but in a very different way than previously perceived. Correctness did correspond to polite culture and social and economic mobility. However, in an era that witnessed changing models of mind and body, style was more than "static language practices" (Butler, *Sourcebook 2*). Style had its own role in cognition, i.e., the mental processes of thought—it provided appropriate sensory information that, in the right arrangement, could imitate the thoughts of the orator within the hearer, reproducing thought's pathways in the hearer's mind. Improper style was dangerous. It broke down these mental processes, and risked the failure the association of ideas and passions.

Why has style and aesthetics, especially of the 18th and early 19th centuries, continued to be under-treated in scholarship? Why are the origins of current-traditional rhetoric such a wide area of focus for our discipline? I would argue that Rhetoric and Composition's past reliance on formal texts and formal education, along with our orientation towards a rejection of current-traditional rhetoric, has kept us from asking more expansive questions. While this reliance makes sense in the context of our role as writing instructors and administrators in formal education settings, and in the context of an academic discipline in a university setting, we need to be aware

of other sites of rhetorical activity—those that are equally, if not arguably more influential than sites of formal education.

Our unintentional focus on formal texts and formal education has kept us from considering rhetorical theories within their own right, outside of whatever relationship they may have to current-traditional rhetoric. I contend that boundaries—what Johnson and Pace aptly term "counterproductive binaries"—between disciplinary specialties, and between disciplines, prevent us from adopting a broader methodology and ideology for rhetorical history. My concluding chapter picks up this theme, contending that exploring rhetorical history across these boundaries (whether Rhetoric and Composition and creative writing or Rhetoric and Composition and literature or Rhetoric and Composition and Communication, to name just some examples) gives rise to alternate narratives of rhetorical history.

## Conclusion

In order to define what style does, this dissertation has made several claims. First, Enlightenment rhetorical theory, and the canon of style along with it, should be treated as *epistêmê*, not *technê*. Although Enlightenment rhetorical theory may seem to be a perfect fit with the handbook tradition, with its lengthy descriptions of proper word choice and sentence structure, the influence of the new science places rhetorical theory as a scientific system of knowledge. Second, the rhetorical practice of American Methodist women and their descriptions of enthusiasm give us a case study of an integrated mind-body. Last, physiological psychology provides a framework in which to understand the rhetorical theories of George Campbell and Hugh Blair, two rhetoricians who would have a transatlantic reach.

Defining style appears deceptively simple. After all, definitions of style in Rhetoric and Composition tend to be short and descriptive—commonsensical. For just one example, Richard Lanham provides this curt definition in his chapter on opaque style from *Style: An Anti-Textbook*: style is “patterns of words” (Lanham 72). Likewise, style is the choices an author makes (Butler; Corbett), or “a refined use of language” (Heilker 230). But such definitions beg even more definitions (What counts as a pattern? What kind of choices? Would subject matter be considered? What qualifies as “a refined use of language?”), and they are little help in identifying why style remains controversial within our field, or why the canons of invention and arrangement, and even delivery,<sup>62</sup> hold an elevated status over style.

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<sup>62</sup> Memory is not often considered in Rhetoric and Composition, although scholarly interest in memory has increased. Communication, in contrast, is greatly invested in memory, particularly public memory.

Of course, I am not arguing here that these scholars do not have a sophisticated concept of style. Rather, the complexity of style appears in the demonstration which follows the definition. Yet, I would draw attention once again to what these texts actually do: demonstrate rather than define. Texts such as Richard Lanham's provides us with an in-depth (and I would say, unrivaled) analysis of what style *looks like*. My purpose in this dissertation was to use the opposite approach, and stress definition rather than demonstration. In addition, Lanham's work continues to depend on a binary division between substance and style as he tracks new media's interaction with composition and argues that style has taken the place of substance (*The Economics of Attention*). Lanham's initial sentence in *Style: An Anti-Textbook* additionally reflects a binary structure to style. He writes, "People have thought prose style many things—persuasion or mere music, duty or pastime, ornament only, the man himself" (7). Inherent in Lanham's binary structure (persuasion/mere music; duty/pastime; the man himself/ornament only) are the two opposing viewpoints of style underlying every discussion of style: the monist and the dualist.<sup>63</sup>

Monism and dualism are separated by a fundamental disagreement over form and content in style. With monism, form and content are inseparable; with dualism, form and content exist independently. Monism most easily equates with the Romantic movement in literature; style "is the man." This is often paired with the subsequent explanation that style is a person's manner of speech or writing. However, I feel there's a more useful example available than these two quick definitions. Many years ago, one of my undergraduate professors set this challenge for his class:

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<sup>63</sup> Monism and dualism differ here from the same terms in Chapter 1; in Chapter 1, monism refers to an integrated mind-body, with the soul physically present in the body. In contrast, dualism imagines the mind and body as separate entities.

If, in a court of law, you had to prove that this poem was Elizabeth Bishop's, and not someone else's, what would you use to do so? What would indicate that Elizabeth Bishop, and no one else, had written this poem? Thus, I would extend the monist view—not only is it the manner of a speaker or writer, but it is also the particular characteristics of speaking and writing that remain unique to the individual, *even when* the individual seeks to imitate another's work.

Though the monist approach is present in Priestley's, Campbell's, and Blair's rhetorical theory, "style is the man" is misleading. This suggests a singular style coming from the speaker/writer to the hearer/reader. Yet, Enlightenment rhetoric always placed the needs and wants of the audience above any individual desire. For these rhetoricians, style could and should be adapted to whatever accepted standard is present and to the rhetorical situation at hand. In the same way that the Wordsworth of the Preludes is not the same Wordsworth of daffodils, speakers and writers created many versions of themselves, seeking to re-create the speaker/writer's thought process for the hearer/reader in a way that was both accurate for speaker/writer and effective for the hearer/reader. This balance between language as connected to thought and audience reception isn't merely Romantic in nature. It originates with Aristotle's organic sense of style (Kinneavy 358), but continues in contemporary rhetorical theory as well, such as in William Walker Gibson's *Tough, Sweet, and Stuffy*.

Gibson's definition aligns with Corbett's in "The Erasure of Language." Corbett's definition, discussed in the introduction, bemoans the lack of the teaching of style. He claims that Renaissance schoolboys "could tell you that style represented the choices that an author made from the lexical and syntactical resources of the language" (Corbett, "The Erasure" 210). Gibson builds a similar definition, placing style as "the writer's particular choices of words" (8). However, while Corbett leaves the reader to ponder what "choices" and "resources" means,

Gibson expands this simple definition throughout *Tough, Sweet, and Stuff* by tying style to a metaphorically physical body. For Gibson, style equates to those choices a person would make when dressing themselves in the morning: the choices of clothes, or hairstyle, or jewelry that prompt a certain judgment in the reader. Yet, just as in Enlightenment rhetoric, this reception-based style also improves the speaker/writer (or, in this case, the “dresser”)—it acts reciprocally, making the man.

It is with style that we try to behind like a decent person, one who ruefully concedes his drive for power while remaining aware of his reader’s well-chosen resistance. Thus style is our way of becoming a person worth listening to, worth knowing. (Gibson 110)

Just as in Enlightenment rhetorical theory, Gibson’s work binds together cognition, style, and morality. He ends his book with what he refers to as the “moral justification” for our field: “We improve ourselves by improving the words we write” (110). Gibson’s final words parallel the entire purpose of rhetorical theory for rhetoricians such as Joseph Priestley and Hugh Blair, and the longer tradition of rhetorical history. Not only should rhetoric make for effective communication, but it should also simultaneously improve body and soul. Writing, for Gibson and for Enlightenment rhetoricians, improves thought as well as the soul.

Set alongside monism, dualism may appear immoral, caring not for improvement of person or society, but for a desired effect upon the audience. However, dualism is most accurately amoral, uninterested in anything aside from achieving persuasion. Adapting to the needs of the audience partly resembles the dualist approach to style, what Lanham identifies as “ornament only.” The dualist approach can also be described as dressed-up ideas (Heilker 229); much as people change clothes, with the dualist concept of style, ideas can change their

ornament. Dualism is most often associated with the Sophists, though James Kinneavy argues that Edmund Burke's work was also dualist (358). With dualism, an idea exists separately from language; language, as an arbitrary sign system, can be manipulated in many ways to mean the same thing.

Erasmus's *Copia* offers a dualist approach to style when it gives hundreds of ways to say "Your letter pleases me greatly." Yet within the text Erasmus divides *copia* (many ways of doing the same thing) into *synonymia* and amplification. *Synonymia*, according to Erasmus, "express exactly the same thought, so that as far as the meaning goes it makes no difference whether you choose rather to use one or the other" (19). A good example of *synonymia* would be the use of the apostrophe to indicate possession or the use of a preposition. Typically, though not always, *Hugh Blair's socks* and *the socks of Hugh Blair* express the same meaning. Amplification, in contrast, "depends on the piling up, expanding and amplifying of arguments, *exempla*, *collations*, *similes*, *dissemblia*, *contraria*, and other methods of this sort" (Erasmus 16). Erasmus also refers to amplification as "enlarging." Consider the two examples below:

He was drenched.

From his topmost hair to the very bottom of his shoe he was wet with rain: Head, shoulders, chest, stomach, legs, in a word, his whole body was dripping with water. (Erasmus 45)

These two sentences, while similar in meaning, are not equivalent. Amplification ups the ante, so to speak, raising an image of a drenched individual to one who is wet to the core and actively pooling water on the floor.

Even though monist and dualist approaches to style both exist in contemporary discussions of style, I cannot accept dualism—language as pure ornament, a simple dressing up

of ideas. Yet, it persists. Tied to this is the still influential notion of rhetoric's aim as the movement of the audience's emotions, with style as rhetoric's side-kick in manipulating the audience. Monism implies that there is no pure transmission of knowledge, as meaning is interdependent with and dependent on sign systems. Indeed, John Locke and Enlightenment rhetoricians sought to separate communication from rhetoric, they did so in order to re-create accurately one man's thoughts in another's mind. There was the goal of pure transmission, with the acknowledgement from Priestley, Campbell, Blair, and others that pure transmission could never quite be. For Priestley, Campbell, and Blair, signs might be arbitrary, but they nonetheless could and did influence the formation of ideas.

Poetry, as a genre, gives a clear example of how style is neither secondary to nor separate from cognition. For, as poet Donald Hall writes in his introduction to W.D. Snodgrass's *De/Compositions: 101 Good Poems Gone Bad*, "Critics have proclaimed forever that the paraphrase of the poem is not the poem. [...] The poem is the whole of the poem, and nothing but the poem. It is vowels and metaphors; it almost invisible connections by the associations of words; it is paradox and contradiction that derive from the connotations of whole words" (Hall xvi). Hall presents here an Aristotelian, organic view of style, where form and content cannot be separated (Butler, *Out of Style* 2-3), and in which sentences or lines that technically mean the same thing in different forms do not actually mean the same thing.

The poet W.D. Snodgrass, in an effort to show young poets the craft behind good poetry, created a collection of de/composed poems that are nonetheless accurate paraphrases of the original text. These poems often also mimic the initial form, outside of his poems de/composed specifically to show the structure of meter and metrics. What is produced from these de/compositions is a very different poem with a very different meaning, even though the form,

and arguably the content, of each line match. Seen though Robert Creeley's "I Known a Man" and Snodgrass's decomposed version of Creeley's poem, "For the Future's Sake,"<sup>64</sup> style is much more than ornamentation.

There is so much lost in Snodgrass's version; there is also so much added. Creeley's poem becomes, in Snodgrass's de/composed version, suddenly a poem about vehicle emissions and global warming. The sense of despair, frustration, confusion, and danger, as well as the wonderful voice in Creeley's original, becomes a stately, logical discussion in Snodgrass's. We no longer get a sense of the immediacy of two men driving down a road; they could be at a baseball game, for all the reader knows. My point here is that style cannot be removed from cognition. In fact, style is necessary to cognition—we get a picture of two different men from each of these poems, and we get two different understandings, even though the poems resemble each other on a line-by-line paraphrase and in form. Yet, one poem is about the despair of everyday life and the other is about ecology. A drastic change, courtesy of style.

Part of the limitation when it comes to style in Rhetoric and Composition, I believe, is the discipline's unconscious focus on *technê*. *Technê* is most often associated with means of production; classically, this meant an art or a craft. Jeffrey Walker's recent *The Genuine Teachers of This Art* demonstrates *technê* as a craft. Walker images a re-creation of Isocrates's teaching and writing handbooks in this texts, putting together examples of what Isocrates's teaching handbook might have looked like based on Isocrates's own writing and other contemporary texts. Yet the handbook Walker describes does not exactly resemble handbooks of today, in which a handbook typically represents a barebones break-down of grammar, usage, and perhaps structure. It may give a few examples, or some how-to hints, but it rarely operates at the

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<sup>64</sup> See Appendix.

level of complexity of a classical *technê*, where a handbook floated the spectrum between teacher's manual and student guide. Walker argues that Isocrates rejected "fixed" models and would have his *technê* on the creative and original use of devices or techniques (62). For Isocrates, then, a handbook would have been more of a collection of creative exercises than the rules of writing.

Conceiving of style in the way of the twentieth- and twenty-first century handbook rules makes style, and more broadly, the discipline itself, skills or resources rather than knowledge. This is a self-perpetuating problem, partly from the descriptions of rhetoric or writing as "skills," and partly from our historical understanding of rhetoric. Previous work (Crowley; Connors; Ferreira-Buckley and Horner) charted the move from a classical model (used through parts of the seventeenth century) to the current-traditional model. Such work collapses centuries of rhetorical study into brief periods of thought, sidesteps the medieval era and Ramus and Agricola of the Renaissance, and assumes that the classical model was cast aside for little reason. The cited reasons (increased writing for public consumption, women in the rhetoric classroom,<sup>65</sup> and economic growth) are framed with a nostalgia for classical rhetoric. And, of course, the Romanticists must additionally get the blame for current-traditional rhetoric; after all, they turned an outwardly system of invention into an inward one and substituted genius for method.

As I argued in Chapter 4, treating the history of rhetoric as linear and progressive has lead Rhetoric and Composition to understand Enlightenment rhetoric narrowly, as a time of rule-rigid handbooks, the transformation of rhetoric departments to English literature departments, and the eventual subordination of rhetoric to English literature, and the era of current-traditional

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<sup>65</sup> Connors amusingly claims that women, and their refusal to speak in the rhetoric classroom, caused the downfall of neoclassicism.

rhetoric to come. This is a comfortable narrative for Rhetoric and Composition studies. It supports our disdain of current-traditional rhetoric and the five-paragraph theme,<sup>66</sup> and it supports our position as the underdog in the English department, looking to restore our former glory, which may or may not have been. But the prevalence of this narrative in the ideology of Rhetoric and Composition, I believe, severely limits the conclusions we make. Placed continually beside current-traditional rhetoric, Enlightenment rhetoric has little chance to be classified as more than a scapegoat.

This narrative reflects our contemporary problems in Rhetoric and Composition, not the reality of rhetorical theory in the historical period. What was groundbreaking then, we have chastised for our students' seeming inability to call topics easily to mind, or to understand that the first engagement of an argument is an agreement of both parties on fact. Yet, at the time, Enlightenment thinkers and Romanticists were attempting to move away from the method that produced over and over again the same kind of, if I may, boring speeches and boring writing; They also wanted to keep writers and speakers from needlessly mimicking classical works. And when the new science began to re-shape the structure of the mind and the body, there was opportunity to understand language, how it worked, how it didn't work physically. There was an opportunity to understand language at the bodily level, down to the particles inside of the body: Those particles then passed sensory information to the brain, to where ideas were created and processed.

Engaging with Enlightenment rhetoric at the religious, scientific, and transatlantic levels cracks open the question of style. While Rhetoric and Composition easily recognize what style looks like, delineating what style does is a different matter. Jeanne Fahnestock, Heather Graves,

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<sup>66</sup> Though I am quite fond of the five-paragraph theme as a teaching tool.

Sara J. Newman, and many others have sought to pick apart the purpose of style, whether it is style as argument or invention or even, at times, ornament. Yet while style can operate as all of these things (argument, invention, ornament), I wanted to know how style fit in to the physiological and psychological experience that is communication. Set alongside John Wesley's empirical writing practice, in which reason and understanding with God came through systematized writing, as well as Benjamin Rush's evangelical physiological psychology, style comes alive. Style no longer sits on the sidelines of rhetoric to be used once an oration or a text is finished, to ornament the language, but plays an integral role in cognition.

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## Appendix

I Know a Man

--Robert Creeley

As I sd to my  
friend, because I am  
always talking, --John, I

sd, which was not his  
name, the darkness sur-  
rounds us, what

can we do against  
it, or else, shall we &  
why not, buy a goddamn big car,

drive, he sd, for  
christ's sake, look  
out where yr going.

For the Future's Sake  
--W.D. Snodgrass

I said to my friend—  
we always discuss this—  
“John,” I said to him

(that's not his real name)  
“evils are universal;  
what can we do

to ameliorate suffering  
or should we just get  
more luxurious comforts?”

“For the future's sake,” he answered,  
“consider the possible  
harm to the ecology.”