DISCIPLINARY AND BODILY DECORUM IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH ELOCUTION: A RHETORICAL STUDY OF WORKS BY THOMAS SHERIDAN, JOHN WALKER, AND GILBERT AUSTIN

by

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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfilment of the thesis requirement for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
English.

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 1997

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation undertakes a rhetorical reading of three treatises (Thomas Sheridan's *Lectures on Elocution*, John Walker's *Elements of Elocution*, and Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia*) from a neglected episode in rhetorical history, namely the eighteenth-century British elocutionary movement. By attending to the intellectually marginalized but socially significant domain of bodily rhetoric (i.e., delivery), the elocutionary writers simultaneously seek cultural capital for themselves and their field of enquiry within the dominant disciplinary hierarchy, and offer limited opportunities for aspiring public speakers to improve their social status. Guided by the concepts of "decorum" and "status aspiration," this study investigates how Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's works negotiate the problems of disciplinary and bodily decorum within a context of social mobility and efforts to standardize language use. Specifically, it analyzes the rhetorical strategies of persuasion these writers use to address a mixed implied readership of critical scholars and both adult and adolescent students. This analysis draws on recent theories of "politeness" discourse, argumentation, and visual rhetoric to elucidate the appeals of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* which dominate, respectively, the opening *exordia* and narratives, the middle confirmations, and the closing perorations of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's rhetorical treatises.

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INTRODUCTION

> The first question to receive attention was naturally the one that comes first naturally–how persuasion can be produced from the facts themselves. The second is how to set these facts out in language. A third would be the proper method of delivery; this is a thing that affects the success of a speech greatly; but hitherto the subject has been neglected. . . . No systematic treatise upon the rules of delivery has yet been composed. . . . Besides, delivery is–very properly–not regarded as an elevated subject of inquiry. Still, the whole business of rhetoric being concerned with appearances, we must pay attention to the subject of delivery, unworthy though it is, because we cannot do without it. . . . (Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.1403b-1404a)

> If all societies . . . that seek to produce a new man through a process of 'deculturation' and 'reculturation' set such store on the seemingly most insignificant details of *dress*, *bearing*, physical and verbal *manners*, the reason is that, treating the body as memory, they entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e. mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of culture. The principles embodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, and hence cannot be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation, cannot even be made explicit; nothing seems more ineffable, more incommunicable, more inimitable, and, therefore, more precious, than the values given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy. . . . The whole trick of pedagogic reason lies precisely in the way it extorts the essential while seeming to demand the insignificant: in obtaining the respect for form and forms of respect which constitute the most visible and at the same time the best-hidden (because most 'natural') manifestation of submission to the established order. . . . (Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* 95)

Aristotle's views on the canon of delivery and Bourdieu's ideas about the "essential" role of "insignificant" bodily practices in structuring social orders provide strategic points of entry for this exploration of the eighteenth-century British elocutionary movement. Though vastly different in their attitudes and analysis, both Aristotle and Bourdieu understand the persuasive power of bodily conduct and recognize that these forms of conduct are "neglected" or "hidden," that they are not explicated. In this latter sense, Aristotle and

Bourdieu situate bodily persuasion at the outlying boundaries of rhetorical and social praxis: a necessary but unworthy subject; an essential but (apparently) insignificant pedagogy; the most visible yet best hidden sign of social propriety.

I am interested in the elocutionary movement because it emphasizes the neglected canon of delivery and, consequently, the problematic issue of bodily persuasion. Within classical rhetoric, the canon of delivery comprised the non-verbal, physical dimensions of persuasion, primarily as these worked through *pathos*, or the speaker's emotional appeal. Typically, these dimensions were classified into two main components: *actio* (the management of the body through posture, gestures, and so on) and *pronuntiatio* (the management of the vocal tones, pitch, rhythm, volume, and so on).[1] The eighteenth-century British elocutionists concerned themselves, to varying degrees, with both dimensions. Although *actio* most obviously represents the role of bodily conduct in persuasion, *pronuntiatio* also depends on the management of non-verbal, physical aspects (i.e., the vocal organs). As Cicero explains, "delivery is a sort of language of the body, since it consists of movement or gesture as well as of voice or speech" (*Orator* 17.55). Hence, in this study I use the phrases *bodily persuasion* and *bodily decorum* to refer to both vocal and gestural delivery.

For the purposes of this study, I limit my investigation of the British elocutionary movement to roughly the second half of the eighteenth century. According to other researchers, the time-frame I have selected corresponds with the period of greatest publishing activity and popular interest in elocution in Britain, though it does not encompass the movement's full scope.[2] The texts which this study focuses on (namely, Thomas

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[1]Although the division into the two main parts of voice and gesture is consistent, the designation of the former as "*pronuntiatio*" and the latter as "*actio*" is not. Cicero, for example, refers to "delivery" (including both parts) as "*actio*" (*De Oratore* 3.56.213). As Quintilian notes, "*Delivery* [*pronuntiatio*] is often styled *action*. But the first name is derived from the voice, the second from the gesture" (*Institutio* 11.3.1).

[2]Haberman's discussion of "English Sources of American Elocution" covers the period from 1750-1800. Robb's similar study covers 1760-1827 (*Oral Interpretation*); Fritz begins with Sheridan's *Lectures* and ends with the *Chironomia* ("Beginnings"); Gray mentions Mason's 1748 *Essay on Elocution* as the commonly accepted starting point of the movement, but he credits Howell ("Sources") with demonstrating that it actually began

Sheridan's *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* [1762], John Walker's *Elements of Elocution* [2 vols., 1781], and Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* [1806]) were published near the beginning, middle, and end of this period, as were the texts that figure less prominently in my discussion (i.e., John Mason's *An Essay on Elocution and Pronunciation* [1748], James Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* [1761], William Enfield's *The Speaker* [1774], and John Herries' *Elements of Speech* [1773]).[3] Despite the early nineteenth-century publication date of Austin's treatise, a comment in one of his footnotes shows that the book was composed, at least in part, during the last decade of the eighteenth century.[4]

Traditionally, the term *elocution*, from the Latin "*elocutio*," designates the third part of rhetoric, that concerned with verbal style. The elocutionists, however, appropriate this term for their own study of non-verbal style, rejecting the English translations of both the Latin terms "*pronuntiatio*" (pronunciation) and "*actio*" (action) to describe their domain of inquiry.[5] Generally, the term "elocution" in eighteenth-century Britain came to comprehend "the just and graceful management of the voice, countenance, and gesture in speaking" (Sheridan, *Lectures* 19), yet each writer defines and justifies the use of the term somewhat differently. Indeed, Austin, whose *Chironomia, or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery* (1806) sums up many aspects of the elocutionary inquiries, rejects the term altogether in preference of "delivery." These varying tactics for defining and naming the field of study indicate the ongoing effort of the elocutionary movement to establish its disciplinary propriety–and hence its intellectual property–through the ordering principle named by the term "elocution."

From the perspective of Kenneth Burke's rhetorical theory, the elocutionists' naming of their subject matter is an example of the process of "conversion," one in which old orders

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"about a hundred years prior . . . in John Wilkins' *Ecclesiastes* . . ." ("What Was Elocution?" 1).

[3]For this study, I have used the 1842 edition of Enfield's *The Speaker* and the 1775 edition of Burgh's *The Art of Speaking*.

[4]On page 55, he refers to "the present (1794) fashion of dress."

[5]See Howell, *Eighteenth-Century*, 149-150 and Haberman, *Elocutionary Movement*, 79 for a discussion of the reasons for this transfer of the title "*elocutio,*" or *elocution*, from the third to the fifth part of rhetoric.

or "pieties" are impiously misnamed and a new order constructed through the development of a replacement terminology (Rosteck and Leff 330; *Permanence and Change* 113). In his discussion of the social practices of distinction, Bourdieu similarly stresses the political significance of the naming process to a group's attempts to distinguish itself within and/or against the existing, dominant social order:

> A group's presence or absence in the official classification depends on its capacity to get itself recognized, to get itself noticed and admitted, and so to win a place in the social order. It thus escapes from the shadowy existence of 'nameless crafts'. . . The fate of groups is bound up with the words that designate them: the power to impose recognition depends on the capacity to mobilize around a name, . . . to appropriate a common name and to commune in a proper name, and so to mobilize the union that makes them strong, around the unifying power of a word. (*Distinction* 481)

The unification of late eighteenth-century writers on delivery around the term "elocution" is a sign of the strength of communal mobilizing. However, the different definitions and uses of this term (including the refusal to use it at all) show the discontinuities that characterized this group's attempts to secure a place within the social and disciplinary order.

Aristotle's comments that delivery is a necessary but unelevated feature of rhetoric represent a dominant, though not homogeneous, attitude toward the role and status of delivery within rhetoric: a simultaneous recognition of its power and necessity, and of its relative unworthiness compared to the natural superiority of "facts" and rational logic represented by verbal language.[6] Begrudgingly, Aristotle grants not only that non-verbal delivery does contribute significantly to the success of a speech but also that "we cannot do without it"; he responds to this unfortunate but unavoidable reality by desiring (though not developing) "a systematic treatise upon the rules of delivery."[7] Such a treatise would,

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[6]By "verbal language," I mean the language of words (whether spoken or written), as distinct from the non-verbal language of gestures, expressions of the countenance, vocal tones, and so on which may or may not occur simultaneously with verbal language and are not reducible to it.

[7]This unfortunate reality is owing, Aristotle says, "to the defects of the hearers" (1404a)—that is, in an ideal world, with ideal hearers, the rhetor would not require the non-

presumably, help to define the boundaries and regulate the practices of the "unworthy" domain of bodily persuasion: the articulation of a "proper method" of delivery will not, Aristotle implies, elevate this subject, but could help to keep it from exceeding its appropriate limits by placing it under the control of rational rules.

Bourdieu's sociological analysis of bodily dispositions, conduct, and pedagogies clearly exceeds the traditional boundaries of rhetorical study. However, this excess permits a perspective that enlarges and complicates concerns for physical delivery within the discipline of rhetoric. In his description of the systematic operations of bodily behaviours, Bourdieu highlights how these "seemingly . . . insignificant details" of culture are in fact very significant to both the reproduction and modification of social realities. According to Chris Shilling, Bourdieu's understanding of the "interrelationship between the development of the body and people's social location" stresses the centrality of bodily management "to the acquisition of status and distinction" (127), although the "intellectualism of intellectuals" prevents us from seeing the connection between social distinction and the dispositions of the body (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 474). Bourdieu argues that these dispositions, which embed and reveal the structures of the habitus "defined as a system of dispositions," are both habitual ways of being and predispositions or tendencies to behave in these ways (*Outline* 214). However, despite the general durability of bodily dispositions in different cultures, these forms of behaviour are neither predetermined nor static because "the habitus is an endless capacity to engender products–thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions–whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production" (*Outline* 95). This means that an individual's or group's efforts to acquire social distinction through bodily conduct operate within a socially and historically constituted "field of the possibles" in which a person's position of origin constitutes merely the starting point of a range of potential trajectories (*Distinction* 111-112).

Bourdieu's broad perspective helps to unravel the ambivalence of Aristotle's comments about delivery: the latter's dominant message is that delivery, rightfully, occupies

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rational, non-factual appeal of delivery to be persuasive. By associating the persuasiveness of delivery with the audience's defectiveness, Aristotle reinforces the devaluation of this canon of rhetoric.

an insignificant or trivial position within rhetorical study, but Aristotle's unwelcomed realization that delivery contributes vitally to successful persuasion troubles the main message.[8] Aristotle responds to this discomfort by implicitly calling for a system of rules, a proper method, an explicit pedagogy to define and govern physical delivery. But Bourdieu cautions against the assumption that pedagogies for transforming bodily conduct through wholly conscious, deliberate transformation can be successfully explicated. According to him, although the management and modification of bodily behaviour to acquire social distinction is a fundamental feature of culture, the social value of bodily practices derives at least in part from their transmission through an "implicit pedagogy" (*Outline* 95) that incorporates "social differences as 'natural' differences" (Shilling 136).

Disciplinary and Social Problems

The subject matter and aims of the elocutionary treatises are problematic in at least two, related senses. First, they threaten to disrupt the traditional hierarchy of the discipline of rhetoric by privileging the canon of delivery above and apart from the "first" part of persuasion—that associated with the invention of rational, disembodied arguments. Second, these treatises can be seen as situated, limited attempts to make explicit the obscured pedagogies of a particular set of bodily behaviours and hence, perhaps, the social values and "*political* concessions" (Bourdieu, *Outline* 95) which these polite behaviours embody.[9]

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[8]In this study, I frequently use the terms "ambivalent," "ambivalence," and "ambivalently," and also the terms "ambiguous," "ambiguity," and "ambiguously." While both sets of terms imply a polysemy of meaning, I use the former, as Susan Stewart explains in her book *Nonsense*, to mean essentially "that which belongs to more than one domain at a time and will not fix its identity in any one member of this set of domains; it is 'both this and that'," while "the ambiguous is that which cannot be defined in terms of any given category; it threatens the integrity of individual categories, being 'either this or that or something else'" (61).

[9]Although this study of elocution does not examine bodily behaviours directly—rather, it studies the representation of bodily conduct in three elocutionary handbooks—my own

Heeding the Aristotelian call to develop a system of bodily management for rhetoric, the eighteenth-century elocutionists write systematic treatises on delivery. By making delivery the whole focus of their treatises, they threaten the traditional hierarchy of rhetoric because they place the fifth canon and its emotional appeals at the centre instead of at the bottom or periphery, of the discipline. Potentially, the elocutionary validation of delivery disrupts both the classical order of the five canons of rhetoric (i.e., invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery) in which invention figures first and delivery last, and the traditional Aristotelian privileging of *logos* above *pathos*. The elocutionary repositioning of delivery thus entails implicit, if not explicit, re-positionings of the "first" or highest parts of rhetoric—those concerned with strictly rational argument based on "factual" evidence.

In a larger sense, their extended focus on and validation of the body potentially counters the mind-body hierarchy of Western culture. According to Roy Porter, the elevation of the mind or soul and disparagement of the body is "a totally familiar aspect of the metaphysics of our civilization," traceable to the dualistic visions of both Classical and Judeo-Christian cultural heritages ("History" 206). So pervasive is this construct in our cultural consciousness that "even writers who have sought to rescue the body from neglect or disrepute have nevertheless commonly perpetuated the old hierarchies" (206). Even as they foreground the significance of the body in rhetoric, the elocutionists partially perpetuate the traditional assumption of the superiority of mind over body and conserve the subordinate status of delivery within the full discipline of rhetorical study.

In Bourdieu's terms, the elocutionists recognize the social significance of apparently insignificant "details of . . . physical and verbal manners." They exploit this recognition by

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conception of "the body" is consonant with Bourdieu's understanding of human bodies as simultaneously symbolic-cultural constructs and material-biological beings, in the sense that they physically embody social forms and meanings. Bourdieu's phrase "bodily hexis" refers to this practical embodiment of social values in physical dispositions: "Bodily hexis, a basic dimension of the sense of social orientation, is a practical way of experiencing and expressing one's own sense of social value" (*Distinction* 474). As Chris Shilling explains, "Bourdieu's analysis of the body as a bearer of symbolic value, and a form of physical capital, can be seen as implicitly containing a view of the body as a biological and social phenomenon. . . . For Bourdieu, the body has become a bearer of value to the degree that it constantly enters into cultural and social markets which bestow value on prestigious bodily forms . . ." (Shilling 148).

explicating a "repertoire of rules" for those who lack practical mastery of the highly valued competence (Bourdieu qtd. in Whigham 5) of bodily conduct appropriate to "polite" society in late eighteenth-century Britain. Their systems presume a range of possible social trajectories for people who can increase their status through the distinction of bodily decorum. In this sense, the elocutionary treatises participate in the larger modification of the established social order occurring in Britain at this time. However, the elocutionary treatises also presuppose a specific social hierarchy that continues to naturalize an asymmetrical distribution of power across ranks. For example, while their prescriptive systems bring a range of bodily practices into the realm of voluntary transformation, this range is delimited by the writers' presupposition of ideal forms of conduct available only to those whose "natural," originary talents place them beyond the management of rules and the effects of education. Further, at the same time as the elocutionary systems open up opportunities for some people to acquire increased social distinction, they exclude those below the middling ranks who, in eighteenth-century Britain, were the majority of the population (Thompson 18). Therefore, the explicit articulation of theories and rules of elocution functions both to demystify implicit codes of socially respectable behaviour and to reinforce the socially exclusive ideology of polite society that emerged during the late eighteenth century.

A Rhetorical Reading of Rhetorical Handbooks

To understand how the elocutionary writers negotiated the disciplinary and social problems of focusing on bodily practices, this study presents a rhetorical reading of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's representative handbooks. The nature of my study is rhetorical not only in the sense that these texts elaborate a content of rhetorical theory and practice, but also in the sense that they can be viewed as themselves persuasive rhetorical actions addressed to particular audiences in particular contexts. As David Goodwin argues, "[r]hetorical handbooks are rhetorical not only because they explicate the theories and practices of persuasion, but, more importantly, because they attempt to persuade the reader

to believe in, and act on, a particular image of what rhetoric is and should be as a discipline" ("*Imitatio*" 26). I assume, therefore, that a selective reading of a few representative elocutionary texts guided by rhetorical theories and methodologies can yield valuable insights about this historical episode as a complex rhetorical event in its own right. And by implication, such a reading encourages attention to the rhetorical nature of other episodes and to the historical narratives about those episodes. Such a critical rhetorical approach to episodes within the history of rhetoric promises, as Carole Blair suggests, "at least in principle to better serve those interested not just in the history of rhetoric but also in rhetoric" (421).

Like Goodwin, Michael Cahn stresses the importance of the "analysis of the rhetoric of rhetoric" for understanding how the discipline presents and constitutes itself. In his view, "the argumentative strategies with which rhetoric faces its critics and its customers are never external ornaments. Rather, they pertain to the very possibility of the discipline of rhetoric. These strategies are the source of power that enables any discipline to establish itself at all" (62). Cahn's analysis attends to the "strategies of disciplinary self-affirmation" at work in classical handbooks of rhetoric. Similarly, my study explores the rhetorical strategies which the elocutionists employ to try to affirm the disciplinary status of their work. However, my study differs in a significant way: whereas Cahn looks at the rhetorical "tropes" used to establish rhetoric as a discipline in the first place, I examine the tactics of persuasion employed by marginal writers seeking entry into the already-constituted, dominant discipline. An analysis of how the elocutionists figure the relationship of their marginal project with the central, established field of rhetoric is crucial for understanding their attempts to achieve disciplinary self-affirmation.[10]

I present this rhetorical reading as an alternative to the general neglect or disparagement of the elocutionary movement in disciplinary narratives written after the movement's occurrence. Wilbur Samuel Howell's conclusions in *Eighteenth-Century*

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[10]When I speak of the "discipline of rhetoric," I do not mean that any single, coherent, stable "discipline" does, or even should exist. Rather, I mean that the *desire for* disciplinary coherence and legitimacy motivates the elocutionary texts in significant and complex ways, just as Cahn shows how this desire motivates the different rhetorical constructions of the discipline of rhetoric found in classical handbooks.

British Logic and Rhetoric strikingly exemplify the disparaging attitude. In his narrative, the elocutionary movement is held responsible for the demise of rhetoric as an intellectually respectable art because it focused on the canon of delivery to the exclusion of more "philosophic" theories of content and arrangement. As a result, Howell claims,

> the elocutionists made rhetoric appear to be the art of declaiming a speech by rote, without regard to whether the thought uttered were trivial or false or dangerous; and under auspices like these rhetoric became anathema to the scholarly community and sacred only to the anti-intellectuals within and outside the academic system. (*British* 713)

Other critics, such as Frederick Haberman, Douglas Ehninger, Mary Margaret Robb, G. P. Morhmann, and so on, have presented kinder versions of the role of the elocutionists in the history of rhetoric, versions which I will discuss along with Howell's representation at greater length in my concluding chapter. However, my own approach differs from these few attempts to establish the "intellectual" legitimacy of the elocutionary treatises because I am less concerned with determining their status as important sources for later theories and practices of speech education in the United States than I am with discovering the forms and functions of persuasion which these texts enact in their immediate contexts.

The intention of this study is to show the elocutionary texts to be interesting and significant rhetorical actions as much because of their apparent failures and incongruities as because of their inherent persuasiveness. In this sense, I am less confident than Cahn that the rhetorical strategies of rhetorical handbooks actually succeed in overcoming the "intrinsically problematic character" or "improbability" (Cahn 64) of their versions of rhetoric as a discipline. Rather, I suggest that the tensions and instabilities in the elocutionary texts are important because they reveal the complexity of these writers' responses to the problematic disciplinary situations and social interests which motivate and interact with their texts. This approach finds some justification in recent scholarship in the historiography of rhetoric, where writers such as Takis Poulakos and James Berlin argue for interpretations of rhetorical history that foreground the heterogeneity, unevenness, and complexity of brief, local episodes rather than "unidirectional, extensive, and comprehensive narratives" (Poulakos 3).

The main direction of my analysis, therefore, is to approach complexities and

instabilities of context through the complexities and instabilities of text: my rhetorical analysis of the texts will indicate features of the social contexts and concerns that surround, motivate, and interact with these treatises, or rather, to be precise, the contexts as these are perceived, rendered, and acted upon by the elocutionary writers. A rhetorical study of selected strategies and structures of persuasion in Sheridan's *Lectures on Elocution*, Walker's *Elements of Elocution*, and Austin's *Chironomia* can help us to understand the complexity and instability of the rhetorical situations to which these texts respond and which they address. Specifically, I shall argue that these texts, through a variety of rhetorical techniques, perform intricate acts of negotiation intended to alleviate the problematic social and disciplinary dimensions of the elocutionary project. An analysis of this process of negotiation requires attention both to the frequent moments of textual instability and incongruity–moments which highlight the problematic, precarious nature of the elocutionary enterprise–and to the various rhetorical strategies which the elocutionary writers employ to try to resolve these incongruities.

Preview

My study draws on the classical rhetorical concepts of arrangement and of the three *pisteis* of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* to analyze how the elocutionists negotiate the problematic dimensions of their project and, in so doing, create persuasive texts. The connection between classical oratory and the elocutionary utterances is quite obvious in the case of Sheridan's *Lectures*. As H. Lewis Ulman argues, the *Lectures* have a decidedly "deliberative slant" and are expressly part of "a very public campaign aimed at garnering support for a practical scheme of educational reform" (158). While Walker's and Austin's treatises offer a less explicitly argumentative or deliberative approach to the subject of delivery, nonetheless an examination of their treatises through the conceptual framework of classical rhetoric reveals how all three writers attempted to affirm the disciplinary status and social significance of their new field of enquiry within the context of late eighteenth-century British society. The rhetorical techniques that their texts employ demonstrate how the

elocutionists shaped their "linguistic utterances" (Bourdieu, *Language* 18) to appeal to a mixed market of readers interested both in the academic theory of elocution and in its practice as a source of social distinction.

My rhetorical analysis shows how Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's treatises are arranged into three main sections, each of which emphasizes one of the three traditional appeals to try to persuade their mixed readership of their works' value. First, the opening sections, which combine a form of *exordium* (introduction) with a type of *narratio* (statement of the case), highlight the *pistis* of *ethos* to secure the audience's goodwill, make the audience receptive and attentive to the writers' subject, and narrate key aspects of the case and of the characters of those affected by the case. Second, the middle sections stress the appeal to *logos* both by developing logical arguments to prove the value of elocutionary study and by constructing quasi-logical systems of rules and notations that attempt to bind and relate in a methodical manner the various elements of elocution (Yoos 411). Third, the closing sections emphasize the *pistis* of *pathos* both through a belated justification of elocutionary doctrine on the basis of its status as a "natural" language of the emotions and through final perorations which employ motivating emotional appeals based on inspirational visions of the ideal orator. By organizing my analysis according to these main divisions (rather than treating each text individually), I mean to highlight the differences as well as the similarities among the writers' rhetorical structures of negotiation within each general part. As well, this organization allows me to point out both the continuities and the discontinuities between each of the main parts as they occur in sequence.

Before embarking on this rhetorical analysis of the arrangement and appeals of the primary texts, my first chapter provides a theoretical introduction to the guiding concepts of *decorum* and *status aspiration* which frame the subsequent study. I distinguish the concept of decorum into two modes: that of *disciplinary decorum*, which concerns mainly the elocutionary writers' efforts to legitimate their field of study in scholarly terms, and that of *bodily decorum* which concerns social propriety in bodily conduct. Each of these interrelated modes of decorum links, on the one hand, to the elocutionists' cultural aspirations as scholars and teachers, and, on the other, to their implied students' desires for social advancement through bodily decorum. To ground this theoretical framework and to situate the subsequent close reading of the primary texts, this chapter also outlines key

features of the elocutionists' social and cultural contexts, their personal biographies, and their readerships. In particular, it highlights the late eighteenth-century interest in standardizing and codifying language use and the contextual opportunities for social mobility.

In the second chapter, I begin my study of the rhetorical actions of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's texts by examining the strategies of *ethos* that they (as well as one or two other writers) employ in the opening sections of their treatises to establish the credibility of their general field of enquiry as well as their specific productions. To perform this analysis, I merge classical views of *ethos* with Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson's current theory of positive and negative politeness strategies. Generally, the elocutionists affirm the *ethos* of their project by demonstrating their subject matter's respectability and relevance to their audience, by showing their own good characters, and by narrating both the public situation and the personal cases that motivate these publications. The issue of disciplinary decorum is central to these sections, as the writers try to negotiate the unstable line between, on the one hand, asserting the absolute value of their subject matter and the significance of their enquiries, and, on the other, deferentially avoiding the vice of *cacozelia*, or indecorous self-assertion, by representing the value of their work and their own characters in negatively polite terms.

In the third and fourth chapters, I examine the systems of elocution which Sheridan, Walker, and Austin construct in the middle, main sections of their treatises to try to make this art knowable and teachable. These confirmations of the elocutionary project emphasize the appeal to *logos* in two main ways: first, especially in Sheridan's case, they advance explicit arguments to demonstrate the logical value of developing systematic rules and methods of instruction in elocution; second, especially in Walker's and Austin's cases, they undertake a quasi-logical demonstration of the facts of elocution by articulating logical methods of instruction. Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca's recent theories of argumentation provide a set of analytic tools for deciphering these two forms of *logos*. In the middle sections, the issues of disciplinary and bodily decorum become intertwined as the elocutionists seek to establish scholarly prestige for themselves by elaborating complex, systematic approaches to the codification and instruction of bodily decorum: a kind of written grammar of the body. Indeed, a key argument for the value of the elocutionary

systems is that the art of speaking requires settled principles and explicit rules like those which (ostensibly) govern written language.

In explicating their "grammars" of bodily decorum, Walker and Austin employ quasi-logical structures of division to amplify the detailed complexity of their *technai* (the rules and knowledge of a practical art) while obscuring the narrowness of the aspects of elocution that these methods actually cover. In Austin's case, the integration of scientific visual forms (e.g., symbols, tables, and drawings) with his verbal elucidation of a detailed gestural system expands the techniques of differentiation and classification at his disposal, particularly in the spatial distribution, partitioning, and abstraction of the speaker's body. Ultimately, for all their detail and depth, the narrow focus of these *technai* on the "elements" (Walker, title page) or "rudiments" (Sheridan, *Lectures* 95) of elocution constructs a limited ideal of a merely competent speaker. This generic speaker has learnt how to control his (not her) body so as to avoid giving offense but does not possess great or noble powers of persuasion.[11] This limited ideal, I will argue, corresponds to both the socially aspiring position of the implied users of the elocutionary texts and the culturally aspiring position of the elocutionary writers themselves.

If the middle sections tend to delimit the deferential, rule-bound ideal of the competent speaker who, because he does not have the advantage of a life-long cultivation in the art of decorum, requires the assistance of a "repertoire of rules" to gain at least a degree of this "highly valued competence" (Bourdieu qtd. in Whigham 5), then the closing sections of Sheridan's and Walker's works (discussed in Chapter Five) focus by contrast on the inspirational but perhaps incommensurable ideal of the complete, truly excellent orator. The "consummate eloquence" (Austin 509) of this figure rests primarily on his "natural talents" (Sheridan, *Lectures* 123) which presumably place him above the domain of rules. Sheridan's and Austin's scholarly rationale for this ideal speaker draws on the contemporary

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[11]Throughout this study, I use the masculine pronoun to refer to the typical speaker implied by the elocutionary treatises because these works clearly presuppose and are addressed to male students. In this sense, my use of the masculine pronoun is not a generic reference to human beings, but a specific reference to the masculine gender intended to foreground the virtual absence of the feminine gender from the discursive domain of eighteenth-century elocution. See Chapter One for a fuller discussion of this issue.

philosophical-psychological topic of the "natural" language of the emotions expressed through gestures and tones. But this rationale occupies an incongruously belated position in their works and it leads to further instabilities as they attempt to deal with the conflict between the concept of a "natural," "universal" language and that of a socially exclusive code of conduct regulated by culturally determined rules and standards. The closing appeal to the ideal of the consummate speaker creates a mysterious connection between the lesser, socially-aspiring speaker for whom the *technai* of elocution are designed and the vague principle of perfection at the top of the elocutionary hierarchy. This mysterious connection inspires the implied students and supporters of elocution by obscuring the limitations of the preceding *technai*. It also displaces the writers' accountability for the success of their students by naturalizing truly effective delivery as ostensibly ineffable, incommunicable, and inimitable (Bourdieu, *Outline* 95), not consciously teachable or learnable.

To conclude this study of the rhetorical forms and functions of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's treatises, I move from my main examination of the primary texts to a brief discussion of the rhetorical motives and structures in twentieth-century secondary scholarship about the elocutionary movement. Encouraged by the arguments of recent historiographers of rhetoric, I approach this criticism as another layer of representation in the ongoing historical construction of elocution within the discipline of rhetoric. Like the primary texts themselves, this criticism develops rhetorical arguments and patterns of representation that reveal not so much the historical "truth" about the eighteenth-century movement as the situated interests and disciplinary motives of the twentieth-century writers themselves. Finally, I reflect on my own disciplinary motivations and predispositions for undertaking this study which addresses the rhetoric of the history of rhetoric (Schilb 13) and which, I hope, encourages greater attention to the possibilities of bodily persuasion within traditional and future histories, theories, and practices of rhetoric.

CHAPTER ONE

GUIDING CONCEPTS AND FEATURES OF CONTEXT

In this chapter, I outline the two guiding concepts of "decorum" and "status aspiration" which provide a general theoretical framework for my rhetorical study of Sheridan's *Lectures on Elocution*, Walker's *Elements of Elocution*, and Austin's *Chironomia*. I then describe some of the key features of the elocutionists' social and historical contexts to ground the preceding conceptualizations and to indicate some of the situational factors which the elocutionary texts seem to address.

First, though, let me offer a few words of explanation about basic rhetorical terms and assumptions which figure in the following analysis. My general rhetorical perspective draws primarily on Kenneth Burke's ideas, in the sense that I understand language use as a form of symbolic action by human agents intended to motivate other human agents to adopt attitudes or undertake actions, even when this language use is not overtly persuasive or argumentative.[1] I am interested, then, not only in what specific uses of language represent or record but in what they actually *do* or attempt to do: that is, in their social and functional aspects. A Burkean perspective emphasizes the performative nature of particular uses of language. Thus, I conceive the elocutionary treatises as rhetorical "acts" that imply specific actors or speakers, audiences, and scenes of performance. For Burke, the "scene" of a rhetorical act refers to its setting. The scene contains the rhetorical actors and their actions, and is consistent with their nature (*Grammar* 3). Burke's concept of "scene" is not limited to the immediate situation in which a rhetorical action occurs, but expands to include broad social, historical, and political contexts as these are relevant to the particular situation.

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[1]In *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Burke defines the basic function of rhetoric as "the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents" (41). Language is "a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols" (43).

Further, I assume that these treatises or rhetorical actions are, in Norman Fairclough's sense, essentially social practices both because language use is socially determined and has social effects and because "the language activity which goes on in social contexts . . . is not merely a reflection or expression of social processes and practices, it is a *part* of those processes and practices" (23). Rather than conceiving the rhetorical situation and social context of particular linguistic events as a set of external exigencies which dictate and control the speaker's or writer's utterances (Bitzer 5; Consigny 175), I presuppose a model of text-context interaction which understands the elocutionary treatises as simultaneously responding to *and*, to a limited extent, shaping the larger discursive contexts which surround and motivate these particular texts.

These basic assumptions about the social and situated nature of rhetorical actions relate to Bourdieu's concepts of "linguistic utterance," "field" and "market." Linguistic utterances (spoken or written) are forms of practice "adapted to a 'situation' or, rather, adapted to a market or field" (*Sociology* 78). According to Bourdieu, a field–such as the field of nineteenth-century philology or contemporary fashion or, for this study, the field of eighteenth-century elocution– "defines itself by . . . defining specific stakes and interests, which are irreducible to the stakes and interests specific to other fields" (*Sociology* 72). Different fields, therefore, engender different forms of linguistic utterance which address "the specific stakes and interests" of each field and the markets that regulate it. These markets confer a value on the linguistic utterances produced by members of the field. Therefore, "part of the practical competence of speakers [or writers] is to know how, and to be able, to produce expressions which are highly valued on the markets concerned" (*Language* 18). For the elocutionists, this means constructing linguistic utterances adapted to the historical markets in which the study of elocution is recognized as valuable. However, because their works are intended to define a new field, the markets that the writers address are more complex and less well-defined than those which regulate a well-established field. In this situation, part of the writers' competence is to be able to shape, as well as respond to, an appropriate market for their utterances.

This attempt to define a new field and market is a socially-historically located process of conflict and negotiation. Gunther Kress argues that individual texts, whether conversations or single-authored treatises, are dialogic sites in which different discourses

and social interests come into conflict. These differences and the resulting conflicts provide the motivation for the text, which, in turn, attempts to resolve or alleviate the conflicts: "Indeed the task of the author/writer is precisely this: to attempt to construct a text in which discrepancies, contradictions, and disjunctions are bridged, covered over, eliminated" (Kress 15). This definition of text supports my basic contention that the elocutionary treatises–namely, the situated rhetorical actions of the elocutionary writers–are important sites for analysis because of, not despite, the conflicts and discrepancies which motivate and structure their performances.

Guiding Concepts: Decorum and Status Aspiration

The concepts of *decorum* and *status aspiration* guide my analysis of the elocutionary treatises. Together, these concepts help to show how, on the one hand, the elocutionary treatises conservatively invoke and reinforce established forms and values, while, on the other hand, they create limited opportunities for social and disciplinary mobility which modifies established orders. In general, the principle of decorum functions to alleviate the instabilities introduced by status aspiration.

In classical thought, decorum refers to the *appropriateness* of rhetorical expression, or style, to the subject matter, speaker, audience, and occasion. For the First Sophists, the term *to prepon* ("the appropriate and the proper") referred primarily to the compatibility or harmony of style to subject matter. However, as John Poulakos points out, the linking of *to prepon* with *kairos* ("the opportune, or timeliness") increased the doctrine's scope to include the appropriateness of the rhetor's speech as a whole to the particular audience and occasion (Poulakos 35). The Aristotelian conception of decorum similarly stresses the importance of suiting style to subject matter, but it also emphasizes the significance of speaking in ways appropriate to social position and character (*Rhetoric* 3.1408a). According to Robert Kaster, "in its post-Aristotelian formulations," decorum was extended "beyond the coordination of style with speaker and subject, to include the interaction of style and context" (Kaster 3). For example, for Cicero "decorum" means attending to the propriety of

the "thought" as well as the verbal style *and* the physical delivery of speech with reference to the character of the audience, speaker, occasion, and subject matter (*Orator* 22.73-74). In these senses, decorum acts as a foundational principle or, as Cicero says, "a universal rule" (*Orator* 22.71) in classical theories of rhetoric, one which can and should motivate virtually all strategies of persuasion and concern all aspects of the rhetorical situation.

According to Kaster, the socially élite nature of classical conceptions meant that the art of decorum "could be mastered only if one were bred into the social system in which decorum was embedded" (Kaster 6). In this sense, classical decorum for the most part defines a "closed" (Kaster 6) and conservative system because the social norms which determine what is and is not decorous are assumed and reflect the interests of the dominant classes.[2] The stability and authority of these norms depend on their remaining implicit, and hence naturalized. In Kaster's words,

> One had to grow into decorum: it was a matter of education in the broadest sense, cultivation . . . . [D]ecorum was an effective part of the high culture's mechanism of exclusion and equilibrium. It depended, in the last analysis, on the life-long development of a point of view shared by the limited community of those of comparable background and status, and so was a powerful, centripetal force of social integration and control. (7)

On one hand, the general classical theory of decorum functioned to perpetuate an ideology of social order that served the interests of those who inhabited an élite, ruling position. However, because the art of decorum also was inscribed through explicit, prescriptive sets of rules for proper conduct, its practice became to a limited extent available to people outside the élite community "of those of comparable background and status." Robert Hariman notes how classical handbooks of rhetoric presented decorum both "as a set of conventions and a theory of conventions" (153). The "common sense" set of conventions, argues Hariman, offered an explicit system of terms that "seemed to represent a natural order," but which in reality "embodied the ideology of the ruling élite" (153). However,

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[2]I say "for the most part" because the early Sophistic views of decorum, or *to prepon*, and its association with *kairos* suggest a more flexible approach to the doctrine through the kairotic recognition of the cultural and contextual contingencies of social values and norms, and hence definitions of "propriety."

these systems, in addition to reinforcing a "closed" order, simultaneously permitted orators to "*imitate* signs of status" and thus "*exploit* the social code governing a situation" (152, my emphasis):

> . . . any time the system of rules is explicit, as in the [rhetorical] handbooks, subversion of the social order recorded in the rules is possible. Instruction in rhetoric would equip one to simulate rank and feign deference; such instruction always was undertaken with the expectation that one could advance oneself beyond ordinary expectation. (Hariman 154)

In this sense, the elocutionary systems of rules for bodily decorum both invoke the forms and values of an élite community and make these practices available for imitation by people born outside this community.

In the elocutionary art of decorum, as in classical theories, the ideals of *verecundia* and self-restraint guide the successful practice of decorum, especially for those whose inherited social position places them outside or at the margins of "high culture" (Kaster 7). *Verecundia*, according to Kaster, translates as "modesty," "respect," "a sense of shame." In this sense, decorum refers to the speaker's ability to act in a modest, inoffensive manner and to avoid exceeding the boundaries of good taste by lapsing into the vice of *cacozelia* ("indecorous self-assertion") through "an unsuccessful striving for distinction or novelty" (Kaster 9). Cicero, especially in *De Officiis*, "pulls the concept [of decorum] inward" by emphasizing the idea of self-restraint and control of the body, ideas which conjoin with political conceptions of social order and restraint (Hariman 155). This theme of self-restraint specifically in connection with bodily conduct likewise plays a central role in Norbert Elias' sociological study of the practices of civility within modern European court society where, he argues, the courtier's self-conscious control over his emotional impulses and their spontaneous bodily manifestations became a key requirement for securing and maintaining a privileged position (Shilling 164). Similarly, Anna Bryson draws on Elias' theories to demonstrate how "control of the body was held to reflect and enhance the status of the gentleman in Tudor and Stuart England" (137). In the elocutionary treatises, these ideals of *verecundia* and self-restraint figure not only in the texts' representations of bodily conduct but also, to some extent, in the writers' characterizations of themselves and their field of enquiry.

Recently, several scholars have revitalized the classical doctrine of decorum for contemporary rhetorical criticism. By contrast with classical formulations, a contemporary approach to decorum emphasizes the non-foundational, contingent, and mutable nature of the standards and conventions of propriety. Thomas Rosteck and Michael Leff argue that Kenneth Burke's secular-rhetorical concept of *piety*, as a principle of order and coherence for human symbolic activity, can be interpreted as a concept of *propriety*. In a Burkean frame, the terms piety and propriety "uncover order within a *relativistic* social universe" (329, my emphasis). Propriety, for Burke, is always a principle of local hierarchy, and any principle of propriety always functions in competition with or opposition to other ordering principles. For example, "the gashouse gang" loafing at the streetcorner has its own "deeply felt sense of the appropriate," revealed through the practice of "proper oaths, the correct way of commenting upon passing women, the etiquette of spitting" (Burke, *Permanence and Change* 77). This local principle and practice of propriety–which clearly opposes the traditional connection of propriety with "exquisiteness of taste" and "the 'better' classes of people" (*Permanence and Change* 77)–demonstrates in an extreme way the possible conflicts among different ordering principles. Thus, schemes of piety operate within particular social contexts as temporarily stabilizing structures which orient human perceptions about what is decorous in a given circumstance; however, these schemes are "not immutable or inert givens. . . . [P]ieties are processes as well; they come to be, change, and pass out of existence in accordance with the situated interests of human communities" (Rosteck and Leff 330). These processes of change inevitably entail conflicts and incongruities between "rival perspectives" to the extent that these perspectives are motivated by diverging or changing human interests (Rosteck and Leff 330).

Rosteck and Leff underline the importance of attending to conflicts *between* different schemes of propriety, but they do not sufficiently acknowledge the possibility of conflict and incoherence *within* a particular order of decorum. By contrast with their assumption of the possibility of the local coherence and integration of rhetorical performances, I would argue that the principle of propriety which holds together any rhetorical performance or situation masks (but does not resolve or remove) its incompatibilities and ambiguities. A rhetorical analysis of the governing principles of propriety reveals not so much the text's or speech's "real" order, but rather the *desire* for the appearance of decorum as well as the rhetorical

strategies which a writer or speaker employs to create the impression of order and appropriateness.

By applying the concept of decorum to the elocutionary project, I wish to emphasize the ways in which the rhetorical construction of the treatises I will examine represents elocution as a socially appropriate undertaking. An analysis of this representation shows how the study of elocution, for both writers and readers, at once conforms to and modifies established conceptions of cultural propriety. Because the articulation of codes of bodily decorum constitutes the heart of the elocutionary project, it is central to the writers' efforts to secure disciplinary or scholarly status for their work. There are, therefore, two main, interrelated dimensions of decorum in these treatises: first, the principle of decorum structures the rhetorical arguments and appeals that Sheridan, Walker, and Austin make for the appropriateness of elocution as a general field of enquiry, as well as for the personal propriety of themselves as writers and of their publications. This dimension I call "disciplinary decorum" because it refers essentially to the elocutionists' attempt to secure disciplinary status and scholarly legitimacy for their field of enquiry. Second, the desire to establish an explicit set of conventions for decorous bodily conduct motivates the elocutionists' rhetorical systems of physical delivery and their figurations of the proper public speaker's body within their treatises. This dimension I refer to as "bodily decorum." These two levels of decorum roughly correspond, and respond, to the main problems of the elocutionary movement which I have identified already: namely, the problem of the threat to disciplinary propriety by focusing on the devalued canon of delivery, and the problem of demystifying bodily behaviour through the articulation of explicit pedagogies.

The forms and strategies of decorum at work in the elocutionary treatises counter-balance the instabilities of *status aspiration* that characterize the markets to whom these texts are addressed. Status aspiration therefore constitutes a fundamental feature of the rhetorical situation motivating the elocutionary project. Because the structure of *status aspiration* is paradoxical, it accounts for the inherent instabilities and tensions within the texts which the techniques of decorum attempt to alleviate. Just as the principle of decorum manifests itself on two levels, so the principle of status aspiration informs both the elocutionists' desire to achieve scholarly prestige and their implied users' aspirations to achieve higher social status by learning new practices of bodily decorum.

Within the complex, but increasingly mobile and heterogeneous, social hierarchy of late eighteenth-century Britain, the elocutionists and the implied users of their handbooks do not occupy a ruling, truly élite position, but rather a middling status. As James Burgh explains, his treatise on *The Art of Speaking* is directed toward "all that part of youth, whose situation places them within the reach of a *polite education*" (Burgh 5), not necessarily toward those who already possess a polite education as their birthright. Similarly, the elocutionists' decision to focus on the marginal canon of delivery combined with their own mixed cultural backgrounds place them at the margins, rather than at the centre, of established disciplinary and scholarly endeavours. Therefore, the rules and forms of decorum elaborated in the elocutionary treatises have a double function: they constitute a rhetorical tool for "making places" in the social order, a tool that can be used both to reinforce the exclusivity of an élite order and to serve the aspirations of lower-status, mobile readers who wish to acquire greater social distinction (Whigham 5-6).

Peter Stallybrass highlights the paradoxical nature of status aspiration in his definition of the class aspirant as someone who "has an interest in preserving social closure, since without it there would be nothing to aspire to. But at the same time, that closure must be sufficiently flexible to incorporate *him*" ("Patriarchal Territories" 134). Paradoxically, by making gestures of conformity, status aspirants construct new and better places for themselves within a social hierarchy; lacking inherited cultural capital, they strive to acquire it through the practices of decorum.[3] [4] The figure of the status aspirant within the context of

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[3]I have chosen the phrase "status aspirant/aspiration" rather than "class aspirant/aspiration" because the appropriateness of describing eighteenth-century British society as a "class" structure remains debatable. As well, the aspirations which motivate the elocutionary writers and their implied readers are not simply class ones—for example, ethnic and gender distinctions, as well as cultural and educational hierarchies also inform the structures of aspiration in these texts.

[4]In Bourdieu's theory, cultural capital refers to "knowledge, skills and other cultural acquisitions, as exemplified by educational or technical qualifications" (Thompson, *Language* 14). Cultural capital may be inherited or acquired (especially through education); the mode of acquisition may affect the relative value of the capital possessed (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 80). Physical capital, which refers to "the development of bodies in ways which are recognized as possessing value in social fields," constitutes one form of cultural capital (Shilling 127).

the elocutionary movement thus inhabits an unstable position on the threshold of polite, élite society: the aspirant's ability to cross that threshold depends on his ability to convince the gatekeepers of social and disciplinary decorum that his conduct legitimately reflects and reinforces (rather than feigns or subverts) the exclusionary codes of high culture, while he simultaneously crosses the boundaries of this culture.[5] In this way, the stabilizing forces of social and disciplinary decorum mask the instabilities of social mobility. However, Stallybrass' stress on the "closed" nature of the Renaissance hierarchy in which the "class aspirant" seeks social advancement does not do justice to the climate of social mobility in late eighteenth-century Britain. In this climate, incorporating status aspirants into the established order does not simply reinforce social closure. Rather, as I shall discuss further in the next section, the openly tolerated aspirations of the middle ranks modify the nature of cultured behaviour as these groups define new standards of polite society and respectable conduct.

For the elocutionary writers, the paradox of status aspiration means that the rhetorical representations of their scholarly ambitions and achievements and of ideal forms of bodily conduct negotiate the tension between *cacozelia*, or indecorous self-assertion, and a modest, limited conception of their own and their implied students' powers and scope of activity. In general, within the topic of disciplinary decorum, these treatises negotiate the tension between the writers' desire to distinguish the scholarly significance and propriety of their subject matter, and their simultaneous appreciation of its problematic cultural status. The principal ways in which they attempt to cover over the incongruities created by this tension include developing an *ethos* for their project that subsumes its novelty within the traditional canons of classical rhetoric and within established contemporary fields of scholarship; constructing a personal *ethos* that validates the writers' diligent processes of composition rather than the success of their final products; asserting both the centrality of

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[5]Like Stallybrass, I use the masculine pronoun advisedly to refer to this figure–as I will throughout this study when referring to the aspiring speaker implied by the elocutionary texts–because the opportunities for status aspiration within elocutionary discourse were very much a male phenomenon. This does not mean that other less public forms and processes of status aspiration were not available to eighteenth-century women, but that the dominant assumptions and structures of the elocutionary movement were directed toward men of middling to upper social status.

elocution to the study of oratory and its subordination to verbal eloquence and rational argument; providing an impression, through complex techniques of vertical differentiation, of systematic, scientific fullness, while in fact restraining the scope of their inquiries to the basic elements of elocution; and reinforcing a traditional mind-body hierarchy by locating the origins of effective elocution in the "internal" nature of the speaker and by constructing an abstract, disembodied elocutionary doctrine to regulate the embodied practices of aspiring speakers. In sum, the elocutionary writers address the problem of constructing disciplinary decorum for themselves and their project by negotiating tensions between novelty and tradition, product and process, marginality and centrality, rudiments and systematic comprehensiveness, the external and the internal, and between the embodied and the abstract.

The primary tension in their discourse of bodily decorum occurs between the ideals of the competent speaker and the consummate speaker. The interplay of these ideals permits the elocutionists to advance their systems of delivery within the framework of a symbolic hierarchy motivated by the mysterious ideal of powerful, consummate oratory. The systems themselves, however, are confined to demarcating a relatively narrow code of bodily decorum suited to the middling, aspiring status of the handbooks' implied users and of the elocutionary writers themselves. This middling status embodies the paradoxical tension between the aspirant's desire to resemble those above him in the elocutionary hierarchy with a simultaneous recognition of his difference in kind from the status to which he aspires. The mysterious connection between excellence and competence that the elocutionary treatises develop allows the aspiring speaker to participate in the ideal of excellence without ever achieving it. In this way, the mysterious figure of the consummate orator motivates the lesser ideal of the competent speaker, while at the same time these figures inhabit incommensurable worlds: the élite orator at the top of the elocutionary hierarchy possesses a "natural" grace and decorum that transcends the domain of explicit rules and instruction, while the competent speaker delineated by the elocutionists' prescriptive systems lacks "practical mastery of a highly valued competence" and thus requires "an explicit and at least semi-formalized substitute for it in the form of a *repertoire of rules*" (Bourdieu qtd. in Whigham 5). If the consummate speaker has "grow[n] into decorum" (Kaster 7) and hence can practice these habits effortlessly and unconsciously, the aspiring competent speaker, by

contrast, must exercise diligence and continual self-vigilance in the learning and performance of bodily decorum. At the same time, the construction of decorum requires a representation of the upper levels of the social hierarchy as somewhat permeable and flexible: in order to justify the viability of the elocutionary handbooks for creating better social and cultural places for their readers and writers, the differences between the character and position of the aspirant and the character and position of the "noble" speaker (Austin 508) must be rendered as, at least in principle, scalable differences of degree.[6]

Social Context, Writers, and Readers

That the elocutionary handbooks contain such tensions within their constructions of disciplinary and bodily decorum, and that the techniques of decorum do not fully succeed in resolving these incongruities is, I suggest, less a sign of the logical or structural deficiencies of these texts than it is a sign of the complex nature of the rhetorical contexts which these texts address and within which they attempt to establish the credibility of the new field of elocution. Through a close reading of selected features of Sheridan's, Austin's, and Walker's treatises, I will show how these writers employ rhetorical appeals and techniques to negotiate the intricacies of the scenes in which the drama of their rhetorical actions takes place. Before I undertake this close reading, however, I will highlight here some aspects of the late eighteenth-century cultural context relevant to the composition and reception of the elocutionary works. This selective delineation of contextual issues is a lead-in to the rhetorical analysis of the contexts and social motivations implied by the elocutionary texts themselves. My assumption is that a close reading of the elocutionary texts can enhance our understanding of the situations and audiences which motivated and interacted with these specific linguistic utterances. In this sense, context refers both to the writers' subjective perceptions and rhetorical representations of the situations which their texts address and to the objective historical realities which structured the market for their field of enquiry. As

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[6]Unless otherwise stated, all parenthetical references to "Austin" refer to the *Chironomia*.

John Thompson notes, Bourdieu's concepts of fields and markets require elucidation in terms of "the specific interests at stake in the practices and conflicts which take place in particular fields" because every field and its markets have distinctive properties which cannot be determined abstractly ("Introduction," *Language* 16).

To help identify the specific properties of the elocutionary field and its markets, my discussion of context focuses on the aspirations of the middling ranks to secure increased cultural capital through educational, rather than inherited, means. "Educational" here refers to a wide range of modes through which people acquire cultural capital, from formal schooling to self-improvement to participation in activities such as learned societies, public lectures, and the eighteenth-century "print culture" (Kernan 16-23). As Roy Porter explains, "most eighteenth-century learning went on outside officially designated systems of instruction. . . . Most education was learning for living, in particular for earning a living" (*English* 158). For the middling ranks of eighteenth-century British society, education in this large sense offered possibilities for social advancement to people with relatively little inherited cultural capital. This perspective applies to both the consumers and the writers of the elocutionary treatises: learning bodily decorum is a possible path to greater social prestige; teaching and writing about bodily decorum creates opportunities for cultural (and economic) advancement.

The late eighteenth-century British social hierarchy contained several distinct levels, of which the middle orders formed a significant but diverse group. For example, James Nelson in 1753 itemized five main ranks: "the Nobility, Gentry, Mercantile or Commercial People, Mechanics, and Peasantry" (Corfield 38). According to Roy Porter, even this five-fold categorization does not do justice to the fineness of the gradations between the links in the chain of income and status in British society:

> The English social ladder was indeed finely graded. The distinctions between being a servant in or out of livery, a kitchen maid or a lady's maid, below or above the salt, lower deck or quarter deck, between being called Mrs or Madam, were fine, but they mattered in creating status differentiation at their own levels as much as the pecking-order between baronets and earls, marquises and dukes. . . . All these nice distinctions, and the supercharged snobbery which they provoked and which sustained them, shaped a social

> order whose gross inequalities were landscaped in a gentle slope rather than in steps. There was no iron curtain of law or blood between bondman and freeman, trade and land, commoner and noble, as there was in some parts of Europe. (*English* 49)

However, E. P. Thompson cautions against overstating the "gentle slope" that connected the highest and lowest ranks. According to him, eighteenth-century British society was characterized by division into the two polarized groups of "patricians" (or "the gentry") and "plebs" (or "the poor") (16-17). Although "no iron curtain" divided these groups, there existed an "immense distance between polite and plebeian cultures" (85). Within this polarized order, the emergence and consolidation of the growing middle orders in terms of numbers, wealth, and cultural presence was slow and complex (88). And while the cultural and economic capital of these diverse middling orders may have increased significantly as the century progressed, this does not mean that basic polarisations in society as a whole were softened (90).[7]

Therefore, the opportunities for social mobility which the elocutionary field presupposes and encourages are not applicable to all levels in society but confined to the middling and upper ranks. Given this important proviso, the sloping gradation of status permitted the emerging middle orders to acquire social distinction through educational as well as other means. In particular, the status of "gentleman" was not legally fixed but negotiable, depending as much on wealth and liberal behaviour as on birth. Porter cites the views of a Frenchman, Guy Mièrge, who maintained that "the title of gentleman is commonly given in England to all that distinguish themselves from the common sort of people by a good garb, genteel air or good education, wealth or learning" (Porter, *English* 65). Yet an overemphasis on the opportunities for and frequency of upward social mobility would be misleading. As Porter notes, although "[p]eople could quite easily rise *towards*

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[7]John Brewer notes the diversity of the middle orders: ". . . lawyers, land agents, apothecaries, and doctors: middlemen in the coal, textile, and grain trades: carters, carriers, and innkeepers: booksellers, printers, schoolteachers, entertainers, and clerks: drapers, grocers, druggists, stationers, ironmongers, shopkeepers of every sort: the small masters in cutlery and toy making, or in all the various luxury trades of the metropolis" (qtd. in Thompson 88). See also Davidoff and Hall, 23.

the portal of the next status group," actually crossing the threshold was more difficult (65). Lawrence Stone and Jeanne C. Fawtier Stone, for their part, argue that the myth of an "open élite" in English society is precisely that: a myth. In reality, they claim, the landed élite remained for centuries a relatively homogeneous and stable group dominating English society. However, while the extensive property and titles that this group owned were not, as the myth suggests, easily and frequently purchased by the upwardly mobile mercantile class, there did exist an important cultural cohesion between these groups. The cultural values and behaviour of the élite were adopted and assimilated by "the middling sort" (423) thus creating an impression of community between the groups. As Paul Langford explains, this middling group "was united in nothing more than in its members' determination to make themselves gentlemen and ladies, thereby identifying themselves with the upper class" (qtd. in Thompson 90).

The complexity of the social scene in late eighteenth-century Britain also may be understood in terms of regional and national differences. As transportation improved and as the socio-economic boundaries between various regions of England, and between England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland became less firm, people engaged in greater geographic mobility.[8] In this context, London acted as the cultural capital toward which those seeking their fame and fortune inevitably gravitated. This meant that the manners of élite London society became the cultural norm toward which aspiring social, professional, and business people strove. In Porter's words, London was the "cynosure" for the whole kingdom, dominating the nation in size, wealth, and social standards. The growth of provincial centres at this time did not detract from London's centrality because "polite society" in these centres emulated the tone and habits set by the capital's élite society (*English* 39-40).

Scotland's and especially Edinburgh's relationship to London was more complex. For example, many members of the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment, centered in

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[8]See Porter, *English Society* (39, 191-93) on improvements in transportation. See Colley on the economic and political integration of Britain during the eighteenth century, especially 117-45 on Scotland and England's relationship. See Colley (154-64) on the making of a British ruling class during the last part of the eighteenth century: "Members of the Welsh, Scottish, and Anglo-Irish landed élites, who had often in the past been excluded, as well as temperamentally aloof and geographically distant, from *the centre of political power*, now moved or were drawn into it" (156).

the intellectual circles of Edinburgh, were explicitly committed not only to the development of thought and culture but also to economic, commercial, and technological advances in Scotland (McElroy 49, 54). This commitment suggests a strong national pride and agenda, not a simple adulation of the English capital's style and power. However, as Linda Colley argues, especially during the second half of the eighteenth century more and more Scots for their own benefit ventured south to political and professional careers, helping to establish and becoming part of an increasingly "British" rather than nationalistically "Scottish" culture (Colley 123-126). The entry of Scots into England's political and social élite can be seen as a form of active infiltration (not passive assimilation) in which Scottish and English society became linked by "cords of mutual self-interest" (Colley 131, 144). Success in these careers, as Edinburgh's Select Society clearly recognized when in 1761 it launched its subsidiary "Society for Promoting the Reading and Speaking of the English Language in Scotland," required the ability to speak English according to emerging "British" standards (McElroy 55).[9]

The development of this subsidiary society was directly influenced by the first set of lectures Sheridan delivered in Edinburgh (McElroy 56) and its efforts coincided with a general trend making the teaching of English central to formal and informal education in Edinburgh (Law 148-161).[10] As W. Benzie explains, during this period "there was a stigma attached to the 'vulgar' Scottish accent and to Scotticisms in written English, mainly because

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[9]The members of the Select Society included Allan Ramsay, David Hume, Adam Smith, Alexander Wedderburn, James Burnett, Alexander Carlyle, William Roberston, Hugh Blair, and Lord Kames, among many others. For more on the Society, see McElroy's chapter "Achievement (1745-1770)."

[10]In conjunction with the first of Sheridan's lecture tours in Edinburgh, the Select Society passed the following resolution:

> That it would be of great advantage to this country, if a proper number of persons from England, duly qualified to instruct gentlemen in the knowledge of the English tongue, the manner of pronouncing it with purity, and the art of public speaking, were settled in Edinburgh; and if at the same time a proper number of masters from the same country, duly qualified for teaching children the reading of English, should open schools in Edinburgh for that purpose. (qtd. in Howell, *British* 158)

Ironically, Sheridan was not, as this resolution specified, "from England," at least originally.

of Edinburgh's prestige as one of the intellectual and cultural centres of the world and the need for Scots M.P.s to make themselves understood in London after the Union" (23). While no doubt some nationalistic Scots opposed this effort to "supplant the Scots dialect with English," David McElroy argues that the degree of this opposition has been greatly exaggerated by subsequent commentators (McElroy 66, 63). Benzie concurs that "[t]here is no evidence in contemporary literature, periodical or otherwise, of any public outcry" about this promotion of English (Benzie 26). The desire for instruction in the "proper" pronunciation and writing of English reflects cultural ambitions for self-improvement. According to John Lothian, "[t]he records of literary clubs and associations of Scotland in the eighteenth century . . . reveal a society animated by an awareness of a need for culture and by an intense ambition to improve" (xxxv). The promotion of the "proper" pronunciation and writing of English reflects this ambition, whether directed toward cultural success in London or at home.

The norms and opportunities of London society also exerted a strong influence on eighteenth-century Ireland, though Dublin like Edinburgh was a vital cultural centre and, toward the end of the century, traditional Irish language and culture gained increasing importance among the country's *literati*.[11] According to R. B. McDowell, "[t]hroughout the century Irish intellectual, cultural and fashionable life was dominated by England, or rather it might be said by London and its outposts" (145). The many Irish immigrants to Great Britain from the middling ranks included businesspeople and professionals as well as writers, painters, actors (such as Sheridan), and politicians "who seem to have found there opportunities and stimulus lacking at home" (McDowell 142). The dominance of English culture is reflected as well in the common practice of sending Irish boys (of whom Sheridan was one) from the middle and upper social ranks to élite English public schools such as Eton, Winchester, and Harrow for at least part of their education (McDowell 143). In Ireland, as in eighteenth-century Scotland, speaking English with a local accent ("a horrid brogue") was deemed by many a source of embarrassment (McDowell 146) because, as Sheridan put it, it renders the Irish "a perpetual subject of ridicule to all English hearers"

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[11]For more on Dublin's cultural vitality and the growth of scholarly interest in traditional Irish culture, see McDowell, 146-55.

(qtd. in McDowell 146). The fact that the majority of the population still spoke Irish, rather than English, demonstrates the presupposed exclusivity of the group that elocutionary writers such as Sheridan were addressing: these were definitively not "the plebs" (Thompson 16). Toward the end of the century, learned societies such as the Royal Irish Academy, of which Austin was a member, developed an interest in the Gaelic tradition, but this interest was "antiquarian" and did not disrupt the dominance of English as the language of power and prestige (McDowell 154-155, 150). Thus, learning to speak and write English without the "disgusting tone of an Irish brogue" (Sheridan qtd. in McDowell 146) was important to advancing or maintaining social status. Given the more tenuous distinctions between the upper and middle classes in Irish than in English society and the corresponding greater opportunities for upward mobility (Connolly 64), the acquisition of cultural capital through education in "proper" English would have contributed significantly to this mobility.

Within England itself, the increasing influence of nonconformist communities primarily within provincial centres further complicates the cultural dominance of élite London society. During the last decades of the eighteenth century, these communities, as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall note, were integral to the shaping of the nineteenth-century English middle class and its new conceptions of social decorum opposed to aristocratic codes (18-21). The development of Dissenting academies during the eighteenth century contributed significantly to educational reforms directed more toward those whose cultural capital was (to be) acquired than those possessing it by birth and inheritance. By contrast with Church of England institutions such as the established public schools of Eton, Harrow, and so on, and the élite universities of Oxford and Cambridge, Dissenting academies such as Warrington and Daventry blended "canonical Classical studies with 'useful' and 'modern' subjects such as geography, shorthand, arithmetic, and science" (Porter, *English* 163). Because of these schools and private-enterprise commercial schools, "boys from the middling orders were getting a more down-to-earth and applicable education than in any previous century" (164). And in at least one Dissenting academy, studies in elocution were a part of this "applicable education." According to William Enfield, schoolmaster at Warrington and author of the elocutionary textbook *The Speaker*, learning to speak and act in a competent, decorous manner was an important part of Warrington's educational program intended to form "respectable characters" able to fill "their stations in

society with reputation" (*The Speaker* iii).

The general concern in the eighteenth century with the standardization of English–not only its pronunciation, but its spelling and other rules of production and reception–constitutes an important context for the field of elocution. Sheridan, in particular, explicitly associated his project for reviving the ancient art of oratory with a concomitant focus on the English language in a reformed British educational system (by contrast with the traditional centrality of the classical languages). According to H. Lewis Ulman, one key aspect of the process of standardizing the English language in eighteenth-century Britain was "the *codification* of the standard in dictionaries and grammars" (26). These practices of codification constituted no less than a "growth industry" during the latter half of the century. Although the elocutionary handbooks attend to the para-linguistic features of language use, their attempts to codify systematically, in writing, these oral features of English usage clearly connect this enterprise with the general growth industry of linguistic codifications. Indeed, both Walker and Sheridan produced successful "pronouncing" dictionaries along with their elocutionary treatises.[12]

The purpose and effects of this standardization effort reveal a tension between opening up the codes of polite language use to more people and reinforcing a new exclusionary standard. John Barrell describes this as the "double valence" of standardization which "suppressed the political freedoms implicit in the heterogeneous utterances of a multitude of native dialects, but paradoxically . . . enabled access to a common language with which all British subjects could advance their individual fortunes" (Brody 55). Ulman stresses the former point by reminding us that the process of standardization involved the "*displacement* of other linguistic forms" (26) and that it was a culturally élite undertaking:

> . . . standardization was not a democratic process aimed at choosing a common linguistic form that would facilitate communication among speakers of different dialects and encourage wide participation in public discourse. Rather, the advocates and codifiers of Standard English belonged to an

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[12]These are Sheridan's *Complete Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1780) and Walker's *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language* (London, 1791).

> educated class and cultivated a standard reflecting their own linguistic forms, communicative practices, and social privileges. (26)

This cultural elitism is evident, for example, in Sheridan's comment that only the "court pronunciation" of London, which is acquired by "conversing with people in polite life" signals a socially respectable status. "All other dialects," he writes, "are sure marks, either of a provincial, rustic, pedantic, or mechanic education; and therefore have some degree of disgrace annexed to them" (*Lectures* 30).

But Sheridan also argues that a national educational program stressing elocution and English would help abolish "the odious distinctions subsisting between different parts of these realms" (*Critical Review* 13 [1761]: 160). As he explains in his *Dissertation on the Causes of the Difficulties which occur in Learning the English Tongue*,

> The consequence of teaching children by one method, and one uniform system of rules, would be an uniformity of pronunciation in all so instructed. Thus might the rising generation, born and bred in different countries, and counties, no longer have a variety of dialects, but as subjects of one king, like sons of one father, have one common tongue. All natives of these realms, would be restored to their birthright in common language, which has been too long fenced in, and made the property of a few. (qtd. in *Monthly Review* 27 [1762]: 70).

It would be naive, however, to assume that Sheridan really means "all natives"; in fact, as other parts of his work reveal, the rising generation that he has in mind are principally those capable of acquiring–if they do not already possess–the status and fortune of gentlemen.[13] This specification confirms my earlier point that, within the late eighteenth-century British social hierarchy, the opportunities for social mobility which the elocutionary field presupposes and encourages are not applicable to all levels in society but confined to the middling and upper ranks. Given these limits, the example of Alexander Wedderburn illustrates the effectiveness of elocutionary instruction for enabling people of the middle ranks and/or of Scottish or Irish heritage to augment their cultural capital. Wedderburn, a Scottish legal advocate who decided to "seek his fame and fortune as a lawyer in London,"

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[13]See, for instance, Benzie, 15-17.

was a keen supporter of Sheridan's project (Howell 156). When Wedderburn first arrived in London, he engaged Sheridan for private lessons in elocution to "purify" himself of his Scottish accent (Benzie 24). According to Howell, this instruction helped Wedderburn achieve considerable political success in the capital, eventually rising to become Lord Chancellor (159).

The possibility of acquiring cultural capital through the educational project of standardization applies to its "advocates and codifiers" as well as its practitioners. Ulman's definition of these codifiers as a socially privileged class does not sufficiently indicate the mixed backgrounds of these writers and teachers. For example, Samuel Johnson, the best-known dictionary maker of the age, derived his cultural capital from years of hard work as a writer and scholar rather than from inheritance or from an élite education.[14] That Johnson became such a leading figure among eighteenth-century *literati* shows the socially mixed nature of the "educated class" of codifiers during this period. Despite these differences, however, the advocates of codification were joined by the desire to "fix" (Benzie 11) the English language according to a uniform standard.

The project of standardization can be connected with the eighteenth-century concern for the development of tasteful speakers, writers, and readers, especially as this is revealed in Hugh Blair's belletristic rhetoric.[15] Like Blair, the elocutionists wished to demarcate the boundaries of "good sense and refined taste" so that their readers might be enabled to "support a proper rank in social life" (H. Blair 34). Although Blair described taste as an

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[14]Johnson's father was a bookseller who experienced financial "business troubles" (Bate 11). Johnson was educated at Lichfield and Stouridge Grammar schools and subsequently attended Oxford for thirteen months as a "commoner" (a rank below those of "noblemen," "gentlemen-commoners," and "fellow-commoners" but above "battelers" and "servitors" [OED 483]) (he could not afford to remain longer) (Bate 87).

[15]Belletristic rhetoric in late eighteenth-century Britain "was based upon the concept that rhetoric and related polite arts, poetry, drama, art, history, biography, philology, and so on should be joined under the broad heading of rhetoric and belles lettres. Since these disciplines share a common interest in taste, style, criticism, and sublimity, they seek to instruct the student to become an effective *practitioner* and *judge* in written and oral communication" (Golden and Corbett 8, my emphasis). For more on British belletrism and its French antecedents, see Warnick.

innate or natural faculty "common in some degree to all men" (H. Blair 38), the problem of establishing a standard for good or refined taste led to the arguments that taste, though a natural faculty, was improvable through cultivation and that the true standard of taste was to be based on the judgment not of humankind in general but rather of "men placed in such situations as are favourable to the proper exertions of taste" (H. Blair 45). Primarily, this description of the arbiters of taste indicates their social and/or educational elitism; yet, as I have already pointed out, this group did not necessarily exclude "men" whose cultural credentials derived less from their backgrounds than from their scholarship in the general fields of standardization and polite literature. This suggests the role of teachers and writers such as Blair not only in *preserving* exclusive codes of polite learning, but also in *forming* these codes for a new generation of young men of the middle ranks aspiring to higher social status and in the process redefining the nature of refined taste and polite society.

Within belletristic rhetoric, the formation of this refined taste depends as much on the ability to judge cultural productions appropriately as it does on the ability to perform them well. As Nancy Struever explains,

> [t]he ability to engage in pleasant and informal, "polite" argument and in the argumentative development of moral and aesthetic judgment, "taste," constitutes a general receptive competence. . . . Rhetorical discipline is reassembled as a new skill which is the duty, property, and talent of a new social élite. . . . (qtd. in Warnick 3-4)

While the elocutionary strand of eighteenth-century rhetoric focuses less obviously than belletrism on the construction and enforcement of this receptive competence, the presumption of a culturally developed refined taste for discerning and judging the appropriateness of one's own or others' bodily performances similarly underlies the elocutionary project. And by codifying standards of tasteful conduct in their handbooks, the elocutionary writers contributed to the construction of the critical codes of reception through which "a new social élite" sought to distinguish itself.

The elocutionists, then, were among the "advocates and codifiers" of standardization and the arbiters of taste in eighteenth-century Britain, but they were not therefore from backgrounds of great social privilege. Socially, the elocutionists tended to occupy middling rather than genteel or aristocratic positions. Similarly to Johnson and the Burney family as

well as many other writers of the period, they profited from opportunities in the fields of authorship and education to secure cultural capital for themselves while promising students of elocution profits as well. By contrast with the world of courtly letters, Johnson's era was increasingly a "print culture" in which writers developed new identities as professional authors no longer dependent on patronage but instead on a broad reading public for their cultural and economic status (Kernan 102-103). Catherine Gallagher in her study of the Burney family notes how "publication was thought of as an upwardly mobile strategy" to acquire cultural capital–a strategy which the family exploited with considerable success (215-216). While the elocutionary writers and their works also illustrate this general strategy, the cultural value of their publications and their identities as authors is more specifically linked to the field of education and the academic marketplace.

Their backgrounds of middling status are exemplified as follows: Sheridan's father was a well-educated schoolmaster in Dublin who sent his son to Westminster school in England for a time, but was forced to remove him because he was unable to continue financing Thomas' schooling there.[16] John Walker left school early to enter "a trade" to help support his family, and after his mother's death began a career as an actor before turning to his educational projects in elocution.[17] Gilbert Austin attended Trinity College in Dublin neither as a member of the highest nor of the lowest social group: he was a

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[16]Thomas Sheridan lived from 1719 to 1788. Of all the elocutionary writers, his life and works have been most fully documented and discussed. In particular, Benzie's *The Dublin Orator* and Wallace Bacon's "The Elocutionary Career of Thomas Sheridan" provide detailed treatments of his activities as an elocutionist.

[17]Walker lived from 1732 to 1801. During his acting career, he performed at Drury Lane theatre in London, under the management of David Garrick, and in the Crow Street theatre in Dublin, a new rival to the Smock Alley Theatre which Sheridan had managed (Walker began performing at Crow Street at virtually the same time Sheridan left the Dublin theatre scene). Though Walker never became hugely wealthy through his labours in the "science" of elocution, they did enable him to amass "a competent fortune" by the time of his death (Obituary, *Gentleman's Magazine* 786). However, at the time of writing *Elements of Elocution*, he distinguishes his own precarious financial situation from the "leisure and liberty of affluence" (*Elements* xiv). In addition to *Elements of Elocution*, Walker's published works include *The Rhetorical Grammar* (1785), *Melody of Speaking Delineated* (1787), *The Academic Speaker* (1789), and *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* (1791).

"pensioner," which was one class lower than the top class reserved for "sons of the nobility and fellow commoners who paid higher fees, wore elaborate gowns and were given special favours," but which was above the lowest and poorest class of students, namely the sizars (Robb and Thonssen xv).[18] James Burgh, from Perthshire, Scotland, attended the University of St. Andrews with a view to becoming a clergyman, but never completed his degree and subsequently entered the linen trade, assisted by an inheritance obtained at the death of his brother.[19] But as his biographer Kippis notes, "[i]n business, however, he was not successful" (14). His failure at the linen trade in Scotland forced him to migrate south to seek opportunity in London, where his first position in the South was the relatively lowly one of corrector of the press for a printer. From there, he became an "assistant usher" in a grammar school in Great Marlow, Buckinghamshire before establishing his own school at Stoke Newington in Middlesex in 1747. William Enfield came from a "poor" background yet managed to receive a good education within the growing system of educational establishments run by and for dissenters (*DNB*).[20]

The diverse religious and regional backgrounds of the elocutionary writers further

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[18]Austin lived from 1753 to 1837. Although little information is recorded about his early years, in their "Introduction" to the facsimile reprint of the *Chironomia* Robb and Thonssen detail his education at Trinity College Dublin and his subsequent career as a teacher and Anglican clergyman in Ireland. The *Chironomia* is Austin's only publication on elocution or, as he prefers to call it, delivery. He also published several scientific articles and *Sermons on Practical Subjects* (1795).

[19]Burgh lived from 1714 to 1775. *The Art of Speaking*, published in 1761, was his only work on elocution. His other publications, which include *The Dignity of Human Nature* (1754), *Crito, or Essays on various subjects* (1766), and *Political Disquisitions* (1774-75), as well as numerous pamphlets and contributions to periodicals, fall more into the category of moral and political philosophy. He also wrote an educational tract, *Youth's Friendly Monitor* (1756). These publications, combined with his labour as master of his own academy, permitted him to acquire by the end of life "a competent, though not a large fortune" (Kippis 15).

[20]Enfield lived from 1741 to 1797. He contributed to the elocutionary movement through his popular handbook, *The Speaker* (1774). Enfield's other publications included sermons, prayers, hymns, historical writings, literary criticism, "natural philosophy," and submissions to the *Monthly Magazine*, the *Monthly Review*, and the *Analytical Review* (*DNB*).

complicate their social profiles. Sheridan and Austin, for example, were Irish, while John Herries and Burgh were Scottish, and other writers originated not from the cultural centre of London, but outlying regions. Walker, for example, came from Middlesex and Enfield was from the Northwest of England. These cultural-geographic origins no doubt increased the elocutionists' sensitivity to the social distinctions effected by differences in vocal and physical conduct and helped to explain, for example, Sheridan's great popularity in Edinburgh, but it also opened them to some ridicule and charges of presumption. For example, Howell cites Lord Campbell's sarcastic comment that Sheridan endeavoured in "his strong Irish brogue 'to teach all the delicacies of English intonation'" (158), while the reviewer of Herries' *Elements of Speech* charges that "[i]t is, indeed, a bold attempt in a *North-Briton*, to erect, in the capital of the kingdom, the standard of the true pronunciation of the *English* language!" (*Monthly Review* 49 [1773]: 274).

Although Sheridan and Austin were both members of the established Anglican Church, several other elocutionists belonged to Dissenting and other minority denominations: for example, Enfield, Burgh, and Herries were all nonconformists while Walker, whose original background was probably a Dissenting one, converted to Roman Catholicism in mid-life. And John Wesley, the great populist Methodist preacher, authored a tract on elocution–which is ironic, given that writers like Sheridan were trying to inject some of the vitality that Methodists brought to their preaching into the reading of the established Anglican service precisely in an effort to prevent the shift of traditional Anglican congregations to Methodism. Although eighteenth-century British society tolerated religious diversity, exclusion from the established national church meant real social disabilities, especially of profession: "choice areas of the state, such as the [English] universities and civil office, were out of bounds to those beyond the Anglican communion," though in reality many nonconformists became "occasionally-conforming" Dissenters in order to enter these realms (Porter, *English* 171). None of the elocutionary writers, then, boasted the social prestige and affluence of an aristocratic or highly privileged background, but they all managed to improve their cultural and economic status at least to some extent through their work as teachers of and writers on elocution.

In general, their formal educational backgrounds were uneven but quite extensive; in their subsequent careers as scholars and educators, several achieved strong reputations but

none enjoyed the prestige and security of university appointments held by contemporary rhetoricians such as Adam Smith and Hugh Blair. Austin received the most extensive formal education, securing his M. A. from Trinity College, Dublin in 1780.[21] Sheridan also attended Trinity College, where he was awarded a B. A. in 1738. (He was subsequently awarded an honourary M. A. from Oxford following his lectures there on elocution.) Although the economic situation of his family was unsteady, Sheridan did enjoy a culturally and academically rich background both because of his father's learning and because of Jonathan Swift's close relationship with the family, a connection which Sheridan later claimed strongly influenced his interest in standardizing the English language.[22] [23] Burgh, as noted above, attended St. Andrew's University for a time, but never completed his degree, while Walker never went to university. Likewise, Enfield did not initially attend university though he did receive a thorough education at Daventry Academy under the direction of Dr. Caleb Ashworth as preparation for entering the Dissenting ministry, and later in life he received his LL.D. from the University of Edinburgh.

In their subsequent careers, the elocutionists participated in the educational marketplace in several ways. Many of them worked as schoolteachers at small grammar schools, part of the "huge expansion" in school places that the century experienced (Porter, *English* 160). Typically, the schools in which they taught and in some cases ran were

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[21]The level of Austin's education and scholarship is indicated not only by his two university degrees, but also by the breadth of learning evinced in the *Chironomia* and by his activities as an amateur scientist. A member of the Royal Irish Academy, Austin published at least three scientific articles in the Society's *Transactions* as well as one letter in the more prestigious *Philosophical Transactions* of the London-based society (see Chapter Four for a fuller discussion of these activities).

[22]In addition to being a close friend of his father's, Jonathan Swift was Sheridan's godfather.

[23]After receiving his B.A. in 1738, Sheridan went against his father's wishes that he become a schoolmaster and instead launched a career as an actor and theatre manager in London and Dublin, although he later claimed that this decision was consistent with his long-term objective of becoming an educator of youth: "My Father's Employment was the Education of Youth; nor was he amongst the least eminent in his Profession. As I ever esteemed that to be one of the most useful and honourable Stations in Life, I resolved to make Choice of it for mine" (*An Oration*, 19).

situated between upper-class public schools such as Eton and Winchester, and the emerging lower-class charity schools. The school that Austin ran in Dublin was probably the most upper-class establishment of this group. Citing Taylor's *History of the University of Dublin*, Robb and Thonssen note that Austin "established a school for the education of a limited number of the sons of the higher classes in Ireland in which profession he was eminently successful" (xv). Other elocutionary writers also worked as schoolmasters, though generally in less prestigious establishments than Austin's. Burgh, for example, ran a school at Stoke Newington in Middlesex from 1747 until his retirement in 1771; Enfield was "tutor in belles lettres and rector" from 1770 until 1783 at Warrington Academy, a dissenting school in Northwest England that developed a high reputation; and Walker, after leaving his career on the stage, in 1769 established a boys' school with James Usher at Kensington Gravel Pits for the instruction of Catholic youth.[24] [25] As Porter notes, the profession of schoolmaster in the eighteenth century was typically a low-status service employment, well below that of (the relatively few) university teachers (*English* 91). And it was–like many other professions–open and unregulated, without the requirements of specific "academic training, exams and paper qualifications, without codified professional ethics" (91). This openness, while it may have mitigated against the development of a firmly respectable cultural status for schoolteaching, simultaneously made the profession a space of opportunity.

In addition to their work as schoolteachers, the elocutionists addressed the educational market through private tutoring, publication, and public lecturing. Sheridan is the best example of an elocutionist who developed a career as an educator without ever teaching in an established school, despite his indefatigable promotion of a national

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[24]Burgh's school seems to have been fairly successful, especially given that he moved to larger quarters at Newington Green in 1750 because of an increase in the number of his students (Kippis 14).

[25]This was the same academy where Joseph Priestly had been "tutor in languages and belles lettres" from 1760 to 1767 (Howell, *Eighteenth-Century* 632). Enfield received his LL.D. from the University of Edinburgh in 1774. When Warrington Academy dissolved in 1783, he became rector of the Octagon Chapel in Norwich and combined this with private tutoring in his home. The pupils he received at his house included Denman, who later became Lord Chief Justice, and Maltby, who became Bishop of Durham (*DNB*).

educational program in elocution and his repeated call for masters and establishments dedicated to teaching this art.[26] After leaving his profession of actor and stage-manager, he developed a career that combined prolific publication with an exhausting schedule of lectures.[27]

According to John Feather, the expansion of the book trade in the eighteenth century was linked directly to concurrent growth in the educational industry (33). The elocutionary publications, many of which combined theoretical and scientific treatment of the principles of elocution with instructions for proper practice, took advantage of this market for educational books in two ways: as part of the growing trade in "instructional manuals" and textbooks (Porter, *English* 160; Belanger 19; Feather 34) and of the increasing popularity among educated members of the reading public in scholarly works of philosophy, science, history, belles lettres, and so on.[28] How much economic capital the elocutionary writers accumulated through their publications is difficult to ascertain, especially given the nature of the eighteenth-century publishing industry which, despite its rapid growth in the second half

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[26]The closest Sheridan came to opening his own school was following his campaign in Dublin in 1757 for support to open an academy modeled on the educational principles elaborated in *British Education* (1756). On December 6th, 1757, he delivered an oration to the Irish "nobility and gentry" in which he described his plan to open an academy intended to teach the Irish student of respectable background how

> to make a figure proportionable to his Talents, in whatever Profession or sphere of Life he shall make his Choice, or into which his lot shall have cast him. Whether it be the Pulpit, the Senate-House, or the Bar; whether he seeks for glory in the Field, or prefers the quiet of a rural Life. (*An Oration* 23)

As well, Sheridan's proposed academy was to educate the student "in all the Accomplishments of a Gentleman to make a Figure in polite Life, and to assist him in acquiring a just Taste in the liberal Arts" (24). Despite initial support for his scheme, Sheridan's position as the president of the proposed academy was thwarted by those who claimed that an actor was unfit to act as its head. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Leland was chosen as the new president, but the academy remained open for only a few years (Benzie 17-18).

[27]For more on Sheridan's career as a public lecturer and on his elocutionary publications, see Benzie.

[28]For a discussion of the popularity of philosophical texts, see Price. On books of science, see Rousseau; Kemp; Knight, "Illustrating." On history, biography, and belles lettres, see Fergus, 189 and Kaufman, 121.

of the century, frequently saw authors surrendering their copyrights to publishers for relatively small lump sums or sometimes no payment at all (Belanger 21). Sheridan, for one, strove to ensure the financial viability of the *Lectures* by soliciting subscriptions from people who attended their oral delivery. Further, the more substantial elocutionary books were not cheap, ranging from four shillings for Herries *Elements of Speech* to twelve shillings for both volumes of Walker's *Elements of Elocution*. As well, we know that by the end of their lives, Walker and Burgh amassed "competent fortune[s]" (*Gentleman's Magazine* 1807: 786; Nichols 265): in Walker's case as a direct result of his publications in elocution and lexicography; in Burgh's case, as a result of his authorship of moral and political as well as educational texts, and of the school that he "conducted . . . with great reputation and success" (Nichols 264). Prior to the publication of his *Lectures*, Sheridan's family experienced a "constant lack of adequate funds" (Benzie 22). However, this and subsequent publications as well as other enterprises such as "Attic Evenings" of polite entertainment combined with a yearly government pension of £200 provided him with a comfortable income in later years (Benzie 29).[29]

Public lectures, which were "another new venture in free-market instruction" (Porter, *English* 164), offered another avenue for the promotion and instruction of elocution. This form of education–in which Sheridan, Walker, and Herries participated–contributed significantly to the development and promulgation of the doctrines of elocution across Britain.[30] It also allowed the elocutionists to capitalize on the commercial opportunities proffered by the growing "culture trade" (Porter, *English* 239). Sheridan, for example, charged attendees at his lectures in Edinburgh one guinea per course of eight lectures while for an additional half guinea, they could subscribe to the forthcoming publication of the *Lectures* for half the price that it was to be sold to the general public. (However, the

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[29]For a description of Sheridan's "Attic Evenings," see Benzie, 55-78.

[30]Between 1756 and 1762, Sheridan gave public lectures on elocution across Britain, including Dublin, London, Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol, Bath, and Edinburgh (Benzie 20-34). Walker's *Elements of Elocution* is based on two series of lectures which he delivered at Oxford. The *DNB* mentions that he also lectured successfully in Scotland and Ireland. Before publishing *Elements of Speech*, Herries gave courses of lectures in Dublin, Glasgow, Oxford, and London (Kassler 504).

published *Lectures* ended up being sold not for a whole guinea but a half guinea, which was the same price charged to the original attendees).[31] Michael Shortland explicitly links the elocutionary movement with the commercial culture of the lecture circuit: "in the mid eighteenth century, church halls, assembly rooms and market places in large cities and small towns throughout Britain would probably have received a visit from someone grandiloquently calling himself a 'Professor of Elocution'" (639). In Shortland's view, the publicity generated through these lectures and presentations contributed significantly to making many of the elocutionary treatises into "best sellers" (639). Indeed, the number of editions that some works went through (Burgh's the *Art of Speaking*, for example, had seven British editions by 1792 and at least four American editions by 1804 [Robb 35]) testifies to their popularity.

The cultural capital that the elocutionists acquired through participation in the late eighteenth-century educational market did not include stable university affiliations–despite their aspirations to foster such connections–but it did include for several connections with scholarly communities. Both Sheridan and Walker, for example, gave lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, a fact highlighted by Walker as a source of *ethos* in the "Preface" to *Elements of Elocution*. Herries, seeking the approbation of any person boasting university credentials, dedicates his work to all "the honourable and learned members of the universities of Great Britain and Ireland" (Herries, "Dedication"). Although the fact that Sheridan received an honourary M. A. from Oxford indicates the institution's respect for his educational efforts, a criticism of his pretensions to a university position in a contemporary review suggests how far he and other elocutionists were from achieving such status: "We find very little in this Discourse," writes a reviewer of the lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, "either to applaud or censure: it being a mere declamation, calculated to recommend the study of oratory,–under so able a professor as it is insinuated Mr. Sheridan would prove to be, if placed in either University, and encouraged by a handsome salary" (*Monthly Review* 21 [1759]: 167).

Several elocutionists did, however, achieve cultural status as members of formal and

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[31]For more on Sheridan's subscription method, see Benzie, 35, *Scots Magazine* 23 (1761): 390, and *Scots Magazine* 24 (1762): 481.

informal learned communities. Sheridan, for example, lectured in Edinburgh at the invitation of the Select Society (Benzie 23) and he was for a time a member of Johnson's celebrated literary circle. However, according to Boswell, their friendship ceased after Johnson commented on Sheridan's pension, "'What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time to give up mine'" (Boswell, *Life of Johnson* qtd. in Benzie 30).[32] Walker, the writer of his obituary tells us, was "honoured with the patronage and friendship of Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, and many other of the most distinguished literary and professional characters of the age" (*Gentleman's Magazine* 1807: 786). James Burgh belonged to "a weekly society of some friends to knowledge, virtue, and liberty, among whom were several persons of no small note in the philosophical and literary world" (Nichols 267). And Gilbert Austin was an active member of the Royal Irish Academy, a learned society that combined interests in literature and science and that, like the London Royal Philosophical Society, published transactions of its proceedings.

Given these features of the eighteenth-century educational market through which the elocutionists secured varying degrees of cultural capital, what can be said about the specific readers of their works? With the exception of Sheridan's listeners and readers, little concrete information is available about contemporary individual readers of the elocutionary works. However, based on general information about the nature of the reading public in the second half of the eighteenth century and on the nature of the works themselves, it is possible to make several safe assumptions.

First of all, as researchers of the eighteenth-century publishing industry and readerships show, there was a substantial increase in the number of books published and purchased during this period (Belanger 19; Kernan 69). As well, the development of circulating libraries helped foster an expanding and increasingly diverse readership (Belanger 20; Fergus 158). Significantly, this readership was not limited to the "small group of gentlemen" presumed by earlier writers such as Milton and Dryden (Kernan 69), but instead ranged from the lower to upper classes. However, as Jan Fergus argues, the popular assumption that "servants" and "apprentices" constituted a major component of the

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[32]Ironically, Sheridan had been instrumental in securing Johnson's pension some years earlier (Kernan 106).

new reading public is not borne out by her study of Samuel Clay's provincial library and bookshop (186). She also notes that her study does not strongly support the "widely accepted cliché that the growth of the reading public in England during the last half of the eighteenth century occurred largely within the 'middle class' (186):

> . . . neither Clay's bookselling activities nor even his library indicates that the middle class had come to dominate the reading public. Tradesmen and women were a good deal more conspicuous as patrons of the library than as buyers of substantial books, but even as borrowers . . . they were not pre-eminent. Both as borrowers and buyers, traditional readers–the gentry and professional classes–remained the largest and most active group of customers served by Clay. (191)

In his general conclusions about the provincial market for books, Feather largely agrees with this analysis, but he stresses the middle rank component more: "book buying was essentially a middle- and upper-class pursuit, in which a small minority of the population made a disproportionate number of purchases" (42). Discussing specifically the eighteenth-century reading public for rhetoric texts, Ulman stresses that the kind of literacy this group enjoyed was not a "basic literacy" but rather one "associated with the communicative practices of a socially privileged class, practices among which we might count philosophy and the discourses of belles lettres, the senate, the bar, and the pulpit" (28).

The partial list of subscribers that precedes Sheridan's *Lectures* confirms these general conclusions: judging from the titles of the people who made up his audience, they ranged from the middle to upper ranks, including many professionals and a few members of the aristocracy (see Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion of this list). Although the elocutionary treatises clearly have a mainly male audience in mind (especially for those works designed for young, not adult, students), women did make up a small but noteworthy portion of Sheridan's adult audience. Many of the female names in this list may be from the special set of lectures that Sheridan held for the "ladies" in Edinburgh following his highly popular first run. Significantly, however, Sheridan modified these lectures to suit the different educational levels and narrower sphere of activity of his female audience: his advertisement promised to retrench all passages that called for an appreciation of "the learned languages" as well as those sections directed toward "such only whose professions

call on them to speak in public" (*Scots Magazine* 23 [1761]: 390).

In addition to the information provided by Sheridan's list of subscribers, we know that both he and Walker addressed learned university audiences who may well have made up part of their subsequent readership. For Burgh, Austin, and Enfield, their own young male pupils constituted a further audience for the instruction on which their publications are based and also, presumably, for the publications themselves. Austin's pupils apparently came from the upper-classes; Enfield's work, however, confirms the significance of elocutionary manuals for the largely middle-class Dissenting community. As Feather notes, the dissenting academies were an important market for educational textbooks geared toward practical and commercial subjects (34-35). The elocutionary manuals fit this category in the sense that they provided practical instruction in conduct that could assist the speaker in his commercial activities. Perhaps most significantly, the prices of the elocutionary texts precluded their purchase by the lower classes (for whom inexpensive newspapers, chapbooks, and broadsheets were much more likely purchases);[33] those without sufficient income to buy might have borrowed them from circulating libraries, but as Fergus' study shows, the lower classes did not constitute a significant part of library borrowers, perhaps in part because library membership was itself an expense (158). Further, the nature of the

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[33]Sheridan's *Lectures* sold for 10s. 6d., Walker's *Elements of Elocution* (2 vols.) for 12s., Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* for 4s. 6d., Enfield's *The Speaker* for 6s., Herries' *Elements of Speech* for 4s. I have been unable to discover the price of Austin's *Chironomia*, but its length and steel-engravings almost certainly would place it at the high end of the price range for elocutionary manuals. Pat Rogers' and Kenneth Levine's summaries of book prices in literature during the eighteenth and very early nineteenth centuries indicate the middling cost of most elocutionary manuals within these general ranges: "As for book prices, they ranged from sixpence or a shilling for a pamphlet of 32 or 64 pages, through 2s. 6d. or 3s. per volume for novels with about 250 pages in each, to 5s. or 6s. for a long book. . . . Nine volumes making up Warburton's edition of Pope (1751) were priced at 27s. the set. Books meant to make something of a splash came out in impressive quarto volumes, and would cost up to a guinea" (50). By the beginning of the nineteenth-century, "the cost of copyrighted books was very high: a three-volume novel averaged 16s. in 1815, while a leading author like Sir Walter Scott commanded 25s. for *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) . . . ." (Levine 90). The cheaper literature of "weekly or fortnightly part-works" sold for as little as 6d. However, even cheaper books were "minor luxuries" which "mainly benefited the middle classes" (Levine 90).

elocutionary texts themselves and the kinds of readers they imply make the educated middle to upper ranks the obvious audience for these works.

By "implied readers," I mean the kinds of readers whom the elocutionary writers address through the rhetorical construction of their works. This is the "hypothetical" audience "whom the author wants to read and understand her text" (Glenn 59). These implied readers are likely similar to but not identical with the actual or "flesh-and-blood" (Glenn 69) readers of the elocutionary treatises. An analysis of the elocutionary writers' implied readers, though it cannot specify the "flesh-and-blood" audience, can help us understand the kinds of people that the writers hoped would purchase and read their works. This analysis both confirms and complicates what we know about the actual readers and the historical context of publication. The remainder of this study will analyze this implied readership in detail as part of its exploration of the writers' rhetorical motivations and strategies for addressing their markets of publication. To introduce this fuller analysis, I will sketch here the main features of the "hypothetical" audience addressed by the elocutionary works.

Most importantly, the mix of genres found in Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's works implies a mixed readership. Partly theoretical-scientific dissertations and partly practical instruction manuals, these books simultaneously address two main groups: a culturally élite group of scholarly judges and a broader market of students of elocution. These groups correspond in general to the dual readership that Ulman identifies for eighteenth-century rhetorical treatises: "first, a philosophical and critical community within the larger culture, a community defined by its critical study of language and discourse, and, second, a broader community in which it became important to read, write, and speak *according to standards codified by members of the first group*" (32). Although the first of these groups is smaller than the second, its cultural exclusivity makes it an important market for the elocutionary texts since its approbation will confer cultural status on the writers and their productions. As Austin explains, in providing substantial scholarly authority to support his own ideas about delivery, he is looking for "the approbation of the liberal scholar" (vi).

But Austin's treatise, he tells us, also is addressed to his current and former "pupils," whom he anticipates will read his work "with a degree of partiality" (xi). The students of

elocution thus comprise the second significant group of implied readers. Though more numerous than the "philosophical and critical community," this implied market possesses less cultural status than the former. The market of students can be divided further into two main components: a market of adult aspiring speakers addressed primarily by Sheridan's work, for whom the study of elocution is an autodidactic form of education, and the younger pupils for whom Walker's, Austin's, Burgh's, and Enfield's books are designed. The implied audience of youthful pupils presumed by these latter works points to another category of readers, situated between the learned community of liberal scholars and the young students of elocution. This is the audience of potential teachers of elocution, the schoolmasters whom the elocutionary writers encourage to purchase and employ their textbooks.

In addressing both the adult and youthful components of their implied student readership, the elocutionary writers primarily presuppose a male audience, though at the time of the publication of his *Dictionary*, Sheridan argues for the instruction of "all children of these realms, whether male or female" in the art of reading and speaking with propriety and grace (*Monthly Review* 63 [1780]: 246). And, as I have already pointed out, his adult audience in actuality included a number of women. The presupposition of primarily male students makes sense given the main occasions of speaking that the study of elocution implies. These situations include the traditional all-male forums of the senate, bar, and pulpit–what Austin calls "the great theatres of public eloquence" which he envisions his students entering "by profession or by rank" (xii).

However, in addition to these traditional oratorical situations, the eighteenth-century study of elocution addresses new public and private occasions that correspond to the interests of the growing middle ranks and the formation of a new polite society. In this way, the elocutionary writers expand the potential market for their works by claiming that the study of elocution is significant not only for "the great theatres of public eloquence," but also for everyday speech in business and leisure activities. For example, James Burgh stresses that it is

> . . . of important *advantage* for all that part of youth, whose station places them within the reach of a *polite education*, to be qualified for acquitting themselves with reputation, when called to speak in public. In *parliament*, at

> the *bar*, in the *pulpit*, at *meetings* of merchants, in *committees* for managing public affairs, in large societies, and on such like occasions, a competent address and readiness . . . is what, I doubt not, many a gentlemen [sic] would willingly acquire at the expence of half his other improvements. (164)

Similarly, Enfield argues that the utility and importance of good elocution stems from its everyday nature in public and private spheres:

> Every one will acknowledge it to be of some consequence, that what a man has hourly occasion to do, should be done well. Every private company, and almost every public assembly, affords opportunities of remarking the difference between a just and graceful, and a faulty and unnatural elocution; and there are few persons who do not daily experience the advantages of the former, and the inconveniences of the latter. (1)

The inclusion of the private domain within the scope of elocution further underlines the connections between belletrism and elocution, to the extent that both were concerned with cultivating tasteful and "innocent" forms of leisure and entertainment that could save one "from the danger of many a pernicious passion" (H. Blair 35). To this end, many of the elocutionary treatises included selections from English and classical "polite literature" (H. Blair 35) that the student practised reading out loud to improve his delivery. The study of elocution also contributed to the speaker's ability to converse politely in the private domain, an ability important for women as well as men aspiring to genteel status.

While the opening up of the occasions for effective elocution beyond the traditional situations of oratory addresses the commercial and social interests of the aspiring middle ranks in late eighteenth-century British society, this opening up does not meet with the approval of all readers. Perhaps expressing a widespread concern about the diverse ranks and types of people that the new field of elocution encompassed, the author of a letter to *Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle* considers the spread of elocutionary study beyond the traditional domains socially inappropriate:

> I am a real friend to an improvement in the art of delivery . . . . The Clergy will do well to correct, as much as possible, any defects in their elocution. The younger ones especially, and such persons as are designed for the Senate or the Bar, should endeavour to acquire, in early life, a just and pleasing

> manner of composition, pronunciation, and action. But what reason can there be for the Ladies, and for Tradesmen, to run in shoals to Sheridan's Lectures? Do Haberdashers and Mercers want to learn a better method of recommending their wares to their customers? (10 [1762]: 323)

These complaints show that there was some resistance to the expansion of elocutionary study beyond traditional domains, but they also indicate the appeal of elocution to a diverse audience of middling status including "Tradesmen," "Haberdashers," and "Mercers," and to "Ladies" excluded from public speaking but not from the social art of "private" conversation.

The mixed nature of the readerships and occasions of speaking that the elocutionary treatises address indicate the mixed nature of these writers' entrepreneurial motivations: the larger market of adult and youthful students to whom they appeal suggests the incentive for acquiring economic capital by selling their publications to as many people as possible, while the more exclusive audience of scholarly, discerning readers whom they hope to impress suggests their desire to secure cultural capital for themselves and their project. In the following study, a more detailed analysis of this mixed implied audience will contribute to a fuller understanding of the rhetorical purposes, occasions, and structures of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's works and it will help to explain the tensions and incongruities that these texts contain.

CHAPTER TWO

OPENINGS: STRATEGIES OF DISCIPLINARY AND PERSONAL *ETHOS*

In publishing their treatises, the elocutionary writers perform rhetorical actions that simultaneously address and construct a socially-historically situated "field" of "specific stakes and interests" (Bourdieu, *Sociology* 73). Their works attempt to define the field of elocutionary study as a contextually significant space of scholarly and practical interest. As they attempt to secure cultural capital through these efforts, the elocutionists face the problem of making their "linguistic utterances" (i.e., their treatises) acceptable and valuable to the particular late eighteenth-century market which receives their publications (Bourdieu, *Language* 18), but which their publications also help to create.

To understand how the elocutionary writers negotiate this problem, the subsequent chapters analyze some of the rhetorical strategies they use to shape their utterances "in anticipation of their likely reception" (Bourdieu, *Language* 19). In this chapter, I look specifically at the strategies of *ethos* which the elocutionists use, in their opening sections, to negotiate the problem of disciplinary decorum as they strive to secure increased cultural capital for themselves and their publications through the demonstration of the scholarly and educational value of their subject matter. Given the traditional neglect and devaluation of delivery within the discipline of rhetoric, and given their own middling status as scholars and educators, the elocutionary writers through strategies of *ethos* work to alleviate the potential impropriety of their rhetorical actions. These include the disciplinary impropriety of asserting the significance of delivery by comparison with the other canons of rhetoric, and the more general scholarly impropriety of presupposing that the socially-devalued domain of bodily conduct warrants extensive, systematic enquiry.

The classical persuasive appeal of *ethos* emphasizes the persuasive effects of the

speaker's "personal character" as this character is constructed and represented within a speech (J. Baumlin xv). An effective construction of *ethos* will make the audience trust the speaker and therefore what the speaker says. In Aristotle's definition, *ethos* means establishing *credibility*: "Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's general character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible" (*Rhetoric* 1356a). In this sense, an analysis of the elocutionists' strategies of *ethos* means examining the rhetorical moves they make to construct themselves as credible, or trustworthy, speakers. These strategies occur most strongly and most obviously in the opening sections of their treatises, where they attempt to conciliate and gain the respect of their readers for their enquiries into elocution.

Aristotle's definition of *ethos* stresses the persuasiveness of stylistic techniques within the speech itself; Cicero, however, notes that in addition to how the speech itself depicts the speaker's character, the audience's goodwill may be "won over by a man's merit, achievements or reputable life" (*De Oratore* 2.43). This distinction between what I would call "internal" and "external" *ethos* highlights the interactivity of the credibility a speaker or writer has established prior to the specific rhetorical event, and the credibility created through the event itself. Unlike the types of orators presupposed within most classical rhetorical theory (e.g., important and well-known civic leaders or renowned legal advocates), the elocutionary writers bring to their publications less impressive and, quite simply, less well-known "external" characters. This phenomenon is attributable partly to their relatively unprestigious social positions and backgrounds, and partly to the effects of addressing their readers through print and within an increasingly print culture. To some extent, the practice that a number of elocutionists followed of giving public lectures prior to printing their works provided opportunity for establishing a public reputation "external" to the printed text. This is especially the case with Sheridan, whose extensive lectures across Britain helped to establish his reputation as the leading (though not always admired) advocate of elocution prior to the publication of *A Course of Lectures on Elocution.*

However, as Alvin Kernan argues, in late eighteenth-century culture the idea of a listening, public audience and of a private, reading audience are not interchangeable. Increasingly, author and reader become, at least physically, isolated from each other (Kernan 220-221). From the point of view of the persuasive appeal of *ethos*, this means that the character of the writer constructed within the text itself gains prominence.

Similarly, while actual "flesh-and-blood" (Glenn 69) readers ultimately determine the success of the elocutionary writers' appeals, each writer's "internal" characterization of the kinds of readers to whom he addresses his words contributes strongly to the credibility and persuasiveness of his utterance. This is because such characterizations not only anticipate but in part make his audience and market, in the sense that Kernan argues Samuel Johnson's "common reader is not just a reflection of an actual historical audience of readers" but an "audience-making" technique (234). However, the relative isolation of flesh-and-blood author from flesh-and-blood reader in the late eighteenth-century context of a rapidly expanding reading public means that the audiences whom the elocutionary writers address are more diverse and less predictable than, for example, in the situations of classical oratory or of "courtly letters" (Kernan 4). The writers' sense of the diversity of their actual readers is demonstrated by the mixed profiles of their implied readers that they construct, profiles which partially predict and shape the actual consumers of their texts.

The distinction between oral and print delivery constitutes one notable difference between the typical context of classical *ethos* and that of the elocutionary treatises. But the genres differ in other ways as well. Although Sheridan's treatise does contain strong deliberative elements, the elocutionary works cannot be classified according to the three principal classical genres of deliberative, forensic, and ceremonial oratory. Rather, the works that I am analyzing (as I have already discussed in Chapter One) tend to combine the genres of academic-scientific treatise and instruction manual. This heterogeneous genre, which implies a mixed target readership ranging from "the most liberal and enlightened persons in the different professions" (Austin, *Chironomia* xiii) to young pupils, introduces a complexity to the forms of *ethos* constructed in the opening sections of the elocutionary works. Because the writers' cultural aspirations cause them to "look forward with considerable anxiety to the judgment" of enlightened scholars (Austin, *Chironomia* xiii), they must create an *ethos* that simultaneously asserts the high scholarly value of their field but does not indecorously overstate the academic worth of their individual productions nor overtly disrupt the disciplinary hierarchy of rhetoric in which delivery figures as the fifth of five parts. This appeal to an academically prestigious readership of "enlightened" judges dominates the opening sections of the treatises, but it is intertwined with a more muted appeal to potential users who must be convinced of the practical value of the elocutionary

publications in helping them to overcome their weaknesses as public speakers. The contextual reality of this tension between the scholarly and practical significance of elocutionary study is indicated by the following comments contained in a review of John Rice's *The Art of Reading* (1765):

> . . . we must be permitted to say, that we do not hold the art of oral delivery in so low an estimation as the learned sometimes affect to do. A proper and expressive mode of delivery, whether in speaking or reading, is a polite, if not a scholastic accomplishment; and, though it be not necessarily accompanied with profound erudition, it is not altogether so superficial and insignificant as is imagined. (*Monthly Review* 32 [1765]: 445)

In terms of the standard classical form of oration, the persuasive appeal of *ethos* is particularly important in the *exordium* or "introduction to the subject on which the orator has to speak" (Quintilian 4.1.1.). The key function of the *exordium*, according to Quintilian, is "to prepare our audience in such a way that they will be disposed to lend a ready ear to the rest of our speech" (4.1.5). To the extent that one way of making the audience receptive is by giving it "a good impression of your character" (Aristotle 3.1415b), strategies of *ethos* obviously play an important part in the introduction. But, as I shall argue, the construction of *ethos* in the opening sections of the elocutionary treatises occurs primarily through the writers' efforts to establish the credibility of their subject matter or field of enquiry. These efforts, which I label "disciplinary ethos," correspond to the *exordium*'s function of making the audience attentive by showing the importance of the matter the speaker is addressing, as well as its relevance to the audience (Aristotle 3.1415b).

By contrast, the construction of each writer's personal *ethos* tends, especially in Walker's and Austin's cases, to take place more within their introductory narratives about their own processes of composition and motivations for writing. In a sense, these narratives correspond to the classical part of the *narratio* or statement of the case. As James Kinneavy and Susan Warshauer explain,

> The *ethos* of the speaker is also strengthened indirectly by a speech's organization and use of narrative, since "the narrative should be of moral character, and in fact it will be so, if we know what effects this. One thing is to make clear our moral purpose; for as is the moral purpose, so is the

> character, and as is the end, so is the moral purpose" ([Aristotle] 3.1417a). Aristotle conceives of the narrative as either part of or immediately following the introduction, and these are, indeed, the most apt places to emphasize the ethical character of the speaker. The end of the speech is too late to establish *ethos* because by then the audience will have already formed a judgment about the speaker's character. (Kinneavy and Warshauer 181)

Rather than clearly following after the *exordia*, the elocutionists' narratives of their composing processes–which emphasize their moral purposes and diligent nature–weave through their introductions and hence occur as part of their opening attempts to make readers receptive to their utterances.

Thus, the introductory sections of the elocutionary treatises work to defuse the suspect disciplinary character of elocution by constructing it as a legitimate field of enquiry. The personal characters of the writers depend on and emerge from the larger disciplinary *ethos* of elocution–in this sense, the writers present themselves and their publications as "representatives of a discipline" (Cahn 64). However, the modest, even deferential identities that their narratives construct also counterbalance the potential presumptuousness of the grand claims they make about the scholarly and educational importance of the field of elocution. The differences between the forms and effects of disciplinary and personal *ethos* in the opening sections at once create instabilities in the elocutionists' representations of their subject matter, *and* they function to ease the problems of making their field of study socially acceptable and respectable within their market. In particular, the different strategies of *ethos* address the problem of the writers claiming too much cultural capital for themselves and hence opening themselves to the charge of *cacozelia* (Kaster 9).

Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson's discourse model of politeness offers a useful framework for understanding the structures and relationships of these two forms of *ethos*. Working from the assumption that many common speech acts contain potential threats to the "face" ("the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself") (61) of the speaker and/or hearer, Brown and Levinson identify a series of linguistic politeness strategies which speakers typically use to diminish or redress these threats. The two basic forms of "positive" and "negative" politeness in their model correspond, I suggest, to the dominant strategies of disciplinary and personal *ethos* enacted by the elocutionists.

The terms "positive" and "negative" derive from the concepts of "positive" and "negative" face. Essentially, positive face refers to a person's desire for approval and appreciation by others, while negative face means the desire to maintain "personal preserves" by being free of imposition from others (61-62).

Strategies of positive politeness, therefore, generally operate through what Kenneth Burke would call a rhetoric of "identification" (Magnusson 397): speakers diminish the threat of their actions by claiming common ground or "consubstantiality" (*Rhetoric of Motives* 21) with their hearers, for example by presupposing and indicating that the speaker and hearer share the same desires and values, by using "in-group identity markers" that stress common membership in a group or category, by offering the listener material goods or other gifts, and by showing the speaker's interest in or sympathy with the hearer's presupposed concerns through the technique of exaggeration or overstatement (see Brown and Levinson, 101-129).[1] In the opening sections of the elocutionary treatises, the writers employ forms of positive politeness primarily to construct the disciplinary *ethos* of their project. For example, they presuppose the shared values of classical authority and of more contemporary scholarly domains such as the philosophical-psychological study of human nature and grammatical-linguistic enquiries; they construct "in-group" membership through the specialized languages of these fields of enquiry and through the patriotic appeal to British superiority; they implicitly or explicitly offer the study of elocution as a source of salvation for the communal deficiencies of British speakers; and, especially in Sheridan's

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[1]According to Brown and Levinson, in-group identity markers include the use of familiar address forms and specialized languages. For example, the use of a non-honorific form or pronoun (e.g. the French "*tu*" rather than "*vous*") to a non-familiar or distant person makes a claim of solidarity between speaker and hearer, while the use of in-group terminology—such as slang or jargon—can evoke shared associations and attitudes (107-111). Making an offer or promise, or actually giving a material or nonmaterial gift to the hearer, further work to create familiarity and common ground between the speaker and hearer because they stress the speaker's good intentions toward the hearer (125, 129). The technique of exaggeration or overstatement can work to establish common ground between the speaker and the hearer by showing the speaker's intense interest in or sympathy with the hearer's presupposed concerns. In their study of a Tamil community, Brown and Levinson illustrate this positive politeness strategy with expressions that use intensifying modifiers, as in "What a fantastic garden you have!" and "How absolutely devastating!" (104).

case, they tend to exaggerate the necessity and benefits of reviving the neglected art of delivery.

Strategies of negative politeness, on the other hand, emphasize the distance and differences between the speaker and hearer in order to redress the imposition of the face-threatening act.[2] For example, negative politeness employs tactics of indirection, impersonalization, and deference; it preserves the boundaries between interactants by avoiding the presumption of too much common ground and by mollifying any criticism or disagreement that may be present (Brown and Levinson 129-210). The use of hedging words or phrases, which introduce a sense that the speaker's question or statement is only partially or possibly true, in particular diminish the speaker's presumption of excessive common ground with the hearer's desires and values.[3] The linguistic realization of deference, according to Brown and Levinson, occurs in two ways: the speaker humbles and abases himself or herself, or the speaker elevates the hearer's status.[4] The technique of impersonalization–for instance through the agentless passive and the replacement of singular personal pronouns, such as "I" and "you," with the impersonal "one" or the plural "we"–further preserves the social distance between speaker and hearer by avoiding the

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[2]This corresponds to Burke's ideas of "division" and "distinctness," which are the necessary counterparts to a rhetoric of identification. As he explains, identification ambiguously presupposes difference and division between people: "Here are ambiguities of substance. In being identified with B, A is "substantially one" with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another" (*Rhetoric of Motives* 21). In a sense, this condition of separation, of "distinctness," exemplifies what Brown and Levinson call "negative face."

[3]For example, the indirect and hedging request, "There wouldn't I suppose be any chance of your being able to lend me your car for just a few minutes, would there?" exemplifies a high degree of negative politeness by contrast with the direct imperative, "Lend me your car" (Brown and Levinson 142-143).

[4]For instance, when serving a meal, the speaker abases himself or herself by saying, "It's not much, I'm afraid, but it'll fill our stomachs," while one way that the speaker can elevate the hearer's status is by using honorific forms of address such as "Sir" or "Dr." (Brown and Levinson 178-185).

presumption of familiarity.[5] These general techniques of negative politeness figure, alongside strategies of positive politeness, in the introductory sections of the elocutionary treatises, especially in Walker's and Austin's constructions of their own modest characters and disciplinary ambitions.

Together, then, tactics of positive and negative politeness allow the elocutionists simultaneously to reach out and claim disciplinary property for themselves, *and* decorously to disclaim–or at least qualify–their full entitlement to this property by pointing out their personal inadequacies. The disciplinary decorum that they thus construct for their project addresses the potential impropriety of their cultural aspirations and responds to the mixed profiles of their implied readerships. The fact that their opening constructions of disciplinary decorum are not wholly coherent indicates the instability of delivery's status in the discipline of rhetoric as well as the writers' own middling scholarly positions and credentials; it also reflects tensions and differences within the backgrounds and interests of their implied readers.

Disciplinary Ethos

To establish the *ethos*, or credibility, of elocution as a field of study in the opening sections of their treatises, the elocutionists employ various forms of positive politeness. Most importantly, they assert the worth of their new field by associating it with more established domains and "images of cultural authority" (J. Baumlin xxix): in particular, they identify their field with the authority of classical culture and of contemporary philosophical and linguistic enquiries. These positive, occasionally exaggerated identifications, which address primarily a market of "enlightened," cultured readers, paradoxically permit the elocutionists to claim a distinctive disciplinary space for their own field which they boldly proffer as a cure for national deficiencies in public speaking.

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[5]An example of an agentless passive would be "It is regretted that" rather than "I regret that"; an example of the impersonalization of pronouns, "One shouldn't do things like that" rather than "You shouldn't do things like that" (Brown and Levinson 197-202).

a) Appeal to Classical Authority

Eighteenth-century admiration for classical culture, though ubiquitous, is complex and variable, ranging from idealization of Periclean Athens and Augustan Rome earlier in the century to nostalgia for primitive Greece and Rome in the latter part (Butler 17). As James Sambrook argues, the tendency to refer to the whole of the century as the "Augustan Age" is inadequate and misleading, but this does not mean that classical models and ideals were unimportant (Sambrook 208). For the elocutionary writers, the invocation of classical authority takes two main forms. First, in accordance with the rhetorical tradition as conceived in the eighteenth century, they argue for the validity of their field as one of the five parts of classical rhetoric. Second, they appeal to the glory of classical culture in general to argue for the importance of reviving this culture through the art of speaking.

The significance of classical authority within eighteenth-century rhetoric figures most obviously in neo-classical rhetorics such as John Holmes' *The Art of Rhetoric* (1739), John Ward's *A System of Oratory* (1759) and John Lawson's *Lectures Concerning Oratory* (1758) which "draw conspicuously from Greek and Roman models" and reinstate the traditional five-part classical division of rhetoric into invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (Goodwin 28). But even in the so-called "new rhetoric" (Howell, *British* 441) of writers such as Hugh Blair and George Campbell, which diverge from the classical formulation of rhetorical theory in noteworthy ways, classical authority retains an important status and continues to play a significant role. James Golden and Edward Corbett describe these rhetorics as a "response to the classical tradition" which "endorsed some ideas but modified and rejected others" (8, 12).[6] Like the "new" rhetoricians of eighteenth-century Scotland, the elocutionists endorse and modify the classical tradition. In arguing for the study of delivery as a valuable contemporary field, they can draw on the neo-classical disciplinary representation of the five parts of rhetoric while also benefitting from a disciplinary *ethos* supportive of new approaches to the study of rhetoric. However, to preserve disciplinary decorum, the elocutionists present the importance of the neglected fifth

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[6]For further discussion of what Blair and Campbell endorsed, modified, and rejected from the classical tradition, see Golden and Corbett 12-17.

canon of delivery in ambiguous terms, on the one hand stating its unequivocal primacy and on the other equating or subordinating it to the other four canons.

Through the metaphor of delivery as a "branch" of oratory, elocutionists such as John Mason and James Burgh (whose elocutionary manuals were first published near mid-century) claim the significance of their subject matter based on the assumption of the cultural authority of a classical conception of oratory. Mason, for example, begins his short work by stating that "Elocution is a branch of Oratory" (3). Here, the metaphor of oratory as a tree with various branches combined with the preposition "of" indicate a spatial relationship of possession, namely that oratory possesses or contains within itself elocution. In making this claim, the writer presupposes that his readers already accept and value "Oratory" as a legitimate, desirable discipline. The classical origins of this discipline are confirmed by the chronicle which follows of its historical lineage in ancient Rome: "[I]t was much cultivated by Quintilian, and before him by Cicero, and before him by M. Antonius; . . ." (3). Burgh similarly represents elocution as a "branch" of oratory in his introduction, but he ambiguates its significance by positively asserting, initially, that delivery "is of the utmost importance" but then qualifying this claim by saying that this importance "*seems* unquestionable" (1), not *is* unquestionable (my emphasis). This small ambiguity suggests Burgh's uncertainty about the propriety of making excessive claims about the value his field of enquiry.

In the introduction to *Chironomia*, Austin–for whom the ancients merit "respect almost mounting to veneration" (22)–likewise explicates the classical conception of the part-whole relationship between delivery and the larger discipline of rhetoric to justify his field of enquiry:

> The management of the voice, the expression of the countenance, and the gesture of the head, the body, and the limbs, constitute the external part of oratory; and relate to the personal talents and efforts of the public speaker, in like manner as the other divisions of rhetoric, invention, disposition, choice of words, and memory, relate to those of his understanding. (1)

In this passage, Austin asserts the position of delivery as one part of oratory, and he identifies the "other divisions" which complete the whole art. In this sense, he implies that the status of delivery is neither greater nor lesser than that of any other part. However, this

passage also establishes a different conceptual relationship between delivery and the other parts of rhetoric: in this figuration, delivery is one of only two divisions–it constitutes the first or "the external part of oratory," whereas "invention, disposition, choice of words, and memory" may be grouped together as a second part dealing with the internal operations of the "understanding." By making delivery one of two parts of the whole art of rhetoric, Austin amplifies its status; it represents, he suggests, a full 50% of the whole art. As well, his enumeration of the sub-parts of delivery (e.g., management of the voice, expression of the countenance, and so on) further increases the distinctive domain of this part relative to its internal counterpart. On the other hand, the relegation of delivery to the outside, to the "external" world of the body, potentially diminishes its value by comparison with the privileged identification of the other divisions of rhetoric with the mind, or the "understanding." This devaluation suggests Austin's acceptance, despite his focus on *bodily* persuasion, of what Porter calls the "old hierarchies." Even though Austin seeks to "rescue the body from neglect or disrepute" (Porter, "History" 206), he does so in a way that characterizes physical delivery in the debased terms of the "external" or the superficial.

The second main argument for the credibility of elocution on the basis of classical authority ranges beyond the specific disciplinary issue of delivery's status as one of five parts of rhetoric to the grander claim that a revival of the art of speaking will reinstate the glory of classical culture in eighteenth-century Britain. This claim, advanced repeatedly and untiringly by Sheridan in virtually all his works, presupposes a market admiring of an idealized form of classical culture and, more importantly, one anxious to re-enact the ostensible glory of this culture within its own time and context. Appealing to sentiments of national pride, Sheridan uses the positive politeness strategy of exaggeration to argue that a revival of the classical art of speaking will enable Britain not only to imitate but to surpass the greatness of classical culture.[7] Although within the elocutionary works this argument

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[7]Although Sheridan glorifies classical culture as the perfect model for reviving the art of speaking as an essential component of eighteenth-century education, his attitudes toward the study of classical languages is much more critical. He advocated educational reform that would make the study of English, rather than classical languages, dominant. However, the manner in which contemporary Britain should study and teach its own verbal and non-verbal languages should, Sheridan argued, be modeled on the classical study of oratory. He elaborates these arguments most strongly in *British Education* and in *A Dissertation on the*

supports the writers' claims about the value of their particular field, the general form of this paradoxical argument was common to late eighteenth-century European culture. Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, for example, notes the "historical *double bind*" implied by Johann Joachim Winckelmann's late eighteenth-century view that "[t]he only way we can become great, and, if this is possible, inimitable, is by imitating the Ancients" (Lacoue-Labarthe 236).

For Sheridan, reviving classical oratory is essential to this process of making the British nation and its civic leaders "inimitable." Unlike Austin, for instance, Sheridan's association of elocution with oratory is so strong that he frequently seems to equate the two by shifting, without explanation, between using the words "oratory" and "elocution." Because the equation is implicit, however, a precise accusation of inappropriate substitution is difficult to make. By associating his proposed program for the study of elocution in eighteenth-century Britain with the idealized culture of classical Greece and Rome, he transfers the latter's greatness to Britain's future. This slippage allows him not only to authorize his project on the basis of its classical origins, but to appeal to his audience's patriotism by affirming the ultimate superiority of Britain over the great cultures of Greece and Rome. In his "Introductory Discourse," he explains the value of the ancient "culture of the language of nature, the living speech" to the progress and "perfection" of contemporary British society:

> Their arts are essentially necessary to render the noblest discoveries in modern philosophy, practically useful to society. Their arts, are essentially necessary, to diffuse those benefits thro' all ranks of people, which such a religion, and such a constitution as our's [sic], are in their own nature capable of bestowing. In short, their arts, are essentially necessary, to our making a right use of all those blessings, which Providence has showered down with a more liberal hand, on this country, than on any other in the world. Now they had no arts whatsoever, in which they excelled us, that did not take their rise, either immediately, or consequentially, from the pains bestowed upon the culture of the language of nature, the living speech. What is there wanting then amongst us, but to apply ourselves with industry to the

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Causes of the Difficulties which Occur, in Learning the English Tongue.

same means, in order to attain the same ends? (xiv).[8]

Far from displaying any hesitation, the hyperbolic style of this passage–indicated, for example, in its climactic anaphora, its repetition of the redundantly emphatic phrase "essentially necessary," and its use of superlative words and phrases (e.g., "noblest," "all ranks," "all those blessings," "more . . . than on any other," "no arts whatsoever")–emphatically affirms the value of the study of "the living speech" for ancient and, therefore, for contemporary society.

Sheridan's figuration of the relationship between classical and contemporary society stresses the proximity, rather than the distance, of the two. Both cultures, he implies, aspire to the same communal ideals and should be judged according to the same standards, though the precise nature of these ideals and standards remains strategically vague. In this way, he transfers the glorification of the past to the present, in the potential of contemporary British oratory. His appeal to classical authority also feeds his audience's sense of national pride. According to Quintilian, this strategy of appealing to a "sense of patriotism" is an effective one for securing goodwill in the *exordium* (4.1.7) and it is one which Sheridan employs repeatedly. For example, at the beginning of Lecture I, he claims that, for the British, "good public . . . speaking" is a matter of the utmost importance to the state, and to society" (1). But having associated the past with the present to effect this transfer of value, Sheridan inserts a distinction which permits the value of the present to rise above that of the past, and which therefore allows his audience the satisfaction of perceiving themselves–at least potentially–as superior to classical culture: Britain, because of her superior religion and constitution, has the potential to exceed, not merely to match, the greatness and glory of classical culture. This greatness, according to Sheridan, is derived exclusively from "the culture . . . of the living speech."[9] In this way, Sheridan further aggrandizes the eighteenth-century project of elocution and motivates his readers to lend it their support. By elevating the question of elocutionary study into an essentially "serious moral consideration"

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[8]Unless otherwise stated, all parenthetical references to Sheridan's work refer to *A Course of Lectures on Elocution*.

[9]John Herries, in the introduction and conclusion to *Elements of Speech*, makes a similar argument.

(Quintilian 4.1.7) about how to make a right use of the blessings of Providence for national improvement, Sheridan allows his audience to conceive themselves, if they support the study of elocution, as engaged in the virtuous, selfless pursuit of enhancing the morality and civility of their society generally, though he also appeals to the more self-interested, personal desire for improved social status. Support for the study of elocution, he argues, should stem from "such powerful motives, as a sense of duty, of honour," but personal "promotion" also "is sure to attend even a moderate share of merit" in the art of speaking (1).

The actual success of Sheridan's exaggerated claims for the value of the study of elocution in contemporary British society were, judging from the critical reviews of his works, only partial at best. Most reviewers of *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* as well as his earlier works *British Education* and *A Discourse Being Introductory to A Course of Lectures on Elocution and the English Language* agreed that his general scheme to make the study of elocution an important part of contemporary education was "practicable and praiseworthy" (*Critical Review* 14 [1762: 170). However, many also accused him–sometimes gently, sometimes not–of absurd overstatement about the alleged social and moral benefits of this study. For example, as the review of the *Lectures* in the *Scots Magazine* noted,

> . . . he is rather too sanguine in his expectations, and lays too great a stress upon the efficacy of declamation. . . . He has studied the subject until he is grown warm in the pursuit, and kindles into a degree of enthusiasm, which sometimes hurries him to the borders of extravagance. One would imagine, by reading these lectures, that he considers elocution as the consummation of all earthly perfection; and that even the virtues of the heart depend, in a great measure, on the utterance of the tongue, and the gesticulations of the body. (*Scots Magazine* 24 [1762]: 481).

Clearly, Sheridan's assertive and hyperbolic characterization of the powers of elocution (or oratory) opens him to the charge of indecorous self-assertion and exposes him "to the ridicule of discerning readers" (*Monthly Review* 27 [1762]: 202). Ulman, however, reminds us of the intentionally deliberative nature of Sheridan's own oratory as he publicly campaigned for his educational project (Ulman 158). Indeed, the initial oral delivery of

these lectures should be kept in mind: as a practised actor, no doubt Sheridan delivered his lectures with all the force and passion which he advocates for Britain's public speakers. Such a powerful style of delivery would have been well-suited to the hyperbole of his verbal text. In its printed format, however, the *Lectures* lack the persuasive influence of "the living speech" and hence Sheridan's words appear exaggerated and inappropriate. Further, these contemporary criticisms are directed principally at the conclusions Sheridan draws from his premises; they do not take issue with his basic assumptions about the greatness of classical culture and its significance as a model for eighteenth-century British society.

b) Association with Contemporary Scholarly Pursuits

Although classical authority serves as the most crucial and prevalent cultural value which the elocutionary writers exploit to legitimate their field of study, the association of their field with more recent, "modern" (Austin, *Chironomia*, title page) forms of enquiry also exemplifies the positive politeness technique of asserting common ground between the writer's interests and those of his "discerning readers." The title page of Austin's *Chironomia* demonstrates this tension between the representation of delivery as valuable because of its classical heritage and also because of its association with new scientific approaches in scholarship. Interestingly, this attempt to reconcile the old with the new reflects the mandate and composition of the Royal Irish Academy, in which Austin participated actively as an amateur scientist. Formed in 1785, this society merged two previously distinct groups: the "Paleosophers," who concentrated on ancient learning, and the "Neosophers," who focused on science and modern literature (Gilbert 227-28). In seeking the approbation of the cultivated "liberal scholar" for his treatise (vi), Austin seems to have in mind the kind of learned community that the Academy composed, with its combination of interests in the ancient and the innovative, in literature and in science.

Austin's title page immediately identifies his work of 1806 with a classical heritage, most obviously in his selection of the Greek term "*chironomia*" as his main title.[10] Later in

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[10]Meaning, for Cicero, "the law of gesture" though Austin extends it to "name the whole art of gesture and delivery" on the authority of Coelius Rhodiginus (xii).

the "Preface," he justifies the use of this title because it is "strictly classical" and "of the very earliest and highest authority," an authority defined through its dissociation "from the affectation of modern fabrication" (xii). This particular attempt to keep the high classical language "strictly" apart from the low or affected "modern" vocabulary suggests that Austin presumes his community of readers have considerably more regard for the solidity of classical authority than for the insubstantiality of "modern fabrication." It also implies that Austin in general wishes to represent his work in terms of a purely classical *ethos*, as opposed to a modern *ethos*. However, the full title and sub-title of his work construct an equivalence rather than an opposition between ancient and modern: "*Chironomia; or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery: Comprehending Many Precepts, Both Ancient and Modern, for the Proper Regulation of the Voice, Countenance, and Gesture, Together with an Investigation of the Elements of Gesture, and a New Method for the Notation Thereof.*" Austin begins by affirming his work's classical origins, but toward the end of his sub-title, the modern scientific representation of his treatise takes over. Finally, he counteracts the presumptuous modernity of his "new method" by placing the title and sub-title on top of two Latin quotations, from Book I of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* and Book III of the *Rhetorica Ad Herrenium*. These quotations, the first of which explains the meaning and importance of "*chironomy*" and the second of which describes the magnitude of the task of expressing physical movements in writing, reaffirm the foundation of classical authority for his modern "investigation" of delivery.[11] But if the classical *ethos* takes precedence at the outset of Austin's treatise, the modern approach–safely framed by this opening appeal to the classical–becomes dominant later in the book.

In the introductions of their treatises, Sheridan and Walker more emphatically associate the study of elocution with the contemporary scholarly domains of philosophy and

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[11]The first quotation comes from Quintilian's *Institutio* I.11.17: "There can be no justification for disdaining to learn what has got to be done, especially as *chironomy*, which, as the name shows, is *the law of gesture*, originated in heroic times and met with the approval of the greatest Greeks, not excepting Socrates himself, while it was placed by Plato among the virtues of a citizen and included by Chrysippus in his instructions relative to the education of children." The second is from *Rhetorica ad Herrenium*, 3.15.27: "I am not unaware how great a task I have undertaken in trying to express physical movements in words and portray vocal intonations in writing."

grammar, respectively. These associations, which presuppose a communal recognition of the significance of the contemporary domains out of which the writers claim to derive their own preserve, helps to construct the credibility of the elocutionary field. However, in creating a scholarly identity for the field of elocution, this positive politeness strategy must also allow the elocutionists to distinguish their exclusive disciplinary space.

Sheridan opens his "Introductory Discourse" by situating the study of elocution within the domain of "speculative philosophy" about the psychological and epistemological nature of human kind, a domain in which, according to Sheridan, John Locke holds an undisputed position of leadership. Given the common perception in the eighteenth century of Locke's status as one of Britain's foremost "intellectual giants" (Sambrook 47) combined with the accessibility of philosophy to the "well-informed reading public" (Sambrook 46), this association seems well-formulated to appeal in a meaningful way to a majority of Sheridan's readers. But having effected this authorizing association of his own work with that of Locke, Sheridan points to a lack in Locke's scholarship, a lack which Sheridan intends to fill. Thus, his opening sentence confidently rehearses the "neo-classical slogan" (Benzie 35) that, "There has been no maxim more frequently inculcated, or more generally assented to, than that human nature, ought to be the chief study of human kind . . ." (v). By writing in the past tense, Sheridan gives this maxim greater weight because he extends its validity back in time, while the use of the passive voice and an expletive phrase increases the sense of his claim's objective, impersonal truth. His paraphrasing of Pope further indicates that his implied readership is familiar with the "polite literature" of the age.

The composition of Sheridan's actual, "flesh-and-blood" readership is indicated by the partial list of "subscribers" which precedes his work; it supports the view that they included people who possessed both the cultural capital of birth and social position, and that of education.[12] These "subscribers" were members of Sheridan's original audiences during his lecture tours; by paying to attend the lectures, they became "subscribers" to his publication.[13] As the reviewer of the 1761 set of lectures in Edinburgh notes, Sheridan's

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[12]This list contains over 600 names, but according to Sheridan "not less than seventeen hundred" attended his course of lectures (*Lectures* xv).

[13]See Chapter One, p. 44 and note 41 for more on Sheridan's subscription method.

course was "attended by more than 300 gentlemen, the most eminent in this country for their rank and abilities" (*Scots Magazine* 23 [1761]: 390). Judging from the names and titles in this prefatory list, Sheridan's original audiences typically included a mix of the middling professional and merchant orders with some members of the landed gentry and peerage, and ranged from the highly learned to the polite reading public. For example, the numerous titles of "Mr." and "Rev." indicate members of the middle orders, while members of the landed gentry–fewer in number but still considerable–are revealed by the titles "Esq." and "Sir."[14] The titles of "Countess," "Lady" and "Hon. Lord," which figure infrequently but noticeably, suggest the status either of full peerage or, at least, membership in the family of a peer.[15]

Sheridan himself seems anxious to impress new readers of his published lectures more with the inherited social rank than with the acquired cultural capital of his original audiences, since he feels compelled to explain why "so few names, of persons adorned with titles, or dignified by station, [occur] in the list of subscribers" (the reason, he says, is that the list is "utterly unsollicited") (xv). But names such as "Mr. Campbell," "Dr. Fordyce," "Hon. Lord Kaims," and "Dr. Smith" probably indicate the presence at Sheridan's lectures of an impressive component of the eighteenth-century scholarly and literary community whose cultural capital stems more from their "abilities" than their inherited social "rank."[16] Finally, the names "Mr. Burgh" and "Mr. Mason" suggest the importance of Sheridan's

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[14]Many non-first born sons from the upper ranks entered the profession of the church because of the system of primogeniture. This means that their professional and economic status may have been lower than their inherited cultural status.

[15]See Donald Greene, *The Age of Exuberance* (53-55) for an explanation of the complex system of titles for the eighteenth-century peerage.

[16]I am assuming that these names likely refer to George Campbell, James Fordyce, Henry Home (Lord Kames), and Adam Smith. This assumption is supported by the fact that they were all members of the Scottish Select Society, which was responsible for inviting Sheridan to speak in Edinburgh. Whether his lectures attracted the same quality of scholars in other areas of Britain is more difficult to determine; however, we do know that he was "well-received" when he gave earlier, introductory lectures at Cambridge and Oxford, though John Cowper, the brother of William Cowper, found Sheridan's discourse "insipid to the last degree" (Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes* 563).

views for other eighteenth-century elocutionists.[17] In sum, the mix of audience members shown in the prefatory list suggests a market for Sheridan's work that included both those actively engaged in "the critical study of language and discourse" and a broader community of those concerned with learning to speak "*according to the standards codified by members of the first group*" (Ulman 32). By situating the study of elocution within the culturally prestigious field of enlightenment philosophical-psychological enquiry, Sheridan claims common ground at once with those who possess a sound, critical knowledge of this field and those impressed by but less learned in this specialized discourse.

If Sheridan begins his discourse by associating his own study with the prestige of Lockean philosophy, he subsequently distinguishes the elocutionary field from Locke's domain: Locke, he states, has successfully delineated *one* part of human nature (the "understanding"), but at least *two* parts ("the passions" and "the imagination" [ix]) remain unexplored. Thus, Sheridan divides the "whole" study of human nature into three parts, and he stakes out for himself at least one, and possibly two, of those parts (he clearly appropriates "the passions" as his own property, but he does not clarify whether he also means to include "the imagination"). Contradictorily, he first commends Locke's work and then points out its limitations. Despite their apparent incompatibility, both these moves, as they occur in sequence, contribute to the construction of Sheridan's own disciplinary *ethos*. Importantly, the association of elocution with "speculative philosophy" legitimates this field more because of its theoretical attention to the nature of human passions and imagination than because of it focus on practical instruction in bodily conduct. But according to some of his critics, Sheridan's opening attempt to situate the study of elocution in the realm of philosophy was pretentiously absurd and disregarded the important work of other scholars in this area:

> It is difficult to determine, whether vanity or absurdity is most conspicuous in what he advances on this head. To suppose, that the *passions hurtful or dangerous to society may be suppressed*, and that those of the *nobler and social kind may be brought forward, invigorated, and carried into due*

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[17]This is based on the assumption that "Mr. Mason" refers to John Mason and "Mr. Burgh" to James Burgh.

> *exertion*, by any thing that language or Oratory can perform, while human nature continues in its present circumstances, is, certainly, one of the wildest notions that can possibly enter into the thoughts of the wildest enthusiast.
>
> What he says concerning those two other important parts of our internal nature, with regard to which the world is at this day, as much in the dark, as they were with respect to the whole, previous to the publication of Mr. Locke's Essay, is, to us, perfectly unintelligible. It is natural to ask–has Mr. Sheridan discovered any new faculties in the human mind? . . . Have the writings of Butler, Hutcheson, Smith, Hume, &c. left us as much in the dark, with regard to the *passions* and *imagination*, as mankind with regard to the *understanding*, before the publication of Mr. Locke's Essay? (*Monthly Review* 27 [1762]: 203-204)

Implicit to this reviewer's invective is the view that Sheridan's efforts to establish elocution as a significant field of study would be much better served by focusing on the practical, instructive nature of his program rather than its "speculative," philosophical dimension.

Walker, for his part, avoids Sheridan's grandiose associations of elocution with the whole study of human nature by claiming common ground between his area of enquiry and the culturally respectable discipline of grammar. The general eighteenth-century concern with the standardization and codification of language use, in which the study of grammar figures prominently, offers fertile ground for establishing the disciplinary *ethos* of elocution. According to Benzie, the elocutionists' attempts to establish and teach standardized pronunciation were part of "a new interest being taken in language during the second half of the century" (105). Along with the increase in texts on elocution during this period, publications on grammar grew dramatically.[18] Indeed, Sheridan as well as Walker developed this dimension of elocutionary study at length, especially in their later, well-respected dictionaries of pronunciation. As Benzie notes, "the rapid advance towards a standardized system of spelling and pronunciation in English during the last years of the

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[18]"According to Sterling Leonard, 'fewer than fifty writings on grammar, rhetoric, critical, and linguistic theory have been listed for the first half of the eighteenth century, and still fewer for all the period before 1600,' but the publications in the period 1750-1800 'exceeded two hundred titles'" (Benzie 105).

18th century was chiefly due to the existence of Sheridan's *Dictionary* and others like it" (108).[19] Walker's dedication of *Elements of Elocution* to the great dictionary-maker of the age, Samuel Johnson, shows a strong desire to associate this work on elocution with the larger project of regulating language use.

Although the increase in grammatical and elocutionary publications may have occurred more or less simultaneously, the way in which Walker characterizes the association of these two fields in *Elements* suggests the primacy of grammar as a recognized discipline. As well, his use of the specialized terminology of grammar to discuss the field of elocution implies a readership to whom this discourse is already familiar. In identifying the study of elocution with the study of grammar, Walker helps to develop credibility for his field but this identification drastically limits the domain of non-verbal delivery since it is necessarily linked, in Walker's representation, with the grammar of sentences. However, like Sheridan's sequential association and dissociation of his field from Lockean philosophy, Walker's explanation of the connections between grammar and elocution is sufficiently uneven and ambiguous to imply a distinctive disciplinary space for the latter while at the same time decorously preserving elocution's position as one part of the larger, culturally validated field of grammar.

Grammar, Walker claims, is "the basis of rhetoric and oratory" (1: 4). Nonetheless, the relative positions of elocution and grammar seem to shift in the course of his opening narrative. His opening association of elocution with "pronunciation" indirectly establishes the elocution-grammar connection, since elocution, he explains, refers specifically to "pronunciation of words, connected into a sentence" (1: 1). According to this definition, elocution constitutes one part of the larger domain of *pronunciation* (which includes the pronunciation of individual words as well words arranged into sentences). But then, incongruously, Walker claims that elocution "may have elements or principles distinct from those of pronunciation" (1: 2), suggesting that elocution is not wholly contained within the larger field of pronunciation.

Next, Walker identifies elocution with "the art of reading" which he distinguishes

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[19]When Walker's *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary* appeared in 1791, it apparently overtook Sheridan's in popularity (Benzie 106).

into two modes: reading in a *grammatical* way and reading in a *rhetorical* way. While his description of the latter clearly validates it above the former (rhetorical reading gives "force, beauty, and variety," whereas grammatical reading "only expresses the sense of an author, so as to be barely understood" [1: 2]), he subsequently claims that grammar, and grammatical reading, are foundational and necessitate first attention. Within the general domain of grammatical reading, the specific part of *punctuation* requires greatest attention; however, punctuation, like reading, can be divided into two parts, or modes: grammatical punctuation, and rhetorical punctuation (1: 4). A question arises: does Walker mean that rhetorical punctuation falls under the heading of grammatical reading, or does it fall under the heading of rhetorical reading? Or perhaps he wishes to mean both?

In the remainder of the "Introduction," Walker simultaneously pursues the distinction between grammatical and rhetorical punctuation, *and* emphasizes the necessary connections between grammar and rhetoric. In the former case, he assures his readers, and in particularly the more learned members of this group whose scholarly approbation he seeks, that "it is far from my intention to introduce a new system of grammatical punctuation" but rather "to make the best use of that which is already established" (1: 6). We might have expected him next to claim that it *is* his intention to construct a new system of *rhetorical* punctuation, as distinct from grammatical punctuation. Instead, he implies that "the whole doctrine of *rhetorical* punctuation" (1: 6, my emphasis) that his treatise will outline originates from the principles of *grammatical* punctuation. In this way, he reassociates the two domains, but leaves unclear the precise nature of the connections between grammar and rhetoric. Elocution and pronunciation, meanwhile, have been left back at beginning of the "Introduction"; already limited in its scope at the outset, elocution has by the end of this brief chapter been reduced to a doctrine of (rhetorical?) punctuation. All told, Walker's articulation of the connections and distinctions between grammar and elocution leads to a disciplinary *ethos* that emphasizes the complexity and scholarly lineage of his field of enquiry, yet that also severely circumscribes its territory and appears unnecessarily intricate.

This tension, I suggest, reflects Walker's aspiration to secure scholarly space and prestige for his work by decorously representing it within the previously validated terms of linguistic study and codification. But at the same time, Walker needs to define the

distinctive contributions of elocutionary study to eighteenth-century linguistic scholarship: he must show the borders of the evolving order of linguistic regulation to be permeable enough to accept new undertakings in elocution, but these new undertakings must support, not disrupt, the primary order. Thus, Walker's narrative seems mainly to fit the field of elocution within the domain of linguistic study rather than asserting a whole separate space for enquiries into non-verbal eloquence.

c) *The Distinctive "Gift" of Elocution*

By identifying their new and potentially suspect field of study with classical authority and other fields of contemporary scholarship, the elocutionists construct a foundation on which to build their own "personal preserves" (Brown and Levinson 62). The positive politeness strategy of claiming common ground with culturally valued sites of authority permits the elocutionists to assert the separate boundaries of their particular project. Their rhetorics of identification create space for tactics of distinction. The order of these strategies is significant, however: the opportunity to distinguish their field of study depends on their prior success in establishing its derivation from respectable origins.

One important way in which the elocutionary writers define the distinctive features and benefits of elocutionary study is by offering it as the answer to the problem of national deficiency in public speaking. In this way, they employ the positive politeness strategy of offering the listener material goods or other gifts; as well, they show concern for the audience's presupposed concerns about these deficiencies (Brown and Levinson 125-129). But offering elocution as the remedy for national deficiencies is a potentially threatening act because the elocutionists must assume an imperfect condition of *lack* within their community in order to justify the presumption of their utterances.

The precise nature of this lack varies from writer to writer, but in general it has two dimensions. First, there is the disciplinary lack of theoretical investigation in the field of delivery. This lack is characterized primarily as a neglect of the classical canon of delivery within current studies of rhetoric, and to a lesser extent as an absence within more contemporary scholarly fields (e.g., Sheridan's claim that only one part of human nature had been properly studied; Walker's argument that the doctrine of rhetorical punctuation

requires more attention). One result of this lack, articulated best by Sheridan, is that the British educational system is deficient because its teachers are not properly trained in the principles of elocution and hence students do not receive a proper education in the art of speaking. The inadequacy in this case resides primarily in the academic and educational community, the community of scholarly critics and codifiers with whom the elocutionists wish to be associated. Secondly, the elocutionary writers identify a deficiency in the practices of British public speakers, especially by comparison with the idealized models of classical orators. In this case, the problem rests not in the community of theorists and codifiers, but in the broader community of those who wish to speak "properly."

By locating the cause of the deficiencies of British public speakers in educational and scholarly shortcomings, the elocutionists partly redress the threat of their accusation against those who desire the cultural capital afforded by the *practice* of proper elocution. The writers also diminish the threat of their accusation by drawing on external authorities for this charge: for example, they cite or allude to Addison's and Steele's complaints about the sorry state of British public speaking, as well as those of other modern writers, to justify the charge.[20] In addition, by presenting the charge of guilt as a commonplace, they presuppose that their readers are already familiar with it and take it for granted. For example, Sheridan does not even bother to cite external authorities but simply begins "Lecture I" with the following statement: "That a general inability to read, or speak, with propriety and grace in public, runs thro' the natives of the British dominions, is acknowledged" (1). Austin similarly refers to "the reproach of frigid indifference which is charged against our public speakers" (xi), though he backs up his claim by quoting the authority of Addison, James Fordyce, and Sheridan himself (6-8). Sheridan's and Austin's agentless passive constructions further displace the authority for the charge away from themselves and into an unspecified, impersonal source.

The elocutionary writers further diminish the threat of their accusation by characterizing it as a national, not individual, problem suffered, in Sheridan's words, by all "the natives of the British dominions" (1). The study of elocution, therefore, offers a path to

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[20]Austin, for example, cites Addison *Spectator* 407, Sheridan's *Lectures*, and James Fordyce on the sorry state of public speaking in contemporary Britain.

national improvement, though we should keep in mind that the community addressed by the revival of the art of elocution is not in reality *all* the "natives of the British dominions," but rather an exclusive group of middling to upper rank people for whom, at the least, a "polite education" is within reach (Burgh 5). This approach helps to make the writers' "gift" acceptable because it allows the audience to configure its interest in elocution as a selfless concern for the progress of learning and as the patriotic desire to improve the standards of British public speaking in general. As well, for those low on the scale of eloquent delivery (which, according to Sheridan, is virtually everyone), the principle of hierarchy encourages commitment to the ideal of public speaking at the top of the hierarchy, and hence an endorsement of the hierarchy itself. As Burke argues,

> even the dispossessed tends to feel that he "has a stake in" in the authoritative structure that dispossesses him; for the influence exerted upon the policies of education by the authoritative structure encourages the dispossessed to feel that his only hope of repossession lies in his allegiance to the structure that has dispossessed him. (*Attitudes* 329-330)

While the newly authoritative field of elocution characterizes the "natives" of Britain as the "dispossessed" in terms of skills in speaking, this *current* dispossession is counterbalanced by an assertion of the potential for *future* repossession. British speakers currently may be deficient but through the study of elocution they have the potential to become as great as the classical models. Indeed, as we have seen in the analysis of Sheridan's association of contemporary and classical culture, the purported superiority of British society in areas other than oratory means that her citizens have the capacity not only to equal but even to outdo the consummate speakers of classical culture. In this way, Sheridan and other elocutionary writers make critical accusations about current practices the basis for a glorious vision of the nation's future, through the medium of a motivating ideal located in the past.

The argument, advanced most strongly by Sheridan but implied by all elocutionary writers, for the importance of establishing a national educational program in elocution further suggests the instability, but desirability, of the "physical capital" that might be acquired in this way. Bourdieu's concept of "physical capital," according to Shilling, refers to "the development of bodies which are recognized as possessing value in social fields"

(127). This capital can in turn be converted into other forms of capital, such as economic, social, and cultural. But physical capital, unlike for example economic capital, "cannot be *directly* transmitted or inherited" (142). As well, although social class has a great influence on the development and specific forms of physical capital, it is not entirely reducible to class or rank. This means that each new generation must, to some degree, labour to achieve the physical capital appropriate to its position in the current social classification.

While the elocutionary writers presuppose that some if not all their readers wish to increase their own physical capital in the immediate context, they also emphasize the significance of developing the study of elocution for the sake of future generations. This is particularly the case with Sheridan's lectures addressed to an adult audience who, he explains at the beginning, may be concerned about the establishment of a national educational program in elocution "either on their own or their children's account" (xv). If Sheridan is correct that this audience is anxious to set up the means for cultivating polite bodily practices in their sons to ensure that the next generation's physical capital suits its economic and social capital, then his plan for a national educational program warrants support. The comments of contemporary reviewers reveal the general approval for such a program, though Sheridan was never able to carry it out.[21] More than a generation later, therefore, writers like Austin continue to produce isolated guides to the study of delivery emerging out of their own teaching practices, not out of a standardized, national program.

The difference between what the contemporary study of rhetoric should, ideally, include and what it, in fact, neglects, together with the resulting gap between what British speakers, ideally, could be and what they, in fact, are, create a space for the field of elocution and its distinctive educational "gift." Thus, by strategically identifying their emerging enquiries with established, authoritative fields of scholarship, the elocutionists mark a new space for themselves within eighteenth-century scholarship and hence work to fulfil their cultural aspirations. Necessarily, the naming of this new territory re-configures the established disciplinary order, though not to the extent of wholly subverting it. With the

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[21]For comments on the usefulness of Sheridan's plan, see *The Critical Review* 14 (1762): 170; *Lloyds Evening Post and British Chronicle* 10 (1762): 322; *Monthly Catalogue* 13 (1761): 161; *Monthly Review* 27 (1762): 69; *Monthly Review* 27 (1762): 201; *Scots Magazine* 24 (1762): 601.

exception of Sheridan, the elocutionists represent their undertakings as parts which contribute to larger, pre-established "wholes" and they avoid the presumption of positively privileging delivery, or elocution, above other parts. Like the individual status aspirant to whom their handbooks appeal, they aspire as a group to disciplinary credibility by becoming incorporated within, and at the same time preserving, culturally-valued structures.

Personal Ethos

In addition to shaping the credibility of their general field of enquiry, the opening sections of the elocutionary treatises enact what I call a *personal ethos*: an *ethos* based on the character of the individual writer and his work. By contrast with the prominence of positive, presumptive tactics in the construction of their communal, disciplinary *ethos*, tactics of negative politeness take precedence in the creation of their personal *ethos*. This *ethos* is most noticeable in the introductory parts of Walker's and Austin's texts; Sheridan, by contrast, does not display tactics of deference and modesty and, as we have seen, contemporary critics judged him guilty of excessive assertion. In general, Sheridan conflates his personal *ethos* with the disciplinary *ethos* by elevating his individual credibility into the larger, presupposed credibility of the general field of enquiry. For Walker and Austin, however, tactics of deference, indirection, and qualification counterbalance the assertive claims that they make about the value of elocution as a general field of enquiry. By characterizing their individual works as possessing limited value within the larger, newly established discipline of elocution, they diminish the threat of their actions. Despite their positive claim that elocution is an important and even necessary field of study for eighteenth-century British society, for the most part they avoid the indecorous self-assertion that their own particular works fully meet the ideals that inform their disciplinary *ethos*.

The construction of their personal *ethos* enacts the traditional features of modesty and deference recommended by classical rhetoricians for establishing the speaker's good character in the *exordium*. As Quintilian explains, "even in a case where there is no room for doubt the confidence of the speaker should not reveal itself too openly. For as a rule the

judge dislikes self-confidence in a pleader, and conscious of his rights tacitly demands the respectful deference of the orator" (4.1.55). While the elocutionists are not literally situated in a court of law pleading before a judge, they are figuratively placed before an implied set of judges whose approval they seek. Austin's opening phrase, for example, immediately introduces this situation: his work, he writes, is "here submitted to the judgement of the public" (iii), though shortly afterward the nature of the particular members of this "public" whose approbation he most desires becomes clarified through reference to the figure of the "liberal scholar" (vi). If the elocutionary writers can please the latter kind of superior judge, then the approval of the wider reading public should follow because being likened to such a figure is flattering. But given the culturally desirable nature of the idealized "liberal scholar," Walker and Austin are careful not to display an excessive self-confidence that will impinge on "the rights" of the judge.

If the construction of personal *ethos* tends to downplay the final value or success of the elocutionary publications, Walker and Austin do not simply present their work in this negative light. Rather, they introduce a distinction between the representation of their final *product* and the description of their *processes* of composition that leads up to these products. This distinction allows them to validate in a more positive manner at least one dimension of their work. By narrating their processes of composition, they present the reader with an unusual "statement of the case"—a statement intended to demonstrate the laudability of the personal intentions and industriousness which act as the relevant background to the publications their readers are about to peruse. They thus make a case for the value of their work based as much, if not more, on the value of their processes of production as on the actual productions themselves. In particular, they validate these processes based on the personal virtue of diligence (as Austin explains, "I trust I shall be found to have done as much as will prove my diligence" [v]), as well as their intention to provide practical or useful works. By focusing on these values, rather than the theoretical, scholarly merit of the final productions, Walker and Austin increase the distance between themselves as cultural aspirants and their implied distinguished audience of scholarly judges. Ironically, this distance establishes a greater proximity and homology between the characters of the writers and those of the implied student-users of their handbooks.

a) Process of Composition

In attempting to secure the audience's goodwill and respect by narrating their processes of composition (and thus providing a kind of *narratio* to their subsequent demonstrations of elocution), Walker and Austin foreground the personal trait of *diligentia*. *Diligentia*, according to Richard Enos and Karen Schnakenberg, constitutes one of three essential character traits that together form the Ciceronian conception of ideal *ethos* or *dignitas* (201). The other traits are *ingenium* and *prudentia*. *Diligentia* results from the synthesis of a speaker's "passion, industry, and sense of duty:" passion or intensity of feeling toward a cause combined with industry in pursuing that cause reveal a rhetor's sense of *officium*, or duty (200-201). In particular, Walker and Austin highlight the sub-trait of *industry*, a characteristic that also foreshadows the nature of the ideal student of elocution. Along with their diligence, the elocutionary writers stress their laudable intention to produce works that are useful and practical, a goal related to the importance of these texts as practical handbooks for aspiring speakers, not only as scholarly or theoretical disquisitions. This tension between the texts' academic *ethos* and the practical, user-oriented *ethos* surfaces in the difference between the logic of the writers' narratives of disciplinary origins and the chronology of their narratives of personal composition.

For example, Walker's opening narrative of his composing process for *Elements of Elocution* constructs a personal *ethos* that emphasizes the trait of *diligentia* along with his intention to produce a work of great practical utility. His description of his initial motivations for devising his system of elocution stresses his sense of duty to the original audience for his lectures that formed the basis for his current publication. He situates the origins of his work in an external "invitation" from "the Heads of Houses" at Oxford to give private lectures in their colleges. The language in which he describes his response to this "flattering invitation" represents him as energetic, hard-working, and conscientious:

> So flattering an invitation made me extremely anxious to preserve the favourable impression I had made, and this put me upon throwing the instruction I had to convey into something that had the appearance of a system. Those only, who are thoroughly acquainted with the subject, can conceive the labour and perplexity in which this task engaged me: it was not

> a florid harangue on the advantages of good Reading that was expected from me, but some plain practical rules in a scholastic and methodical form, that would convey real and useful instruction. (1: vii-viii)

Rather than being self-motivated, Walker here decorously figures himself as responding to the expectations of others, who through their leading positions at Oxford boast a significantly more prestigious status than he does. No wonder Walker represents himself as anxious to meet their expectations. In a subtle way, he performs the negatively polite tactic of humbling himself while acknowledging the status of his original audience. In addition to pleasing his superior audience, however, this invitation affords Walker an opportunity to increase his own stature by preserving "a favourable impression." In this way, Walker recognizes that his desire to please those above him also may function to improve his personal situation; as well, his reference to this invitation and to his efforts to create a "favourable impression" on nis prestigious original audience function to impress the readers of his published treatise.

The anxiety that Walker describes indicates the precariousness of the "favourable impression" he both wished and wishes to cultivate. This impression, he suggests, could only be maintained through great diligence directed toward the production of a truly useful, practical system of elocution. One way in which he attempts to distinguish his efforts, and hence himself, is by dissociating his work from the "florid harangues" of preceding elocutionists. By contrast with these "harangues," Walker's system is intended to provide "real" instruction. In this hierarchy of values (a hierarchy which Walker presumes his readers share), "real" instruction may be equated with what is "methodical" and therefore "useful." Though he does not name Sheridan directly, the allusion is clear. However, for all that Walker wishes to distinguish himself and his work from Sheridan's "florid harangues," these promotional harangues laid essential groundwork for later elocutionary writers.

The remainder of Walker's "Preface" narrates the stages of his process of composition, a process which he renders as a difficult journey of labour and discovery. Initially, this journey leads him through the chaotic maze of "a thousand puzzling distinctions" to the discovery of the single, "precise and definite" distinction of the "upward and downward slide" (1: x) on which to found his whole system of elocution. Once

discovered, this distinction provides a stable ground on which to begin the second main stage of labour, that of constructing the new system: "Here then commenced my system; infinite were the difficulties and obscurities that impeded my progress at first, but perseverance, and, perhaps, enthusiasm, has at last brought it to a period" (1: xi). Walker's personal industriousness cannot, within the terms of this narrative, be doubted but the passion or zeal he feels for his work is more doubtful.

Like Walker, Austin recounts his personal motivations for, and process of, composing the *Chironomia*. And, based on this introductory narrative, he explicitly asks his readers to judge the value of his work in terms based at least as much on his "diligence" in composing it as on his final accomplishment (v):

> The laborious duty of teaching declamation . . . incited me first to devise some permanent marks, by means of which I might be enabled to record, and to communicate in writing, with brevity and precision, my own idea as to the manner of delivery proper to be adopted on certain occasions. Having, as I conceive, fallen upon a fertile principle, as will be found explained in the work, I succeeded by considerable labour in the invention and arrangement of a notation applicable to my purposes; and proved its advantages by the test of my own experience. In the course of my investigation I was also induced, and, by means of the permanent marks, in some measure enabled to examine more minutely the various requisites for perfect rhetorical delivery. And no longer limiting myself to my original intention of relieving merely my own labour, I extended my views and enquiries not only to the elementary principles of rhetorical action, but also to whatsoever appeared to me most intimately connected with the improvement and perfecting of public speaking in general. (iv-v)

Austin's narrative of the origins and progress of his work starts by amplifying his sense of duty because this sense, he says, is not only the result, but also the origin of his process of composition: the initial "laborious duty" of teaching motivates him to the next laborious duty of composing the *Chironomia*. A similar technique of amplification occurs in the remainder of his story, as each stage of his composition process extends the scope of his "enquiries." This amplification involves Austin moving from the specific, limited plan of "relieving

merely my own labour" to the much larger objective of studying "whatsoever appeared to me most intimately connected with the improvement and perfecting of public speaking in general." However, he mitigates the potential presumptuousness of his enlarged objective through the passive voice and choice of verb ("I was induced"), which implies that an external force was responsible for this enlargement, and by qualifying his claim to success in meeting this objective ("in some measure enabled").

This narrative of Austin's composition process figures the personal domain of his teaching experience as a primary motivation for his labour. The explanation of this motivation enhances the credibility of his enquiry by showing his work to be based on first-hand experience teaching declamation and by revealing his dutiful concern for his students' well-being. At the same time, though, it reinforces the distance between his own relatively modest and laborious position as a schoolteacher and the higher, more leisured cultural position of, for example, a university professorship. It also orders the evolution of Austin's personal composition differently from the logical order of the narrative of origins which he tells for the discipline as a whole. That is, in constructing his personal *ethos* Austin situates his "own ideas" and his "own labour" as a teacher first, and then moves from this basis to a consideration of "what had been done by others" (for example, classical authorities) (v). By contrast, his narrative of disciplinary *ethos* figures the ancients' views on delivery as the primary motivation, and foundation, for contemporary enquiries like his own. This tension indicates the mixed nature of the opening appeals that Austin employs to fulfil different functions of the *exordium*: the logic of the narrative of disciplinary origins fulfils the function of stressing the general significance of his subject matter, while the chronology of his narrative of composition demonstrates his "good character" especially by highlighting the trait of diligence.

b) Ethos of Products

The qualities and values that Walker and Austin attach to their final texts differ from those they assign to their diligent, laudable processes of composition. Although the representation of their final products continues to emphasize the writers' desires to produce useful works, their confidence in the actual success of this effort is limited. Walker and

Austin carefully circumscribe the final value of their publications, modestly acknowledging the imperfections of their products. This qualified characterization presents them as decorously modest about their abilities and achievements. But in addition to appealing to the reader's goodwill, such a characterization makes the writers less accountable for their handbooks' possible lack of success in teaching a truly practicable system of elocution.

Walker's description of his final text is conventionally modest. Despite the great labour of his composition process and the impressive sanction that his early efforts received from the "Heads of Houses" at Oxford, he carefully circumscribes the value of his product. The motivating term for Walker's text is "system:" his ideal is to produce a complex, yet coherent, system of instruction in elocution. However, he destabilizes this ideal in his first use of the term on the first page of his "Preface:" "this put me upon throwing the instruction I had to convey into *something that had the appearance of a system*" (1: vii, my emphasis). Rather than claiming that his treatise develops a true or real system, Walker presents his work as the mere *appearance* of a system, and he further reduces its worth through the indefinite term "something." Thus, the beginning of Walker's treatise suggests that his work is much less than what, in its ideal form, it should be–namely, a real or true system. This representation reinforces the sense of anxiety that Walker has already noted about his abilities to preserve his "favourable impression" on his superior judges. In actuality, Walker seems to have succeeded very well in preserving this impression, judging from the praise his work received in *The Monthly Review*: "The Author of these Elements appears to us, to have been particularly successful in his attempt to reduce the principles and rules of elocution into a system; and, in the course of his work, to have advanced many things, which merit attention on account of their originality as well as their utility" (*Monthly Review* 65 [1781]: 81). Unlike Sheridan's confident, extravagant assertions of the value of his field of study which drew charges of excess and absurdity from contemporary critics, Walker's polite understatement of his work's merit paradoxically helps to establish its credibility.

The close of Walker's "Preface" further disclaims the success of the treatise in its final, published form. These disclaimers, however, succeed more positive arguments about its importance. In this way, the negative disclaimers and qualified language counteract the presumption of the preceding statements:

> Unassisted, therefore, and unpatronized, the work is at length completed: without any breach of modesty, it may be asserted, that the general idea is new, curious, and important: and, without any false humility, I am ready to allow, that the manner of treating it has a thousand faults and imperfections. It wants that strength and correctness of the college, united with the ease and elegance of a court, which is found in several of the present productions; and it partakes of that haste, that interruption, and want of finishing, which must necessarily accompany a life of labour and uncertainty: for though nothing but long practice, in actual tuition, could have enabled me to construct such a system, it required the leisure and liberty of affluence to produce it to the best advantage. (1: xiv)

In this passage, Walker negotiates the conflicts between, on one hand, commending his labour and resulting product, and, on the other, humbly acknowledging its imperfections. His initial positive claim is carefully deferred with a modifying clause that introduces the key term "modesty," and with passive constructions ("the work is . . . completed," "it may be asserted") that obscure Walker's role as agent of this "new, curious, and important" action and that give the impression of an objective, rather than subjective, judgment of its worth. As well, the modal auxiliary "may" makes this positive judgment politely tentative. By contrast, Walker voices his acknowledgement of the work's deficiencies in the first person, suggesting greater proximity between the composer and the composition in this case. But if he is "ready to allow" an overstatement of the defects ("a thousand") resulting from his personal execution of "the general idea," this formative idea maintains its credibility regardless of its flawed execution.

These disclaimers also can be read as justifications of his work (e.g., "the want of finishing" has been caused by factors beyond Walker's control and, given these circumstances, he has done the best he can), as well as a veiled criticism of those who do enjoy "the leisure and liberty of affluence" and who do not, therefore, "labour" in "actual tuition." In closing the "Preface," then, he returns to the key virtue of *diligentia* to construct the *ethos* of himself and his work: his diligence as a teacher, combined with his labour as a writer, have given him the authority, he now suggests more confidently, to "construct such a system." By contrast with his initial expression of anxious desire to impress the superior

judges of the domain of the "college," the authority that Walker claims for himself at the close of his "Preface" is constructed more through the dissociation than the identification of himself and his work with this privileged world. Instead of presumptuously claiming to being able to meet the high cultural standards of "strength and correctness of the college," let alone the socially élite standards of "the court," Walker limits his authority to the world that he inhabits and knows best: that of the hardworking, non-affluent schoolteacher.

Austin's "Preface," like Walker's, also negotiates the problem of claiming some positive value for his final product while decorously qualifying these claims. Thus, for example, the first two sentences of the "Preface" seek to establish the credibility of his treatise by making positive claims about its value, but Austin counterbalances these potentially presumptuous claims with tactics of negative politeness:

> The work here submitted to the judgment of the public will be found to be constructed of materials, some of which have been long in their possession, and some of which are new. As to the reception of the former, provided I shall be found to have selected and arranged them with any degree of judgment, I cannot doubt that it will be favourable; they have been always approved, however not always duly observed: as to the latter, I should hope, that not only their novelty but also their utility in an important department of literature may serve as their recommendation. (iii-iv)

Most obviously, this passage invokes the unquestioned authority of the past to validate Austin's present enquiry, while at the same time justifying his assertion of a new system of gesture. The order in which Austin introduces these two dimensions is significant: he reduces the imposition of the "novelty" by placing it after, or in a secondary position to, the safe ground of the traditional materials.[22]

In representing his final product, Austin at once defers to his reader's judgment and tells his reader what s/he should think. This conflict suggests the mixed nature of his implied readership: he is appealing both to the broader reading public (whom he may feel

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[22]However, this ordering of the product, as we have already seen, differs from the order of the narrative of composition Austin is about to tell, in which he explains how he first developed his *new* system and subsequently examined the opinions of ancient authorities.

comfortable directing to think in certain ways) and to a more exclusive audience of "the most liberal and enlightened persons" (xi) (to whom he defers). Austin's repeated use of the agentless passive permits him both to distance himself from the presumption of his action (e.g., he does not identify who submits "The work") and to avoid making any direct reference to the readers whose judgments he requests but also attempts to define (e.g., "will be found," "shall be found," "approved," "observed"). He further diminishes the threat of his action by qualifying its definitive value. For instance, he makes the favourable reception of the ancient authorities conditional on his own ability to select and arrange these sources appropriately, and he makes the worth of the new materials tentative through the modifying phrase "I should hope" and the modal auxiliary "may." If indeed these new materials are accepted it will be, as other elocutionary writers argue, on the basis of their "utility."

Austin's explanation of his process of composition follows from this opening recommendation of his work on the basis of its solid construction out of materials both old and new. After this narrative of composition, he elaborates the opening division into old and new materials by describing more specifically how these form his product. For example, he draws the reader's attention to the "copious extracts" he has made from ancient writers for "the ornament and support" of his work (vi) and to the "numerous engraved figures" which illustrate and clarify his novel system of gesture (vii). This detailed characterization of his work leads the reader to anticipate a full, yet carefully arranged, composition. Ultimately, Austin recommends his final product based on its value in making a *new* contribution to an *ancient* discipline: "My object in this work is therefore to contribute my share of labour towards the completion of the rules for the better study and acquisition of rhetorical delivery. . ." (x). Austin's statement of his main purpose is heavily qualified. He does not claim to be constructing a whole new and independent system, but instead contributing to an established discipline. The nature of this contribution is imprecise and modest. Austin does not say definitively that his work completes the rules for delivery, but more indirectly and tentatively claims that he has laboured toward this objective, an objective which is itself qualified as merely "better," not "best" or ideal. Like Walker, then, Austin emphasizes the value of his *labour* or *industry*, rather than his final accomplishments, in constructing the *ethos* of his publication.

c) *Characters of Implied Users*

By confirming a respectful distance between themselves and the culturally superior audience of "the most liberal and enlightened persons in the different professions" (Austin xi), the strategies of negative politeness that writers like Walker and Austin use help them to avoid offending this important segment of their implied readership whose approbation they desire. Ironically, however, these same strategies create a homologous relationship between the characters of the writers and those of their implied readership of users, namely those seeking practical instruction rather than academic speculation from the elocutionary texts. By characterizing themselves as writers, the elocutionists also in an indirect manner characterize the kind of person best suited to the practical, laborious study of the elocutionary systems they are about to articulate.

Like the elocutionary writers, the merit of this figure, as the subsequent systems of instruction make clear, lies less in his final success or achievement than in the diligent "pains" (Sheridan 18) he takes in learning the basic aspects of delivery. For both groups (writers and users), the decorous limits of the envisioned scope of achievement combined with an emphasis on the value of diligence confirms their socially or culturally aspiring status. Although they may aspire to slightly higher status in the classification system, this aspiration is structured by the social order whose hierarchic gradings and principles are accepted by those operating within it. The limited, decorous aspirations of the elocutionary writers and users indicate their social "sense of limits, a practical anticipation of objective limits acquired by experience of objective limits, a 'sense of one's place' which leads one to exclude oneself from goods, persons, places and so forth from which one is excluded" (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 471).

But knowing the positions from which one is excluded also means knowing what aspirations are achievable, and within the late eighteenth-century British context of social flux and mobility, significant aspirations were achievable, as the elocutionary writers themselves demonstrate (e.g., Walker and Sheridan moving from the semi-respectable world of the theatre to become the leading authorities in elocution and ortheopy of the day; Burgh rising from the position of "corrector of the press" to that of well-respected school principal and moral-political author). Further, just as Frances Burney was able to capitalize on the

more limited cultural achievements of her father (Gallagher 216), Sheridan's son Richard Brinsley exceeded his father in status aspirations and achievements. The elocutionary argument that the immediate generation can achieve only so much improvement whereas the rising generation has the potential to arrive at true greatness coincides with the contextual reality that not only could individuals of the middling ranks augment their cultural capital significantly within their own lifetimes, but that this capital could be improved upon by subsequent generations.

Nonetheless, the elocutionary writers are careful to circumscribe their immediate users' aspirations by preparing them to focus more on the value of their diligent efforts in learning good delivery than on the potential success of these efforts in transforming them from weak and awkward to strong and graceful speakers. Although Sheridan does not characterize himself and his work in the same modest, tentative terms as do Walker and Austin, his explanation of the scope and objectives of his current instruction in relation to his immediate audience of adult speakers captures well this sense of limited expectations and deferred achievements. In Sheridan's vision, the educational reforms that he advocates have the potential to "wholly subvert" current "bad habits" so that the greatness of the powers of classical oratory becomes the birthright of Britain's "rising, and future generations" (18). However, the objectives of his immediate work are much more limited, in a manner that he designates as suitable to the immediate adult consumers of his instruction:

> But as a scheme of this kind [i.e., of complete educational reform], would be of benefit only to the rising generation, and as my present object is, the improvement of such as are more advanced in life, I shall in the progress of this course, endeavour to point out a method, by which the adult may get the better of bad habits, and at the same time lay down such rules to guide them, in acquiring a just and natural delivery, as will enable them *to compass their end, provided they take suitable pains*. . . (18, my emphasis)

Strategically, Sheridan validates the reduced objectives of his current work by stressing the appropriateness of this reduction to the character of his audience. At the same time, he situates this limited approach within the larger framework of the potential achievements of the "rising generation," a potential which depends on his audience's support for his educational reforms.

In general, the elocutionists' decorous sense of their own limits is revealed by their not claiming too much authority and success for their final productions, preferring instead to highlight the virtue of their diligence in the process of composition. This decorum sets the stage for an implied user whose aspirations are similarly limited and whose effort for its own sake constitutes the main payback of practising the elocutionary systems. In turn, the limited expectations and middling status of the implied user provide an indirect rationale for the focus of these systems primarily on the basics or rudiments of elocution, not the higher powers of delivery. As well, they help to justify, if necessary, the possibility that the student, despite all his laborious efforts, may not achieve in the end any noticeable success but still remain prone to "a thousand faults and imperfections" (Walker 1: xiv).

Despite the validation of elocutionary study on the basis of its inspiring classical precedents, the eighteenth-century treatments of delivery and bodily decorum tend to reinforce the limited ideal of the competent speaker who can manage the basic "elements" of elocution much more than they construct a consummate speaker whose powers of persuasion are irresistible. As Burgh explains, his treatise is designed for "all that part of youth, whose station places them within the reach of a *polite education*, to be qualified for acquitting themselves with reputation, when called to speak in public" (164). This characterization of the implied user of his handbook emphasizes the reader's socially aspiring position ("within reach"), but it suggests that achieving the status of politeness means at best evading the charge of guilt ("acquitting themselves"), not gaining the power of persuasion. Thus the *positive* ideal of the consummate speaker, which figures strongly in the development of elocution's disciplinary *ethos*, becomes displaced (but not erased) by the more *negative*, lesser ideal of the competent speaker.

CHAPTER THREE

MIDDLES: THE *LOGOS* OF THE ELOCUTIONARY *TECHNAI*

From the opening sections of their treatises, which foreground strategies of disciplinary and personal *ethos*, the elocutionary writers move to the development of their systems of rules for proper delivery. The order of these sections is significant because the legitimation of delivery as an acceptable subject matter through its associations with established fields and cultural values predisposes the reader to accept the novelty of the systems which follow the introductions. Similarly, the self-deferential strategies of negative politeness that precede the articulation of these new (and as yet unauthorized) systems of elocution diminish the risk that the elocutionists will be charged with excessive presumption in attempting to transform the study and practice of delivery from mere "chance" to an art of "known rules" and settled principles (Sheridan 21). Within the overall structure of the treatises, therefore, the introductory sections provide an authorizing frame for the elocutionists' subsequent explications of their new systems for studying delivery.

In developing their systems, the elocutionists boldly attempt the difficult, paradoxical, and perhaps impossible task of expressing "physical movements in words" and portraying "vocal intonations in writing" (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.15.27). In thus verbalizing the non-verbal, they present delivery as a knowable and teachable *techne*. As Michael Cahn explains,

> [*t*]*echne* designates first of all a craft, but in a broader sense it also applied to the rhetorical handbook. For Plato the concept referred to the codification of an activity, which, "with a specific teachable method, is directed towards a specific end, and thus left neither to mere natural endowment nor to uncontrollable inspiration." In the strict use of the term, it designates the

> ability of a form of knowledge successfully to direct action, the ability to master it through the formulation of rules. Therefore *techne* is fundamentally ambivalent. It belongs to two domains at once: to both method and action. (72)

The middle sections of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's works demonstrate precisely such a desire not only to formulate practical rules for correct action but also to define and thus make knowable the principles of the art of elocution. Together, these dimensions advance the practical utility of the elocutionary craft while also raising it to the status of scholarly discourse. The former dimension addresses primarily the implied audience of students of elocution, while the theoretical principles and methods are addressed mainly to the "enlightened" (Austin xi) scholars whose approbation the elocutionary writers seek. This mixed address responds at once to the writers' disciplinary aspirations to establish their field of enquiry as "high" (Cahn 72), scholarly discourse and to the status aspirations of their implied users, for whom the practical set of conventions provides an explicit "repertoire of rules" that may substitute for the lack of their practical mastery of a "highly valued competence" (Bourdieu qtd. in Whigham 5).

Whereas the appeal to *ethos* dominates the opening sections, the appeal to *logos* figures most strongly in the middle arguments for and expositions of the new elocutionary systems. Rather than focusing on the credibility of the writer's character and field of enquiry, these sections emphasize the rational and logical value of the methods of elocution that Sheridan, Walker, and Austin propose. In this sense, these sections contain the proof, or *confirmatio*, of the elocutionary discourses where persuasion is produced principally from the reasonableness of the speaker's arguments and from "the facts themselves" (Aristotle 3.1403b). These are the parts in which Sheridan, Walker, and Austin attempt to demonstrate the validity of their cases for treating the art of delivery at systematic length and in methodical detail.

To do this, they employ two main kinds of *logos*, namely *logos* as reason or argumentation and *logos* as logic. According to George Yoos, *logos* as reason means the logical appeal "to reasons presented as premises, warrants, evidence, facts, data, observations, backing, supports, explanations, causes, signs, commonplaces, principles, or maxims. Insofar as the emphasis is on logos as reason, logical appeal is to the substance of

premises and/or presumptions and not to . . . logical form" (411). *Logos* as formal logic, by contrast, emphasizes the formal consistency and rules of formation that bind and relate terms (410). In the articulation of their systematic *technes* of elocution, Sheridan, Walker, and Austin combine these two general types of *logos*: the former occurs mainly in the reasonable arguments that they make for why systematic treatises and rules for the study of elocution should be developed; the latter, primarily in their exposition of these systems, whose categories, rules, and notations strive to bind and relate in a consistent, orderly manner the various elements of elocution. In this way, their confirmations integrate two modes of proof, the explicitly argumentative premises and reasons for their systems and the implicitly persuasive logical exposition of these systems. As Edward Corbett explains, "[t]he use of the term *confirmation* . . . may suggest that this division figures only in persuasive discourse. But if we regard *confirmation* or *proof* as the designation of that part where we get down to the main business of our discourse, this term can be extended to cover expository as well as argumentative prose" (Corbett 300).

Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca's reconfiguration of classical theories of argumentation provides a useful set of analytic tools for examining the structures and effects of these two main forms of *logos* in the middle sections. Their distinction between argumentation and the classical concepts of demonstration and formal logic correspond for the most part to Yoos' categories of *logos* as reason and *logos* as logic. Formal logic, explain Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, constructs axiomatic systems whose validity depends on the internal consistency of its rules and symbols rather than "rational evidence" external to the system: "Any consideration that has to do with the origin of the axioms or rules of deduction, with the role that the axiomatic system is deemed to play in the elaboration of thought, is foreign to logic conceived in this manner" (13). Argumentation, by contrast, uses rational evidence and discursive techniques to induce or increase the audience's adherence to the writer's or speaker's position (4). In argumentation, "it is no longer possible to neglect completely, as irrelevancies, the psychological and social conditions in the absence of which argumentation would be pointless and without result" (14).

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca divide the techniques of argumentation into four main categories: quasi-logical arguments, arguments based on the structure of reality,

arguments that establish the structure of reality, and techniques of dissociation.[1] In this chapter, I will draw on the first three categories to explicate the structures of argumentation in the elocutionists' confirmations; the technique of dissociation will help to elucidate the rhetoric of their closing sections, discussed in Chapter Five.

Quasi-logical arguments take advantage of "the prestige of rigorous thought" by claiming "to be similar to the formal reasoning of logic or mathematics" (193-194). This similarity gives them "a certain validity owing to their rational appearance" (261). Because of this emphasis on the formal aspects of proof, quasi-logical arguments correspond to *logos* as logic; however, as forms of argumentation, the "psychological and social conditions" which influence their production are relevant to their persuasiveness. Although they resemble formal demonstration, they are not identical to it: "What characterizes quasi-logical argumentation . . . is its nonformal character and the effort of thought which is required to formalize it" (193).

Arguments based on the structure of reality are persuasive not primarily because of their formal or operational features, but instead because of their substantive claim "to be in agreement with the very nature of things" (191). In this sense, they correspond to Yoos' category of *logos* as reason. Generally, these arguments work by positing sequential relationships, such as cause-effect sequences or relationships of co-existence, such as those which are accepted as existing between people and their actions. The rhetor's appeals to these basic structures of reality "establish a solidarity between accepted judgments and others which one wishes to promote" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 261). Arguments that establish the structure of reality also, in a manner, claim to agree with "the very nature of things," but this "nature" or this "reality" is a new rather than established one. Thus, for example, an argument by analogy attempts "to reconstruct certain elements of thought in conformity with schemes admitted in other domains of the real" (191). The "new" reality established by the analogy depends on the accepted reality to which it is compared. In this way, arguments that establish the real are closely connected with arguments based on the real because the former cannot be established without recourse to the latter. For the

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[1]By "reality," Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca mean not "an objective description of reality, but the manner in which opinions concerning it are presented" (262).

elocutionists, especially Sheridan, this connection between the two kinds of arguments provides an argumentative strategy for establishing the validity of their new field of enquiry (i.e., a new "domain of the real") while simultaneously seeking solidarity between accepted judgments and the ones they wish to promote.

The logical appeal of the elocutionary systems in the middle sections of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's treatises works through the interplay of *logos* as reason and *logos* as logic. On the one hand, they make a reasonable case for the development of these systems based on accepted "structures of reality"; these substantive arguments allow them to establish a solidarity between accepted domains of the real and the new structure of elocutionary reality. On the other, they present methodical forms of instruction for elocution whose persuasive power derives from their quasi-logical appearance. Specifically, Sheridan, whose case for the development of a knowable and teachable method of elocution is the most fully articulated, employs an argument by dysanalogy and based on the co-existence of "the person and his acts" (ix) to establish the new structure of elocutionary reality; arguments based on the co-existence of "the person and his acts" and on the sequential relationship of means and ends underlie, in various ways, all three of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's systems; and the quasi-logical division of the whole into parts dominates the exposition of their *technai* of bodily decorum. For the sake of clarity, in the following analysis I will highlight, first, arguments that establish a new structure of reality by being based on existing structures and, second, quasi-logical forms; I shall also, however, indicate ways in which different kinds of arguments interact since, as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca emphasize, a single statement can "be regarded as capable of expressing several schemes" at once and as addressed to different audiences (188).

Using these main forms of logical argumentation, Sheridan, Walker, and Austin argue for the importance of the study of elocution, define the scope and elements of this study, and enumerate methodical rules for its proper practice. These arguments, as the following analysis will show, are motivated by an ideal of competence that simultaneously makes the study of elocution accessible to an aspiring audience and ensures the preservation of disciplinary and social limits. By focusing on the "rudiments" (Sheridan 93) of elocution, the elocutionists avoid the impropriety of claiming to be able to make knowable and teachable the full art of delivery. They explicitly define parts and detail rules for basic

competence but preserve some of the social mystery surrounding bodily communication by leaving the more powerful and more moving aspects of delivery largely unexplicated and hence unavailable for mastery through the formulation and application of rules.

The mixed nature of the implied audience for these treatises can help to clarify the role that this ideal of the competent speaker plays in the logical appeals of the elocutionary systems. The *logos* the middle sections addresses itself not only to the obvious implied audience of aspiring speakers who can "benefit from prescriptive guidance in matters of taste, grammar, and elocution" (Ulman 35). Just as importantly, the *logos* of arguments based on the structure of reality and of quasi-logical schemes addresses the implied audience of scholarly judges whose approbation the elocutionary writers desire. In fact, the latter group of readers are those implied most strongly by the initial arguments of the middle sections. These arguments, which both elaborate the general claims of the opening sections and introduce new rationales, are concerned less with the practical application of the elocutionary systems than with establishing elocution as a systematic "department of knowledge . . . considered as an organized whole" (*OED*). Specifically, these arguments attempt to prove the significance of elocutionary study based on its relationship to the accepted "reality" of written or verbal language, and they provide the appearance of rationality through the quasi-logical whole-part definition of elocution's disciplinary domain. Logical appeals to the implied audience of students emphasize the practical application of the systems. They do so primarily through the ends-means and person-act arguments (particularly in the method of self-vigilance recommended to aspiring speakers) and through Walker's and Austin's quasi-logical enumeration of complex rules for bodily decorum which appeal to those who require a "repertoire of rules" (Bourdieu qtd. in Whigham 5) to be able to "discriminate and imitate signs of status" (Hariman 152).

This mixed readership and the inherent social and disciplinary risks of the elocutionary project suggest contextual reasons for the tensions and incongruities in the logical appeals of the middle sections. These are the risk of focusing on the "seemingly most insignificant details" of bodily practices (Bourdieu, *Outline* 95) as a means of providing aspiring speakers with increased opportunities for social mobility, and the risk of disrupting the traditional hierarchy of rhetorical study in which delivery figures as the least important component as a way of securing increased cultural capital for the elocutionary

writers. The tensions of the elocutionary systems are not, therefore, strictly internal or logical. Rather, they reflect the complexity of the project's rhetorical situation. If these texts are responses to a context, then this context offers delivery as an undeveloped territory for profitable mining. However, it demands circumspection in explicating the ostensibly "insignificant" domain of bodily practices and in aligning elocution with other areas of study. Further, while the situation opens up possibilities for both the elocutionary writers and their readers to increase their cultural capital, the exigencies of decorum constrain these opportunities by requiring the avoidance of excessive self-assertion which might offend more powerful members of the social and scholarly hierarchies. Given these situational complexities, the following analysis of the techniques of argumentation at work in the development of the elocutionary systems will reveal the places where the logics of the writers' *technai* fray as well as the rhetorical tactics they employ to negotiate these inconsistencies.

Logical Appeals to Scholarly Readers

Even though the systematic rules and codes of elocution developed by Sheridan, Walker, and Austin are designed to make the practice of bodily decorum teachable and learnable, these systems also appeal to an audience concerned more with the theoretical elaboration of a new "department of knowledge." This appeal, as I have already discussed, presumes and draws on the contemporary contextual interest in the methodical standardization and codification of language use, an interest fostered by "a philosophical and critical community" whose study of language makes reading, writing, and speaking according to these scholarly standards important to a broader community of learners (Ulman 32). By relating the elocutionary project to this existing "structure of reality," Sheridan makes a reasonable case for the study of elocution as a new department of knowledge. The persuasiveness of this case is enhanced through Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's quasi-logical definition of elocutionary knowledge as a series of distinct parts which together make up their whole field of enquiry. However, the argumentative process of negotiating a

legitimate and distinctive, but not excessive, disciplinary space for elocution entails ambiguities in the relationships these writers assert between existing and new structures of reality and in the exhaustiveness of the parts into which they divide their field.

a) Arguments Relating the New Field of Elocution with Existing Structures of Reality

In twentieth-century discussions of the elocutionary movement, Sheridan frequently is described as the founder of the so-called "natural" school of elocution. By "natural," recent critics mean primarily delivery that is not regulated by a methodical set of mechanical rules.[2] Although in the *Lectures* Sheridan does advocate a "natural" conversational style of elocution and although his work does not develop a detailed or methodical set of rules for proper delivery, this description of his approach as spontaneously "natural" ignores his forceful advocacy of a systematic prescriptive method for making the art of elocution knowable and teachable. Critics of his own era recognized and valued this advocacy as a key argument for establishing the contemporary significance of elocutionary study, even though some noted that the actual method explicated by Sheridan in the *Lectures* was not fully developed. Critics commended the practical "usefulness" of his plan to develop "a well-digested system of rules" (*Monthly Review* 27 [1762]: 201, 208) to teach elocution, but also commented that "[h]e has this defect, however, in common with most didactic writers, that after having set forth in general terms the utility of his art, his pupils are left to themselves, to proceed *secundum artem*" (*Scots Magazine* 24 [1762]: 601).

To establish the desirability of developing a system of rules to regulate public speaking, Sheridan draws a dysanalogy between the existing "reality" of the art of written language and the art of spoken language (whose significance he wishes to re-establish). This dysanalogy, which presupposes the contextual importance of standardizing and codifying language, appeals primarily to a scholarly audience concerned with regulating and judging the practices of writers and speakers. To justify his advocacy of systematizing the study and practice of elocution, Sheridan argues that,

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[2]For more on Sheridan and the "natural" school of elocution, see Robb, Fritz, Ehninger, Vandraegen, and Shortland. See also the "Conclusion" to this study.

> . . . it is a disgrace to a gentleman, to be guilty of false spelling, either by omitting, changing, or adding letters contrary to custom; and yet it shall be no disgrace to omit letters, or even syllables in speaking, and to huddle his words so together, as to render them utterly unintelligible. . . . The reason for the unequal judgment past by mankind in this case, is that written language is taught by rule, and it is thought a shame for any one, to transgress the known rules of an art, in which he has been instructed. But spoken language is not regularly taught, but is left to chance, imitation, and early habit: and therefore like all other things left to chance, or unsettled principles, is liable to innumerable irregularities and defects. (21)

According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, arguments by analogy "attempt to reconstruct certain elements of thought in conformity with schemes admitted in other domains of the real" (191). In the above passage, Sheridan presents the "known rules" of written language as an existing "structure of reality" to which the new structure of elocutionary reality may be compared. However, because Sheridan highlights the differences, rather than the similarities, between the current states of written and spoken language, this passage constructs a dysanalogy. Clearly, though, the main intent of this dysanalogy—which provides a rationale for why these two domains of the "real" are valued unequally—is to demonstrate why spoken language requires the same kind of settled principles and known rules that currently regulate the art of written language. In this sense, Sheridan's dysanalogy implies an analogy between the separate spheres of written and spoken language.

This dysanalogy, rather than taking the most common formulation of "A is to B as C is [not] to D," follows the pattern of "A is to B as A is [not] to C" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 372, 376). In other words, Sheridan argues that rules and settled principles are to written language as rules and settled principles are (not yet) to spoken language. Such a pattern indicates the proximity between Sheridan's argumentative scheme of analogy and the scheme of example. Indeed, it is possible to analyze the above passage as an instance of what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca call examples of a "universal system of law" (374). In this scheme, the existing rules of written language and the desired rules for spoken language would each constitute "entire systems" whose resemblance stems from their equal subjection

to the universal law that "it is thought a shame for any one, to transgress the known rules of an art, in which he has been instructed" (21). Because this argumentative structure posits the application of a general "law" to a new example, it presumes that both the existing and new examples belong to "a single domain" of reality (374). This scheme of argumentation therefore establishes the importance of developing a systematic set of rules for spoken language by classifying spoken language, in its potential, as a new example of the domain of "reality" already exemplified by the art of written language. The "known rules" of written language thus take precedence over the desired rules for spoken language not only chronologically but also logically.

This argument of precedence appeals to the community of critical scholars implied by the elocutionary treatises because it decorously associates the study of elocution with the established domain of written language. However, Sheridan's typical representation of the relationship between written and spoken language conflicts with this argument that spoken language is simply another example of the "reality" already well-exemplified by written language. Rather, Sheridan's main presumption–both in the *Lectures* and in other works–is that spoken language is more important than, not logically inferior or even simply equal, to the art of written language. Thus, for example, he argues that the development of an exact method of articulation is "of much more importance" in speaking than exact spelling is in writing since, in the former case, the speaker may be addressing "many hundred hearers" whereas the "writing of a gentleman is submitted but to one reader at a time" (21). More generally, Sheridan repeatedly asserts the superiority of spoken over written language by defining the former as "the gift of God" and the latter as "the invention of man" (xiii). These definitions lay the foundation for an analogical relationship because they distinguish the two kinds of language into separate spheres, a distinction "essential for the existence of an analogy" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 375). In light of Sheridan's recurring argument for the superiority of spoken over written language, the above passage can be read as a strategic way of simultaneously asserting the logical precedence of written language and the (potential) superiority of spoken language. Explicitly, Sheridan asks his audience to accept the logic that a methodical system for teaching and judging proper elocution is important because, like the rules of written language, such a system allows polite society to distinguish between disgraceful and graceful practitioners. But the implicit conclusion of his

argument–a conclusion entailed by Sheridan's surrounding claims about the greatness of spoken language compared to written language–is that the development of settled principles and exact rules to regulate spoken language will make this distinctive sphere of reality not only equal to but greater than the art of written language.

Through this dysanalogy, Sheridan seeks adherence to a new structure of reality, namely the systematic explication and regulation of elocution according to its own distinctive principles and rules. A key element in this appeal shows how the category of arguments based on the structure of reality can interact with those that establish a structure of reality: Sheridan employs a person-act argument, based on a relation of co-existence, to strengthen his analogical case for the significance of a system of elocutionary instruction. By arguing that failure to follow the "known rules" of written language disgraces gentlemen, Sheridan posits a person-act relationship. The person in this case is the "gentleman" and the "act" is the practice of correct written language. A gentleman, Sheridan presumes, can be defined by his ability to enact the rules of written language properly. Conversely, the disgrace of not abiding by these rules threatens the person's identity as a gentleman. By analogy, Sheridan argues that a gentleman's identity should likewise be determined according to whether his practices of elocution conform to an established mode of instruction.

The "person" of the gentleman in Sheridan's argument can be considered not only as "the author of a series of acts" but perhaps more importantly as "the object of a series of appraisals" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 295). That is, the assertion of the co-existence of the gentleman with the actions of proper writing and speaking provides a standard for discriminating between those who do and those who do not act according to these definitions of gentlemanliness. The person who wishes to be identified by others as a gentleman becomes the object of a moral appraisal that depends on his abilities to act competently in terms of "known rules." As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain, typically "the notions of responsibility and of guilt or merit are related to the person" while "the notions of norm and of rule are primarily concerned with the act" (296). The words "disgrace," "guilt," and "shame" in Sheridan's argument demonstrate the moral nature of the appraisal to which the person of the gentleman is subject, while the acts that identify him are categorized as norms and rules. However, this dissociation between the person and his acts is "partial and

precarious" since "if rules prescribe or prohibit certain acts, their moral or juridical significance resides in the fact that they are meant for persons" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 296).

Because this argument foregrounds the person of the gentleman as an object of appraisal, it appeals mainly to an audience of external judges–those whose interest lies in developing, teaching, and enforcing standards of socially polite linguistic behaviour. For aspiring speakers, the appeal of Sheridan's argument is double-sided. By affirming that the practice of proper writing and speaking according to an explicit set of rules is a distinctive mark of gentlemanliness, Sheridan offers opportunities for status aspirants to increase their cultural capital. Importantly, these opportunities address the late eighteenth-century British context of social mobility by basing the achievement and maintenance of gentlemanly status on capital acquired through education, not birth. Sheridan does not, however, claim that writing and speaking properly are alone sufficient for a person to be identified as a gentleman. Rather, he argues, negatively, that not possessing these abilities will seriously damage any gentlemanly identity the person already possesses. This negative argument counters the implicit appeal of social opportunity by foregrounding the problem of transgressing "known rules." If indeed it is a universal law that failure to act according to such rules necessarily brings shame on the person of the gentleman, then the development of an explicit method of instruction in elocution increases the possibilities for transgressing the standards of gentlemanly behaviour as much as it enhances opportunities for status augmentation through educational means.

In addition to the argumentative schemes of dysanalogy and person-act coexistence, a crucial premise underlies Sheridan's rationale for the importance of developing a regulated *techne* for elocutionary study. This is the implicit premise that the art of written language is in truth wholly settled and regular, a premise which Sheridan presupposes "the judgment of mankind" accepts without question. The logic of his contrast between the current defective, irregular condition of the art of spoken language and its potential to become an unambiguously methodical *techne* that will "successfully . . . direct action" (Cahn 72) depends on the truth of his assumption that written language has already achieved this ideal condition.

This assumption, however, is debatable, not only from a modern perspective but

within Sheridan's own context. Despite the strong contextual interest in standardizing and codifying language, at least one leading member of the community of critical scholars engaged in this pursuit acknowledged the great difficulty, even the futility, of discovering and articulating any fully settled principles or absolute rules to regulate language use. Samuel Johnson, whose *Dictionary* perhaps best exemplifies the eighteenth-century British effort to limit, order, and fix language "in an authoritative way" (Kernan 184), candidly describes in the "Preface" to the *Dictionary* how his initial optimism about the possibility of bringing language under control was transformed into an acknowledgment of the futility of this ideal:

> Those who have been persuaded to think well of my design, will require that it should fix our language, and put a stop to those alterations which time and chance have hitherto been suffered to make in it without opposition. With this consequence I will confess that I flattered myself for a while; but now begin to fear that I have indulged expectations which neither reason nor experience can justify. . . . [W]ith justice may the lexicographer be derided, who being able to produce no example of a nation that has preserved their words and phrases from mutability, shall imagine that his dictionary can embalm his language, and secure it from corruption and decay. . . . [S]ounds are too volatile and subtile for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength. (Johnson 255)

As a member of Johnson's literary circle until the dissolution of their friendship in 1762, Sheridan presumably was familiar with Johnson's views. However, such an admission of the impossibility of controlling the mutability of language and restraining its volatile sounds would undermine the *ethos* of Sheridan's whole project. Despite contemporary criticism that his expectations concerning the benefits of systematic instruction in elocution were "over-sanguine" and "most extravagant" (*Monthly Review* 27 [1762]: 202), the persuasiveness of Sheridan's case relies on his consistent, unequivocal assertion that the development of "a well-digested system of rules" taught by a "a sufficient number of skilful masters" (17) is both feasible and essential to the nation's moral and political stature. Such a position cannot afford to admit that the systematic regulation of

elocutionary practice may be as impossible as Johnson's effort to preserve verbal language from mutability. But even though Johnson's "Preface" shows the debatability of Sheridan's fundamental premise that written language is subject to precise regulation, the "Preface" confirms the contextual *desire* to achieve this kind of regulation. The logic of Sheridan's argument, therefore, appeals to an important communal desire even if the presumption that this desire can be fulfilled is highly debatable.

The reality of late eighteenth-century British "print culture" (Kernan 16) further reinforces the contextual appropriateness of Sheridan's argument that the art of elocution, to achieve disciplinary and social status, requires methodical explication in words and print. The very nature of print, according to Kernan, creates a logical form conducive to the systematic ordering and reduction of language use. Johnson, he argues, "came to understand that the order conferred on language by a dictionary is a print-derived rationalistic system imposed amid and upon a chaotic scene of actual living speech and writing" (185). Paradoxically, the elocutionary writers exploit print's "logic of system" (Kernan 187) to try to fix and enumerate methods of non-verbal delivery or, as the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* puts it, to express "physical movements in words" and "vocal intonations in writing" (3.15.27). This paradox highlights the basic ambiguity of the relationship between the existing "reality" of written (or printed) language and the new "reality" of spoken language's non-verbal expressions. While Sheridan asserts the absolute distinctiveness of the latter sphere, claiming that the expression of the passions in non-verbal delivery constitutes "a language of [its] own, utterly independent of words" (xi), he also argues for the subjection of this language to a kind of systematic logic proper to the sphere of written language and print culture.

For later elocutionary writers such as Walker and Austin, this subjection of non-verbal delivery to the logical forms of written language and print culture becomes more pronounced. Walker, for example, addresses the problems of disciplinary decorum by presenting an ambiguous relationship between his system of elocution and the more established, respected domain of verbal and written language. On the one hand, his systematic and extensive detailing of rules for elocution realizes Sheridan's dream that this canon of rhetoric achieve the same status as the art of written language through the articulation of settled principles, "known rules," and regularized teaching. Importantly, the

inscription of an orthodox *techne* of elocution permits not only the identification of acceptable speaking practices, but conversely the marking of unacceptable forms, just as the grammatical rules of written language allow a gentleman "guilty" of transgressing these rules to be clearly distinguished from someone who does not. In this sense, Walker's system, like Sheridan's, implies a kind of analogous relationship between the rules of written language and those of non-verbal elocution: the implicit argument is that elocution may achieve a status similar to the art of written language to the extent that it shares salient features with this "known" and "settled" art.

However, Walker also represents the relationship between verbal and non-verbal language in a more explicitly hierarchical fashion: in this case, verbal language acts as the dominant form which non-verbal language serves and supports. From the outset, Walker's system presupposes that all proper elocution occurs within the boundaries of verbal and grammatically correct language. The entire purpose of elocution thus becomes the development of the speaker's ability to correctly communicate verbal and grammatical meaning; elocution should support and clarify, but in no way exceed the confines of grammar. To help preserve this decorous representation of elocution's (sub)disciplinary status, Walker engages in periodic manoeuvres of negative politeness intended to minimize the imposition of his new system of rhetorical punctuation. For instance, he reassures his scholarly readers that "when I contend for the propriety, and even necessity, of pausing, where we find no points in writing or printing, I do not mean to disturb the present practice of punctuation: I wish only to afford such aids to pronunciation as are actually made use of by the best readers and speakers. . ." (1: 17). In this passage, the adverb "not" negatively affirms Walker's non-threatening, modest intentions, while the adverb "only" characterizes his own area as significantly lesser and more modest than the established field of grammatical practice. Although he clearly finds established doctrines of grammatical punctuation woefully inadequate to his art of elocution, he tactfully refrains from stating this directly.

This polite subordination of the art of non-verbal communication to the pre-established domain of verbal language compounds the sense of elocution's limited scope. Walker's reductive definition not only permits him to obviate the potential disciplinary impropriety of attending to the subordinate art of elocution in so much detail (since he

justifies this attention by the importance of the higher form it serves, namely verbal language); as well, this definition suits the social position of his implied students, whose acceptance within higher culture paradoxically depends on their ability to serve this culture in a deferential, inoffensive manner. Walker's whole system of elocution, with its limited conception of the scope of this art combined with its emphasis on observing intricate rules and boundaries, constructs a speaker who does not "disturb" but supports the established order.

b) Quasi-Logical Definitions of Elocution's Scope

The appeal of *logos* as reason which characterizes Sheridan's rationale for why elocution requires systematic regulation enhances the scholarly and social significance of this new "department of knowledge." Because his argument foregrounds the gentlemanly speaker as an "object of appraisal," it addresses mainly an implied audience of critical judges, namely the community of scholars concerned with setting and enforcing social standards of language use for a broader community of learners. In Sheridan's as well as Walker's and Austin's treatises, this use of *logos* as reason to address their implied audience of "liberal scholar[s]" (Austin vi) interacts with the appeal of *logos* as logical form primarily through their quasi-logical whole-part definitions of the elocutionary field. The persuasiveness of these definitions stems mainly from their formal appearance rather than from "the substance of premises and/or presumptions" (Yoos 411). These proofs, therefore, appear closer to logical demonstration than to argumentative debate. They "lay claim to a certain power of conviction in the degree they claim to be similar to the formal reasoning of logic or mathematics. Submitting these arguments to analysis, however, immediately reveals the difference between them and formal demonstration" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 193).

The quasi-logical scheme based on the division of the whole into parts operates in two main ways in Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's definitions of the scope of elocution. First, Sheridan and Walker employ the argument of division or partition which enumerates the components of the whole field; second, Austin uses a genus-species form of division to show the different genres of public speaking to which rhetorical delivery is essential.

Together, these whole-part schemes give an impression of exhaustiveness, depth, and detail to the study of elocution and thereby enhance its status as systematic "department of knowledge." However, a close analysis of these definitions reveals ambiguities about which parts or species properly belong within the whole field.

i) Sheridan's and Walker's Part-Whole Definitions

The quasi-logical division of the whole into parts presupposes that the parts are "exhaustively enumerable, but that they can be chosen at will in a variety of ways on condition that by adding them up again the given whole may be reconstituted" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 235). Further, this technique assumes "that the classes formed by the subdivision of a set are not ambiguous" (235). In defining the various parts that make up the whole study of elocution, Sheridan and Walker give an impression of exhaustive enumeration which enhances the apparent scope of their discipline. But an analysis of these formal divisions indicates ambiguities within the writers' classification schemes and it shows that "adding up" the specified parts does not clearly reconstitute the "whole" of elocution. The distinction between competent and consummate speaking, I suggest, can help to make sense of these formal inconsistencies.

Although Sheridan provides only limited prescriptive guidance to his audience of adult learners in the *Lectures*, his definitions and classification of the art of elocution into its basic parts, combined with a relatively detailed expository explanation of the features and boundaries of each of these parts, establish an apparently systematic foundation for the transformation of the irregular and defective practices of British elocution into a known and disciplined *techne*. By specifying and enumerating multiple distinct parts that together make up the whole art of elocution, Sheridan's definitions amplify the sense of disciplinary fullness; however, the slight shifts in these definitions indicate the instability of elocution's disciplinary boundaries, while the greater number of divisions accorded to the "rudiments" (Sheridan 95) rather than the higher, more emotionally affecting elements of delivery foregrounds the decorous limits both of elocution's disciplinary property and of the aspiring speaker implied by Sheridan's method.

In the *Lectures*, Sheridan provides two main divisional definitions of his subject

matter. It is the second of these that Sheridan figures as the foundation from which he will "examine the several parts of elocution" (19). "Elocution," he states, "is the just and graceful management of the voice, countenance, and gesture in speaking" (19). This definition, in accordance with classical views, includes both vocal and physical delivery, or *pronuntiatio* and *actio*; however, physical delivery includes two parts of its own (the countenance and gesture), increasing the main parts of elocution to three. Although classical writers specified facial expression and especially the expression of the eyes as a vital part of delivery, the eighteenth-century enumeration of "the countenance" as a distinct part of the field may be attributed to the contextual importance of the science of physiognomy which influenced theories of the expression of the passions in both elocution and acting. According to Shearer West, "the issue of infinite variety [in late eighteenth-century theatre] came to be related to a growing interest in the science of physiognomy, as physiognomy–the way stable external features reflect inner character–became interchangeable with pathognomy, or the expression of the passions" (138). The contextual significance of the science of physiognomy likewise supports the elocutionary link between internal moral character and external physical expressions since it presumes that specific facial features convey specific character traits (Shearer 139).

Sheridan's foundational definition implies that the "whole" of elocution includes these three main parts, and that these three main parts together constitute the whole art. Therefore, we would expect the subsequent examination of "the several parts of elocution" to follow these three main divisions and give each approximately equal treatment. In fact, though, the divisions that Sheridan ends up making, and the relative weight and detail he accords each, do not match this preliminary definition. Most notably, his quasi-systematic analysis of elocution gives far more "presence" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 236) to the divisions of vocal management (five lectures in all), relegating the two parts of the countenance and gesture to a single lecture. As well, by focusing on the "rudiments" of good delivery, Sheridan's examination of elocution shortchanges the rules for acquiring truly "graceful" and impressive delivery in favour of those aimed at merely "good" delivery (19). Grace and force in delivery, Sheridan explains, depend on the mastery of tones and gesture but these parts are distinct from the "rudiments" (95) which everyone requires to be included in the category of "gentleman" (21).

Yet the precise parts of competent, socially respectable delivery are complicated by a prior definition of elocution, a definition which corresponds less closely with classical authority but which more accurately reflects the divisions of elocution as Sheridan's method conceives them. About half way through Lecture I, he lists the necessary "ingredients" of "just" delivery:

> A just delivery consists in a distinct articulation of words, pronounced in proper tones, suitably varied to the sense, and the emotions of the mind; with due observation of accent; of emphasis, in its several gradations; of rests or pauses of the voice, in proper places and well-measured degrees of time; and the whole accompanied with expressive looks, and significant gesture. (10)

The structural divisions of this passage indicate Sheridan's desire to break down elocution into manageable (i.e., knowable and teachable) components. The abundance of commas and semi-colons contributes to this impression of careful distinctions among parts, but the inclusion of all within one sentence maintains a sense of coherence and connection. The diction of this passage (for example, terms such as "distinct," "varied," "several gradations," "well-measured degrees" which connote *difference*, and words such as "just," "proper," "suitably," and "due" which connote *decorum*) stresses *differentiation* as the principal method for achieving *decorous*, well-managed elocution. This stress amplifies the rational appearance of elocution's disciplinary property. In this way, it appeals to a scholarly audience interested in the expansion and classification of a "department of knowledge" directed toward a refined appraisal of elocutionary performers. For aspiring speakers, though, the enumeration of elocution's many parts clarifies but also complicates the task of learning "good" delivery, since the more parts there are to learn, the longer and harder the learning process becomes.

Sheridan's subsequent lectures follow this enumeration of parts quite closely, though still with some variation: he begins with a section on "Articulation," then "Pronunciation," next "Accent," "Emphasis," "Pauses or Stops," "Pitch," followed by "Tones" and "Gesture." Later, however, Sheridan alters his definition of what ingredients really are necessary to "just" delivery. In his introduction to "Lecture VI" on "Tones," he explains that the preceding parts are "fundamentally, and essentially necessary to every public speaker" (93); by contrast, the "two remaining articles," namely tones and gesture, are supplementary–they

"*add* grace, or force" to delivery (93, my emphasis). In fact, this inconsistency is already present in the first definition. Although Sheridan claims that "of all these ingredients, not one can be spared from a good delivery," the final clause of his definition describes "expressive looks, and significant gesture" as *accompaniments*–not essential parts–to the whole composed of the preceding parts (10).

By situating the "accompaniments" of "expressive looks and significant gesture" both inside and outside the domain of his system, Sheridan allows these higher, more powerful elements to act as motivating ideals to the aspiring student of elocution, while, at the same time, preserving an appropriate social "sense of limits" (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 471) through the exclusion of "grace, or force" from the necessary aspects of competent delivery. Far from being a simple example of logical inconsistency within Sheridan's text, the ambiguity of his definitions of elocution can be read as a rhetorically canny effort to articulate a situationally appropriate system: mastering the limited set of ingredients which he claims are fundamentally necessary for "good" delivery offers his implied learners an educational path to secure the cultural capital of gentlemanliness (see preceding section); this ideal of competence is inferior to the exclusive ideal of truly graceful and forceful delivery. However, by framing the limited ideal of "good" delivery within the larger, ultimately desirable framework of excellent delivery, Sheridan constructs a difference of degree, not of kind, between the socially respectable and the socially powerful speaker. In this way, the higher ideal of consummate oratory motivates the lower ideal of competency, but the technique of differentiating the parts of merely "just" from those of perfectly graceful delivery ensures the continued exclusivity of the latter distinction and provides critical judges of elocutionary performance with a classification scheme for discriminating between the two kinds of speakers.

Like Sheridan, Walker divides the whole subject matter of elocution into its elemental parts. This technique of division amplifies the disciplinary "presence" of his field of enquiry by drawing the reader's attention to its internal differentiations and away from the narrow scope of the field as a whole. Walker's definition of elocution, which makes it a sub-category of pronunciation and limited to the art of reading, is one of the most reductive given by any of the elocutionary writers (see Chapter Two), yet his treatment of this narrow field is one of the most extensive and detailed. This tension between the narrowness of

elocution's external boundaries and the copiousness of its internal differentiation increases the impression that a precisely knowable and teachable *techne* of elocution can be articulated, because elocution has been reduced to a classified, manageable object of study. The logical form of Walker's presentation of elocution stresses the intricate details of the art and gives an impression of exhaustive analysis. For the implied scholarly reader of his treatise, this quasi-logical form foregrounds the significance of elocution as a rich domain for analysis and classification.

Despite the limited scope and fine differentiations that structure Walker's system, the articulation of this system is, from its outset, informed by inconsistencies. These instabilities suggest the great difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of bringing "the mayhem of the body" under precise, systematic control, while at the same time they foreground Walker's desire to participate in the eighteenth-century social project to standardize and codify, in an exclusionary manner, "the proper comportment of the body in a polite society" (Porter, "History" 217). For example, in defining the scope of his subject matter, at the outset he clearly limits elocution to the area of vocal delivery. However, in the second volume of his treatise, Walker ends up including a lengthy section on gesture (modeled closely on Burgh's detailed catalogue), despite the boundaries of his opening definition.

Walker's division of elocution into its constituent parts or "elements" (as he calls them) is less explicit than Sheridan's. The titles of his chapters indicate the following as the main parts of the whole: punctuation, inflexion, accent, and emphasis. These are the elements which the "weak" (1: 47) speaker must master to achieve competence. As well, Walker discusses the "modulation" of voice through proper "pitch" or what he also calls "tone," and he concludes his whole work with the unannounced lengthy section on "gesture." Walker seems to present the first four parts of punctuation, inflexion, accent, and emphasis as the necessary elements that a "weak" speaker must master to achieve competence. But he contradicts this interpretation by suddenly claiming only part way through his lengthy treatment of "inflexion," that "[a]t this point the present treatise might finish" (1: 158). This statement implies that he already has covered the necessary material and that the remainder is somehow supplementary and unessential. Instead of stopping at this point, though, Walker continues for more than another 300 pages to break down elocution into minute particulars. In terms of his implied audience of scholarly readers, Walker's theory of

inflections constitutes his distinctive contribution to the growing department of elocutionary knowledge; although mastery of the other parts of elocution is necessary for aspiring speakers, these parts have been treated already by other writers and therefore do not constitute the essence of Walker's system. A contemporary review of Walker's treatise corroborates the significance of this part of his work, noting how "he advances many things in this part of his work which merit particular attention," especially because "the inflexions of the voice" has been "hitherto little regarded by writers on elocution" (*Monthly Review* 65 [1781]: 85).[3]

The unstable divisions of Walker's *techne* are magnified further by his representation of the status of "inflexion" and "punctuation" within his system. In the "Preface," he informs us that the most important and fundamental element is "Inflexion"–that "precise and definite quality of the voice. . . into which all speaking sounds may be resolved" (1: ix-x). Accordingly, he devotes the most space to its elaboration and articulates the greatest number of rules for its proper practice. But the arrangement of his text introduces new ambiguities into the role and status of inflection in the ordering of his "elements." Instead of beginning with the "distinction" that he claims originates and substantiates his system, the first main division of his text examines punctuation. His discussion of inflection follows that of punctuation, giving the latter apparently the most elemental position in his system. For example, Walker introduces inflections as *accompaniments* to the more fundamental "pauses" of punctuation: "Besides the pauses, which indicate a greater or less separation of the parts of a sentence and a conclusion of the whole, there are certain inflexions of voice, accompanying these pauses, which are as necessary to the sense of the sentence as the pauses themselves . . ." (1: 112). In one way, this passage equates the role and status of punctuation and inflections: they are "beside" each other and each is necessary. However, for the comparison to be effective (inflections are "as necessary" as pauses), the reader must already accept the primary necessity of pauses. In this way, the "element" of punctuation

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[3]In fact, Joshua Steele's *Prosodia Rationalis* (1775) had already elaborated a theory of inflections, which Walker acknowledges in his "Preface," noting that his own attempt is "humbler" than Steele's effort "to bring every word to some part of the musical scale" (xi). Subsequent critics have accused Walker of "plagiarizing" Steele's views. For a description and refutation of these criticisms, see Lamb.

seems prior to, or more substantial than, the "element" of inflection–despite Walker's prefatory figuration of the founding role of inflection within his whole system.

ii) Austin's Genus-Species Division

Unlike Walker's and Sheridan's treatments of elocution, which focus on vocal delivery, Austin's *Chironomia* centres on gestural delivery. However, Austin positions his novel system of gesture after detailed discussions of the various parts which make up the whole art of delivery. In the next chapter, I will analyze Austin's extensive system of rhetorical gesture; here, I will attend to the whole-part divisions of delivery which precede his exclusive focus on gesture.

Like Sheridan, Austin subscribes to the division of delivery into the three main components of the voice, countenance, and gesture. Not only does he define the field according to these three parts; he also provides chapter-length reviews of each one, citing both classical and modern authorities extensively to support his points. In this way, he arranges his treatise so that, initially, it affords an equitable and exhaustive representation of each of the main parts of delivery. By basing these reviews of each part on so many reputable sources and by arranging his text so that they precede the novel system of gesture, Austin bolsters the educated reader's confidence in the breadth and soundness of the scholarly background to his new undertaking. As well, the division of the whole art of delivery into its various components provides disciplinary amplification, an amplification that is augmented further in Austin's subsequent multiple sub-divisions of one part of this whole, namely gesture.

In his chapter on "Gesture in General" (the third of these three review sections), Austin reassures readers who may be concerned that the licentiousness of theatrical gesture could infect his system of rhetorical gesture by arguing that a system of gesture is valuable precisely because it differentiates between the kinds of bodily conduct suitable to different places and professions. The explication of these distinctions reinforces, rather than dissolves, the boundaries between decorum and indecorum:

> To distinguish the character of the delivery belonging to each profession, to discriminate their peculiar manner, force, and expression, and if possible to

> mark the limits of each distinctly, lest they should indecorously break in upon the bounds of each other, is the proper object of a system of gesture, and one of its most arduous labours. (135)

Austin uses the quasi-logical scheme of genus-species division to demarcate the different genres of delivery. This scheme is similar to the enumeration of parts which make up a whole except that the argument by species, unlike the argument by enumeration of parts, "presupposes a similarity in kind between the parts and the whole" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 235). Further, the nature and number of the species included under a genus cannot be "chosen at will" nor do they have to be exhaustive (235). For Austin, rhetorical delivery is a "genus" which possesses a number of "species." These "species" he calls the "modes" of public speaking. They include "Reading, Recitation, Declamation, Oratory, and Acting" (188). With the first of these main parts, he develops further sub-divisions, distinguishing the mode of reading into a hierarchy of six levels ("1. Intelligible. 2. Correct. 3. Impressive. 4. Rhetorical. 5. Dramatic. 6. Epic"). Because each mode includes all three parts of delivery (namely, the voice, countenance, and gesture), each possesses "a similarity in kind" with its genus rather than being one incomplete part of a larger whole. This division of delivery into its main genres signals a shift from attending to the instruments of delivery (i.e., the various bodily instruments that the speaker uses) to focusing on the distinct scenes of speaking and the kinds of performances appropriate to these contexts. However, for all that Austin desires and claims to articulate clear boundaries between the various kinds of public speaking that together define the whole genus, in reality this division of the art reveals the ambiguity of Austin's definition of what should be included and what excluded.

We see this ambiguity most dramatically in the final two chapters of this five-chapter section, Chapter VIII: "Of Acting" and Chapter IX: "Of the Ancient Pantomimes."[4] According to Austin's own statements, the subject matter of these chapters does not seem to

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[4]Ironically, Austin includes more extensive treatment of theatrical delivery than either Sheridan and Walker, both of whom worked as actors before embarking on their elocutionary careers. Perhaps this indicates Sheridan's and Walker's sensitivity to the socially problematic character of their former profession and their consequent desire not to have it foregrounded within their elocutionary doctrines.

fit into his classificatory scheme; they appear to "indecorously break in upon the bounds" of proper public speaking. And yet he devotes two full chapters, at the very centre of his treatise, to the forms of delivery and gesture which he wishes to exclude from his whole system. The division of public speaking into its different genres implies "a similarity in kind between the parts and the whole." But Austin's emphasis in his chapter on acting on the differences, to the point of contrariety, between the modes of oratory and acting shows how each species may differ from others, while apparently sharing the essence of the genus.[5] He opens with an extended comparison that constructs the dissimilitude of oratory and acting:

> Acting is distinguished from oratory, both by the subject, the character of the speaker, and the manner. The actor is seldom supposed to deliver his own composition, so that his merit is generally considered separately from that of the part, which he sustains. . . . The orator, *on the contrary*, appears always in his own character. . . . The actor traverses the whole stage; as he is moved by passion, or by the circumstances of the scene. The orator is limited in the movement of his lower limbs, at most, to an occasional, single step, in advancing or retiring, or perhaps merely to a change of position of the feet. The gesture of the actor is unrestrained. . . But the liberty of the theatre would be licentiousness in the orator, and he is to guard himself carefully against it. (240, my emphasis)

This comparison reinforces the prescription of self-discipline and self-restraint that the aspiring speaker must, Austin maintains, vigilantly enact in order to achieve social respectability (see next section). Through this comparison between the orator and the actor, Austin implicitly warns that even a slight lack of self-restraint, a momentary unguardedness may cause the aspiring orator to become guilty of "licentiousness." The rigorous way in which Austin distinguishes the proper gesture of oratory from the proper gesture of acting indicates, perhaps, the threatening yet attractive proximity of the latter to the former. Certainly, Walker's and Sheridan's backgrounds as professional actors reveal the real

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[5]By contrast, the earlier modes were represented as having only degrees of difference from oratory; they lead up to oratory.

closeness of the two worlds; Burgh and Cockin also demonstrate great fondness and admiration for theatrical delivery; and Austin himself indicates his great admiration for at least one respectable actor, Sarah Siddons. But the legitimacy of the elocutionary project depends on its assertion of a wholly distinct "scene" for itself by contrast with the highly popular but socially-suspect world of theatre. His defensive approach shows his appreciation of gesture's questionable status, a status associated with concepts of indecorum and "licentiousness." During the eighteenth century the world of the theatre gained increasing respectability by comparison with its Restoration excesses, a respectability due in part to Sheridan's strenuous efforts at moral reform while a theatre manager, but more particularly to the influence of leading actors such as David Garrick and Sarah Siddons whose own decorous, unimpeachable private lives helped to give the profession of acting a more favourable reputation.[6] However, as Kristina Straub notes, despite propaganda arguing for the social and moral decorum of the profession of acting, decorous actors were seen as the exception to the norm while most actors continued to occupy a "liminal position" in the class structure (30, 26). In particular, actors were characterized in terms of excessive sexuality, a sexuality associated with disease, effeminacy, and a lack of dignity or self-control (32-33). Given the currency of such cultural representations, Austin's association of theatrical gesture with licentiousness makes rhetorical sense, while at the same time his obvious admiration for actors such as Mrs. Siddons demonstrates the ambiguous, partial respectability of some aspects of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century world of the theatre.[7]

The chapter on "ancient pantomimes," which Austin does not name in his initial division of the modes of public speaking, appears even more incongruous with the other genres of oratory. In the introductory sub-heads of this chapter, he states quite clearly that pantomime should not be associated with the proper domain of oratory (the first sub-head reads "The pantomimic art not properly connected with rhetorical delivery"), yet Austin

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[6]For more on Sheridan's efforts to reform the theatre, see Bacon, 6-8 and Straub, 102-103.

[7]For more on the issue of the theatre's moral and social respectability in the second half of the eighteenth century, see West, especially 11-18, and Woods, 18-24.

nonetheless chooses to include a discussion of this improper form of non-verbal communication. The manner in which he introduces it further confuses its status. At first, Austin seems to be giving pantomime a kind of foundational status and commending its great powers of communication:

> If the art of gesture be worthy of cultivation, it would appear that it should be cultivated in its highest perfection, and that its perfection must consist in its power of communicating the thoughts independant [sic] of language. In this view the pantomimic art should be the sole object for the investigation and acquisition of those who study the art of gesture; for the pantomimes express entire dramas without the aid of words. (251)

As it turns out, Austin sets up these premises only to disregard them, although he does not refute them directly. Instead, he simply states that, despite the "extraordinary" powers of the gestures of pantomime, this genre of universal and independent non-verbal language "forms hardly any portion of the proper subject of our present enquiry" (251). By contrast with the independent significations of the gestures of pantomime, rhetorical delivery properly concerns itself with "the gesture suited to the illustration and enforcement of language, not to the gesture which supersedes its use" (251). The nature of this rhetorical gesture, claims Austin, is "altogether different" from that of pantomime (253). A few paragraphs later, however, he modifies his introductory statement of the absolute disjunction between rhetorical and pantomimic gesture. He now explains that "although the pantomimic art is remote from the main object of this work," still it is a subject "in some measure connected with it" (253). By alternatively figuring the distinction, first, as a qualitative difference in nature and, second, as a quantitative difference of degree, Austin attempts to resolve the incompatibility of including pantomime as one part of the whole of rhetorical delivery. But these alternations also once again demonstrate the awkwardness that Austin experiences in trying, on the one hand, to be true to the ultimate authority of classical culture (pantomime, he says, "boasts of classic origins" [253]) and, on the other, to exclude perceived improprieties from his system.

Just as Austin does not explicitly refute the premise that the "perfection" of gesture "must consist in its power of communicating the thoughts independent of language," neither does he openly justify his counter proposition that the "proper subject" of his enquiry is

"gesture suited to the illustration and enforcement of language" (251). Rather, he presumes that his readers, like himself, will take for granted the propriety of focusing on gesture that supports and clarifies, but never exceeds, the sense and structures of verbal language. The "whole" of delivery becomes, in this figuration, merely a supplement to the forms and meanings of verbal language. It has no independent status or property fully its own. Yet, even though this subordination of gestural language to verbal language necessarily diminishes the power and scope of the former, it also amplifies the disciplinary credibility of Austin's project because it situates non-verbal gesture as supportive of the established "reality" of enquiries and practices in verbal language. And while this chapter on pantomime seems out of place in Austin's overall demarcation of the boundaries of oratory, it permits him to show, *as he rejects it*, the "highest perfection" of gesture which has the "power of communicating the thoughts independant of language" (251). In this way, Austin simultaneously emphasizes the great significance of his general subject matter (gesture) and selects its less powerful, more decorous species suitable to the art of public speaking.

Logical Appeals to Implied Learners

The foregoing arguments–that is, Sheridan's dysanalogical rationale for the necessity of articulating a systematic method of elocutionary study combined with the quasi-logical division of elocution into parts–appeal mainly to an implied community of critical scholars, rather than a broader community of learners, because they foreground the disciplinary status and scope of elocution more than its prescriptive application. In this section, I examine the main logical appeals of the elocutionary systems to those concerned with learning the performative applications of these systems. Like the logical arguments already examined, these appeals employ both argumentative schemes based on the structure of reality and the formal reasoning of quasi-logical argumentation. Specifically, Sheridan and Austin employ a person-act scheme to persuade learners to follow the general rule of self-vigilance. Walker's system demonstrates a further use of the quasi-logical whole-part scheme to enumerate the detailed rules of his prescriptive system. (Austin's system employs a similar

technique, which I analyze in Chapter Four.) Sheridan's, Austin's, and Walker's technai all draw on an ends-means argumentative structure to persuade their implied students that diligently following their prescriptive guidance is worthwhile. This guidance, however, makes the learner's personal diligence as, if not more, important than the rules themselves in securing the limited "end" of elocutionary competence. And, paradoxically, success in achieving this performative competence depends on the student's receptive competence in vigilant self-appraisal and comprehension of complex rules.

a) The Person-Act Argument of Self-vigilance

The person-act argument, as we have already seen, posits a relationship of co-existence between a person and his or her actions, such that one identifies the other and a transfer of value can occur between them (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 297). Sheridan's general argument, discussed above, is that the desirable identity of gentlemanliness depends on a person's ability to follow regulated systems of written and, potentially, spoken language correctly. Although the *Lectures* provide only a preliminary method for teaching and regulating the latter domain, Sheridan prescribes the rule of self-vigilance to his adult audience as a crucial means for acquiring a "just" though not excellent delivery. This rule is based on a person-act argument in the sense that it presupposes a relationship of co-existence between the speaker's socially respectable identity and his actions of self-vigilance. Self-vigilance thus becomes a defining feature of the aspiring speaker, not simply an externally imposed rule. But this ability to monitor oneself against bad habits paradoxically entails a division within the person of the speaker between his performative and appraising selves.

Sheridan recommends the following basic method to his adult learners for curing themselves of a "vitious articulation," which is virtually the same method he suggests for achieving competence in all the rudimentary parts of elocution:

> To cure any imperfections in speech, arising originally from too quick an utterance, the most effectual method, will be, to lay aside an hour every morning, to be employed in the practice of reading aloud, in a manner, much slower than is necessary. This should be done in the hearing of a friend, or

> some person whose office it should be, to remind the reader, if at any time he should perceive him mending his pace, and falling into his habit, of a quick utterance. . . . I would have him, for some time, read the words of a vocabulary, in the alphabetical order. In this way, he will soon find out, what letters and syllables, he is apt to sound too faintly, and slur over. Let him make a list of those words; and be sure to pronounce them over distinctly, every morning, before he proceeds to others. (27-28)

Beyond the commonsensical advice to make a list of words one has trouble with, to practice reading aloud daily, and to have someone monitor this practice, Sheridan offers his adult students virtually no detailed guidance, in the form of specific rules and techniques, for overcoming years of "bad habits." As the review in the *Scots Magazine* notes, beyond general advice, "his pupils are left to themselves" (24 [1762]: 601).

In this sense, he does not really succeed in transforming the art of elocution from a matter of "chance" into a knowable and teachable *techne*, whose rules ideally would be as explicit, well-known, and settled as those of "written language" (21). But his lack of success in producing a fully knowable and teachable *techne* of elocution can be seen as, in a sense, situationally-appropriate rather than simply a failure to complete his stated objectives. Sheridan's simple method of self-improvement tacitly presupposes his implied reader's proximity to, if not yet full inclusion within, "polite life" and "good company" (30). The kind of person whose actions may be "cured" through the method that he recommends is someone who already inhabits a sufficiently respectable social world that this person, or at least this person's intimate acquaintances, can differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable habits. On the one hand, this presupposition helps to maintain the mystery of the established social order by ensuring that only those who already have some habitual knowledge of the forms of social politeness may further improve their positions. On the other hand, access to "good company" and the knowledge of what constitutes polite behaviour is not limited to those born into socially exclusive circles. Although Sheridan's method for curing imperfections does not provide explicit techniques for discriminating and imitating signs of status (Hariman 152), the eighteenth-century context of social flux suggests that many of his adult learners are close enough to "polite life" to be able to discriminate and educate themselves in these signs even if they do not possess much

inherited social prestige. In this way, Sheridan simultaneously opens up the study of elocution to a relatively wide market of status aspirants while constructing a socially exclusive system.

By basing the method for curing defects on the person's own vigilance or that of a close "friend," Sheridan transfers responsibility for his method's effectiveness onto the person of the student: most obviously, he makes the student's diligence in exercise a necessary requirement for success. More fundamentally, though, he makes proper elocution depend on the aspiring, but infected, speaker's ability to correctly appraise his own weaknesses. This process of self-criticism and self-control corresponds with Norbert Elias' identification of factors crucial to the civilized bodies of modern European society. As Shilling explains, Elias' "civilized body . . . has the ability to rationalize and exert a high degree of control over its emotions, to monitor its own actions and those of others, and to internalize a finely demarcated set of rules about what constitutes appropriate behaviour in various situations" (150-51). This internalization of rules and the ability self-consciously to monitor oneself as well as others reflects a kind of "reception regime" (Hodge and Kress 4), a set of standards for decoding and ranking the meanings of particular bodily behaviours. Only if the speaker can properly decode and assess the social appropriateness of his own and others' conduct–for example, by distinguishing between correct and incorrect forms of articulation–will he be able to train himself in a decorous performance regime.

As bodies become more and more "civilized," according to Elias, the thresholds of social shame and embarrassment correspondingly rise (Shilling 160, 151). This argument presupposes a person-act co-existence, since the person's internal experience of shame or embarrassment corresponds with his or her external actions. Sheridan's desire to cultivate these moral thresholds in the person of the aspiring speaker appears, as I have discussed, in his argument that the "known rules" of written language demarcate shameful behaviour from polite, gentlemanly conduct. By advocating an explicit repertoire of rules to standardize "acts" of elocution, Sheridan similarly desires an advance in the threshold of embarrassment that the person performing these acts will experience. Appropriately, therefore, Sheridan advises his adult audience to engage in ongoing practices of "mortification" to rid themselves of the shameful faults that they have identified in themselves. Burke describes mortification as "a kind of governance, an extreme form of 'self-control'." This extreme self-discipline

entails self-division because "the mortified must, with one aspect of himself, be saying no to another aspect of himself" (Burke, *On Symbols* 289). The practices of mortification that Sheridan recommends turn the speaker on himself, always watching critically for and ready to punish his own transgressions. As well, Sheridan's reference to these self-disciplinary practices of mortification as "taking suitable pains" (18) chillingly reminds us that "the learning of self-controls . . . is never a process entirely without pain; it always leaves scars" (Shilling 165). To avoid slipping back into conditions of disgrace requires constant self-vigilance because, Sheridan maintains, the original "bad habits" of his audience of adult speakers have, through time, become strongly engrained. Therefore, they must continuously guard *against* the multiple improprieties to which their original identities make them vulnerable. As a result, the transformation of their identities from corrupt to competent works primarily through the reductive process of circumscribing their habitual actions to avoid excessive, indecorous behaviour. In this way, the person of the aspiring speaker becomes closely associated with the propriety of his actions.

Unlike Sheridan's adult audience of "autodidact[s]" (Porter, *English* 160), the implied students for Austin's system are young male pupils whose instruction is regulated carefully by teachers and detailed rules. As he explains, the immature judgment of his youthful learners makes this external regulation necessary: "On his commencement as a public speaker (*which cannot begin too early*), it is necessary to teach him *everything* and to regulate by rules *every possible* circumstance in his delivery. . . . After sufficient *practice* and *instruction*, he will regulate his own manner according to the suggestions of his judgment and taste" (282). In Austin's pedagogical system, the speaker's ability to judge his actions appropriately depends on extensive prior instruction in the rules of proper delivery. In this way, the "merit of the person" proceeds from his conformity to rules which "prescribe or prohibit certain acts" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 296).

However, even though Austin provides a much more extensive system of rules for training aspiring speakers than Sheridan does, and even though he presumes a group of learners subject to the tutelage of a schoolmaster rather than self-taught adult learners, the principle of self-vigilance likewise underlies his pedagogical method. His discussion of the propriety of shedding tears as a public speaker demonstrates the importance of this principle to his theory of delivery. In this instance, self-vigilance becomes the means through which

the person of the public speaker avoids the charge of acting in an effeminate manner, while benefitting from the highly moving action of shedding tears on rare occasions. Despite classical endorsements of the persuasive power of shedding tears, Austin asserts that tears are a dangerous sign of weakness and effeminacy which threaten the speaker's "manly firmness" and may excite "derision rather than commiseration" (107).

Austin's attitudes about the propriety of shedding tears reflect a contextual tension between endorsements and condemnations of this form of expression for men. On the one hand, the late eighteenth-century cult of "sensibility" frequently represented the shedding of tears by men as a desirable action. Janet Todd cites Lovelace's explanation in *Clarissa* that "tears . . . are no signs of *unmanliness*, but contrarily of a humane nature" (Richardson qtd. in Todd 99) to exemplify the sensibility doctrine that "[t]he man of feeling cries easily and other benevolent characters share his tears" (Todd 99). This doctrine, she argues, represents the body as "a true communicator beyond rational speech" (99). The style of acting popularized by Garrick during the eighteenth century similarly endorsed tears as a positive action. According to Leigh Woods, "[t]ears and other signs of extreme emotions did not represent weakness to Garrick and his audience, but stood rather as an energy which could be channelled constructively into dynamic and altruistic action" (53). To the extent that Austin believes in the body's persuasive power "beyond rational speech," then tears have a role in his system of delivery. However, the "extreme emotions" of the theatre are not, in his view, appropriate to the domain of public oratory. Primarily, then, his discussion indicates a wary, fairly condemnatory attitude about the social propriety of male public speakers shedding tears. This attitude can be linked to the post-revolutionary, conservative reaction to the cult of sensibility. According to Todd, "[t]o many in Britain the cult of sensibility seemed to have feminized the nation, . . . and emasculated men" (133). By contrast with an ostensibly effeminate indulgence in tears, Austin advocates a vigilant self-control that corresponds more with a masculinized "rational and scientific world view" typical of the middling ranks in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Davidoff and Hall 26-27) than it does with the principles of sensibility.

However, instead of banning the potentially effeminate action of tears altogether from the speaker's inventory of socially decorous behaviour, Austin permits "the affecting effusion of tears" a degree of acceptance in his system (113). This acceptance depends on

the speaker's ability to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate occasions and to maintain vigilant self-control even while he sheds a few tears:

> he will restrain himself as much as possible, and not suffer his pathetic imagination to get the better of him, except on the most justifiable occasion; and then he will be brief. If he burst out for a moment, he will stifle his emotion and quickly recover his voice, and speak his feelings with firmness, even though the silent tear obscure his eyes, and trickle down his manly cheek. (113)

This prescriptive passage indicates the great importance that Austin places on the aspiring speaker's ability rationally to control and even *withhold* the self, so that his bodily actions betray no embarrassing habits that would disgrace the person of the speaker. For the aspiring speaker, the art of restraint is a paramount strategy for gaining social acceptance, for being deemed "civilized" in Elias' sense of the bodily rationalization integral to the civilizing process. If the aspiring speaker allows his strong emotions to "get the better of him," then he runs the risk of being judged, not "affecting," but ridiculous. This rule endorses and constructs a speaker characterized primarily by his negative, self-disciplined capacity to "retrench" (Austin 137) his bodily expressions to avoid the social embarrassment of ridicule.

b) Walker's Quasi-Logical Enumeration of Rules

The means for securing the limited ideal of elocutionary competence include adherence both to the fundamental principle of self-vigilance and to numerous specific rules of conduct. The enumeration of copious rules designed to train the speaker in decorous delivery occurs in Walker's and Austin's treatises (the latter to be discussed in the next chapter). This enumeration constitutes a further use of the whole-part quasi-logical argument: having divided the whole study of elocution into its elemental parts, Walker sub-divides each of these parts into an extensive catalogue of specific rules that the aspiring speaker must follow. This technique of vertical differentiation gives his elocutionary system an impression of depth and complexity, while masking its narrow scope.

Walker's intention in developing this detailed system is, as he explains in the

"Preface," to provide "plain practical rules in a scholastic and methodical form, that would convey real and useful instruction" (1: viii). While the "scholastic and methodical form" of his system addresses mainly the interests of an audience of scholarly judges, its "real and useful instruction" is directed primarily to his implied students who, like Austin's students, are expected to practise his rules under the careful guidance of an instructor. While implicitly agreeing with Sheridan's basic argument that elocution requires "settled principles" and "known rules" (21), Walker distinguishes his own work from Sheridan's by clarifying that he intends to provide more than "florid harangues" that recommend but do not produce a practical system of instruction. This attempt to combine a "scholastic . . . form" with "useful instruction" was commended by the *Monthly Review*, which acknowledged the superiority of Walker's system of copious rules to Sheridan's simple, general advice:

> . . . general rules (such, for instance, as, that the reader or speaker should follow nature, or imitate the tones of conversation) can be but of little use, without some certain method of applying them to particular cases.
>
> For these reasons we cannot but approve of the pains which those who have lately written on this subject have taken, to teach the art of elocution by plain practical rules, delivered in a methodical form. The Author of these Elements appears to us, to have been particularly successful in his attempt to reduce the principles and rules of elocution into a system. . . . (65 [1781]: 81)

The schoolroom focus of Walker's treatise (held in tension with his other focus on the world of the "learned") is evident from the prefatory reference to his "long practice, in actual tuition" (1: xiv), a practice described many years later by a former student wishing to praise "the guidance and correction" that Walker offered his pupils:

> Methinks, Mr. Urban, I now see the worthy man, rendered venerable by his years, but still more by his virtues and consummate skill in his profession, standing in the midst of his pupils (who are listening with silent respect and attention) in the very act of communicating his instruction; and surely no object could be more grateful to the sight, or pleasing to the feelings. . . . [A]bove all, the moral and pious tendency of his tuition cannot be too much extolled and admired. He never omitted any opportunity to improve the

> heart, at the same time that he was initiating his pupil in the science of Elocution. (*Gentleman's Magazine* 1807: 1122)

The methodical detail of his system for "real and useful instruction" addresses a pedagogical context that would permit early and extended supervision of the learner's progress through the many stages of the rules for the elements of elocution. This pedagogy is directed, not toward "strong" (Walker 1: 48) speakers who do not require the substitute of a repertoire of rules in order to secure the highly valued competence of decorous physical conduct, but rather "weak" (1: 47) speakers for whom the regulation of rules and exercise provides the educational means for securing adequate, though not excellent, delivery. As Walker explains, in constructing his *techne* of elocution, he has "rather consulted the infirmities than the perfections of my fellow-creatures; by endeavouring to point out those resources which are necessary to the weak, without imposing them as rules upon the strong" (1: 47-48).

Although the numerous rules that Walker articulates for each element of elocution are necessary, he implies, for acquiring competence in public speaking, the rules on their own do not constitute a sufficient means. The student's diligence in practice likewise is crucial. This stress on personal diligence shows another use of the person-act scheme of argumentation: the person's inherent virtue of diligence underlies the success of the rules for action articulated in Walker's system:

> Nothing but habitual practice will give the musician his neatness of execution, the painter his force of colouring, and even the poet the happiest choice and arrangement of his words and thoughts. How then can we expect that a luminous and elegant expression in reading and speaking can be acquired without a similar attention to habitual practice? This is the golden key to every excellence, but can be purchased only by labour, unremitting labour, and perseverance. (2: 119-120)

Appropriately, Walker, who has already characterized himself as a persevering, industrious writer and teacher, invokes similar traits in his implied students. For both Walker and his students, extreme diligence is a necessary trait for success precisely because they do not "naturally" possess "excellence"; instead, they must consciously and unremittingly labour to achieve the social cachet of a "luminous and elegant expression" or, in Walker's case, the

cultural capital of being recognized as the author of a systematic, scholarly inquiry. By naming "habitual practice" as the primary method through which both he and his implied students may approach, if not actually arrive at, higher social and disciplinary positions, and by characterizing this labour as "unremitting," Walker postpones the question of when success or the lack of success can be measured definitively. In this way, he introduces a kind of perpetual motivation to the aspirant's efforts to achieve the distant ideal of excellence. The copiousness of the rules that the student must master through his diligent practice further extends the magnitude of his labour and defers the attainment of "elegant" elocution. In part, then, this system turns the student's focus away from the final "end" and onto the "means" as valuable in themselves. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain that "[a]n activity may . . . be evaluated as a means. This evaluation does not result from the transformation of an end into a means, but from the importance something . . . is recognized to possess as an instrument" (276). The rules of Walker's system combined with the student's "habitual practice" are the valuable instruments of elocutionary pedagogy.

In addition to possessing an inherent character of diligence, the kind of person suited to learning Walker's system can be deduced from the specialized grammatical terminology which he uses to articulate his rules. His use of this terminology means that his readers must already be able to decipher the significations of the complex meta-language of grammar before they can practise the ostensibly "plain practical rules" that Walker has laid down. His ideal reader is someone who already possesses not only a practical mastery of correct grammatical forms, but also a symbolic or reflexive mastery of the critical codings (i.e., the rules, the labels, the concepts) which explicate the practices of grammar. Although he may flatter himself that his system provides "real and useful instruction" through "plain practical rules" for all those classified as "weak," in reality, the rules and principles articulated in his treatise are already socially exclusive because they are fully accessible only to an audience familiar with the specialized technical terminology of verbal grammar and able to comprehend abstract, scholarly language. His first rule of punctuation, for example, instructs the reader as follows: "Rule I. Every direct period consists of two principal constructive parts, between which parts the greater pause must be inserted" (1: 64). Other rules, and explanations for these rules, employ a host of technical grammatical terms (e.g., "nominative case," "genitive case," "the object and the adjunct,"

"clause," "concluding series," "penultimate member," "complex sentence," "loose sentence," "substantive," to cite just a few), which together severely constrain the accessibility of Walker's text.

Clearly, such a scholarly, exclusive discourse appeals primarily to those members of Walker's implied audience who inhabit "the philosophical and critical community" responsible for defining the standards of language use that the broader (but still exclusive) reading public sought to practise (Ulman 32). The youthfulness of Walker's implied students suggests that most would not possess the high literacy necessary to decode appropriately the meta-language of grammatical terms and concepts. Therefore, the successful employment of Walker's treatise as a tool for learning proper elocution requires the mediation of masters of elocution who will decode and enforce the language of Walker's rules for the students they supervise. Unlike Sheridan's *Lectures* which attempt to provide the adult learner with simple prescriptions that he can apply on his own, Walker's system addresses the context of an educational institution in which schoolmasters "regulate by rules *every possible* circumstance" (Austin 282) in their young pupils' delivery.

Concluding Remarks

The *logos* of the middle sections of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's treatises thus address both readers interested in developing and enforcing standards of language use, and readers who wish to learn how to act according to these standards. By combining substantive reasoning "based on the structure of reality" (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca ix) with the formal appeals of quasi-logical argumentation, these writers present a logical case for valuing the new "reality" of elocutionary study to both groups of readers. In part, this value derives from the "apparent neutrality" of the academic systems these writers develop (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 477). However, as Sheridan's dysanalogy between written and spoken language shows, the value of the new elocutionary field also is linked explicitly to the issue of social status–specifically, to securing (or not losing) the cultural capital of gentlemanly status by conforming to a systematic *techne* of elocution. Even though the

elocutionary *technai* are intended as applied systems of instruction, the competent practices of elocution that they define require a highly developed "receptive competence." This competence is required not only of the teachers and scholars positioned as external judges of aspiring speakers, but of the aspirants themselves whose command of the codes of proper conduct depends on their ability to vigilantly "guard against bad habits" (Austin 124). Further, the extensive, complex detail of Walker's and Austin's rules for proper conduct (see Chapter Four for a fuller analysis of Austin's system), while it may help to make elocution a knowable and teachable art, also increases the possibilities for students to transgress these rules and thus to "disgrace" (Sheridan 21) themselves. As well, the division of elocutionary study into multiple parts and sub-parts focuses the learner's attention onto the instrumental "means" rather than the desired "end" of acquiring competent delivery. These quasi-logical divisions foreground the diligent process of learning each of the many steps within each rudimentary part, rather than the achievement of effective delivery as a whole.

In the ways that I have analyzed, the *logos* of the middle sections articulates a rationally impressive case for the scholarly and social value of systematic elocutionary study. However, a fundamental tension underlies these substantive and formal arguments, namely the tension between the competent speaker who successfully learns the "rudiments" of delivery (Sheridan 95) by following the elocutionists' prescriptive *technai* and the "strong" speaker for whom, as Walker explains, rules are an imposition not a help (1: 47-48). Austin likewise characterizes his implied student as someone for whom a middling position of competence, rather than excellence, should be adequate. The reason for studying the art of delivery, he maintains, is not because "[t]hese acquisitions are . . . equally within the reach of all" but because "it is shameful to be the last in the race of honour" (124). According to this logic, the elocutionary systems promise to help "weak" (Walker 1: 48) speakers avoid disgrace, but they do not offer any sure methods for achieving the "honour" of truly excellent delivery. Nonetheless, the image of an ideal orator who commands an emotionally powerful, rather than decorously restrained, delivery frames the more circumspect person of the competent speaker implied by the elocutionary *technai*. As I shall discuss in Chapter Five, this ideal orator inspires but exceeds the scope, and in some ways contradicts the objectives, of the elocutionary systems of instruction.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VISUAL ORDERING OF THE SPEAKER'S BODY IN AUSTIN'S SYSTEM

The detailed system of rhetorical gesture which makes up the second half of Austin's *Chironomia* contributed distinctively to the elocutionary movement not only because of its extended focus on this part of delivery but also because of the many visual illustrations Austin included to clarify the operations of his system. Prior to the *Chironomia*, James Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* (1761) had provided a lengthy descriptive catalogue of the physical expressions of different passions or attitudes, but these descriptions were purely verbal. Austin's treatise, by contrast, integrates visual illustrations with words to represent gesture more fully than preceding elocutionary texts.[1] Most strikingly, the *Chironomia* includes a separate section of eleven one-page "plates" illustrating the various forms of physical delivery that make up Austin's system; as well, in the main part of his text, Austin uses other visual forms of a scientific nature to elucidate his system, most notably symbolic codes, lists, and tables.

Although the "visual literacy" of Austin's treatise is mainly one in which "visual communication has been made subservient to language" (Kress and van Leeuwen 8), his visual forms have rhetorical functions that exceed a merely supporting role to the dominant verbal text. As Kress and van Leeuwen argue, "the visual component of a text is an

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[1]Like the *Chironomia*, John Bulwer's *Chirologia* (1644) provided detailed illustrations of rhetorical action, specifically hand gestures. However, there is no definite evidence that Austin was familiar with this text. As well, this text was published some 100 years before the flourishing of the British elocutionary movement; as such, it is an important forerunner to the elocutionary texts published during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, but in the absence of evidence that it influenced Austin *et al.*, it is beyond the scope of this study.

independently organised and structured message," which repays analysis in its own right and not only from the perspective of the structures and functions of verbal text (4-5). Austin's various visual forms contribute in important ways to the construction and interpretation of his system, much as technical illustrations elucidate a scientific analysis. The complex layering of visual illustrations, symbolic codes, written descriptions, and external references produces, in this section of Austin's treatise, a "stratified" technical document. According to Bruno Latour,

> The difference between a regular text in prose and a technical document is the stratification of the latter. The text is arranged in layers. Each claim is interrupted by references outside the texts or inside the texts to other parts, to figures, to columns, tables, legends, graphs. Each of these in turn may send you back to other parts of the same texts or to more outside references. (Latour 48)

Austin's visual text conforms principally to what Kress and van Leeuwen call a "scientific/technological coding orientation" (53). This orientation to the world privileges an abstract, generalized, non-naturalistic representation of reality over visual images which emphasize more naturalistic, sensory features such as colour, texture, depth, and setting. The visual *and* verbal partitioning of the public speaker's body and gestures contributes further to this sense of the scientifically analyzed body. Even though Austin presents his work as an educational text, his visual ordering of the speaker's body addresses primarily an implied audience of specialized readers interested mainly in the scientific dissection and appraisal of competent speaking rather than readers striving to learn its successful practice.

The scientific-technical nature of Austin's discourse on gesture is not surprising, given his active participation in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin's amateur society of scholars interested both in ancient learning and in science and modern literature (Gilbert 227-28). As a member of this society, Austin presented and had published in the Academy's *Transactions* at least three scientific articles: "Description of an Apparatus for Impregnating Water and Other Substances Strongly with Carbonic Acid Gas" (1790), "Description of an Apparatus for Transferring Gasses over Water or Mercury" (1799), and "Description of a Portable Barometer" (1803). In addition, he submitted in 1813 an article "On a New Construction of a Condenser and Air Pump" to the more prestigious Royal

Society of London, addressed in letter form to the leading chemist and president of the Royal Society, Sir Humphry Davy.

These articles demonstrate Austin's involvement, in a modest and amateur way, with the flourishing field of chemistry of the time. According to Jan Golinski, late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century developments in chemistry stressed this field "as a means of cultural and material improvement, capable of mobilizing the energies of gentlemen and aristocrats in the pursuit of national progress" (7-8). Davy's approach to chemistry in particular, Golinski claims, emphasized "how its applications could benefit humanity in a stable and stratified society" (9). If, as M. Berman argues, scientific societies of the era were motivated by the ideal of "the wealthy amateur pursuing scientific research at his leisure" ("Hegemony" 34) and therefore offered an "obvious avenue to improved social status" (36), then Austin's participation in the RIA was a means for securing cultural capital while contributing to the advancement of chemical knowledge.

However, like his representation of the purpose and value of his rhetorical system, Austin characterizes his forays into chemistry in modest, obliging terms. For example, he writes, "As a small attempt towards the improvement of this instrument, I beg leave to offer to the Academy the following description of a portable barometer" ("Description of a Portable Barometer" 100); and to Sir Humphry Davy, "According to your desire, I give you a description of my glass condenser, which, upon inspection, you were so obliging as to consider might possibly be found useful in some of those extensive and profound chemical researches, in which you are happily engaged" ("On a New Construction" 138). Austin's articles do not recount the dramatic findings of innovative empirical experiments, but instead describe the construction and application of chemical apparatus that supports the central experimental activities of leading scientists. Similarly, for the most part Austin positions his systematic study of rhetorical gesture as supportive of, and hence subordinate to, the higher elements of verbal eloquence and the "internal" parts of oratory.

Austin's familiarity with the field of chemistry helps to explicate the forms and functions of his visual illustrations in the *Chironomia*. Specifically, the stratification of verbal and visual text—of coded legends and outside references in his scientific articles—provides a context for understanding similar forms of stratification in the *Chironomia*. As well, we can read Austin's ordering of the speaker's body in the

Chironomia as linked to the contemporary interest in devising a uniform chemical nomenclature and in clearly depicting chemical apparatus. According to David Knight,

> By the later eighteenth century, the idea that chemistry was a mystery had been generally given up . . . research in chemistry soon became something for men of genius to perform with expensive apparatus, although its new language, devised by Lavoisier and his associate, was intended to be open, clear, and unambiguous. If we follow the progress of chemistry . . ., we see in its visual part a transition from pictures and illustrations through to tables and diagrams; and this is closely related to the growth of a chemical community, all trained in much the same way so that they could interpret these abstract forms of visual language, just as they could make sense of the brief and impersonal text which the illustrations accompanied. ("Illustrating" 136)

In the *Chironomia*, Austin articulates a system of gesture which in many ways conforms to these developments in contemporary chemistry: he attempts to devise a "new language" that will clearly and unambiguously denote the copious elements of rhetorical gesture; he stratifies "impersonal" verbal descriptions with visual illustrations to describe the parts and positions of the generic speaker's body; he uses abstract tables to order the symbolic elements of this new system of notation and the body positions to which these symbols refer; and his diagrammatic drawings of rhetorical gesture depict the generic speaker as more of a mechanical "apparatus" than a live, persuasive performer. As Knight argues, these forms of communication–despite the intention of openness and accessibility–presume a specialized community of readers trained to decipher the abstract, non-naturalistic conventions of a scientific discourse.

Although Austin's specialized visual-verbal discourse in the *Chironomia* gives an initial impression of logical, scientific coherence, in reality this discourse contains frequent incongruities which seem to be amplified, not reduced, by the visual illustrations he claims clarify his verbal text (vii). As with the other elocutionary works, the instabilities of Austin's system are, I suggest, a symptom of the *Chironomia's* mixed implied readership composed primarily of a culturally prestigious group of "liberal scholar[s]" (vi) interested in the analysis and appraisal, not the practice, of the codes and standards for polite

communication, and secondarily of a young group of pupils for whom prescriptive guidance in the performance of bodily decorum is intended to help them behave appropriately in "the great theatres of public eloquence" (Austin xii). To negotiate this tension, Austin constructs a technically sophisticated system that appeals to the former group, while including prescriptive rules for the latter. As with Walker and Sheridan, the result of this combination is uneasy. In this case, the predominance of Austin's abstract, analytic discourse in the construction of his system of gesture forces its practical, prescriptive dimension into the margins. As a consequence, the *Chironomia* articulates principally a method for analyzing and decoding, rather than for learning and producing, proper rhetorical gesture.

The System of Symbolic Notation

During the late eighteenth century, the field of chemistry experienced "*la contagion nomenclative*" (Crosland 203). This phenomenon, as Knight argues, constitutes a significant dimension of the scientific attempt to order the world logically: "An important aspect of classification is naming. Once we can give names to things we have come some way towards ordering them; and the names may even indicate the place things have in the order" (*Ordering the World* 24). The reforms to chemical nomenclature proposed by Lavoisier and his associates demonstrate, says Knight, such an attempt. But these reforms were only one of several new systems developed during this period.[2] As an amateur chemist and member of the Royal Irish Academy, Austin witnessed–if he did not actually suffer from–the naming "contagion" at first hand: his articles demonstrate his acceptance of the new terminology proposed by Lavoisier (for instance, he uses the terms "oxygen" and "carbonic acid"), but he also no doubt was familiar with Stephen Dickson's rejection of Lavoisier's system. Dickson, a professor at Trinity College, Dublin, expounded his views in his *Essay on Chemical Nomenclature* (1796) and in a paper which he read to the RIA in

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[2]See Crosland for more on the different chemical nomenclatures proposed during this period.

1800. This context of scholarly interest in devising a new methodical language for naming chemical substances, based on "sound principles" yet amenable to minor reforms in the future (Crosland 179), helps to explain Austin's similar effort in the *Chironomia* to develop a new methodical language for notating and classifying rhetorical gestures.[3]

Austin presents this system of notation, or new "language" of gesture, as the most important aspect of his contribution to the study of delivery:

> One of the reasons which may be assigned for the neglect of cultivating the art of gesture, is the want of a copious and simple language for expressing its different modifications with brevity and perspicuity . . . . [I]t has been the misfortune of this art, that to display it fully and intelligibly is most difficult, for it has hitherto been unfurnished with appropriate written language . . . . To produce a language of symbols so simple and so perfect as to render it possible with facility to represent every action of an orator . . . and to record them for posterity, and for repetition and practice, as well as common language is recorded . . . may not be deemed unworthy of attention . . . (271, 274-5)

By making the *notation* of gesture, rather than gesture itself, the foundation of and motivation for his whole system, Austin makes the abstract analysis of bodily conduct more significant than the embodied practices themselves. The rules for recording and decoding the meanings of gesture within his system are more important than the rules for producing those meanings in real, material performances. Even more than Walker, Austin focuses on developing an abstract, theoretical discourse *about* delivery, a kind of meta-language that can "represent" and "record" physical actions but does not necessarily show how to *practise* them. This hierarchy, in which notation takes precedence over performance, privileges the forms of writing and verbal language over those of non-verbal, bodily persuasion.

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[3]The development of chemical nomenclature is by no means the only contextual activity that resembles Austin's efforts to develop a system of specialized names and symbols for gesture: contemporary music and dance are just two other fields in which symbolic notation was a primary concern. Joshua Steele's *Prosodia Rationalis* (1775) best exemplifies the links between musical notation and vocal delivery; Austin's system is unique because it devises a system of notation for gestural delivery.

Paradoxically, making gesture intelligible means transforming it from embodied communication into a kind of written, linguistic code. Austin's system thus positions the reader primarily as a distant, rational analyst and superior observer of gesture, rather than an embodied, impassioned learner and performer.

But if Austin is ambitious to produce a "simple" yet "copious" language that will express the different modifications of gesture with "brevity and perspicuity," then the way in which he describes the composition of this special discourse in his chapter "On the Notation of Gesture" shows its inconsistencies and limitations. Most notably, his code draws on a hybrid mix of pre-formed symbolic systems, depending on the conventions of both "common" verbal language and Arabic numerals. While this mix helps to expand the range of gestures that Austin's system can symbolize, it creates–as Austin himself acknowledges–ambiguities and inconsistencies in the system's application. But instead of attempting to obscure the imperfections of his final system of notation, Austin chooses to foreground the narrative of his process of putting the code together. This narrative once again asks the reader to approve Austin's work on the basis of his diligent, well-intentioned effort rather than on the actual success or coherence of his final product.

The twenty-six letters of the alphabet form the basic set of symbols that he uses in his notation. Each letter represents, in abbreviated form, a particular modification of gesture. These modifications are described using the vocabulary of common language. Further, Austin mnemonically connects the single symbolic letters with the descriptive words they stand for by using the first letters of these words: for example, the symbol "a" stands for "ascending"; the symbol "b" stands for "backwards," and so on. This system addresses the main limitation of "common language" for noting gestures because it avoids the unwieldy quantity of words required to describe them fully. According to Austin, "the number of words necessary for any such description is so very great, that to particularize the gestures used in a few sentences would occupy in common language almost as much room as a long oration" (277). Austin's criticism of "common" verbal language creates space for his own, innovative symbolic system of notation which will reduce the space that the description of gestures occupies while nonetheless permitting a more extensive and refined representation than "common language" allows. By implication, those who read and speak this specialized language will, like the language itself, display refinement.

However, his choice of the alphabet as the basic code for his system demonstrates his desire to maintain a strong connection between his new system and the "ordinary language." To justify this decision, he candidly explains that initially he considered inventing completely "new names" for signifying the minute modifications of gesture, but on reflection he realized the extreme "embarrassment" of such an approach. Therefore, he "determined to try every contrivance which might extend the resources of the ordinary language" (357). This decision to draw on "ordinary" language to develop his symbolic codes seems to conflict with his earlier critique of its shortcomings for his specialized purposes, but it also indicates his desire to make his code "open" (Knight, "Illustrating" 136) to a more general readership. The deliberate association of his new system with "ordinary language" shows how Austin tries to negotiate the problem of appealing simultaneously to "learned and lay audiences" (Ulman 35). Further, by modestly presenting his novel system of notation in the terms of established, common language, Austin reinforces the disciplinary decorum of his project and thereby avoids his own potential "embarrassment:" he does not make the presumptuous claim to have invented an entirely new language but carefully situates his work within the framework of dominant cultural forms and conventions. At the same time, however, he preserves the *uncommon* value of his symbolic system by emphasizing its distinctions from and improvements to the resources of ordinary language. Thus, Austin's decision to associate his symbolic language of gesture with ordinary written language is rhetorically strategic; however, as he himself admits, this choice leads his method into a series of logical "difficulties" which, in order to be "got over" (357), require a variety of devices.

Austin's narrative of the process of his composition reveals the limitations of his simple, fixed set of alphabetical symbols to "discriminate" the "minute and undefined differences" among gestures (357). Most importantly, he encountered the problem of several names of gestures beginning with the same letter, which meant that the signification of the symbol "a" became multiple and ambiguous (i.e., did it refer to *ascending* or *across* or *advancing* or . . . ?) . Initially, Austin he tried to resolve this and other difficulties by resorting to what he terms "*literary* contrivances:" for example, he introduced distinctions by means of upper and lower case letters, and also by varying on occasion the rule that the symbolic letter is necessarily identical with the first letter of the descriptive word (e.g.,

across became symbolized by "c" rather than "a"; *extended* by "x" rather than "e") (358-59). Eventually, however, Austin discovered (so he tells us) that the "resources of ordinary language" were insufficient for his purposes, and so he supplemented this basic approach with an altogether different method for reducing the ambiguities and amplifying the distinctions of meaning possible through his basic alphabetic code. This scientific method is analogous, Austin says, to the system of "Arabic numerals" in which the value, or meaning, of each numeral is determined by its place in a sequence of numerals (359).[4] In the same way, Austin radically augments the possible distinctions among his symbolic letters by making their place in the sequence of the notation a primary marker of their meaning. Thus, for example, in the sequence of symbolic letters "phfd," the first letter relates to the position of the hand ("prone"), the second to the elevation of the arm ("horizontal"), the third to the transverse position of the arm ("forwards"), and the fourth to the direction of the motion ("descending") (359-60). Conceivably, a sequence of notation could include the same symbol twice, as in "phxx," but the meanings of the repeated symbols would be distinguished by their position in the series. Thus, the first "x" would stand for the transverse position of the arm ("extended") and the second "x" for the force of the motion ("extreme").

This alternative method of distinguishing the meanings of the symbols requires the reader to decode the alphabet in a new way: a series of letters with no spaces between them does not construct a single meaningful word, but instead a series of separate meanings, represented in highly condensed form. And while each symbol has a mnemonic association with a particular descriptive term, this association is determined not only by the symbol itself but also by the placement of the symbol in the sequence. Additionally, Austin extends the possible range of distinct significations of his code through another visual orientation, this time following the conventions neither of verbal nor numerical language: when a line of notation occurs above the line of text to which it refers, the symbols refer to the movements of the upper body; when one occurs below, it refers to the actions of the lower body. The

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[4]As Austin explains in a footnote, "In the management of the symbolic letters there is some analogy to the disposal of the arabic numerals, in which each is of value according to its place, though expressed by the same name. Thus each symbol in the sum 3333, is known to be of different value" (315).

visual orientation which Austin employs in this case is, appropriately, that of the (standing) human body.

Founded partly in "the resources of ordinary language," but made applicable only by recourse to the sequential order of arabic numerals, and further supplemented by visual analogy to the erect human body, Austin's system of notation is hybrid from the outset. This hybridity indicates the tension in Austin's situation of trying at once to make his system accessible to a relatively "broad audience" and to construct an academically credible and innovative technical code for gesture. Caught between the desire to invent a wholly new, scientifically perfect language for gesture and the conflicting desire to avoid appearing offensively presumptuous to his scholarly judges, striving on the one hand to preserve the exclusive value of his system and on the other to make it sufficiently accessible to his implied users, Austin articulates a logically imperfect but situationally understandable system of notation.

Interestingly, the narrative that he recounts to explain how he constructed this system highlights, rather than obscures, the sense of its mutability and incompletion. In part, Austin's story emphasizes his ingenuity in discovering new "contrivances" for extending the scope of his code, but it suggests more strongly the virtual impossibility of his task and the limitations of his final product. Recalling his opening strategies of negative politeness, this section of his treatise includes repeated disclaimers about the success of his system (it is, he says, "readily acknowledged to be imperfect" [275]); instead, he claims "indulgence" more on the basis of his intentions and his diligence in attempting the exceptionally difficult task of producing a system of notation for gesture, than on the final "execution" of this system (275-76). This strategy of *ethos* takes for granted that Austin's audience values–as he does–the goal of systematically encoding gesture; it also predisposes his audience to judge his work more favourably than they might were he to presume to claim complete success in meeting this goal. And it decorously re-inscribes the unstable, marginal status of his elocutionary project: although Austin seeks acceptance for his work within scholarly culture by writing it in the validated terms of abstract, scientific discourse, his negatively polite admission of its imperfections shows his embedded, disciplinary sense of his own limits, as well as the limits of his bodily subject-matter.

Body Parts and Positions

Having established the priority of abstract notation to his conception of gesture in rhetorical delivery, Austin describes, in an impersonal, technical fashion, the various bodily parts and positions which this system represents. This section of the *Chironomia* (Chapters XI-XII) articulates verbally what `is plates illustrate visually. In these chapters, he makes continuous cross-references to these plates, thereby showing the interdependence of visual and verbal text within his treatise and increasing its technical stratification.

The division of the body into its fundamental parts and positions has important implications for the ideological scripting of bodily decorum enacted within Austin's treatise. Both Michel Foucault and Norbert Elias note the significance of differentiating the whole body into smaller components as part of the socio-political process of education in the norms of regulated, civilized behaviour. The *Chironomia* articulates a model for this educational process, though this textual representation of an "analytic pedagogy" (Foucault, *Discipline* 159) is no guarantee that the teachers and students of elocution to whom Austin addresses his work will activate this model successfully. In fact, as Robb and Thonsenn note, at least one set of students subjected to Austin's pedagogical system rebelled against it.[5] As a rhetorical model of bodily regulation, however, the *Chironomia* operates, as Foucault explains, not by "treating the body, *en masse*, 'wholesale', as if it were an indissociable unity, but of working it 'retail', individually; . . . of obtaining holds upon it at the level of the mechanism itself–movements, gestures, attitudes, rapidity: an infinitesimal power over the active body" (*Discipline* 137). Austin's differentiation of the whole body into its multiple parts thus scripts the implied student's active body as a "mechanism" to be analyzed and manipulated by the "scrupulously 'classificatory' eye of the master"

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[5]Robb and Thonssen report that Jonathan Barber's students resisted his instruction based on the *Chironomia* by hoisting his bamboo sphere, which he used to teach Austin's system, on the top of a barber's pole; "[t]he students found his teaching too mechanical and demanding" (xvii-xviii).

(*Discipline* 147). For Elias, dividing the whole body into parts that can be separately managed similarly contributes to the social process of producing rationally controlled bodies, but he emphasizes the internalization of the masterful eye: *self*-control constitutes one of the fundamental features of the civilizing process manifested through increasing bodily regulation and decorum (Shilling 164). To the extent that Austin's treatise addresses teachers of elocution, rather than private adult learners, Foucault's conception of the externalized ordering of the master's eye makes sense; however, by learning to identify their bodies through the parts and positions that his system names, the students of Austin's system will also, ideally, internalize this representation and the techniques of self-management that it makes possible. In this way, Austin's differentiation of the body models both an external technology of power for masters of elocution to apply to their students, and–perhaps to a lesser degree–an internalized technology of the self, through which students "effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies" for the purposes of self-transformation into a higher state of being (Foucault, "Technologies" 18).

Like Walker's and Sheridan's division of elocution into its multiple constituent parts, the rhetorical technique of division which Austin employs in this section of the *Chironomia* increases the sense of his subject-matter's depth, while eliding the limits of his conception of bodily action. From the student's perspective, the vertical detail of these divisions may defer his realization of the limited results that Austin's system of instruction offers. However, while Austin may hope that his representation of the body divided into parts will impress both his scholarly and student readers as a comprehensive rendition, in reality his representation is highly selective and inconsistent, and it emphasizes the abstract separation rather than the embodied integration of its parts. These tensions surface in the different lists that name and order the parts included in his system of bodily action, in the impersonal technical language which describes the positions of the arms and hands, and in his tabular representation of the fifteen systematic positions for the arms.

Austin bases his argument that the "classification and nomenclature" of an "almost . . . infinite" variety of rhetorical gestures is possible on the premise that, within their variety, they share similarities and relations (293). This premise implies that the various parts of the body which perform these gestures also are connected and cannot, says Austin,

"in truth, be considered separate" (294). This "truth," however, presents obstacles to the articulation of his system, since this articulation calls for the careful differentiation of gestures and body parts at the same time as it requires the assumption of a foundational "whole" which encompasses all these differences. To deal with this incompatibility, Austin does not reject the essential "truth" he has just stated but instead argues from the new premise of "convenience" for the separation of the body into distinct parts, and for the examination of each part according to the main gestures it performs. By distinguishing between two kinds of reality (the foundational, immutable reality that the parts of the body cannot be separated and the immediate, expedient reality that a systematic knowledge of this whole requires precise separations), Austin clears a space for his subsequent utterances. Implicitly, he justifies his system's divisions as the means to a higher end, namely an understanding of how all the parts of the body function together, as a whole, in the performance of rhetorical gesture. In reality, however, Austin's text (both its verbal and visual components) ends up enacting primarily the principle of segmentation, with few counterbalancing explanations of how to re-integrate into a coherent, effective whole these many parts. As a result, it becomes unclear which reality is "in truth" primary.

In these chapters, Austin's use of lists and tables visually reinforces the separations among body parts and positions. In identifying the body according to its parts, he initially mentions "the head, the body, and the limbs" (293). Soon after, however, he offers a different, more formalized list of "the most distinguished parts of the body" which he presents as the basis for classifying gesture: "1 The head. 2 The shoulders. 3 The trunk or body. 4 The arms. 5 The hands and fingers. 6 The lower limbs and knees. 7 The feet" (294). By enumerating t`ese parts, Austin gives the impression of an exhaustive division of the whole body into all its components. But despite its appearance, this second list is actually highly selective. It corresponds more to the Bahktinian category of the "classical body" representative of "high official culture" (Stallybrass and White 21) than to a "warts and all" (Hall 6) naturalistic depiction of real, active bodies. The "typical" (Hall 6) body that Austin lists is discrete, decorous, erect, and masculine. Indeed, the presumption of the public speaker's masculine gender is so strong that Austin does not bother explaining this directly; instead, he allows his drawings and his subsequent explanations of desirable qualities to reinforce what he (and his implied audience) already take for granted. Thus, for

example, in justifying his treatment of "the feet" prior to the body's other parts, he emphasizes their foundational role in establishing the "manly dignity and grace" of the "standing figure." The culturally validated term "manly" here refers not simply to "rude strength" but to a higher, more complex class of manliness that combines "stability" with elegance (295). Even though a few of Austin's illustrations depict female figures, these figures occur only in his plates of "complex significant gestures" which are peripheral to his main system (see final section of this chapter). Similarly, the concept of female speakers is peripheral to his view of rhetorical delivery.

The order in which Austin discusses each of these bodily parts does not follow the order of his original lists. Most noticeably, his discussion begins at the end, with "the feet" rather than "the head." Whereas his list moves from the most noble to least noble part, his actual treatment moves from the most basic to the most refined and expressive part. The general instability of Austin's principles of order becomes even more apparent, however, in his subsequent analytic discussion. For example, the inversion of the list does not remain complete: Austin now moves from the feet to the arms to the hands, not from the feet to the hands to the arms. In addition to this difference in the overall ordering of the parts, Austin's analysis of the parts omits and conflates some of the parts named in the list. Thus, he subsumes (with no explanation) the positions and movements of the "lower limbs and knees" within his discussion of the positions of the feet. Similarly, he collapses the "head," "shoulders," "eyes," and "body" all into one very short chapter, despite his inclusion of a passage from Quintilian which lauds the head as that part of the body which contributes principally "to the expression of grace if delivery" (349). As a result of these re-organizations, the arms and the hands end up receiving the greatest attention (one fairly lengthy chapter each) in what is thus clearly a highly selective analysis of the public speaker's body.

One way in which Austin emphasizes the role of the arms and the hands is by differentiating their many possible positions. In Chapters XII and XIII, he identifies these positions partly by assigning different descriptive *words* to the different forms. For example, the words "downwards," "horizontal," and "elevated" refer to the possible elevations of the arms, while the terms "across," "forwards," "oblique," "extended," and "backwards" describe the transverse directions of the arms around the vertical axis of the

body. But the resources of "common" language only partly contribute to this descriptive analysis. More notably, Austin stratifies scientific-style languages to specify the arms' full range of distinct actions. Although his descriptive words do have "common" significations, they also refer in a technical sense to the fundamental *coordinates* in Austin's geometrical system. These meanings can be properly understood only by reference to the geometric coordinates of the generic speaker's body, as specified in the spherical illustration of Plate 2 (see figure 5). Austin begins his chapter on the positions of the arms by verbally describing, in dense, technical language, this geometric illustration. In turn, the symbolic code that he uses in the illustration to identify the different planes for the body's motions refers us back to the descriptive words (e.g., the code "q" on the illustration refers to the word "oblique").

Austin's verbal descriptions of the arms' actions thus require the additional explanation of visual images; although this cross-referencing contributes to the technical stratification of his text, it also diminishes its accessibility. As well, both the verbal and visual texts operate according to a "scientific/technical coding orientation" which validates an abstract, segmented, and intricately classified view of reality. Because this coding implies a learned audience, it increases the scholarly nature of Austin's treatise; however, this coding simultaneously threatens to alienate his implied students because it is difficult to penetrate if one has only the "resources of common language," because it presents a segmented and objectified model of the speaker's body, and because its detailed complexity augments the possibilities for transgressing the boundaries of proper conduct.

Austin further develops the technical stratification of the arms' positions with a table, included in the main text, intended to help clarify his verbal descriptions (see figure 1). The conventions of this visual clarification, however, demonstrate the specialized readership to whom Austin primarily addresses his text, one familiar with the conventions of scientific discourse in which illustrations of this nature were common.[6]

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[6]Scientific books and periodicals of the period show in particular the common convention of creating tables with little if any horizontal grid lines between rows of information; usually horizontal lines were used to separate titles from the main body. Vertical grid lines between columns of information were common but not always used, especially for tables containing only two or three columns of information. For numerous

Fig.	No.		Noted
		1st Line.	
19.	1.	Directs the arm downwards across - -	*dc*
20.	2.	- - downwards forwards - -	*df*
21.	3.	- - downwards oblique - -	*dq*
22.	4.	- - downwards extended - -	*dx*
23.	5.	- - downwards backwards - -	*db*
		2d Line.	
24.	1.	- - horizontal across - -	*hc*
25	2.	- - horizontal forwards - -	*hf*
26.	3.	- - horizontal oblique - -	*hq*
27.	4.	- - horizontal extended - -	*hx*
28.	5.	- - horizontal backwards - -	*hb*
		3d Line.	
29.	1.	Directs the arm elevated across - - -	*cc*
30.	2.	- - elevated forwards -	*cf*
31.	3.	- - elevated oblique - -	*cq*
32.	4.	- elevated extended - -	*cx*
33.	5.	- - elevated backwards - -	*cb*

Figure 1: Table of Arm Positions

Because the elements of Austin's table consist "almost entirely of words, not quantities, so they may seem more a part of the text than of . . . pictures" (Myers 243). However, as Greg Myers argues in a recent analysis of scientific illustration, the data in a table of this nature is "not part of the text because the clusters of words are not be read sequentially, left to right and then to the next line and so on, but are each to be read as a unit of information that is related to other units in its row and column" (243). Therefore, a reader familiar with the conventions of scientific illustration would understand that Austin organizes his table according to the primary coordinate of the vertical direction (with its three possible positions: "downwards," "elevated," and "horizontal"), and makes the coordinate of the transverse direction, with its five possibilities, secondary to this first class. Although in verbal language the sequence of the descriptive terms "downwards" and

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examples of scientific tables of the period, see *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, vols. 80-90, especially the Society's monthly "Meterological Journal."

"across" (for example) would not significantly change the meaning of the description when they modify the noun "arm," in Austin's numerically and geometrically organized system the sequential order of the terms is essential to understanding their meaning. Only "arm downwards across" makes sense in this framework, not "arm across downwards."

Relating units of information vertically foregrounds the connections between each systematic position through a principle of numerical ordering. The order of the figures in the first vertical column and the order of the numbers that Austin assigns to each of the positions in the second column make sense because they proceed in precise sequence from lowest to highest number (i.e., 19-33 and 1-5). The inclusion of two columns of numbers immediately beside each other, however, fosters confusion and suggests that Austin is unsure which sequence of numbers fundamentally organizes his analysis of the fifteen systematic positions of the arms. In general, a vertical reading makes the speaker's arm positions intelligible by allowing the analytic reader to see their systematic arrangement as a whole, and to compare the discrete units of this arrangement. A horizontal reading, on the other hand, gives the reader detailed information about each particular position. But though a horizontal reading approximates the conventions of written communication (i.e., reading a line of text from left to write), it differs from this convention in the sense that it does not follow the rules of linguistic grammar. For example, the connections between the columns are conveyed implicitly through the graphical form of the table, not through explicit verbal connectors and modifiers. As well, the symbol of the period, which succeeds each of the numbers, does not signify, as it typically does in written language, the end of a sentence. The relatively long, but untitled, columns of verbal description about each position which follow after the columns of numbers show the complexity of Austin's method of classification: partly numerical, partly verbal, partly alphabetical. Notably, the verbal descriptions are almost, but not quite, grammatical sentences: they include a verb ("Directs") and a predicate (e.g., "the arm downwards across"), but the subject of the verb (i.e., the speaker performing the action) is unstated. This implicit, unnamed subject further suggests Austin's desire to disembody gesture; seemingly, gesture can exist without an identifiable person, or subject, to embody it.

As a whole, Austin's four chapters on the various parts and positions of the body employ a strong "scientific/technical coding orientation" to construct his vision of an ideal,

decorous speaker. This rhetorical orientation integrates graphical, geometric, and numerical forms along with dense technical verbal language to convey an impression of systematic analysis and mathematical precision. Yet, as I have tried to show, the very hybridity of his forms as well as the occasional incongruities in the boundaries of his partitions and in the ordering of his segments introduce logical inconsistencies into this scientific representation. And Austin himself, despite his apparent desire to render the speaker's body and possible gestures with scientific exactness, candidly contradicts this objective. For example, he asks the reader to note that "in speaking of angles and elevations determined by degrees, mathematical precision is not intended, and is not necessary: it is sufficient for the present purpose, that the position described should be *nearly* in the angle or direction mentioned" (310, my emphasis). With this qualifying passage, Austin implicitly recognizes the impossibility–and maybe even the undesirability–of any real, living body performing gestures with the "mathematical precision" that his system appears to call for. But if this is true, then his heavily scientific approach to systematizing gesture seems excessive and perhaps contradictory to the objective of improving the practical art of rhetorical delivery.

Austin's Master Table

Alphabetical Arrangement of Symbolic Letters.

	Above the Line. Hands, Arms, Body and Head.							Below the Line Feet.		
	Small Letters relating to the Hand and Arm.				Capital B and double small Letters. Both Arms and both Hands.	Capitals for particular Parts.	Capitals for Head and Eyes.	Small Letters Steps.	Capitals Positions.	Capitals and small; significant Gestures.
	1. Hand.	2. Elevation of the Arm.	3. Transverse Position of the Arm.	4 and 5. Motion and Force.						
A	- - -	- - -	- - -	ascending alternate	applied	- - -	{assenting averted	advance	- - -	appealing attention admiration aversion
B	backwards	- - -	backwards	backwards beckoning	both	breast	- - -	- - -	both	
C	clinched	- - -	across	collecting contracted clinching	crossed clasped	Chin	- - -	cross	- - -	commanding
D	- - -	downwards	- - -	descending	- - -	- - -	{down-wards denying	- - -	- - -	deprecation declaration
E	- - -	elevated	- - -	- - -	encumbered	Eyes	erect	- - -	- - -	encouragement.
F	forwards	- - -	forwards	forwards flourish	folded	Forehead	Forward	- - -	front	fear
G	grasping	- - -	- - -	grasping	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Grief
H	holding	horizontal	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Horror
I	index	- - -	- - -	inwards	inclosed	- - -	inclined			
K	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	a kimbo	- - -	- - -	- - -	kneeling	
L	collected	- - -	- - -	left	- - -	Lips	- - -	- - -	left	{Lamentation Listening
M	thumb	- - -	- - -	moderate						
N	natural inwards	- - -	- - -	noting	enumerating	Nose				
O	outwards	- - -	- - -	outwards						
P	prone	- - -	- - -	{pushing pressing	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Pride
Q	- - -	- - -	oblique	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	oblique	
R	- - -	Rest	- - -	{right recoiling repressing rejecting	reposed	- - -	round	retire	right	
S	supine	- - -	- - -	{sweep springing, striking shaking	- - -	- - -	{shaking aside	{start stamp shock	side	shame
T	- - -	- - -	- - -	{touching throwing	- - -	- - -	Tossing	traverse	- - -	threatning
U	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Upwards			
V	Vertical	- - -	- - -	revolving	- - -	- - -	Vacancy	- - -	- - -	Veneration
W	hollow	- - -	- - -	waving	waving					
X	extended	- - -	extended	extreme						
Z	- - -	Zenith								

Figure 2: Arrangement of Symbolic Letters

Specific Gravities of Alloys of Tin and Lead.

Compound Metal.		Mathematical Specific Gravity.	Real Specific Gravity.	Compound Metal.		Mathematical Specific Gravity.	Real Specific Gravity.
Tin.	Lead.			Tin.	Lead.		
79	21		7.9658	39	61		9.4727
78	22		7.9977	38	62		9.4355
77	23		8.0296	37	63		9.4788
76	24		8.0615	36	64		9.5221
75	25	8.2586	8.0934	35	65	9.8074	9.5676
74	26		8.1253	34	66		9.6132
73	27		8.1572	33	67		9.6565
72	28		8.1891	32	68		9.7021
71	29		8.2210	31	69		9.7454
70	30	8.4520	8.2529	30	70	10.0010	9.7887
69	31		8.2848	29	71		9.8297
68	32		8.3167	28	72		9.8730
67	33		8.3486	27	73		9.9163
66	34		8.3828	26	74		9.9573
65	35	8.6455	8.4170	25	75	10.1945	9.9983
64	36		8.4511	24	76		10.0416
63	37		8.4853	23	77		10.0871
62	38		8.5195	22	78		10.1350
61	39		8.5537	21	79		10.1806
60	40	8.8397	8.5879	20	80	10.3881	10.2261
59	41		8.6228	19	81		10.2717
58	42		8.6562	18	82		10.3173
57	43		8.6904	17	83		10.3629
56	44		8.7246	16	84		10.4084
55	45	9.0333	8.7588	15	85	10.5799	10.4586
54	46		8.7929	14	86		10.5062
53	47		8.8271	13	87		10.5543
52	48		8.8613	12	88		10.6021
51	49		8.8955	11	89		10.6500
50	50	9.2258	8.9319	10	90	10.7734	10.7001
49	51		8.9729	9	91		10.7479
48	52		9.0139	8	92		10.7958
47	53		9.0550	7	93		10.8414
46	54		9.0960	6	94		10.8869
45	55	9.4203	9.1373	5	95	10.9668	10.9354
44	56		9.1552	4	96		10.9781
43	57		9.2190	3	97		11.0236
42	58		9.2600	2	98		11.0692
41	59		9.3033	1	99		11.1148
40	60	9.6139	9.3466	0	100	11.1216	11.1603

Figure 3: Example of an Eighteenth-Century Scientific Table
(*Philosophical Transactions* vol. 86 [1796], 119)

In the eighteenth century, the table was both a technique of power and procedure of knowledge. It was a question of organizing the multiple, of providing oneself with an instrument to cover it up and to master it; it was a question of imposing upon it an 'order'. (Foucault, *Discipline* 148)

Once he has enumerated and classified the various permissible gestures of delivery according to the particular body part which performs each gesture, Austin attempts to re-combine these multiple segments within a single, master table (see figure 2). This table appears to cover and order the multiple modifications of gesture within Austin's selective system just as, within contemporary publications in chemistry and other sciences, synoptic tables ordered heterogeneous facts for presentation to the scientist's or philosopher's scrutiny (Golinski 21) (see figure 3). Tables organized both the factual data of research and, as with Lavoisier's new method of nomenclature, the names for chemical substances. Part of the logical appeal of Lavoisier's new system derived from its systematic representation in the abstract visual form of a table on "a large folding plate, divided into six columns" with each column subdivided into two (Crosland 183). According to Myers, as a mode of scientific illustration tables eliminate the "gratuitous details of naturalistic representations. This abstraction "is part of the move from the particularity of one observation to the generality of a scientific claim" (235). Austin's inclusion of a master table to summarize the relations and distinctions between the multiple facts and names in his system of gesture thus contributes to this system's quasi-logical appearance of scientific rationality.

The title that he gives to this table ("Alphabetical Arrangement of Symbolic Letters") re-emphasizes the priority of *notation* within his system of gesture: the primary principle of arrangement for the gestures in his system is the alphabetical ordering of the symbolic letters that make up his code of notation. It is not, as we might have expected from the preceding sections, the selective list of body parts that he has used (albeit inconsistently) to organize the discussion that precedes the master table. Instead, in this table, the particular body segments that Austin's system treats become a secondary ordering principle, subordinate to the order of alphabetical notation. The primacy of this alphabetical order for organizing the tabular representation of rhetorical gesture underlines how Austin's system attempts to transform the paralanguage of embodied practices into a disembodied, linguistically-based coding. As well, the tabular representation of gesture according to the twenty-six letters of the alphabet further augments the number of differentiations in, and hence the internal complexity of, Austin's language of gesture.

Foucault's analysis in *Discipline and Punish* of the spatial distribution of bodies

provides an inventory of techniques through which to decipher the rhetorical construction of Austin's table. These are the interrelated techniques of enclosure, partitioning, comparison and classification, and ranking (*Discipline* 141-146). Importantly, though, Austin's table remains a textual model for an analytic pedagogy of bodily regulation; it does not demonstrate the practical activation of such a pedagogy on real bodies in real institutions. As well, Austin's proposed method differs from the pedagogies Foucault analyzes in that the students for whom he initially invented his system were "a limited number of the sons of the higher classes in Ireland" (Taylor qtd. in Robb and Thonssen xv), not students attending lower-class charity schools or state-run institutions. Further, whereas Foucault relates the techniques of spatial distribution primarily to the organization of multiple human bodies, in Austin's case we can read them in terms of his struggle to arrange the multiplicity within the single body of his model speaker. Despite these differences, Austin's "Alphabetical Arrangement of Symbolic Letters" evidences the centrality of the table as a procedure of knowledge and technique of power in the late eighteenth century (Foucault, *Discipline* 148) by showing the use of the four techniques of spatial distribution to represent, if not activate, a pedagogy of bodily regulation which privileges the scientific observer rather than the student performer. However, as the following analysis will demonstrate, Austin's effort to organize and master the messy multiplicity of bodily behaviours via the ordering technique of the scientific table remains at best that: an effort. In reality, his master table contains a number of discrepancies that disrupt this effort to abstractly rationalize the forms of bodily persuasion.

The techniques of enclosure and partitioning are evident in the cedlular construction of the table, where each point of intersectign between explicit and implicit grid lines in the vertical and horizontal parameters visually encloses a specific element of Austin's system of gesture. In this visual structure, each element of information is, apparently, "heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself" (Foucault, *Discipline* 141), thereby making it amenable to "meticulous control" (137). By contrast with Austin's earlier table of the fifteen systematic positions of the arms, this master table includes explicit grid lines, particularly in the vertical direction, to enclose visually the information that it attempts to represent and organize. This visual enclosure simultaneously partitions the multiple elements of Austin's table to prevent their "diffuse circulation" (Foucault, *Discipline* 143).

According to Edward Tufte, in the visual organization of complex information, implicit typographical grids are preferable to the "chartjunk" of "dark grid lines" because the former graphical style gives priority to the information itself rather than to the visual "prison" of a gridwork which, perhaps inaccurately, encloses and separates the data (59, 63). But the vertical grid lines in Austin's table give a visual impression of decisive, impermeable order; they help to combat the permeability of the columnar divisions by imposing, visually, a sense of strong separation and exact boundaries among the elements of information that they organize. The pronounced vertical lines and infrequent horizontal lines of Austin's table conform to the standard scientific models of his period (see figure 3).[7] In this sense, there is nothing irregular about his format. However, a paradox emerges when we consider the nature of the information sharply separated by the vertical lines compared with the information less clearly distinguished on the horizontal axis. The table inscribes stronger visual boundaries between those elements which in the practice of gesture may occur simultaneously (e.g., the positions of the arms, head, and feet) than between those elements which, according both to Austin's system afd to the material reality of bodily conduct, can not occur together (e.g., the hand can not be simultaneously backwards and forwards). This paradox suggests the extent to which Austin's coding of bodily practices attempts primarily to dissect these practices in a scientific, abstract manner, rather than to represent them in an integrated fashion suited to learning how to perform them in fluent, persuasive fashion.

The strategy of spatial distribution also, according to Foucault, creates analytic sites which permit supervision through *comparison* and *classification*. In Austin's table, the vertical and horizontal parameters classify each element of information included within these parameters. The visual proximity and juxtaposition of these multiple elements within the larger classificatory parameters of the table allow the reader to compare and contrast each partitioned cell of information. The graphical form of the table thus enacts what Tufte calls an effective "micro/macro design" because it organizes so much relevant information within the human eye span. This allows the reader or viewer to "control" and reason about this information much more easily than if the multiple elements were loosely distributed

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[7]See n. 6, above.

across many pages or contexts (Tufte 50). While Tufte is full of praise for the rationalizing effects of such a design, Foucault's perspective makes apparent the more chilling effects of the dominating power attributed to the masterful eye both implied and constructed by this design. This is the eye which, from a superior position, analyses the subjugated body in order to manipulate or reform it.

The principle of ranking, by which Foucault means that each element (or body) in an institutional system is interchangeable because it is "defined by the place it occupies in a series, and by the gap that separates it from others" (145), also is at work in Austin's spatial distribution of units of information (rather than real bodies). Austin's system, however, ranks the multiple parts and motions of a single idealized body rather than, as Foucault discusses, multiple individual bodies within an institutional context. The principle of ranking is evident in the technique of numerical ordering that Austin employs for assigning meaning to each of the symbolic letters in a sequence of notation. The meaning of a symbol in a notation is determined to a large degree by the place it occupies in the sequence, just as the location of a single arabic numeral within a series of numerals determines its value. Accordingly, in Austin's system of notation, the first place in a sequence above the line always means the position of the hand, the second always means the elevation of the arm, and so on, regardless of the particular symbolic element that occupies each place. Austin's table to some extent represents this ranking in the horizontal parameter: reading from left to right, the first four columns follow the numerical order of a typical sequence of notation above the line of text, while the visual order of the eighth and ninth columns matches the sequence of notation for the feet.

These intricately interrelated techniques of spatial distributions demonstrate Austin's own command of the powerful discourse of scientific analysis, at the same time as they reinforce the relative subjection of the model human body regulated by his master table. Despite Austin's implicit promise that his system offers a path to aspiring speakers through which they can improve their bodily practices and thereby secure greater social prestige and power, in fact this system subjects the implied speaker's body to the objectifying techniques of scientific analysis. Instead of granting the aspiring speaker power over his bodily behaviours, Austin's system gains power over the speaker by situating his idealized and generic body as its object of analysis. In this situation, it is not the embodied speaker-

performer, but rather the distant, elite decoder-analyst who masters the art of gesture.

However, for all that Austin's table does enact, at a textual level, these various features which Foucault claims are typical of late eighteenth-century bodily regulation, the master table also reveals inconsistencies within his system. In particular, these incongruities include an ambiguity between different principles of arrangement for ordering the elements in the table; a tension between the abstract disjunction of the body into discrete units and the embodied reality of bodily actions which cannot be thus separated; the omission of elements that logically would seem to form part of the system, and conversely the inclusion of elements that seem to exceed and hence disrupt the system's limits; and the practical difficulty of using this table as the master code for deciphering the meanings of Austin's system of notation. These instabilities, I suggest, indicate both the inherent resistance of human bodies to this kind of treatment and Austin's own ambivalent motives and attitudes: clearly, he wishes to purchase disciplinary prestige for himself and his subject matter by representing delivery in a specialized, scientific language, but at the same time (though less strongly) he seems to want to permit the embodied language of rhetorical gesture a power and position of its own, beyond the confines of strictly abstract codification.

The principle of alphabetic order frames Austin's table on the far left column. Thanks to the double vertical lines that enclose it on both sides, this column visually suggests a precise and firm boundary. The alphabetical order of the individual letters within this firmly bounded space–an order that presents each letter as a discrete unit–further creates an impression of logical arrangement; however, the completeness of this order is disturbed slightly by the unexplained omission of two letters, "j" and "y." The segmentation of the body into parts (i.e., the hands, arms, body, head and eyes, and feet) constitutes the second parameter for organizing the elements of the table and occurs in the top horizontal space of the table. This parameter, though, is much less precisely arranged than the dominant vertical parameter of the alphabetic letters. In fact, it ambiguously organizes gesture partly through the segmentation of the body into its ostensibly fundamental parts and partly through the alphabetical and numerical orderings of the system of notation. The conflation of these two perspectives results in a confusing horizontal parameter. Instead of invoking the classification of the alphabetic letters, here Austin

organizes the various body parts according to the basic visual classification of his system of notation into a top and bottom sequence. The way in which he describes these two spatial categories ("Above the Line" and "Below the Line") presupposes the full dependency of the language of gesture on the dominant language of verbal composition. That is, Austin's system of notation, by definition, can represent only gestures which correspond directly to a "Line" of verbal text. The line of verbal text acts, both conceptually and visually, as the dominant, determining centre around which the sub-language of gesture may be noted.

This fundamental distinction therefore abstractly separates the public speaker's body into two main parts: the top and the bottom. Although this separation on one level makes sense because of its visual correspondence with the spatial orientation of a standing body, it also inserts a conceptual separation between the actions of the upper body and those of the lower body, preventing an integrated view of the speaker as a whole and conflicting with the realities of embodied practices. However, in terms of the rhetorical functions of Austin's treatise, this strategy of subordinating non-verbal language to verbal language reinforces his socially-decorous effort to transform the devalued language of the body into the more prestigious codes of verbal language and scientific notation, and thereby to increase the disciplinary status of delivery.

The two general categories of "above" and "below" then become sub-divided into the various body parts that Austin has already analyzed in the immediately preceding chapters. Incongruously, though, the order of these parts as they are listed in the first horizontal row of the table differs from the order in which he has examined them (and, as we have seen, the order in which he examined them differed from the initial order of his introductory lists). The new principle of division emerging from the positions of the notation sequences relative to the line of verbal text requires a new ordering of the parts of the body. The primacy of the order of Austin's sequence of notation, rather than the order in which bodily actions are actually performed, is further underlined by the distinctions he makes within and between the first four columns ("Hand," "Elevation of the Arm," "Transverse Position of the Arm," and "Motion and Force") and the fifth column ("Both Arms and Both Hands"). The double line between the first four columns and the fifth represents not a material distinction between body parts or positions, but an abstract, graphic distinction within Austin's system of notation between upper and lower case letters. Within the first four columns, the wholly

theoretical nature of these divisions is demonstrated by the fact that the two conceptual coordinates of the elevated and transverse positions of the arm can be distinguished only within the sequence of notation. When embodied in the practice of gesture, they always occur simultaneously.

In these ways, the principles for reading Austin's system of notation take precedence over the order of the parts of the body which structured his earlier discussion. Although this latter principle of representation was itself highly selective and contributed to an objectified, segmented view of the public speaker's body, this assertion of his symbolic code as the primary screen mediating and organizing the representation of the speaker's body much more drastically demonstrates the extent to which the *Chironomia* articulates an intricate theoretical discourse *about*, not *of* bodily language. The more intricate and specialized this meta-language becomes, the greater its distance from the material practices and embodied meanings of human speakers, but the closer its proximity to the specialized discourse of scieftific analysis.

The unresolved tension within Austif's system of notation between an alphabetical and a sequential principle of ordering also surfaces in the table. For example, the method of noting the actions of the feet employs both ordering principles: the difference between "Steps" and "Positions" is indicated both by the distinction between lower case and upper case letters, and, redundantly, by the place that each symbol occupies in the notation sequence. This inherent tension also helps to explain why so many spaces in the table are empty: initially, Austin tried to develop a system that would be comprehensible only through alphabetical distinctions; therefore, he presumably tried to avoid assigning more than one or two descriptive words to each alphabetical symbol. Subsequently, he hit on the alternative sequential mode of distinguishing meanings which, in principle, would permit an entry under each column for each symbol. However, instead of reconceiving his earlier approach from this new perspective, the table shows how he tries to merge the two different methods. While many spaces in the table remain blank, others include several entries–for example, the space at the intersection of row "C" and the fourth column, and the space at the intersection of row "S" and the eighth column. Here we see how, even with the merging of both methods of organization, Austin has been unable to enumerate sufficient distinctions in the language of his notation to preserve a clear separation between all

elements.

The final column on the far right of the table further destabilizes the coherence of Austin's system. This column, which indicates the proper forms of notation for "significant Gestures," does not fit within Austin's fundamental division of "Above" and "Below." By contrast with the fundamental forms of gesture that the main part of his table encompasses, the dramatic expressions of passion which the final column identifies can be represented only with reference to the speaker's whole body. And unlike, for example, the final column of Lavoisier's table of chemical nomenclature which gives the names for compound substances composed of the preceding elemental substances (Crosland 183), the compound gestures identified in Austin's final column do not combine preceding elementary positions. This means that these complex gestures cannot be encoded within the sequential organization of a line of notation, since this sequence is constructed according to the division of rhetorical gesture into its elementary and hierarchically organized elements, rather than according to examples of bodily action in their fullness. As Austin explains later, the notation of significant gestures or "the expression of particular passions" occurs "in the margin" of the text (362), not within the main sequences of notation situated above and below the line of verbal text. The final column thus exceeds the boundaries of his system, yet remains as a "significant" supplement to it. The peripheral positioning of the notation codes for these "significant" gestures in the table indicates Austin's ambivalence about their propriety for rhetorical delivery and it reveals the instability of the conceptual and practical boundaries he is attempting to inscribe around gesture.

The master table acts as one element in Austin's complex stratification of technical forms (e.g., verbal descriptions, numerical orderings, graphical forms, drawings, and so on) deployed to represent, in complete detail, his whole system of gesture. But each of these approaches–all of which require reference outside themselves for proper understanding–introduces new instabilities into the system, which in turn require supplementary explanations, qualifications, and contrivances. Although Austin's attempt to represent the language of gesture within a complex tabular format suggests his desire to impose a firm, general order on the messy world of particular bodily practices, this effort leads him to construct a system containing its own multiplicities and inconsistencies.

The Plates of "Engraved Figures"

The most purely visual component of Austin's treatise is the set of "engraved figures" (vii) of the various positions and motions of gesture described in the main text. The placement of these figures at the end of the treatise belies their centrality to the explanation of his system.[8] As Knight explains, because engravings required different printing presses than type, engravings were printed separately from type, which kept text and illustrations apart in their published format ("Illustrating" 146). Rather than employing the established intaglio process of copper-plate engraving, Austin's plates used the new method of steel-engraving (Robb and Thonssen ix). According to Michael Twyman, this process constituted a "far reaching improvement in intaglio printing" because the tougher steel plates could withstand the wear of printing much longer than softer copper ones (Twyman 22-23). The inclusion of these engravings would have made the *Chironomia* a relatively expensive work. Knight notes, for example, how during this period "high-quality scientific engravings might cost twenty guineas each [to print]; an enormous sum in 1800" ("Illustrating" 145). The final cost of Austin's work was, however, less than it might have been precisely because he ended up including smaller and less expensive engravings than he initially had commissioned. As he explains, he commissioned a second artist "who first altered and completed, and then reduced the whole of the figures to their present form and size" (viii). This reductive revision had the benefit, claims Austin, of saving the "purchaser" unnecessary expense; yet, by making such an "oeconomy," the book was deprived of "splendor" (viii).

There are eleven plates in all, each the size of a single page of text. Each plate contains between four and sixteen separate drawings. Many of these drawings represent the entire body of the standing, gesturing public speaker, but–in the same way that Austin's verbal text examines the body according to separate parts–others show only segments, such as the feet and hands. Typically, these drawings are arranged sqmmetrically in rows across

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[8]In the facsimile reproduction of the *Chironomia* published by Southern Illinois UP they are placed at the very beginning but in the original text they occurred at the end. See G. P. Mohrmann, "The Real Chironomia," n. 6.

the page. For epample, Plate 3 contains three rows of five figures each; these figures also are aligned vertically (see figure 7). This style of layout, which includes sufficient white space between each figure to clearly distinguish it from others, gives an impression of methodical order. Some of the plates, though, are arranged less clearly; for example, the drawings in the first plate (see figure 6) appear more cramped and less clearly distinguished than those in Plate 3. We can probably attribute this effect to the economical reduction of the original drawings, which permits a greater number of figures to be included in a single plate but decreases the clarity of its layout.

By altering his drawings from ones of "splendor" to more economical, smaller ones, Austin's engravings adopt principally a didactic rather than elegant form. In scientific illustration, didactic drawings, according to Bert Hall, are used

> . . . to clarify a problem, to indicate to a viewer how something looks, be that something a specimen, a piece of apparatus, or the path of a moving body . . . the didactic drawing is purely instrumental, merely a convenient means of conveying information to the viewer that otherwise could only be put across using masses of words–if then. . . . On the other hand, "elegant," . . . is meant to convey the other function illustrations usually serve, that of enhancing the appearance of the illustrated in the eye of the beholder. (28)

The didactic function of Austin's drawings foregrounds their logical rather than emotional appeal: they are "plain and serviceable" rather than charming or beguiling (Hall 29). This didactic function corresponds with contemporary developments in chemical illustrations. In particular, the *Chironomia*'s engravings of the parts and positions of the speaker's body bear similarities to the "plain and serviceable" depictions of chemical apparatus to be found both in Austin's own articles (see figures 4a and 4b) and in other scientific publications. Knight notes how illustrations in chemistry textbooks of the period "show apparatus and indicate how it is to be used" ("Illustrating" 144) so that experiments could be repeated exactly. Although Austin does not present his descriptions of chemical apparatus in the context of specific experiments, his combined visual and verbal descriptions provide precise, detailed information about how to construct and use each apparatus. According to Knight, the straightforward depiction of chemical apparatus signalled a shift from the poetry of earlier alchemic illustrations to abstract geometric representation which gives "a strong

feeling of the form of the vessels" ("Illustrating" 153). As well, illustrations of chemical apparatus often tried "to get as many pictures on the page as possible" and important parts might be magnified (153).

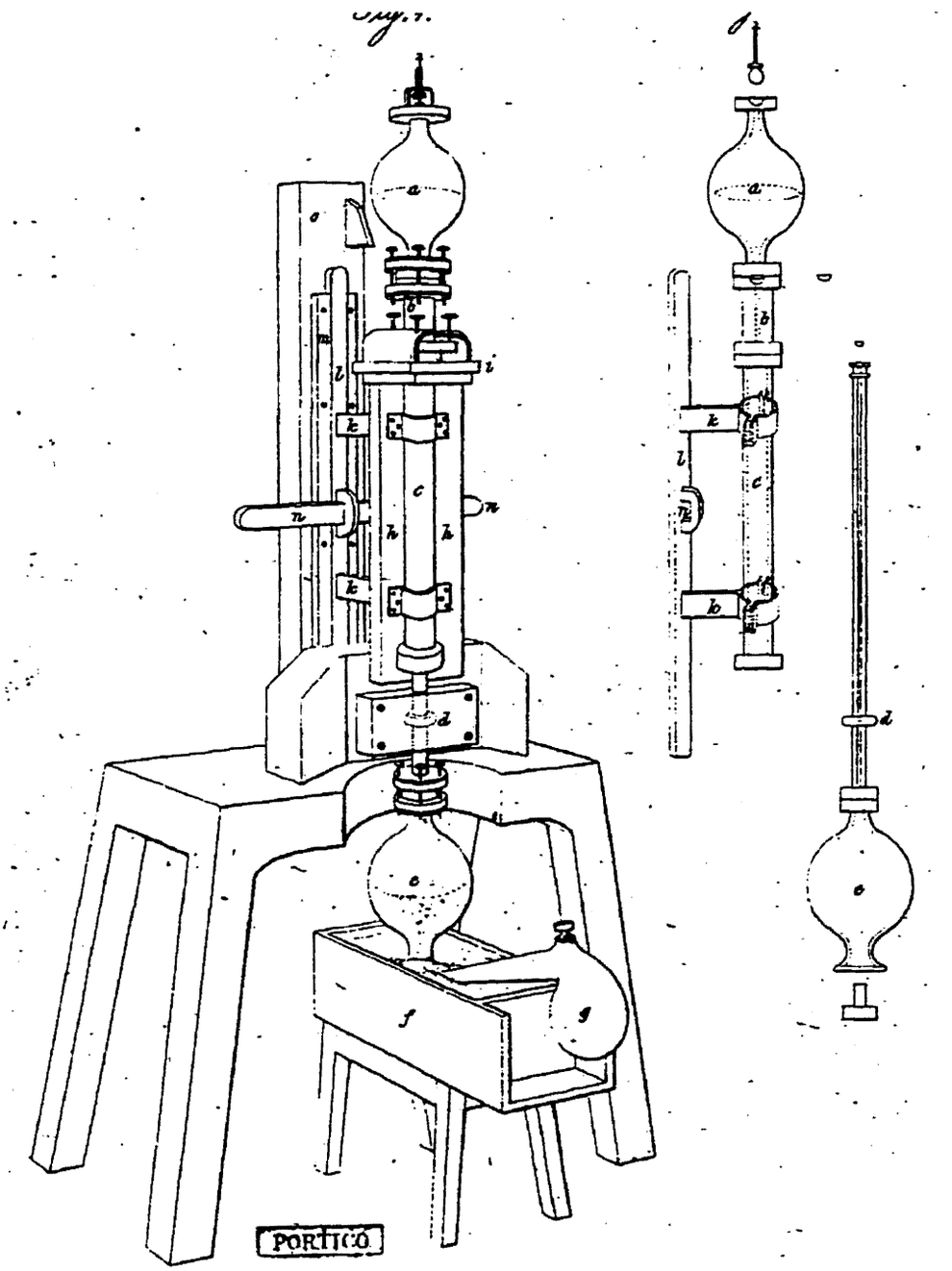


Figure 4a: Austin's Illustration of a Condenser and Air Pump

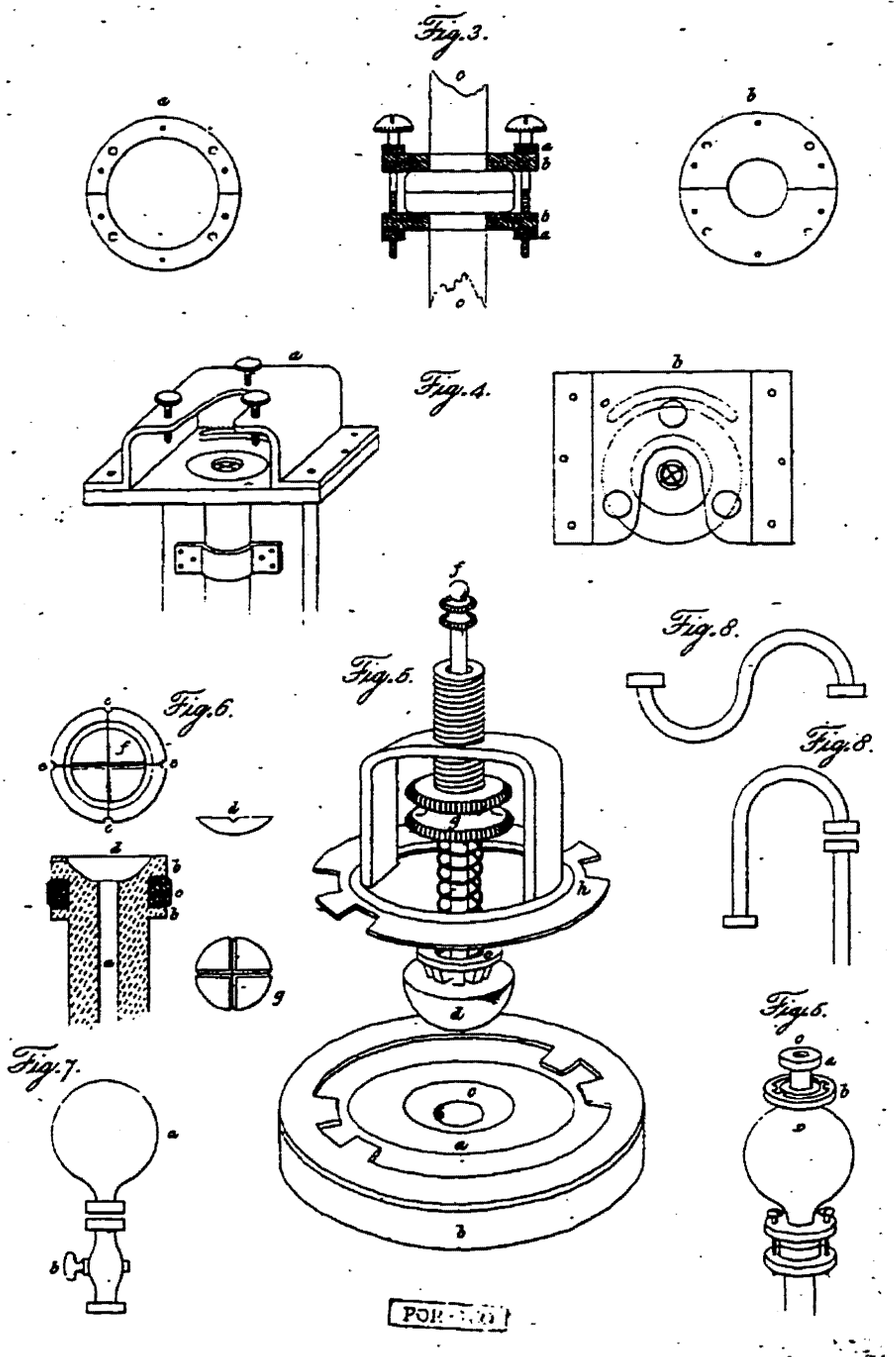


Figure 4b: Austin's Illustration of a Condenser and Air Pump

The correspondence between the *Chironomia*'s engravings and contemporary conventions for illustrating chemical apparatus reinforces the basic "scientific/technological coding orientation" (Kress and van Leeuwen 53) which I claim informs Austin's whole explication of his system of gesture. By representing the parts and positions of the public speaker's body as, in a sense, a mechanical "apparatus," these drawings address primarily an analytic, scholarly reader who may supervise and appraise but does not himself perform the functions of this "apparatus." However, although the drawings do privilege an abstract, scientific view of delivery, they also contain elements of naturalism which slightly soften the "hardness" of their diagrammatic forms (Kemp 114) and introduce a hint of "flesh-and-blood reality" into their "synthetic idealization" (Kemp 111). These elements imply a more general readership interested in learning the practice of proper gesture.

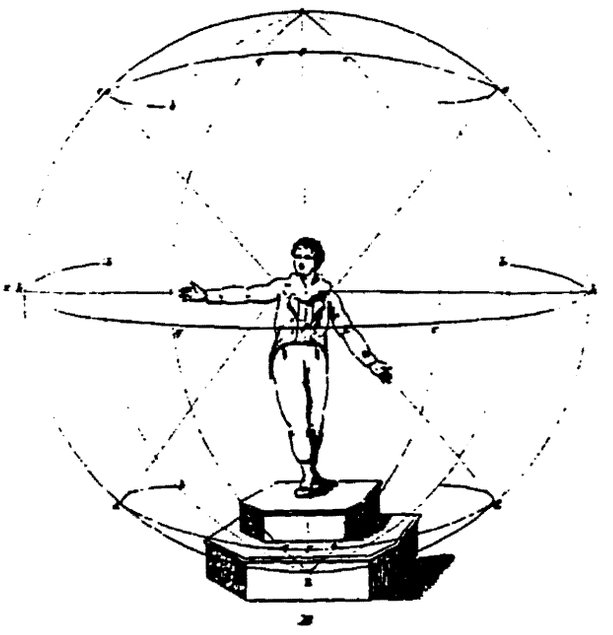


Figure 5: Spherical Diagram of Speaker, from Plate 2, *Chironomia*

The most important image in these plates for understanding Austin's system is the

figure of a generic speaker enclosed within a sphere of "imaginary circles" (see figure 5).[9] This illustration uses a specialized scientific discourse of geometric forms to depict a "synthetic idealization" of the public speaker. Primarily, this representation renders the speaker as a passive apparatus to be deciphered and regulated by a scientific reader. Kress and van Leeuwen point to the significance of the relationship between the viewer (or reader) and the "represented participant" in the text (e.g., Austin's enclosed figure). They distinguish between images which make *demands* and images which make *offers* to the reader. The former, for example, occurs when a "represented participant" in an image looks directly and perhaps presumptuously at the viewer. Visual "offers," by contrast, "are realised by images which offer to the viewer represented participants as objects for contemplation, but do not demand that the viewer enter into an imaginary social relation with them" (28). Both the distant, impersonal position of Austin's figure and the indirect, oblique direction of the figure's eyes suggest that this image fits with the negatively polite category of "offer" rather than the positive, presumptuous form of "demand." This representation situates the generic speaker in a relatively powerless, submissive position, offering himself up to the scrutinizing gaze of the powerful analyst-judge.

The vertical angle from which the viewer perceives the figure in the image, however, conflicts with the modest, deferential form of the "offer." Instead of perceiving the figure from a high angle, which would tend to indicate that the viewer "has power over the represented participant" (Kress and van Leeuwen 40), the public speaker stands raised slightly above the viewer and therefore is looked at from a slightly low angle. Indeed, according to Austin, this angular relationship is a fundamental feature of the geometrically idealized speaker: "It must be observed that the eye of the spectator, or of the person addressed among the spectators, or on the stage among the interlocutors, is always supposed to be in the plane of the right circle (ZfR), and nearly in the point (f)" (310). In other words, the spectator's eyes should not meet the speaker's eyes on an equal plane, but instead rest below them at approximately the position of the breastbone or upper stomach.

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[9]Austin uses the phrase "imaginary circles" to describe this image in his "Table of References to the Figures," located at the very end of his verbal treatise and, in the text's original form, immediately prior to the visual plates.

Contrary to the visual relationship of the "offer," this angular relationship suggests that the figure in Austin's image is superior to the viewer. The spherical image of the public speaker places the speaker partly in a superior position to the viewer and partly in a subordinate position.

The "Galilean reality" which constitutes the dominant manner of visual representation in this image defines the "real" in terms of its "size, shape, quantity, and motion" abstracted from the more sensory, naturalistic aspects of colour, texture, setting, and perspective (Kress and van Leeuwen 52-57). This scientific modality prefers an abstract and typical representation of the world to a naturalistically detailed and particularized rendition. Just so, this geometric drawing abstracts and depersonalizes the public speaker into his typical dimensions: this figure is meant to conceptualize, in an ordered and geometric manner, the essential features of a generic, nameless speaker. The decontextualization of this figure, along with the drawing's relative lack of naturalistic depth and detail, heighten the image's scientific representation of reality (Kress and van Leeuwen 52-57).

However, this non-naturalistic, scientific manner contrasts with more naturalistic elements which to a small extent personalize and particularize Austin's speaker. For example, the detail of the speaker's clothing, facial features, and hair give him a naturalistic quality, unlike a purely abstract drawing of the human figure; as well, the partial details of setting given through the outline of the pedestal and the representation of visual depth with a shaded three-dimensional isometric form rather than a more abstract two-dimensional frontal view contribute naturalistic aspects. This drawing, therefore, enacts a tension between two ways of encoding reality, namely between a "scientific/technological coding orientation" and a "naturalistic coding orientation" (54). While the former dominates Austin's vision of the ideal public speaker, the latter slightly destabilizes this attempt to abstract and objectify the speaker's body completely. By including some naturalistic elements, Austin creates an opening for those who have only "common" reading and speaking skills. Like the paradox of status aspiration, Austin's visual coding is flexible enough to permit the entry of the aspiring, "common" reader/speaker, but at the same time inscribes the specialized language of scientific discourse.

I have suggested that this spherical diagram plays a central role in the visual

illustration of Austin's system. As such, one might well expect to encounter this drawing at the beginning of the plates. Strangely, though, Austin reserves it for the lower half of his second plate and begins instead with a plate devoted to the positions of the feet (see figure 6). As a result, we do not see Austin's fundamental *whole* representation of the body until we have deciphered *segmented* views of a single part of the body. This ordering, which

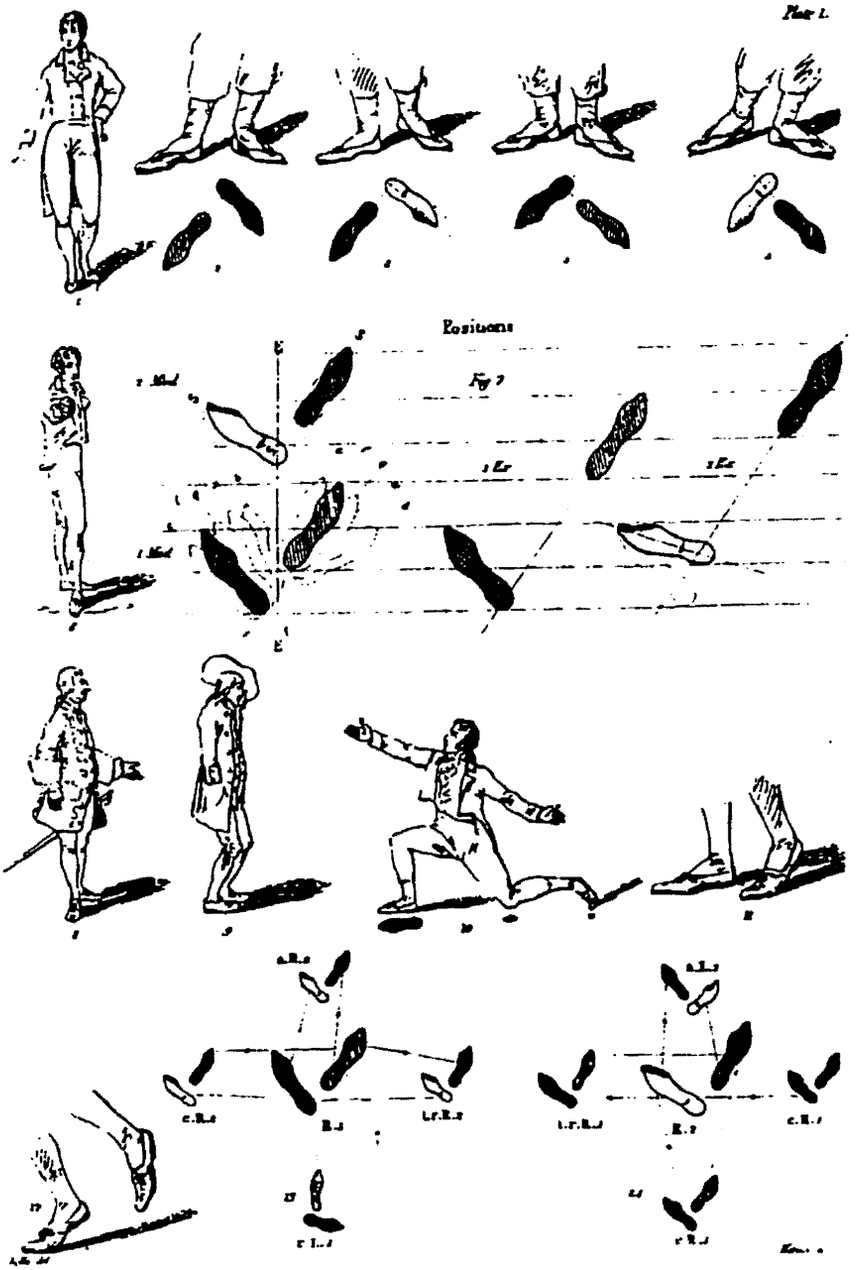


Figure 6: Positions of the Feet, Plate 1, *Chironomia*

privileges the division of parts over the integration of a whole, matches the form of Austin's verbal text which begins by listing the "most distinguished parts" of the body and then treats each part separately with little attention to how these parts function together, as a whole. Contrary to a naturalistic perception of the world, the sectional drawings of the positions of the feet privilege a theoretical approach to gesture. This approach assumes that actions of the feet can be properly known and controlled only by (unnaturally) detaching them from the rest of the body in the same way that Austin's illustration of chemical apparatus provide separate drawings of their different parts to help the reader understand how to construct his mechanisms (see figures 4a and 4b).[10]

Despite this analytic segmentation, the first row of drawings (positions 2-5) maintains a degree of naturalism through details of clothing and shadows, and through the use of a three-dimensional form and frontal perspective. By contrast, the next line of drawings eliminates most of these naturalistic elements: the details of clothing and the shadowing that show depth are removed, while non-naturalistic dotted lines are added to indicate conceptual angular relationships; the feet lose depth, becoming two-dimensional abstractions; most dramatically, the perspective shifts from a frontal to an overhead view. As a result, the viewer is asked to read these images not from a naturalistic, subjective orientation (an orientation which operates from the principle of "what we would see if we were looking at them [e.g., the feet] in reality") but instead from a scientific orientation which privileges the ostensibly higher reality of what we "know," objectively and conceptually, about the feet (Kress and van Leeuwen 32).

Assuming the ability to decipher its visual coding properly, this overhead view places the viewer in a position of full control literally *over* the objects of analysis. Not only is the viewer positioned above the objectified feet, but the viewer's own distant, disembodied location is essentially invisible because purely theoretical. Donna Haraway, in her critique of the assumptions and methods of modern science, and Kristina Straub, in her

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[10]Austin's "Description of an Apparatus for Transferring Gasses," for example, includes four figures: the first two illustrate the separate parts of the mechanism; the third and fourth primarily show how to assemble these parts. Similarly, his "On a New Construction of a Condenser and Air Pump" provides figures which illustrate the apparatus as a whole and figures which give enlarged views of separate parts.

theory of eighteenth-century spectatorship, both highlight the gendered nature of this viewer-viewed relationship. Haraway, for example, describes a masculinist scientific approach as one which privileges an abstract, disembodied "conquering gaze from nowhere." This "god trick of seeing everything from nowhere" objectifies and subjugates whatever or whomever the disengaged, unmarked scientist is analyzing ("Situated" 581). Straub, for her part, notes the complex gendered qualities of the idealized form of spectatorship in eighteenth-century British theatre: primarily, in the logic of this ideal, the audience of the critical, rational, "all-but invisible" observer occupies a masculine position of dominance over the feminized "other" of the decorously submissive spectacle (3-4). Similarly, Austin's "conquering gaze" at the idealized speaker's feet places this speaker in a submissive, feminized situation controlled by the critical masculine eye of the implied scientific spectator.

But, as Straub notes, the boundaries of the idealized logic of the masculine spectator and the feminine spectacle are, in reality, frequently disrupted or transgressed (4). Drawings 8 and 9 in Austin's illustrations of the feet perhaps perform such a disruption. They seem out of place in this overall set of drawings, primarily because of the individualizing details of clothing and the wholeness of the figures. These naturalizing details suggest "the accidents of a single specimen" rather than an abstract model (Kemp 111). The verbal descriptions of these figures in the main text explain the reason for their distinctiveness, an explanation which implicitly reifies the scientific, generic codings of the other drawings. Drawings 8 and 9, Austin explains, represent improper, unacceptable positions for the feet: "The position of the orator is equally removed from the awkwardness of the rustic with toes turned in and knees bent, and from the affectation of the dancing-master, constrained and prepared for springing agility, and for conceited display. Fig. 8 and 9" (301). Although these characters and positions would have a place in comic acting, they are outside the boundaries of dignified rhetorical delivery.[11] Notably, Austin's verbal

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[11]See West, 122-147, and Woods, 16-19 on comic roles for actors during the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. Austin's illustrations closely resemble Henry Siddons' illustrations of "Idiotism" (for Austin's "rustic") and of "Vulgar Arrogance" and "Foppery" (for Austin's dancing master) in *Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action Adapted to the English Drama* (Siddons 6, 32, 62).

and visual descriptions of these figures extrapolate a whole character of impropriety (i.e., the character of the rustic and of the dancing-master) from the single, small feature of the positions of the feet; indirectly, these examples warn the aspiring speaker that an error in any one of the many components of decorous gesture can infect the entire person. In this case, the naturalism of the illustrations indicates the inferior nature of their content, while the use of abstract diagrams to portray acceptable positions shows the superiority of these positions. Paradoxically, though, the very inclusion of these dramatic characters in the first plate suggests Austin's ambivalent attitude about the propriety of theatrical gesture as a genre of rhetorical delivery. Visually, these improper, unsegmented figures are much more engaging, seemingly much more human and communicative, than the geometric images of proper positions which surround them.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the illustrative plates in the *Chironomia* is the use of what Edward Tufte calls "small multiples." In small multiple designs, he says, "information slices are positioned within the eyespan, so that viewers make comparisons at a glance—uninterrupted visual reasoning." These designs draw the viewer's attention to specific differences and slight variations among pieces of information by otherwise maintaining a constancy of design in the repeated image. As a result, small multiples visually enforce "comparisons of changes" and "the scope of alternatives" (Tufte 67). Austin's use of a small multiple design again reinforces the ways in which his system constructs an analytic pedagogy perceived primarily from the position of the rational observer and controller of bodily conduct, rather than that of the embodied performer.

Austin's illustrations of the correct positions of the feet, especially the top two lines of drawings, present a limited example of small multiple design. The visual representation of the systematic positions of the arms (see figure 7) is perhaps the best example of a small multiple design because of the constancy of the basic repeated image, with variations limited almost entirely to the positions of the arms. Note how the position of the speaker's feet stays constant throughout, as does his frontal orientation. The size of the figure is also constant, along with the space between drawings and the short line of shadow extending

diagonally to the right behind the generic speaker. The careful horizontal and linear arrangement of this series of drawings further contributes to the sense of coherent constancy

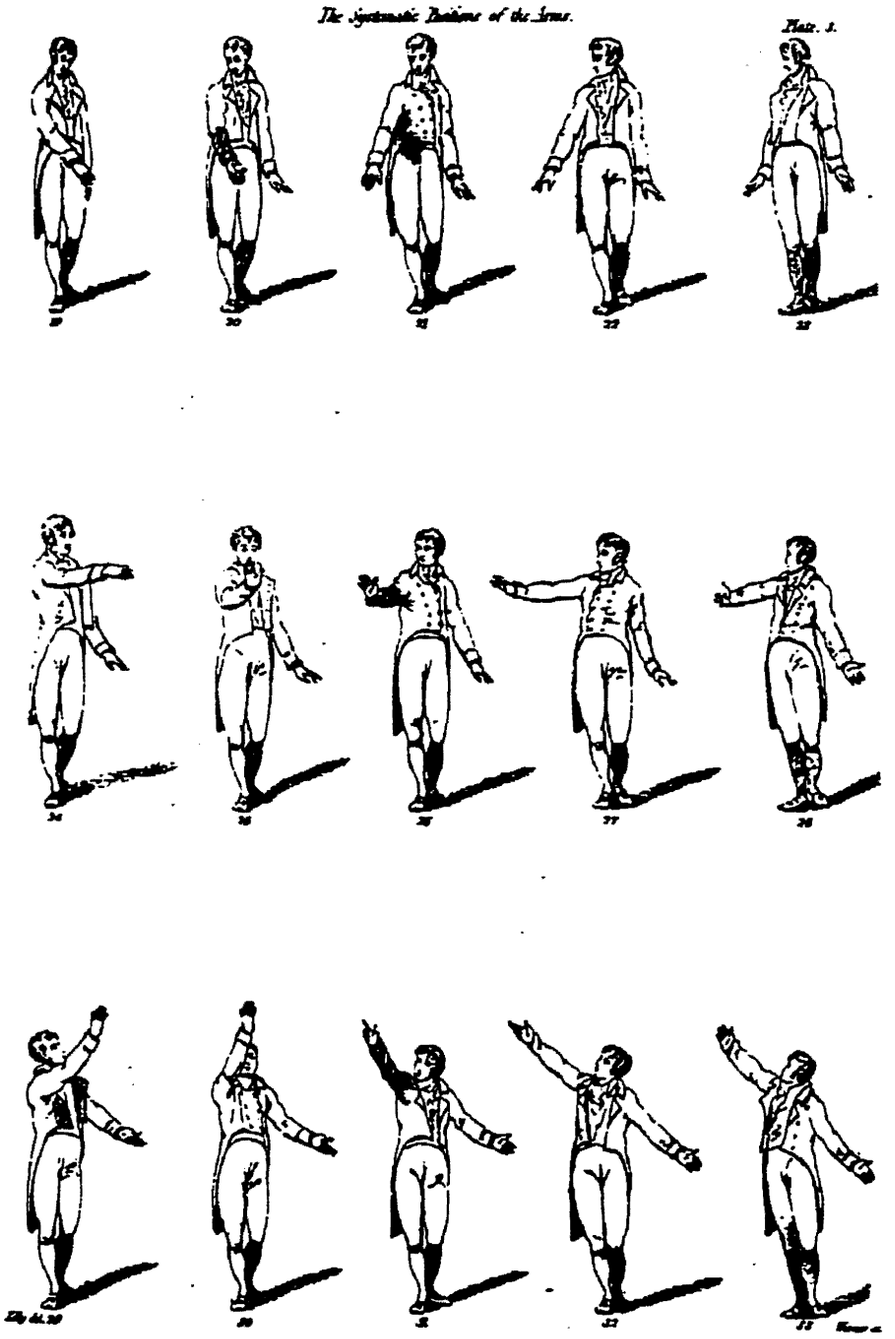


Figure 7: Systematic Positions of the Arms, Plate 3, *Chironomia*

underlying the distinctions between individual images. As well, the title of the plate (only a few of the plates have identifying titles) reinforces this sense of coherent order surrounding and structuring multiplicity; it confirms the bounded *scope* that encloses the limited domain of *alternatives*. In this situation, only the masterful analyst of gesture is in the right position to perceive (and impose) the coherent order enacted by Austin's small multiple design; the performer of these "pieces of information," by contrast, can only enact them one at a time and is therefore unable to engage in the "uninterrupted visual reasoning" granted to the privileged analyst.

Still, Austin's drawings do not entirely fulfil the conceptual, scientific ideal of a small multiple design: the variations among these figures include unexplained but noticeable differences in the position of the head as well as small changes in the naturalistic details of clothing (e.g., in some drawings the speaker's jacket is unbuttoned, in others it is done up). For all that Austin seems to wish to analyze each part of the body in isolation, this small multiple design shows the difficulty of keeping these parts neatly separate, and it indicates his continuing desire to appeal not only to the elite scientific community of analysts but also to the more "common" group of aspiring speakers who are more likely to be alienated than engaged by Austin's non-naturalistic rendition of the human body as a series "information slices."

The final two plates of the *Chironomia*, like Plate 3, have an identifying title and, like Plate 3, they comprise to some extent an example of a small multiple design (see figures 8 and 9). However, these plates convey much less of a sense of precise, isolatable variation within a fixed, constant order than does the plate illustrating the systematic positions of the arms. The main reason for this, I suggest, is Austin's ambivalent attitude toward what he calls "complex significant gestures" or, alternatively, "the expression of particular passions" (362), an ambivalence that has already surfaced in his peripheral positioning of these gestures in the master table. Whereas the systematic positions of the arms clearly form a fundamental component of his system (a component that he spends much effort to articulate logically and exhaustively), significant gestures occupy a much more problematic, marginal position.

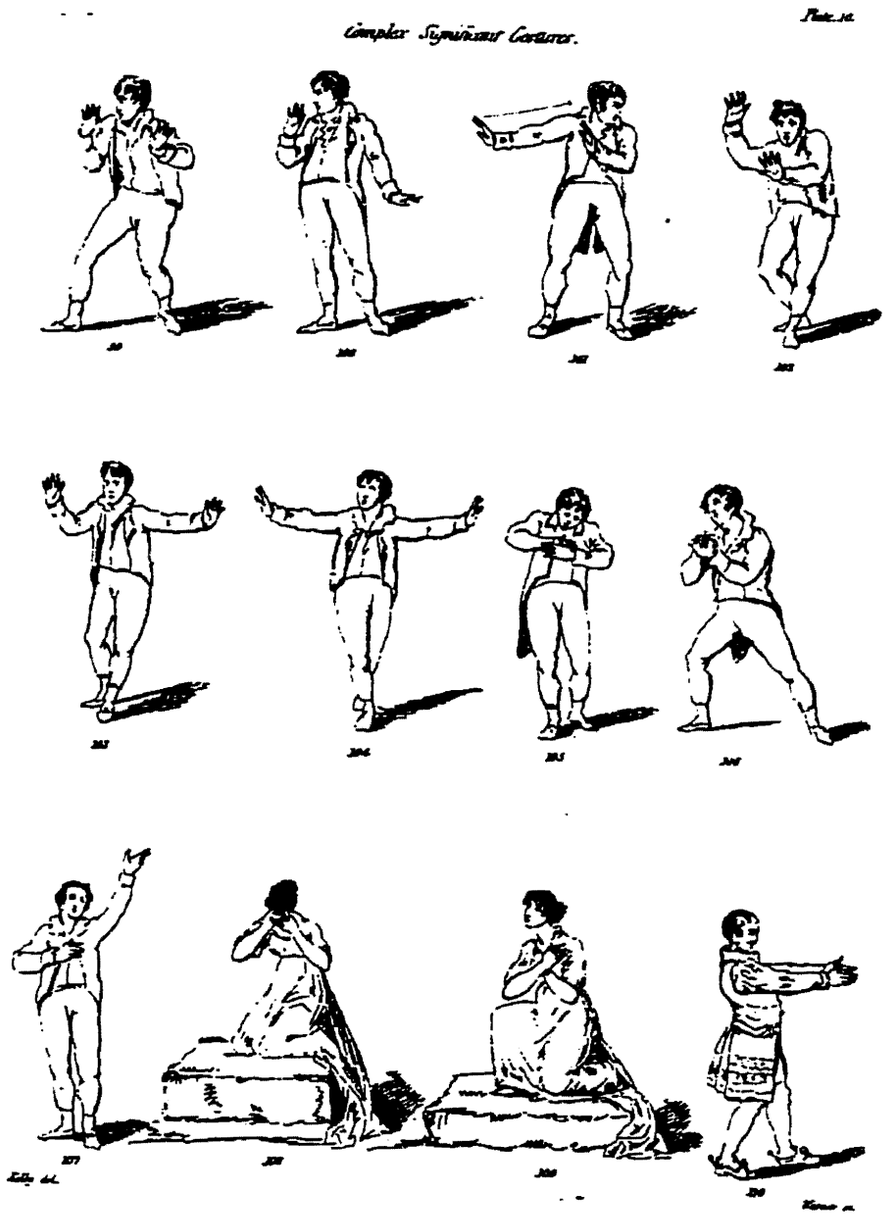


Figure 8: Complex Significant Gestures, Plate 10, *Chironomia*

The illustration of these gestures in Plates 10 and 11 foregrounds their incongruity with other components of Austin's system of gesture. For example, drawings 99 to 107 maintain some constancy of design to the extent that we recognize the generic speaker of



Figure 9: Complex Significant Gestures, Plate 10,
Chironomia

previous illustrations, but the range of differences in the forms of this figure between each drawing is far greater than in earlier plates: the feet, legs, torso, arms, hands, shoulders, head, eyes, mouth, and so on, all change from drawing to drawing. No fundamental similarities connect and control these variations. The succeeding drawings (108-122) heighten the sense of individualistic multiplicity even more: we now encounter a series of very distinctive figures, distinguished not only by physical form but more noticeably by costume, setting, and–remarkably–gender. Unlike the preceding plates, which represent

with only one exception a generic male speaker, these drawings include nine illustrations of a female figure.[12] The theatricality of the attitudes and characters portrayed in these plates helps to explain both their presence and their peripheral position. As we have already seen, Austin simultaneously admires theatrical delivery but considers it inappropriate for public speakers. The peripheral positioning of these figures allows him to participate in the contextually popular rendition of dramatic attitudes without officially including them within his system of rhetorical delivery.[13] The presence of female figures can be explained similarly: the acceptability of female actors within the world of the theatre justifies the place of female forms in these final, peripheral illustrations but not within the main space of Austin's representation of delivery.

The connection between these closing figures and the central drawing of the spherically enclosed ideal speaker seems distant indeed. The gap between them seems to constitute an incommensurable difference of kind, not simply a quantitative one of degree. Thus, despite their rendition of whole bodies, Austin's closing illustrations of the complex significant gestures do not represent a quantitative synthesis of the several distinctive parts of

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[12]They are, explains Austin in his "Preface," illustrations of the renowned actress Sarah Siddons. Her permission for him to use these illustrations was based, he says, on "private friendship" (viii), but he is not clear about whether she actually posed for his illustrator or whether she allowed him to use pre-existing drawings. As a whole, these drawings convey a much more theatrical form of gesture than the other gestures. In his main text, Austin condemns theatrical gesture as "licentious" and improper for the decorous public speaker, yet he continues to give it presence both in the verbal and visual text. His reference to Sarah Siddons' "elegant talents" implies that Austin greatly admires at least some forms of theatrical action and some actors, an admiration that conflicts with his attempt to exclude theatrical gesture from his system.

[13]Henry Siddons' *Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action Adapted to the English Drama* (1807), which is based on M. Engel's *Ideein zu einer Mimik* (1785), provides one example of a contemporary work that visually illustrated 69 dramatic attitudes, ranging from "Pride" to "Obsequious Attention." However, with the exception of Siddons' depiction of "Horror" (24) and of "Idiotism," "Vulgar Arrogance," and "Foppery" (see n. 11, above), the bodily positions in his illustrations do not closely resemble Austin's. Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* also includes extensive descriptions of the dramatic expression of particular passions, though his depictions are verbal not visual. For more on "expressive gestures" in eighteenth-century acting, see Barnett, 36-68.

gesture that the preceding plates visually analyze. Even though drawings 99 to 122 show complete bodies in action, the constituent elements of their complex actions do not correspond to the elements of gesture within Austin's system. As a result, these elements never receive visual (or, for that matter, verbal) re-integration: Austin never shows the aspiring speaker how to put all the parts of gesture back together again once he has learned them in isolation. Instead, Austin's series of visual drawings intended to illustrate the verbal and graphical explanations of his complex system incongruously end with two plates of "significant" figures whose place within this system is ostensibly insignificant, and whose actions are unrelated to the preceding elemental forms. These final figures simultaneously disrupt and enrich Austin's construction of proper delivery because they move beyond the boundaries of actions appropriate to the submissive, strictly regulated, merely competent speaker to assert the powerful, but unregulated and unclassifiable, practices of "significant" delivery.

Concluding Remarks

An analysis of Austin's attempt to articulate a comprehensive and detailed system of gesture for delivery reveals a sophisticated integration of verbal and visual rhetorical forms. The interaction of verbal descriptions with the less common, more scientific languages of symbolic notations, tables, and geometric drawings produces a richly stratified and multiform text. And while these various languages are interdependent in the sense that none is fully comprehensible on its own, each form operates according to different principles of communication. As a whole, the verbal and visual languages of Austin's treatise demonstrate his desire to enclose his generic ideal of the competent, decorous speaker within firm boundaries and precise classifications. Thus, his system plays out a tension between multiplicity and selectivity: in constructing his version of Bahktin's "classical body" (Stallybrass and White 21), Austin strives, as Foucault explains, to master the multiple by imposing a selective order on it. But without the texture of multiplicity, Austin's system would be uninteresting and insignificant; therefore, his verbal and visual languages enumerate at length the many distinctions which make up his system as a whole. However,

as I hope the preceding analysis has shown, whether we consider his enumeration of the parts and positions of the body, his articulation of a system of notation, or the drawings in his plates, Austin's struggle to organize the multiplicity of gesture within a single, coherent system inevitably entails incongruities. He resolves some of these incompatibilities by engendering new "contrivances," but others continue to destabilize the firm boundaries of his conception of bodily decorum.

Austin's background as an amateur chemist provides a revealing context for understanding the nature of his visual forms in the *Chironomia*. In accordance with contemporary conventions in the discourse of chemistry, Austin's visual codes primarily represent physical delivery as a disembodied, theoretical discourse to be spoken by scientific analysts and regulators of gesture, rather than a practical, integrated art accessible to aspiring speakers. This tendency foregrounds his efforts to establish the disciplinary status and scholarly propriety of rhetorical gesture through its articulation as a technically stratified discourse. However, Austin's use of the "resources of ordinary language" (357) and the inclusion of humanizing naturalistic elements in his visual forms suggest his simultaneous desire to appeal to a more general readership interested in learning how to practice the standards and codes of polite bodily conduct. Despite an apparent desire to secure increased cultural capital through the specialized scientific language of his system, Austin seems–in a manner consistent with the paradoxical structure of status aspiration–at the same time tacitly aware both of his own limits and the limits of his subject-matter to complete explication in this language.

As well, the incongruities in his system appear to stem, at least in part, from the ambivalence of his own position as schoolmaster to young boys of superior social class. In this context, the strong subjugating effects that Foucault identifies in late eighteenth century activations of bodily regulation would be inappropriate, to say the least. While Austin's system may imply the authority of the "scrupulously 'classificatory' eye of the master" (Foucault, *Discipline* 147), this "eye" must also decorously negotiate its own ambivalent status in relation to the students it supervises, and especially the upper-class families of the students whose continued patronage is necessary for the growth and continuation of an educational program in delivery. When Austin's pupils enter "by profession or by rank the great theatres of public eloquence," he wishes to be remembered by them fondly, not just

obediently (xii). Finally, we can read the tensions in the *Chironomia*'s system—in particular, the ambivalent inclusion-exclusion of theatrical "complex significant gestures"—as signs of Austin's own uneasiness about how his abstract codification and unnatural segmentation of bodily language contradict his efforts to assert the significant persuasive powers of rhetorical delivery in its integrated, embodied practices.

CHAPTER FIVE

CLOSINGS: THE "NATURAL" *PATHOS* OF DELIVERY AND THE IDEAL ORATOR

The middle sections of Sheridan's, Walker's, and Austin's treatises develop complex and relatively extensive, if not fully coherent, systems for the proper management of the voice and gesture in rhetorical delivery. These systems confirm the disciplinary status of delivery by articulating it as a teachable and knowable branch of the whole art of oratory. Still, as we have seen, the internal complexity characteristic of systems like Walker's and Austin's, although it does contribute notably to the affirmation of delivery's scientific or scholarly status, simultaneously obscures the reductive scope of their inquiries into the "elements" of elocution and the correspondingly limited character of the competent speaker which their *technai* both presuppose and construct. As well, the impression of exhaustive treatment of their subject matter through intricate structures of division draws our attention away from the lack of re-integration of these parts, the lack of guidance for re-combining the several elements of elocution into meaningful, practicable wholes.

One might logically expect the final sections of the treatises to fulfil the progressive sequence of their rhetorical forms (Burke, *Counterstatement* 124) by providing the kind of summative, holistic perspective that seems absent from their detailed, technical middles.[1] In a sense, the final sections do perform that function by representing, directly and indirectly,

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[1]In the following discussion, I use the phrases "final sections" or "closing sections" to designate not only the final conclusions, or perorations, of the treatises, but also the immediately preceding sections which for the most part focus in some way on the meaning and role of the "language of nature" in elocution. Specifically, these closing sections include the final two lectures in Sheridan's work, Lecture VI: "Tones" and Lecture VII: "Gesture", and, from Austin's *Chironomia*, Chapter XX: "Of the Analogy of Gesture and Language," Chapter XXI: "Of the Significancy of Gesture," and Chapter XXII: "Of Grace."

an ideal speaker who has mastered the art of elocution in its highest forms. From the perspective of classical oratory, these ideals, articulated in particular in Sheridan's and Austin's treatises, partially fulfil the peroration's function of summarizing "the whole" of the speaker's case (Quintilian 6.1.1).[2] In general, classical rhetoricians agreed that a primary function of the conclusion of a discourse was to provide a brief summation of the speaker's main arguments to refresh the audience's memory. Aristotle, for example, says that in the peroration "you have to review what you have already said" to make your points easily understood (*Rhetoric* 3.18.4), while Cicero explains that, in the peroration, "the summing-up is a passage in which matters that have been discussed in different places here and there throughout the speech are brought together at a glance in order to refresh the memory of the audience" (*De Inventione* 1.51.98).[3] However, whereas classical theory advises the speaker to enumerate the most important points of the case he has just made, the closing summations of Sheridan's and Walker's treatises do not mainly recapitulate the many parts and rules of elocution that their middle sections have already discussed; instead, they present a new kind of summative ideal of elocution that exceeds the scope of their representations so far.

By summing up the virtues of persuasive delivery, this ideal acts, in Burkean terms, as the principle of perfection motivating the symbolic hierarchy of elocutionary study and uniting all its members. These closing visions of complete oratory unite all participants in the hierarchy of elocution in the sense that "each class of being in the hierarchy strives to achieve the perfection that the top of the hierarchy represents" (Foss 174). At the same time, however, these lower, aspiring classes are divided and estranged from the inspirational ideal (Foss 176). Whereas the middle sections of the elocutionary texts

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[2]The conclusion of Walker's treatise, by contrast, is very brief and does not delineate a summative ideal of elocution. The final section of his two volume work does, however, provide an extensive catalogue of the physical expressions of internal passions. This section, as Walker notes, draws heavily on Burgh's catalogue in *The Art of Speaking*. Walker's closing inclusion of a lengthy section on gesture destabilizes his previous definition of the field of elocution which did not include gesture.

[3]Quintilian also discusses this enumerative and "regrouping" function of the peroration in Book VI.I.1-8 of *Institutio Oratoria*.

develop a modest, approachable ideal of competent speaking, based on the mastery of the fundamental "elements" (Walker, title page) or "rudiments" (Sheridan 95) of elocution, the final sections do not simply confirm the centrality of this limited, learnable ideal to the hierarchy of eighteenth-century elocutionary study. Instead, they leap, incongruously, from the representation of elocution as a knowable and teachable art to an affirmation of the most powerful and significant, but essentially mysterious and unteachable, forms of delivery.

The closing sections of Sheridan's and Austin's treatises thus re-configure the tension between the competent and the consummate speaker. Whereas the preceding *technai* of bodily decorum were expressly or implicitly intended to assist aspiring speakers who require the guidance of an explicit "repertoire of rules" combined with diligent practice in these rules to cross the threshold into polite society, the closing visions of the "genuine orator" (Herries 236) by contrast idealize a superior speaker who naturally possesses, ostensibly through an effortless "inborn capacity," (Cicero, *De Oratore* 1.25), the irresistible powers of delivery in its highest, truest manifestations. In Bourdieu's terms, this tension foregrounds the difference between those who acquire cultural capital primarily through educational means and those who possess it, effortlessly, by birth. However, because the transmission of physical capital between generations is less secure than the inheritance of economic and other forms of cultural capital (Shilling 142), the elocutionary representations of the "naturally" talented, superior speaker both exclude those whose social backgrounds have not cultured them in these validated forms of conduct and create possibilities that those who do not possess significant inherited capital of other kinds may display great "inborn" physical capital.

One of the key differences between the rule-bound competent speaker and the naturally talented consummate speaker is the role which *pathos* plays in their conduct. The image of the competent, diligent, socially-aspiring speaker for the most part emphasizes the decorous traits of *verecundia* (a modest sense of shame) and of self-restraint. These traits, which correspond with the status aspirant's "sense of limits" (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 471), make the display of strong emotion subject to the charge of indecorous self-assertion. As Quintilian cautions, "if the pleader is a feeble speaker," then grand emotional appeals are more likely to excite laughter than emotional engagement (6.1.44-46). Yet, according to Cicero and Quintilian, the great power of delivery lies in its *pathos*, in the "fire that voice,

look, and the whole carriage of the body" give to the speaker's emotional appeals (Quintilian 11.3.2).[4] As John Herries explains in *Elements of Speech*, the noblest form of delivery in public speaking is "animated with the SPIRIT OF THE PASSIONS. By that irresistible energy which penetrates the deepest recesses of the heart. Here dwells the triumph of original eloquence. It is this which distinguishes the genuine orator from the false one" (236). The closing ideals of "genuine" oratory, then, re-assert the marvelous power of *pathos*, though not as a feature of the rule-bound competent speaker but rather as a characteristic of the truly excellent speaker for whom rules are an imposition (Walker 1: 47).

This closing validation of delivery on the basis of its powers of emotional persuasion reconfirms the significance of *pathos* to rhetoric. Of the three classical appeals of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*, the latter has occupied the most problematic status within the rhetorical tradition. While classical rhetoricians such as Cicero and Quintilian strongly endorse the importance of *pathos* to persuasion, the Aristotelian tradition has helped to foster a deep suspicion of non-rational, emotional appeals, a suspicion that continues today, as we see in Edward Corbett's comment that "there is something undignified about a rational creature being precipitated into action through the stimulus of aroused passions" (*Classical Rhetoric* 86).[5] Joseph Colavito argues that, even though the place of *pathos* in the rhetorical

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[4]According to Cicero, "delivery is wholly the concern of the feelings" (*De Oratore* 3.59.221); "delivery, which gives the emotion of the mind expression, influences everybody, for the same emotions are felt by all people and they both recognize them in others and manifest them in themselves by the same marks" (*De Oratore* 3.59.223).

[5]Cicero, for example, argues that "nothing in oratory . . . is more important than to win for the orator the favor of his hearer, and to have the latter so affected as to be swayed by something resembling a mental impulse of emotion, rather than by judgment or deliberation" (*De Oratore* 2.42). The beginning of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, by contrast, condemns other writers on rhetoric for dealing with "nonessentials." "The arousing of prejudice, pity, anger, and similar emotions," he claims, "has nothing to do with the essential facts. . . . It is not right to pervert the judge by moving him to anger or envy or pity" (1.1354a). Aristotle does subsequently include *pathos* as an important appeal but, as his discussion of verbal style and delivery at the beginning of Book III makes clear, he remains highly ambivalent about the emotionally charming effects of non-rational appeals, arguing that

> The right thing in speaking really is that we should be satisfied not to annoy

tradition is significant, it continues to have "a negative cast" and to be viewed with "suspicion" (Colavito 493-494). The traditional association of delivery with the suspect appeal *pathos* suggests one reason why this canon has received less attention and less validation than the other parts of oratory. In their closing sections, however, Sheridan and Austin make *pathos* a primary, validated means of persuasion.

They do this on two levels: on a substantive level, they posit the expression of the natural language of the passions as an essential feature of genuine delivery; on a rhetorical level, the elocutionary writers themselves employ emotional appeals to create a psychological rather than strictly logical connection (Cooper and Nothstine 85) between the lesser ideal of competent speaking and the closing, inspirational ideal of consummate delivery. But both these forms of *pathos* introduce incompatibilities between Sheridan's and Austin's earlier representations of delivery and their closing ones. In particular, the association of elocution with the "language of nature" seems to conflict with the technical assumption that an explicit analytic pedagogy of bodily decorum can be systematically articulated and taught. And the final amplified visions of genuine oratory which appeal to the aspiring speaker's emotional desires contrast with the earlier quasi-logical elucidation of the basic elements of elocution.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's theory of the dissociation of ideas that yields the "appearance-reality" pair offers a critical tool for analyzing how Sheridan and Austin strive to alleviate some of the basic incompatibilities between the middle and closing representations of elocution, as well as further incongruities generated primarily within the final discussions themselves as these unfold. According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, the dissociation of concepts is "prompted by the desire to remove an incompatibility arising out of the confrontation of one proposition with others, whether one is dealing with norms, facts, or truths" (413). The prototypical dissociation of a concept into an "appearance-reality" pair acts to resolve or overcome incompatible "appearances" of reality by

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> our hearers, without trying to delight them: we ought in fairness to fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts: nothing, therefore, should matter except the proof of those facts. Still, as has already been said, other things affect the result considerably, owing to the defects of our hearers. (3.1404a).

distinguishing between "those appearances that are deceptive from those that correspond to reality" (416). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca designate the former as "term I" and the latter as "term II" in the appearance-reality pair:

appearance		term I
reality	or, in general	term II

In this pair, term II is the validated concept that represents "real" or "true" reality while term I stands in for multiple erroneous or illusory appearances.

This chapter will focus on how the elocutionists employ the technique of dissociating key ideas into appearance-reality pairs as a strategy for resolving, or at least temporarily alleviating, the main conceptual incompatibilities that emerge in their closing sections. These techniques help to construct a mysterious, psychological connection between lower and higher dimensions of the elocutionary hierarchy. As well, by emphasizing the role of natural talent, they make the learners, rather than the teachers and rules, of elocution ultimately accountable for success in delivery. To explore the substantive dimension of *pathos* in these closing sections, I will examine the sequences of dissociations put into play by Sheridan's and Austin's belated authorization of the art of elocution on the basis of its connections with the "language of nature" (Sheridan 113). To understand the inspirational effect of the closing ideals of the consummate orator, I will analyze the techniques of dissociation at work in their characterizations of this psychologically motivating but logically incongruous ideal.

The Language of Nature and Elocution

In the closing sections of their treatises, Sheridan and Austin attend to the relationship between persuasive delivery and "the language of nature," or "the language of the passions" (Sheridan 113, 101). This language, as Sheridan explains, consists of the "true signs" of the internal passions or "emotions of the mind," as these are expressed externally through "tones, looks, and gestures" (100-101). The role of the voice, countenance, and gesture in communicating and arousing emotion has firm classical

precedents, especially in Cicero's and Quintilian's rhetorical theories,[6] but within the cultural context of the elocutionists this dimension acquires further credibility through its identification with contemporary philosophical-psychological theories. This identification, which provides a kind of belated philosophical rationale for the study of delivery, amplifies the scholarly legitimacy of eighteenth-century elocutionary theory. But this rationale, while it may develop a culturally prestigious foundation for elocution as a field of enquiry, conflicts with the earlier quasi-logical representations of the parts and rules of elocutionary study. As well, the promotion of elocution as the communicative medium for expressing the natural language of the passions through non-verbal tones and gestures re-configures the disciplinary relationship between elocution and the art of written, verbal language. Especially within Sheridan's account, elocution and spoken language in this final configuration occupy a superior and distinct position in relation to written language.

Primarily, the elocutionary writers draw, either directly or indirectly, on the ostensibly authoritative views of Henry Homes (Lord Kames) about the meaning and operation of this natural language of the passions.[7] As Bizzell and Herzberg note, within the late eighteenth-century intellectual community, "Kames' influence . . . was considerable, and his effort to ground criticism and the arts in scientific psychology provided support for the important project of including the emotions, as well as reason and the understanding, in the study of human nature" (657). Austin extracts several lengthy passages from "the acute and learned author of Elements of Criticism" to explain "the external signs of emotions and passions" (469). His selections include the following key passage:

> The natural signs of emotions, voluntary and involuntary, being nearly the same in all men, form an universal language which no distance of place, no difference of tribe, no diversity of tongue, can darken or render doubtful. Education, though of mighty influence, hath not power to vary or sophisticate, far less to destroy, their signification. This is a wise

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[6]See Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.57-59; Quintilian, *Institutio* 11.3.1-14.

[7]See Mohrmann, "The Language of Nature and Elocutionary Theory" and "Kames and Elocution" for more information about the contemporary sources for the elocutionary views.

> appointment of Providence. For if these signs were, like words, arbitrary and variable, it would be an intricate science to decipher the actions and motives of our own species, which would prove a great or rather invincible obstruction to the formation of societies. But as matters are ordered, the external appearances of joy, grief, anger, fear, shame, and of the other passions forming an universal language, open a direct avenue to the heart. (Austin 472).

In particular, as the above passage suggests, the language of nature is socially valuable because, by contrast with the "arbitrary" language of "words," it is "universal" (i.e., cross-cultural and trans-historical), because it is "natural" in the sense of being untaught, and because its meaning is invariable and "direct." From the perspective of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's theory, this rhetorical representation deals with the incompatibility between different notions of human language by dissociating the general concept of language into an "appearance" term and a "reality" term: the higher, truer language (Term II) is the universal, untaught, mysterious language of the non-verbal expression of passions while the "arbitrary and variable" language of words and ideas occupies the position of Term I, the potential source of error and illusion.

However, this validation of delivery on the basis of its connections with the natural language of the passions clearly conflicts with several of Austin's and Sheridan's preceding arguments and assumptions about the nature and significance of elocution. Notably, their closing focus on the language of nature positions new features of delivery as more important than the essential elements detailed in their middle parts. Thus, these closing sections, instead of coherently tying together the various threads of the earlier sections, introduce new incompatibilities into the rhetorical formulations of their field of inquiry. These incompatibilities include a tension between the new privileging of delivery as a passionate, mysterious, and universal form of expression by contrast with former attempts to restrain bodily conduct through rational systems of verbally articulated rules and codes. This tension in turn destabilizes the preceding subordinate association of non-verbal eloquence with the established, gentlemanly art of written language. The question is, how do Sheridan and Austin (attempt to) deal, in their final sections, with these new disruptions to the overall coherence and decorum of their project?

Of all the elocutionists, Sheridan most extensively exploits the topic of the natural language of the passions to legitimate his field of inquiry. Of his seven lectures, he devotes the final two to this issue, though he has already alluded to it in earlier sections. In Lectures VI, on tones, and VII, on gesture, he constructs a complex theoretical rationale for the value of what he characterizes as "all that is pleasurable, or affecting" in elocution (95). To demonstrate the appropriateness of the concept of the natural language of the passions as the main philosophical justification for the study of elocution, Sheridan makes a series of dissociations that permit him to continue claiming the significance of this rationale to the elocutionary project despite emerging incongruities. These moves allow Sheridan to distinguish between (yet also connect) the imperfect nature of current speakers for whom the rudiments of elocution are appropriate and the idealized nature of future speakers who manifest higher forms of delivery; they allow him to assert the scholarly credibility of his discourse while avoiding the problem of providing prescriptive instruction for achieving "all that is pleasurable, or affecting"; they allow him to privilege non-verbal, spoken eloquence above verbal, written language, yet also to legitimate elocution according to a traditional mind-body hierarchy in which the body acts decorously as the external conveyor of higher, internal meaning; and his crucial dissociation between the universal language of nature that humans share with animals and the language of nature available only to "noble" humans allows him to re-affirm the value of cultivating non-verbal expressions of emotion.

Sheridan begins his final two lectures on "Tones" and "Gesture" by dissociating these "two remaining articles" from the earlier parts of elocution that he has covered. He classifies tones and gestures as the source of "all that is pleasurable, or affecting in elocution" whereas the earlier parts, though "essentially necessary," comprised merely the "rudiments" of public speaking (93). Thus, Sheridan establishes tones and gestures as the higher, more "real" term within the general concept of elocution, while the preceding parts are figured as less significant. However, by characterizing these less significant parts as "fundamentally, and essentially necessary," he does not exclude them from the hierarchy of elocution. Rather, his dissociation of ideas constructs two ranks of beings within this hierarchy: those who are masters merely of "these rudiments of rhetoric" and those who are masters of "every thing, which can add grace, or force to . . . delivery" (93). Although these two ranks are divided from each other, they are nonetheless connected because

committed to the same overall hierarchy of elocution. In this way, Sheridan stresses the situational, *kairotic* value of learning the preceding fundamental points of delivery: "so low is the state of elocution amongst us," he explains, "a man who is master even of these rudiments of rhetoric, is comparatively considered, as one of an excellent delivery" (94). Even though these "rudiments" do not represent elocution in its highest, ideal form, within the current time and circumstances one who possesses them will profit from the appearance, if not the reality, of "excellent delivery." However, the achievement of truly graceful and forceful delivery–the principle of perfection motivating Sheridan's symbolic hierarchy–requires more than the competent management of articulation, pronunciation, accent, emphasis, pauses, and pitch; it requires mastery of "tones, and gesture: upon which all that is pleasurable, or affecting in elocution, chiefly depend" (94).

This introduction to the final two lectures creates an expectation that Sheridan will now provide, at the very least, the same kind of practical (though limited) instruction for learning how to perform tones and gestures appropriately that he has given for mastering the "rudiments." But instead of giving any kind of practical instruction about tones and gestures, Sheridan shifts to an extended theoretical discourse about these forms of human communication combined with a panegyric celebration of their persuasive powers. While this discourse is logically inconsistent with his stated objective of providing his adult learners with a practical method for acquiring "just and natural delivery," it is rhetorically strategic in the sense that it foregrounds the "speculative," scholarly nature of his disquisition while preserving the indeterminacy of truly excellent elocution.

As Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca explain, typically knowledge of the "reality" of Term II in an appearance-reality pair "is indirect, sometimes even impossible, and rarely capable of communication in an exhaustive and unquestionable manner" (418). By simultaneously praising the natural language of tones and gesture as the most powerful aspect of elocution, yet avoiding the mundane task of explicating a practical method for acquiring these powers, Sheridan amplifies the value of this mysterious reality. Thus, the structure of his lectures moves from the explication of a *techne* designed to provide his immediate audience with the opportunity to become masters of a rudimentary degree of competence in public speaking, to the re-mystification of this art in its ideal form. This re-mystification ensures that the art of elocution does not become "easy, and for that very

reason insignificant" (Cahn 68).

Sheridan launches his theoretical discourse about the tones and gestures with a disquisition on "the precise meaning, of the term language" (94). Whereas formerly he attempted to garner support for the methodical study of elocution by associating it, analogously, with "the known rules" of written language (see Chapter Three), now Sheridan validates the language of tones and gestures by dissociating written, verbal language and spoken, non-verbal language. In his initial analogy, the art of written language occupied the higher, more "real" position which, claimed Sheridan, the irregular, unsettled practices of non-verbal spoken language should strive to imitate. Now, by contrast, his dissociation of the general concept "language" situates the non-verbal signs of emotions as a more "real" and important form of communication than the language of "words" (100).

Initially, he presents this dissociation in a fairly weak form, claiming that verbal language is "only a part of language" and that there are other parts that warrant attention as well. However, this apparently neutral whole-part division quickly adopts hierarchical values as Sheridan asserts that these "other parts" are not only "*equally* necessary" but "in their consequences of *more* importance" because they serve the "noblest and best ends" of "social communication" (98, my emphasis). Here Sheridan re-confirms the "serious moral" (Quintilian 4.1.7) nature of his enquiry by alluding to its implications for the spiritual well-being of the whole British nation and even all of humanity. The "ends" to which he refers consist of the ostensibly infallible, universal communication of emotions between human beings, a communication "necessary to society, and to the state of human nature in general" (101). While Sheridan is unclear about how exactly this non-verbal communication benefits society, he can count on the persuasiveness of his general argument because of its contemporary cultural currency, in particular in the doctrines of Scottish common sense philosophy and the aesthetic theories of Lord Kames.[8] By drawing on these current philosophical-psychological theories, Sheridan augments the scholarly authority of the elocutionary project. At the same time, his lengthy theoretical disquisition on the nature of language takes his audience's attention away from the lack of practical instruction on tones

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[8]See Mohrmann, "The Language of Nature and Elocutionary Theory" for an elucidation of the connections between elocutionary theory and common-sense philosophy.

and gestures in these closing lectures.

Sheridan overcomes the intellectual impropriety of asserting the value of bodily tones, looks, and gestures *in their own right* by dissociating this language into external appearance (i.e., its physical forms) and higher, internal reality (i.e., its abstract forms and meanings). Unlike words, tones and gestures provide "fixed, self-evident, and universally intelligible" signs of the passions (101). These signs, however, are not in themselves or for their own sake valuable; rather, their meaning and worth depends on their ability to accurately express the non-physical reality of internal feelings. In turn, the external expression of these internal feelings is important because it contributes to an abstract, mysterious conception of social well-being.

The premise that the physical expression of emotions comprises a "universally intelligible" natural language that "requires neither study, art, nor imitation" (105) leads to a new incompatibility in Sheridan's general conception of this language. Clearly, the idea that human beings successfully perform this language without study or art contradicts an essential motivation for the elocutionary hierarchy—that is, to develop a regulated method of instruction in delivery. Even more disquietingly, the theory of the natural language of the passions—according to its fundamental premises—dissolves hierarchical distinctions not only between human beings of different cultures and classes, but between human beings and animals: "man, in his animal capacity, is furnished, like all other animals, by nature herself, with a language which requires neither study, art, nor imitation" (105).

To overcome this incompatible identification "between the human and animal species," Sheridan introduces a new dissociation intended to "mark their boundaries" (106): while animals and humans share a natural capacity for expressing basic feelings through physical expressions, the latter possess "nobler faculties" that link them with "spiritual beings" and distinguish them from "the brute species." Thanks to these noble, rational faculties, human beings are capable of improving, through their "own pains and industry" (106), the basic resources of nature. In this new figuration, nature is "an instrument" subject to "the care and invention of man." Here, Sheridan's argument comes full circle, allowing him to reassert, at least indirectly, the value of conscious study and art to non-verbal delivery: by contrast with the basic, natural expressions of emotion common to all species, the noble faculties of human beings create a whole new range of "internal exertions

and emotions" distinct from those of "the brute species"; this higher, nobler set of emotions requires different tones and gestures than those universally supplied by nature. Thus, it is up to the "care and invention of man" to establish through art and custom those external signs which express these higher emotions.

While Sheridan begins by asserting the value of tones and gestures on the basis of their untaught, universal nature, he moves eventually, through a series of hierarchical dissociations, to reaffirm their culturally-determined forms. At the same time, this move causes him to re-identify the non-verbal language of the passions with the verbal language of ideas, first of all because the meanings of both, he claims, are "established by custom" and secondly because the expression of the nobler emotions requires association with verbal language to be fully determinate:

> But the tones resulting from the emotions and exertions of our nobler faculties, tho' they excite feeling, as it is in the nature of all tones to do, yet it is only of a vague and indeterminate nature; not corresponding to the energies in the mind of the speaker, unless they are associated with words, or the symbols of ideas. . . . When any tones therefore are affixed to certain modes of expression, and adopted into general use; those tones, tho' they have no natural connection with the sentiment, no more than words have with ideas; yet by such association, become equally intelligible, and equally affecting with those that have, and are made part of the language. . . . (108)

Sheridan's discussion of the natural language of the passions in Lectures VI and VII constructs a complex theoretical rationale for the value of "all that is most affecting, and pleasurable" in elocution, namely the tones and gestures. While an analysis of the main dissociative moves that characterize this discussion shows its logical inconsistencies, the sequence of these moves permits Sheridan to alleviate these incongruities as his discourse progresses, and thereby to preserve for his audience the mysterious value of the highest elements of elocution. As well, the philosophical nature of this section of his discourse enhances the scholarly credibility of his work by demonstrating the apparent association between the practical, physical art of elocution and learned, abstract enquiries into the nature of social communication and the superior "internal faculties" of human beings. By characterizing the "signs of internal emotions" as the "nobler branch of [human] language,"

he affirms the social and disciplinary value of his subject matter. And, though logically disquieting, the instability of his dissociations between the verbal language of ideas and the physical language of the passions, and between animal and human forms of communication augment the indeterminacy of this noble language. This indeterminacy, which amplifies the reality-value of Sheridan's privileged term, is increased further by the absence of any practical, technical method for successfully learning and performing the language of the passions.

The closing section of the *Chironomia* also explores the role of the language of nature in elocution both by drawing on Lord Kames' views of this language and by foregrounding theatrically "expressive" gestures which "represent a passion of the character being portrayed" (Barnett 36). But at the same time as Austin presents as a basic premise for the significance of non-verbal delivery the concept of a gestural language which indicates the emotions in a universally comprehensible manner, his representation demonstrates ambivalence about the propriety of including this powerful, but perhaps excessive, natural language of the passions within the hierarchy of decorous elocution. Simply the positioning of Austin's discussion of the expressive language of nature within the treatise as a whole introduces an ambiguity about its status: although it apparently articulates a fundamental premise for the study of elocution, by placing this section so late, Austin calls into question its fundamental relevance. Austin's closing representation thus confuses the distinction between what is *apparently* and what is *really* the most significant or truest form of delivery.

Moving from his systematic analysis of the parts of gesture and their symbolic notation, Austin includes two closing chapters that explore the nature of gesture as a kind of language in its own right. Chapter XX begins by boldly affirming the equality of verbal language and the language of gesture: "Gesture is in itself capable of being used as the sign of ideas, and therefore of being substituted for language" (449). Contrary to Austin's earlier representation of the proper gestures for public speaking, this statement introduces the disciplinarily presumptuous view that gesture can actually *replace* verbal language rather than simply act as a secondary support to its dominant meanings. And not only does gesture express the meanings of passions or emotions; it can even signify "ideas" independently of words. As evidence for this proposition, Austin refers to "the excellence

of the art of ancient pantomimes" (449), a reference which recalls the incongruities of his earlier chapter on the pantomimic art (see Chapter Three).

As in this earlier chapter, however, Austin quickly re-establishes a decorous structure for the specific kinds of gesture appropriate to public speaking. He does this primarily by dissociating the language of gesture as a whole into the true or proper forms of gesture for public speaking as distinct from those common to theatrical expression. Yet his dissociation ambivalently presents theatrical gesture as an ideal model at the same time as it excludes this form of gesture from the hierarchy of elocution:

> The action of the theatre supplies the most perfect models, because in its highest performance, tragedy, all the qualities of perfect gesture are required. But for rhetorical delivery, we have seen that some of those qualities are unnecessary, and some are improper. If the speaker have judgment sufficient to retrench what is superfluous, or improper for his use, the action of the theatre may, no doubt, afford him very useful instruction, and become under proper restrictions the best model. . . . But he must carefully guard against attempting to introduce the full license of theatrical action into rhetorical delivery of any kind. (461-62)

This dissociation between theatrical and rhetorical action is unstable, encouraging the student of public speaking to follow the "most perfect models" of theatre while at the same time requiring him always to "guard against" its licentious extremes. In this way, Austin represents theatrical action as both the highest reality and the erroneous appearance of reality. Indirectly, this dissociation depends on a distinction within the character of the speaker: the speaker who can successfully negotiate the mysterious relationship between theatrical and rhetorical action is he who possesses "sufficient judgment" to make the right decisions. By appealing to this characteristic of the speaker, Austin makes the possible overstepping of the boundaries of decorous gesture become the fault not of his prescriptive *techne* but instead of the student's own judgment and nature.

The subsequent chapter, "Of the Significancy of Gesture," also opens with a general pronouncement about the relationship between verbal and non-verbal language, a pronouncement that once again appears to position non-verbal language as equal, if not superior to, verbal language in its "significancy." The terms and phrases that Austin uses to

describe the former language align it with the validated reality principle of Term II: for example, tones, looks, and gestures are "a sure indication" of the emotions; they "discover the thoughts distinctly"; they are "never misunderstood" (469); indeed, their "significancy" is by definition what Austin calls "truth" (481). Thus, the initial structure of dissociation in this chapter functions to privilege the untaught, natural signs of emotions above the "arbitrary," unreliable significations of verbal language. However, this hierarchy obviously conflicts with assumptions that underlie Austin's preceding *techne* of gesture: the assumptions that proper gesture can be taught and should be socially regulated, that the highest, most significant form of gesture is cultivated, and that the primary role of rhetorical action is to support, not displace, verbal language.

To overcome these incompatibilities, Austin moves from "the authority of the acute and learned author of Elements of Criticism," through which he has established "the existence of natural signs and their necessity" to another authoritative view. Now he draws on the Abbé du Bos' "division of gesture into *natural and instituted*" (475).[10] The category of "instituted" gestures would seem to introduce an opening for reaffirming the importance of cultivated, socially-regulated action within the order of elocution. According to du Bos, however, Quintilian associates "instituted" gestures that signify independently or *in the place* of words with the questionable domain of theatrical and especially pantomimic action.[11] Thus, "naturally" significant gestures continue to maintain the more privileged position, while "instituted" or "artificial" gestures classify as erroneous for public speaking:

> . . . a man who beats his breast, uses a natural gesture indicating a strong affection of the mind: but he, who by his gestures described the forehead encircled by a diadem, makes use of a gesture of institution, signifying a crowned head. An orator in speaking has no occasion to use these artificial gestures in order to make himself understood. And besides many of these

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[10]Jean-Baptiste Dubos was the author of *Reflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1755). An English translation of his work by J. Nourse was published in 1748.

[11]For more on "instituted" or, as Dene Barnett calls them, "imitative" gestures in eighteenth-century theatre and oratory, see Barnett, 33-35.

> gestures could not fail to be incompatible with the decorum he ought to preserve in his delivery. (476)

Instead of developing the logical implications of this new dissociation between "naturally" and "artificially" significant gestures further, Austin retreats from the role of critical scholar, in which he comments on the relative merits of differing viewpoints, and takes on for the remainder of this section more the function of uncritical compiler. For example, he simply allows du Bos/Quintilian's views to co-exist both with Kames' preceding theory and, subsequently, with the ideas of other contemporary writers on gesture such as Johann Engel, Joannes Lucas, and Georges-Louis (the Count) de Buffon. As well, he refers the reader to both Sheridan's and Walker's views about "the external characters of the passions" (482) without commenting on their different views. As a compiler of the views of others, Austin manages to demonstrate the breadth of his learning without being forced to take an explicit position for or against any particular view, or to untangle the distinctions between possibly conflicting views.

Paradoxically, even though the gestures that Austin discusses in these closing chapters may have great social "significancy" because they are natural, universal indicators of the emotions independent of verbal language, they are only peripherally significant to his system of delivery. By the end of his chapter on the "Significancy of Gesture," Austin returns to his dominant, and disciplinarily decorous, representation of rhetorical action as primarily and properly concerned with what he calls "not significant" gestures (497) rather than "significant" gestures. And, as the following passage shows, this dissociation between significant and not-significant gesture depends on the prior (unstable) dissociation between theatrical and rhetorical action, a dissociation here characterized in terms of degree not opposition:

> The significant gestures however numerous and correct which a great actor makes in the representation of an entire dramatic character, bear no proportion to the greater number of his gestures which are not significant, and which are no less necessary, though not so splendid nor imposing. . . . If the significant gestures of the actor are less numerous than those which are less brilliant; the gestures of this kind allowed to the orator are still more rare and reserved. (497, 499)

In the end, Austin reasserts the relatively insignificant status of "significant" gesture within the order of elocution, while at the same time permitting it a mysterious if marginal position (as he has done in both the master table and the plates of drawings). His final affirmation of non-significant gesture, despite its ambiguous relationship with the preceding, main discussion of significant gesture in this chapter, gives him the opportunity to return the reader's attention to the gestures his system has enumerated in the prior, middle section of his treatise. In addition, this affirmation allows him to assert the value of his system for guiding theatrical as well as rhetorical action since, claims Austin, non-significant gestures "will be found to constitute the great mass of those which must also be introduced on the theatre" (499). Whereas he began these two closing chapters by praising theatrical gesture for providing "the most perfect models" of action to the discriminating student of public speaking, he ends by asserting the supremacy of his own system of rhetorical gesture not only for the domain of public speaking but for the world of the theatre as well. In this way, he reverses his opening hierarchical dissociation, now situating rhetorical action in the Term II position and theatrical action as Term I.

The ambiguous relationship between the domains of rhetorical and theatrical action reflect, at least in part, the unstable social status of the world of the theatre in late eighteenth-century Britain. Though securing an increasingly respectable reputation, as Straub argues this respectability was precarious and counterbalanced by a continued perception of the socially and sexually suspect nature of the acting profession (Straub 9-10). And although the increasing role of elocutionary manuals in prescribing styles of delivery for private entertainment, rather than strictly for public speaking, creates a partial opening for the introduction of the theatre's "brilliant," passionate gestures, this leakage of public theatrical forms into the private spheres of polite society must be carefully regulated to prevent the intrusion of "licentiousness" (Austin 240). Otherwise, private elocutionary entertainments may lose their status as tasteful and "innocent" forms of leisure similar to the study of *belles lettres* recommended by Hugh Blair, and instead introduce the kind of "pernicious passion" they are intended to prevent (Blair 35).

Characterizations of the Ideal Orator

In addition to presenting *pathos*, or the expression of the passions, as a fundamental rationale for the significance of delivery, the closing sections of Sheridan's and Austin's treatises function as final emotional appeals to the implied readers of their handbooks. The summative ideal of consummate oratory which these sections describe in a sense fulfils the peroration's function of providing a summary, though this "summary" exceeds the scope of the elemental parts of elocution detailed in the middle sections. As emotional appeals, however, these ideals more clearly fulfil the peroration's function of "*affectus*" (Corbett 307). In addition to summarizing key points to make them better understood, the conclusion of a speech, according to Aristotle, should "excite your hearers' emotions" (3.1419a). Quintilian discusses at length "the appeal to the emotions" suited to the peroration, stressing how this appeal will make the judges or hearers not only accept the speaker's case, but more importantly desire it. A successful emotional appeal at the close of a discourse, claims Quintilian, sweeps the judge along "in a tide of passion" to which he "yields unquestioningly" (6.2.5-7). While the closings of Sheridan's and Austin's treatises may not quite sweep the reader along in a tide of passion, they do appeal to the reader's emotions through their motivating visions of "excellent" delivery (Sheridan 95). Even though the implied users of these treatises may never be able to achieve the final inspiring descriptions of the highest forms of delivery, they can all desire them. These final visions therefore simultaneously transcend and obscure the limitations of the preceding elementary *technai*, leaving the reader with a mysterious sense of connection between the two incongruous representations of bodily decorum.

The logical incompatibility of these two images does not prevent the representation of the truly excellent speaker from acting as the ideal that motivates the rhetorical hierarchy of elocution and which therefore inspires the aspiring speaker to achieve his appropriate level, or degree, within this hierarchy. As Burke argues, in a social hierarchy, "even the dispossessed tends to feel that he 'has a stake in' the authoritative structure that dispossesses him" (*Attitudes* 329). The hierarchic order of elocution implied by these closing,

summative ideals suggests that these ultimate terms encompass conflicting inferior elements, not by "outlawing" them, but by finding a place for them in a "developmental series." According to Burke, "Once you have placed your terms in a developmental series, you have an arrangement whereby each can be said to participate, *within the limitations of its nature*, in the ultimate perfection ("finishedness") of the series" (*On Symbols* 197-98). Despite separating the rank of competent speakers from the highest rank of perfect orators, the closing sections of Sheridan's and Austin's treatises attempt, through various techniques of dissociation, to reveal the mysterious connection that exists between all members of the hierarchy of elocution. In particular, the construction of this hierarchic order depends on dissociations between the temporal and social locations of the different levels of speaker in the elocutionary hierarchy, and between the artificial, unemotional orator and the naturally talented, passionate, and graceful orator. To preserve a sense of developmental series and of mysterious communion between the separate ranks created by these dissociations, Sheridan and Austin present the separations between these ranks mainly as bridgeable differences of degree, not insurmountable ontological gaps (Whigham 72).

Roughly half-way through his final lecture, Sheridan stops explaining the role of the language of the passions within human society generally and begins discussing its role specifically within the art of elocution. This shift entails a series of dissociative moves which allow him both to advance an ideal vision of perfect oratory and to identify an achievable rank in the elocutionary hierarchy for his immediate, imperfect audience of "persons who are advanced in life" (127). Sheridan accomplishes this mainly through a temporal dissociation which both distinguishes the imperfect present from and connects it with the potentially perfect future, modeled on the idealized past, of elocutionary study and practice. Within this dominant dissociative structure, Sheridan effects other more subtle, yet significant, distinctions, particularly between the admirable forms of the language of nature ostensibly practised in ancient culture compared to the false modes of contemporary British oratory, and between the kinds of imperfect but "natural" elocution that are admissible in the current imperfect context by contrast with those "unnatural" forms which should be wholly excluded. This sequence of dissociations enables him to close with a hierarchic vision of the elocutionary symbolic order that implies, through the form of a developmental series, the participation of all members of the order in the "finishedness" of

the ultimate stage according to the limits of their nature.

Sheridan distinguishes between the true cultivation of the language of nature, to be found in the regular study and practice of classical oratory, and the false, capricious forms prevalent in the contemporary British context. Here, the value of the former "reality" compared to the latter is represented through the contrast of terms signifying stability and harmony with those connoting instability and discord. Sheridan extends this basic structure of validation by claiming that the classical forms of the language of nature distinguish themselves from the lesser, imperfect reality of the current scene because they were based on "common standards" and "general" models, rather than the wholly irregular practices of eighteenth-century British society. This argument presumes a neo-classical conception of "nature" as typical, uniform, and regular rather than a pre-romantic association of "nature" and the "natural" with individuality, irregularity, and spontaneity (Mattingly 81-84). This distinction provides Sheridan with the premise to justify his own lack of precise rules for teaching his audience how to acquire the "beauties" of the language of nature: without suitable models or common standards, he argues, it is impossible to develop rules for teaching students of public speaking how to imitate these non-existent models. Thus, until Britain develops these ideal models, the best that can be done is to give rules that teach individuals how to "avoid faults" but not how to "acquire beauties" (119). The avoidance of faults, though an imperfect form of elocution, is nonetheless situated as a necessary step in the movement toward the past/future ideal of classical oratory. While Sheridan's immediate audience and immediate context can only advance by small degrees toward that ideal, the displacement of the ideal into a mysterious future allows him to promise great long-term rewards, provided of course that his audience continues to support a national project for the revival of elocutionary study.

Given the immediate impossibility of securing the heights of true excellence, what short-term methods does Sheridan offer to his audience for ensuring that their public speaking benefits at least to some degree from the power of the language of nature? Setting aside for the moment the higher reality of classical/ideal oratory, Sheridan focuses expediently on the actual situation of his audience. Within this generally imperfect reality, he creates a new hierarchical dissociation between a speaker who follows "a manner of his own" and a speaker who borrows or copies the manner of another imperfect speaker (119).

While the former may not possess grace, he at least has the advantage, says Sheridan, of expressing his "true" feelings, whereas the latter appears "unnatural" and affected (120). A distinguishing feature of the former speaker is that he employs "no art" in his delivery and in this sense exhibits a pleasantly "natural" manner (123). Here Sheridan draws on the association of "nature" and "natural" with individuality and spontaneity. But this promotion of a non-artful form of elocution seems to conflict with his preceding glorification of the way in which classical oratory, he claims, artfully cultivated the language of nature so that it was graceful as well as forceful. To overcome this incompatibility, Sheridan emphasizes that art in its proper, perfect form is desirable; however, this art must combine the best instruction, perfect patterns, and constant practice. Where this ideal form of art is unavailable or impractical (as it is for his immediate audience), then no art is preferable to "insufficient art" (121). Thus, says Sheridan, until the necessary elements for the proper cultivation of elocution are in place, "the best service I can do, is to inform individuals how they may by their own endeavours arrive at such a degree of excellence, as they can attain without the aid of masters" (123).

However, Sheridan's expedient advice that the best way for his immediate audience to introduce the force, if not the grace, of the language of nature into their public speaking is simply to follow their own "natural" (untaught) manner introduces another tension. What if a person's natural manner involves "bad habits"? Initially, Sheridan deals with this possible problem simply by attaching a conditional phrase to his characterization of the current speaker who may achieve force but not grace in delivery: "Grace in elocution, it is hardly possible to obtain, in the present state of things; Force of delivery, is the necessary result of a clear head, and warm heart; *provided no bad habits interfere*" (my emphasis, 122). This brief conditional clause indicates the exclusivity of the apparently wholly accessible secondary ideal that Sheridan has constructed to conform to his immediate context: if "bad habits" do interfere with a person's so-called natural manner, or rather, if "bad habits" constitute this person's manner, then he is excluded even from this secondary hierarchy of elocution.

A page or two later, however, Sheridan returns to the topic of "bad habits" and draws on a previous dissociative structure to permit them a limited, imprecise inclusion within his symbolic hierarchy. Just as he has dissociated the preferable reality of a person's

"own manner" from the affected appearance of someone who copies another person's manner, he now classifies "faults" into two forms: the acceptable form of those that properly, "naturally" belong to the speaker and the unacceptable form of faults borrowed from someone else:

> 'Tis granted; and it were to be wished, that a way were opened, by which speakers might be cured of all faults, in all the parts of delivery; but as this is impossible, without the aid of masters; and since thro' want of masters, faults there must be; the question is, whether a person should take up with his own, or those of another? A man's own faults, sit easy on him; habit has given them the air of being natural; those of another, are not assumed without awkwardness, they are evidently artificial. Where truth is concerned, the very faults of a speaker which seem natural are more agreeable to the hearer, than such beauties as are apparently borrowed. (124)

In this way, Sheridan privileges a person's "own" faults above those of another. Implicitly, this characterization supports a social ideology which validates the possession of personal property and the rights of the individual. Indeed, this whole section of Sheridan's treatise both perpetuates and appeals to such an ideology, emphasizing several times that the imperfect but best-available method that he recommends to his audience is "in the power of everyone" to pursue (123). While this method may be in the power of his audience from the middling ranks to pursue (given the social worlds they already inhabit and their proximity to, if not full participation in, polite society), this assumption obfuscates the social elitism which, in reality, excludes very large portions of the British population from even entering into the lowest ranks of the hierarchy of elocution.

As well, by claiming that every member of his audience (if not all British citizens) has the individual power to achieve at least forceful, if not graceful, delivery, Sheridan once again places responsibility for the success of his adult learners primarily on their individual "natural talents" (123) rather than on his own rules and instruction. He promises his audience that simply by combining mastery of the "fundamental points" of elocution discussed in his earlier lectures with a "natural manner" of delivery, each has the power "to obtain him the character of an excellent speaker, *in proportion to his natural talents*" (123, my emphasis). If a speaker does not secure a character of excellence, this is the result not

of Sheridan's instruction but instead of the student's insufficient "natural talents" which have "entitled" (129) him to at best a limited stake in the social property and power of elocution. This terminology of individualism and natural talent psychologically motivates members of the elocutionary hierarchy to continue striving toward greater degrees of perfection and at the same time to accept only partial success as consonant with their ostensibly "natural" limitations.

Although the bulk of the second half of Sheridan's final lecture focuses on the lesser degrees of excellence that are, he maintains, realistically accessible to his immediate, imperfect and imperfectable audience, this characterization of the "good" speaker who adequately "answer[s] every end of elocution in these times" (127) is subordinate to the higher past and future ideal of the truly excellent orator. To ensure that his audience properly understands and remains motivated by this ideal, Sheridan provides at the very end of his last lecture a succinct, explicit summary of the different ranks of speakers within the hierarchy of elocution:

> It is evident, in the use of the language of emotions, that he who is properly moved, and at the same time delivers himself, in such tones, as delight the ear with their harmony; accompanied by such looks and gestures, as please the eye with their grace; whilst the understanding also perceives their propriety; is in the first class, and must be accounted a master. In this case, the united endeavours of art and nature, produce that degree of perfection, which is no other way to be obtained, in any thing that is the workmanship of man. Next to him is the speaker who gives way to his emotions, without thinking of regulating their signs; and trusts to the force of nature, unsollicitous about the graces of art. And the worst is he, who uses tones and gestures, which he has borrowed from others, and which, not being the result of his feelings, are likely to be misapplied, and to be void of propriety, force, and grace. But he who is utterly without all language of emotions, who confines himself to the mere utterance of words, without any concomitant signs, is not to be classed among public speakers. (133)

This developmental series clarifies the separation between each rank at the same time that it creates a mysterious sense of connection from highest to lowest. The connection

across ranks operates through the strategically vague concept of the natural language of the emotions: each level possesses some form of this language, the substance that all members of the hierarchy share. However, while this substance may be necessary for all levels, it is not sufficient for the highest, perfect orator who must combine the forces of nature with the graces of art. Here the concept of "nature" becomes realigned with the values of cultivated uniformity and regularity, yet it also maintains its definition as an emotional force to which the individual speaker must "give way" in an unregulated, spontaneous manner. Further, by specifying a kind of speaker who is wholly excluded from the hierarchy of elocution, Sheridan emphasizes the negotiable differences of degree, not the insurmountable differences of kind, which exist between all those who do participate in the elocutionary order, no matter what their level. His closing image thus creates a kind of congregation through segregation (Burke, *On Symbols* 281) and derogation, confirming the value of those within the borders of the hierarchy by stressing the disrepute and undesirability of those classified as wholly outside. Still, as Burke suggests, even the wholly dispossessed tends to feel a stake in the authoritative structure that dispossesses him because, once this structure is accepted as authoritative, his only hope of salvation lies in the possibility of finding a "niche" for himself within it (Burke, *Attitudes* 329-330).

By establishing a mysterious sense of community between all members of the elocutionary order, Sheridan's closing hierarchy offers an inspirational representation of the highest degree of perfection to help motivate his immediate audience in their lesser, imperfect expressions of this ideal; as well, by positioning this hierarchy after his extensive explanation that the most his audience of "persons . . . of advanced years" can and should hope to achieve is a limited degree of excellence, Sheridan mitigates the potentially de-motivating effects of presenting this audience with an ideal so far beyond their grasp. Additionally, the formal structure of Sheridan's closing hierarchy functions indirectly to solicit support for his disciplinary aspiration to situate the canon of delivery at the centre of rhetorical study and to help ensure his own future as the leader of the revival of elocution in Britain. By accepting a lower or middling, or even wholly dispossessed, position within this ranked order, Sheridan's audience also accepts and endorses the highest ideal. And the actualization of this ideal in the future, as Sheridan already has made clear, depends on the development of "the best instruction, perfect patterns, and constant practice" in the art of

elocution (121). Who better suited to lead such an endeavour than Sheridan himself? And who better suited to support it than those he has persuaded to invest in the hierarchy of elocution by attending or purchasing his lectures?

Whereas Sheridan's closing section establishes the *force* of the language of the emotions as the essential feature of excellence in public speaking, Austin's idealized representation of the perfect orator stresses the counterbalancing quality of *grace*. Consonant with its ultimate value in Austin's hierarchy of elocution, "grace" is the most difficult quality to achieve and it mysteriously encapsulates all the subordinate qualities that are necessary but not sufficient to acquire the character of a perfect orator.

Although Austin does not, like Sheridan, make the natural language of the emotions the primary focus of his closing vision, he nonetheless draws on the topic of nature to help him overcome potential incompatibilities in his delineation of the properly graceful speaker. Anticipating the objection that the so-called *external* grace of physical gestures constitutes only the appearance of *internal*, disembodied truth, Austin dissociates his conception of "genuine oratorical grace" from the false, merely external grace of physical affectations. Thus, he legitimates his definition of graceful delivery by associating it with the higher realm of non-physical, internal meanings and dissociating it from its embodied character. Genuine grace is not identical with internal truth, but–like the physical expression of the passions–it always corresponds exactly with truth and "sincerity"; it is "the proper garb and ornament of truth" (507).

As well, the dissociation between false and genuine grace (similarly to Sheridan's argument about the language of nature) depends on the distinction between physical forms and habits which "naturally" *belong* to the speaker, as his own property, and improper graceful forms which are copied from others. But Austin is more explicit than Sheridan in clarifying the socially hierarchic nature of the differences between these two ranks of speakers: "true external grace can hardly be either assumed by, or imparted, except to a mind of a generous and *noble* nature," whereas the affected imitation of grace is typically the property of the "awkward," the "vulgar," and of "silly fellows" (506-508, my emphasis). While on the surface Austin's rhetoric conveniently presents the difference between these speakers as the consequence of their individual, internal natures, his choice of terms such as "noble" and "vulgar" indicate the social premises of his characterizations. These social

premises become even more apparent in his concise explanation of the path to achieving true grace: "But genuine oratorical grace can only be the result of refined cultivation adorning a superior understanding, or the rare gift of nature to a pure and exalted mind, expressed by the actions of a distinguished person" (508).

Austin's explanation of the sources and properties of "true" grace indirectly draws on the principle of *sprezzatura,* or graceful effortlessness, which distinguishes the élite from those below them. According to Whigham, the virtue of *sprezzatura* "makes possible the symbolic demonstration of differences in kind between the ruling class and others, in the face of substantive evidence to the contrary" (93). The conceptual distinction between the positive judgment of *sprezzatura* and the negative judgment of affectation, or of displaying laborious effort in striving to act gracefully, provides the basis for a kind of "ontological criticism" that mystifies the actual lack of substantive evidence in the speakers' performances. By situating the source of external grace in the prior domain of the speaker's internal "noble" nature, Austin makes the ultimate basis of judgment about a speaker's gracefulness not the substantive evidence of physical performance but rather the prior, incontrovertible evidence of his already-established social distinction or nobility. As Whigham argues, in court society the distinction between "an established courtier" and "a would-be" would "often have been achieved by application of a prior judgment or information on status" (149). Similarly, Austin's closing vision of true gracefulness presupposes that the judges of the speaker's performance have prior information about his social status–that is, whether the person speaking already possesses a "noble," "refined," "distinguished" position in the social order, or whether his origins are "vulgar" or "silly." Regardless of the speaker's external, physical comportment, only the former type has the opportunity to be judged truly graceful.

But by continuing to exploit the topic of nature, Austin remystifies the basis of true grace. In addition to being a socially inherited property, this physical capital may, on rare occasions, be possessed by a person who does not by birth possess other forms of capital. For example, by including the secondary possibility of a speaker who possesses grace "as a rare gift of nature" he denies the strictly social limits that determine who may and may not be judged graceful. As well, Austin suggests that someone who "naturally" possesses only a small degree of physical capital can greatly augment it through education. He reassures his

aspiring readers that, as long as they are not "totally deficient in natural qualifications" or "dispositions," they have the chance to improve their "talents" and thus ascend toward–though almost certainly not attain–the heights of "consummate eloquence" and "true grace" (509). The important condition for this improvement, however, is the student's degree of "application" (509). In this way, Austin doubles the significance of the aspiring speaker's personal dispositions for determining the degree of his success in escalating the hierarchy of elocution. But by making "application" an essential condition for movement up this hierarchy, Austin paradoxically confirms the inferior status of those who labour to improve themselves, since this display of effort is precisely the basis for the charge of affectation. The implicit social elitism that determines those who are permitted in the first place to embark on, let alone succeed at, the laborious task of striving toward true grace becomes even more explicit as Austin explains that those "men" who may hope to improve their "natural" talents through further cultivation in rhetorical delivery must already be, in a general sense, "well educated" (509). In this way, he ensures the social exclusivity of the highest rank in the elocutionary hierarchy while simultaneously preserving an impression of open opportunity by appealing to the "rare" possibility of grace bestowed solely "by nature."

Ultimately, Austin's blurring of the boundaries between untaught "natural" talents and the social refinements granted by culture and application leads him to appeal to the classical doctrine of decorum as the most fitting way to legitimate his ideal of the genuinely graceful speaker. At the same time, by returning to the authority of classical sources for the final word, he reconfirms the disciplinary propriety of his novel inquiry into gesture: "So that it will be allowed, according to the very just maxim of Cicero and Quintilian, that decorum constitutes true oratorical grace. And accordingly this decorum admits great variety, and allows great scope for the action of the orator under different circumstances" (516). Whereas the bulk of the *Chironomia* attempts to articulate a precise system of specific rules and notations that will make the art of rhetorical gesture fully knowable and teachable, in closing Austin posits an ultimately unteachable doctrine of decorum as both prior and superior to the technical specifications of his system. As Quintilian explains in the lengthy quote that Austin employs to finish his final chapter, "neither can that decorum be acquired without the assistance of art, nor yet be altogether delivered by the rules of art" (517). Thus, Austin preserves the value of his *techne*, since it constitutes "the assistance of

art" that he promises can help aspiring speakers secure greater cultural capital, but he simultaneously makes it unaccountable for the failure of any of his students to improve their status, since this failure can always be blamed on their imperfect "natural" talents.

The doctrine of decorum permits another escape from accountability for student failures: not only does true decorum (or genuine grace) require, as Sheridan would say, "the united efforts of art and nature," but the rules of art if pursued too laboriously themselves risk undermining the highest grace and opening the practitioner to the charge of affectation. Austin suggests in the end (through Quintilian's voice) that to become a perfect orator the aspiring speaker ultimately must discard the rules of art and act rather "according to the nature of his own peculiar powers" (517). While Austin's initial association of art and nature within the ideal of decorum creates a sense of unity between all ranks in his hierarchy of rhetorical delivery, this new dissociation re-inscribes an apparently unbridgeable ontological gap between the aspiring middle-rank speaker who hopes to improve his status by labouring to master Austin's *techne*, and the speaker of "consummate eloquence" (509) who, by gracefully investing his delivery with "his own peculiar powers," effortlessly transcends the rules of art intended for less noble speakers. The instability of these final associative/dissociative moves allows Austin to imply that learning his system of gesture somehow will help the aspiring speaker move closer to the ideal of genuine grace, but without making the risky claim that it necessarily or even probably fulfils this function.

Concluding Remarks

The foregoing analysis demonstrates how *pathos* informs Sheridan's and Austin's closing sections, both on a substantive level in their discussions of the significance of the natural language of the passions and on a rhetorical level in their final psychologically motivating characterizations of the ideal orator. While these two levels of *pathos* apparently conflict with their preceding quasi-logical representations of rational systems for defining and regulating bodily conduct, the use of dissociation alleviates the incongruities between the middle and closing sections of Sheridan's and Austin's works. Their closing appeals to

the powerful but mysterious language of nature and to the ideal of the perfect orator transcend the limitations of their *technai* and the "rudiments" of delivery these *technai* are intended to teach and regulate.

From the perspective of the implied aspiring speaker, the concluding visions of "consummate eloquence" (Austin 509) divert the student's attention from the ponderous task of training himself in the basic elements of acceptable, inoffensive delivery and onto the inspiring principle of perfection which motivates the hierarchy of elocution as a whole. Although this principle lies outside the reach of the aspiring speaker situated within the imperfect context of contemporary British society, it nonetheless validates the lesser achievements suitable to the limitations of his nature. At the same time, by asserting the vague but important role of "natural talents" (Sheridan 123) to the aspiring speaker's success at delivery, Sheridan and Austin in closing both give their implied readers hope that they may already possess these unteachable "talents" and make the learner's possible failure at effective speaking primarily the fault of his own "natural" deficiencies rather than the prescriptive *technai* of elocution. As Cahn notes, reference to a student's "natural qualifications" makes it possible "to blame the student himself" for an unsatisfactory result (77).

Further, the closing visions of the ideal orator—whose power rests, at least in part, on transcending rather than obeying the rules of art—reinforce the distance between the limited *technai* of elocution and the competent speaker they claim to form, and the higher reality of "genuine" oratory which exists "beyond the rules of art" (Herries 48). On one hand, this claim undermines the value of the elocutionary *technai* because it indirectly represents them as logically disconnected from the ideal motivating the whole hierarchy of elocution. However, with respect to the elocutionists' disciplinary *ethos*, this claim reinscribes their initial negatively polite self-characterizations because it shows that they do not indecorously presume that their systems can form a truly excellent orator; rather, the most that these *technai* can do is to help an aspiring speaker achieve a limited, respectable degree of improvement within the overall hierarchy. This potential status improvement does not so much transgress social boundaries as it supports the cultural superiority of the "noble" ideal which encompasses, yet lies well beyond, the nature of the student who requires a "repertoire of rules" to secure competence in the rudiments of elocution.

CONCLUSION

RECENT CRITICISM, CURRENT CONCERNS, AND FUTURE ORIENTATIONS

> Far from being disinterested figurations, stories about the past are purposeful constructions, outcomes of the historian's desire to shape readers' understanding of the past and indirectly influence readers' self-understanding and attitude. (Takis Poulakos, *Rethinking the History of Rhetoric* 5)

> . . . what I miss in reading several recent histories of rhetoric is sustained, explicit recognition that such histories are themselves potential objects of rhetorical study. In short, I think the history of rhetoric needs to address more the rhetoric of history. (John Schilb, "The History of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of History" 13)

Recent discussions in the historiography of rhetoric stress the significance of viewing the writing of our disciplinary histories as themselves rhetorical actions, involving the construction of selective and partial narratives by writers situated in their own times, places, and institutions (Jarratt 190).[1] Carole Blair and Mary Kahl argue that the writing of rhetorical history requires a range of "inventional choices:"

> These choices . . . include the means of interpreting, contextualizing, organizing, legitimizing, and judging sources. . . . These choices also function advocatively, inviting the reader of this historical text to view the past of rhetorical theory as the historian presents it. (148)

Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong, in their recent article "Aspasia: Rhetoric, Gender, and Colonial Ideology," emphasize the "multilayered operations of historiography" in the construction and re-construction of moments within our disciplinary past (9). According to them, each historical representation of the figure Aspasia, from classical times to the present, acts as an

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[1]See also Berlin, Biesecker, Blair, Blair and Kahl, Crowley, T. Poulakos, and Schilb.

interpretative "layer," revealing the situated interests and concerns of the interpreter.

In applying this concept of situated layering to the episode within rhetorical history which has been designated "the elocutionary movement," I would argue that the original elocutionary texts themselves act as the initial rhetorical "layer" within the historical representation of this episode. In other words, the elocutionists were themselves historiographers of their own movement or rhetorical enterprise. They quite consciously and strategically sought to write their "new" field of study into the history of rhetoric and they represented this history selectively as a means of legitimating the inclusion of their own endeavours. Like later historians and critics of the elocutionary movement, the initial elocutionary writers also invented a narrative of rhetorical history that invites the reader to perceive rhetoric's disciplinary past *and* present in their terms.

By way of conclusion, I turn now to a brief consideration of subsequent "layers" in the disciplinary representation of the elocutionary movement. The purpose of this consideration is to highlight the rhetorical nature of these layers as they interpret and judge the original texts. By drawing attention to the rhetorical interests that inform these selective narratives, I do not mean to dismiss them as erroneous or invalid; rather, I wish to point out how these twentieth-century rhetorical representations of the eighteenth-century British elocutionary movement tell us as much about the critics' own disciplinary concerns and assumptions as they do about those of the elocutionists. Within these secondary texts, then, we discover yet another narrative of disciplinary self-constitution and self-affirmation (Cahn 61-62) which addresses and responds to the particular situations of these rhetoricians.

Twentieth-Century Representations of the Elocutionary Movement

The main historical and critical investigations of the elocutionary movement occur within a group of some twenty to thirty texts emanating from the American discipline of speech communication, mainly between 1950 and 1970, though several discussions were published in the 1930s and 1940s as well. Primarily, these texts were published either as fairly brief articles in speech communication journals (e.g., *Quarterly Journal of Speech*,

Southern Speech Journal), or as articles or discrete sections within book-length treatments of the history of speech studies in the U.S.[2] As well, Haberman's unpublished dissertation provides the lengthiest treatment of the movement to date. In addition to the commentaries closely connected with the field of speech communication, Wilbur Samuel Howell's *Eighteenth Century British Logic and Rhetoric* offers a lengthy treatment of the elocutionary movement within the parameters of Howell's larger survey of the emergence of a "new" logic and rhetoric during the eighteenth century. As I shall discuss more in what follows, the American provenance of the vast majority of these critical commentaries is noteworthy; in my research, I have run across only two fairly recent treatments of the elocutionists by British writers: Benzie's monograph on *The Dublin Orator* (i.e., Thomas Sheridan) and Michael Shortland's recent article "Moving Speeches."

In this selective interpretation of the secondary criticism of the elocutionary movement, I wish to draw the reader's attention to three main issues as the means for foregrounding the situated rhetorical interests and values which inform these historiographical representations. First, I will discuss the extent to which these commentaries may be classified according to some of the general patterns of rhetorical history that recent scholars of historiography have identified. In particular, I will draw on Carole Blair's characterizations of two "traditional" modes of history-writing, namely "influence studies" and "systems histories" (Blair 404). From this general positioning, I move to a more specific examination of two of the disciplinary values that seem to motivate many of the twentieth-century discussions of the elocutionary movement. These interrelated and taken-for-granted values reveal themselves in the ongoing debates about the intellectual

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[2]These journal and book articles include Bacon, "The Elocutionary Career of Thomas Sheridan"; Ehninger, "Dominant Trends in English Rhetorical Thought, 1750-1800"; Fritz, "From Sheridan to Rush: The Beginnings of English Elocution";Gray, "What Was Elocution?"; Grover, "John Walker: The Mechanical Man Revisited"; Guthrie, "The Elocution Movement–England"; Haberman, "English Sources of American Elocution"; Hargis, "James Burgh and the Art of Speaking"; Howell, "Sources of the Elocutionary Movement"; Lamb, "John Walker and Joshua Steele"; Mohrmann, "Kames and Elocution"; Mohrmann, "The Language of Nature and Elocutionary Theory"; Mohrmann, "The Real Chironomia"; Parrish, "The Concept of 'Naturalness'"; Parrish, "Elocution–A Definition and a Challenge";"The Influence of English Elocutionists" in Robb; Vandraegen, "Thomas Sheridan and the Natural School."

respectability of the elocutionary texts and about the "natural" versus "mechanical" approaches of the original writers. The values of "intellectual respectability" and "naturalness" act as two of the dominant criteria against which twentieth-century critics and historians judge the disciplinary legitimacy of the early elocutionary texts. In developing their assessments of the eighteenth-century contributions, however, these commentators simultaneously justify their own more recent scholarly enterprises and disciplinary positions.

While my discussion is concerned primarily with indicating the situational, and hence rhetorical, *differences* between the twentieth-century historiographical representations of the elocutionary movement and the narratives told by the original writers, I also have been intrigued to discover the extent to which, at least on a general level, the more recent layers recall and redeploy several of the basic assumptions that I have noted in the primary texts. Perhaps this is not so surprising, if we agree with Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca that appeals to so-called "universal values" are rhetorically persuasive precisely because their capacity to generate agreement derives from the abstraction of these values (*New Rhetoric* 76). Thus, both the elocutionists and their historical commentators may draw on the same general assumptions and values, but the ways in which they make these values concrete for their particular audiences and situations differ. Abstract values or ideals can act, as Brody notes in her analysis of the historical trajectory of the ideal of "manly" style, as "a procrustean bed to accommodate new agendas" specific to the socio-historical circumstances in which the ideal is redeployed (15).

a) Patterns of History

In "Contested Histories of Rhetoric: The Politics of Preservation, Progress, and Change," Carole Blair argues that, typically, the narrative stances adopted by writers of the history of rhetoric have engendered partial accounts "that mask their own partiality" (403). She characterizes the most common, traditional stances according to two general organizational patterns of history writing: the influence study and the systems study. The influence study, she suggests, "embodies a politics of preservation; its practice sacralizes ancient rhetorical theory by treating later rhetorics as monuments to classical rhetoric"

(404). By contrast, systems studies present "the history of rhetoric as a succession of paradigms that have given rise to present ways of theorizing. Systems studies treat historical rhetorics as relics of a primitive past that were *necessary* to the progress that produced the present state of knowledge" (405).

Although most of the secondary treatments of the elocutionary movement take the form of relatively short, focused discussions, rather than lengthy, full historical arrangements, it is possible to read within many of these brief commentaries the structures and implications of the larger patterns of organization that Blair identifies. In particular, the "systems" mode of history writing, with its assumptions of progression toward a present state of knowledge and practice, seems to dominate twentieth-century accounts of the elocutionary movement, though this form plays itself out in several variations. The fact that historians and critics of the elocutionary movement take the eighteenth-century episode as essentially foundational or original suggests that the genre of "influence" study described by Blair, in which the significance of later works is measured according to how well they preserve the *classical* heritage, has little bearing on this analysis. However, if we generalize the concept of the originary beyond its specific location in the classical, then the pattern of the influence study may be relevant to deciphering how twentieth-century critics represent the eighteenth-century "original" movement. As well, an analysis of these critical-historical works shows how both general patterns of organization, with their motivations of preservation and progress, may be operating to some extent within the same text (just as, for example, the eighteenth-century elocutionists strategically drew on classical endorsements of delivery to authorize their own new systems and field of study).

The systems approach to writing the history of the elocutionary movement is apparent in such works as Mary Margaret Robb's "The Influence of English Elocutionists, 1760-1827" in her book *Oral Interpretation of Literature in American Colleges and Universities* ([1941]1968) and Frederick W. Haberman's "English Sources of American Elocution" in *History of Speech Education in America Background Series* (1954).[3] For both

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[3]Other sources that take a systems approach include Douglas Ehninger's "Dominant Trends in English Rhetorical Thought, 1750-1800" and Warren Guthrie's "The Elocution Movement-England."

Robb and Haberman, the British elocutionary movement is significant primarily because it initiated subsequent developments in the theory and practice of speech education in the United States. In other words, they assume that the eighteenth-century views originate a progressive movement or "evolution" (Robb, "Preface") toward a present state of knowledge. In Robb's case, the main motivation for employing such a pattern of organization is to construct a solid historical background for her particular field of teaching, namely the oral interpretation of literature. That is, her story of elocution's eighteenth-century origins helps to establish the contemporary disciplinary position of oral interpretation "as an important subject in the liberal arts curriculum" ("Preface"). Haberman, for his part, creates a narrative that appeals more broadly to American patriotism. For him, the eighteenth-century elocutionists are important mainly because they staked out an intellectual territory which later American writers (or heroes) were subsequently able to improve and take over as their own rightful property.

The following opening passage from Robb's "Preface" demonstrates her assumption that the history of speech education, as narrated in her text, has unquestionable disciplinary value both for affirming the established heritage of her and her colleagues' field of education, and for ensuring the continuing progress of this field:

> It will always be important for teachers and students to be aware of the historical background of the subject they are studying. Without knowledge of the history, they often claim as new techniques or concepts so old and worn as to have been discarded. It is impossible to see clearly where we are going unless we know where we have been; and we can often adjust, or add to that which, pedagogically speaking, is old as the hills. . . .
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> The material is arranged in five different parts so that the reader may easily see the pattern which the evolution of speech education took from 1750 to the present time, especially that of the teaching of oral interpretation. . . . It is hoped that the continuity of the history will give readers, especially teachers, a feeling of pride and security. This is not a new or untried field of study but one with a history. ("Preface")

The first sentence of this passage provides a general truth or maxim as justification for Robb's specific study, a justification which highlights the significance in all disciplines

of knowing the history of the field in order to avoid claiming as "new" that which is "old" and, especially, in order to continue the progressive movement of the discipline's history. Robb's shift from third to first person pronouns between the second and third sentences particularizes her general arguments in terms of the teachers and students specifically involved in the subject of oral interpretation. The sense of a progressive movement from past to present and on into the future surfaces through key terms such as "evolution" and "continuity." By describing how the arrangement of her material is intended to help the reader "easily see" the historical pattern, Robb naturalizes the rhetorical constructedness of her narrative, implying that her role has been simply to present the objective historical truth of a clear evolutionary pattern in an accessible manner. In this evolutionary scheme, neither the past nor the present acts as the ideal disciplinary form: the past of speech education is filled with "concepts so old and worn" that they have been "discarded," while the present, Robb suggests, suffers from practitioners of speech education who, not sufficiently knowledgeable about the history of their field, make the mistake of proposing ostensibly "new techniques" which have already been "discarded" as inappropriate. The future of speech education holds great promise, however, if Robb's colleagues use her (selective) history as the basis for making informed improvements to the evolving subject.

Robb's opening justification and description of her work implies a sense of disciplinary insecurity about how her subject matter is represented and perceived within her educational context. Presumably, her motivation to offer other teachers in this field "a feeling of pride and security" stems at least partly from a sense of insecurity about the position of oral interpretation in twentieth-century American pedagogy. Perhaps more importantly, by seeking to redress the apparent ignorance of many of her colleagues about the history of speech education, Robb seems intent on improving the disciplinary profile of her subject. In effect, she introduces her work as a kind of defense mechanism against both the internal ignorance and lack of professional pride of her colleagues, and the implicit external criticisms of teachers and scholars outside the field.

Haberman's narrative addresses less specifically the pedagogical concerns of teachers of speech education, appealing instead to a sense of national pride by characterizing the evolution of elocution as the progressive movement from British origins to superior American formulations. The opening and closing paragraphs of Haberman's article indicate

this framework, each one beginning by stressing the sense of continuity or association between British origins and American practices, but ending--especially in the closing paragraph--with a representation of this relationship as one in which the Americans successfully challenged, and hence distinguished themselves from, the foreign originators:

> As a modern study elocution originated in England. In its first half century, from 1750 to 1800, it was accepted in America as readily as in its native land, and in the next century cultivated even more assiduously. The Americans, in the early stages of the movement's history, republished British authors, copied them with or without acknowledgement, modified and adapted their teachings to meet their situations. . . . Meanwhile, they were creating a movement in America which possessed attributes of independence as well as adaptation. ("English" 105)
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> Both the purposes and the books which the elocutionists wrote to accomplish them, were eagerly accepted in America. The demand for elocution in this nation being as great or even greater than it was in England, it is no wonder that the British found a market here for their books, or that piratical publishers should look for the cheapest way to capture the market, or that a band of indigenous writers should arise to challenge the supremacy of the originators of the movement and eventually to take over its direction. ("English" 122-23)

Although the body of Haberman's discussion focuses on the authors and texts of the British elocutionary movement, these framing paragraphs highlight the specifically American perspective in which this movement is viewed. Clearly appealing to a "modern" American audience, whose taken-for-granted nature is demonstrated by the phrase "this nation," Haberman constructs a narrative of the progressive development of elocution which begins with the influence of the British on the Americans but culminates with the independent leadership of the latter. While Haberman does not, like Robb, overtly explain that a main purpose of his narrative is to foster pride in his readers, his use of the value-laden term "independence" together with his final glorification of the "band of indigenous writers" sprung from American soil undoubtedly feeds a sense of nationalistic pride. The historical progress of elocution thus acquires significance as one thread in a larger cultural

narrative of American supremacy based on the nation's mythologized spirit of independence and challenge.

Other critical-historical discussions of the eighteenth-century elocutionists also implicitly or explicitly foreground the twentieth-century American cultural and disciplinary interests of its writers, but they do so somewhat more according to the "influence study" pattern of organization that Blair identifies. This pattern is less prevalent than the systems approach but still noteworthy in twentieth-century criticism. The "influence" pattern tends to privilege the eighteenth-century writers as the influential "founders" or "fathers" of modern speech communication. The identification of key individuals and texts as the primary, authoritative sources for subsequent theories and practices of elocution scripts an ideological narrative predicated on the celebration of the individual. As Barbara Biesecker points out, the problem with "a system of cultural representation that coheres around the individual subject" is that it entails "a mechanics of exclusion that fences out a vast array of collective rhetorical practices to which there belongs no proper name" ("Attempts" 156-57).[45] In the influence pattern of organization, the original treatments of elocution by the

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[4]Biesecker's comments about the ideology of individualism relate to general questions about the criteria typically used to determine the inclusion or exclusion of particular figures and practices within the canon of rhetorical history:

> What are the criteria against which any particular rhetorical discourse is measured in order to grant or deny its place in the canon? One way into this question is to recognize that the rhetorical canon is a system of cultural representation whose present form is predicated on and celebrates the individual. It is a list of proper names signifying the exceptional accomplishments of particular individuals over time: from Gorgias, Isocrates, Cicero, and Augustine to John Winthrop, Jonathan Edwards, Susan B. Anthony, and Martin Luther King, Jr. To each of these proper names corresponds a text or set of texts, and between them is marked a certain kind of originating function that wins the individual membership in a distinguished ensemble of individuals. ("Attempts" 156)

[5]This "individual" approach is by no means limited to the those texts demonstrating an "influence study" pattern of organization; it is equally present in more progressivist constructions, and it figures strongly in the naming of Sheridan and Walker as the founders, fathers, or leaders of the so-called natural and mechanical schools of elocution, respectively.

individual founders become, with some provisos, a kind of ideal toward which the imperfect disciplinary context of current speech education needs to return in order to save itself from the "opprobrium" (Gray 1) being heaped upon it.

G. P. Mohrmann's recuperation of Austin's *Chironomia*, for example, stresses the foundational status and complete nature of this text.[6] While the *Chironomia* held a deservedly high reputation through the nineteenth-century, its neglect and disparagement within the context of twentieth-century speech education constitutes, Mohrmann argues, one cause for current misunderstandings of elocutionary theory in its original "totality:"

> Upon its publication in 1806, the Reverend Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* gained immediate acceptance as the standard English work on gesture, and the treatise continued to receive favourable notices on into the twentieth century. By the turn of the century, however, . . . *Chironomia* was to suffer an unusually severe reversal of fortune. Today, the force of this once-dominant presence is almost entirely dissipated. . . . ("Real" 17-18)
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> [T]he totality that was elocutionary theory . . . can be best understood by starting with the totality that is *Chironomia*. The scholarship, the scope of coverage, the analysis of gesture—each can provide a measure of understanding; but these are not discrete elements. It is the unified thrust of the coherent entity that takes the reader directly to the essentials of elocutionary theory and marks *Chironomia* as the best single introduction to the elocutionary movement. ("Real" 27)

Mohrmann's characterization of Austin's treatise contrasts its current weak, "dissipated" disciplinary status with images of strength and invincibility, evident in the choice of terms such as "force," "dominant," "totality," "unified thrust," "coherent entity," and "essentials," to validate its recuperation. In particular, Mohrmann's representation privileges Austin's text on the basis of its apparent unity, a taken-for-granted value in Mohrmann's perspective. By equating Austin's single, ostensibly coherent text with the whole of elocutionary theory, Mohrmann indirectly claims that elocutionary theory is itself

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[6]Other commentaries that evince features of the "influence study" pattern include those by Fritz, Mohrmann ("Real"), Grover, and Gray.

unified and coherent. Thus, his revalidation of the *Chironomia* as the still-essential introduction to elocutionary theory simultaneously promotes the disciplinary integrity of the whole field of study, not just of Austin's text.

But Mohrmann's appeal to the unified coherence of the *Chironomia* is destabilized even within his own discussion, through his representation of Austin's system of notation for gesture. This section also indicates the limits of Mohrmann's use of the "influence study" pattern of history to construct his interpretation of Austin's text. While he does praise the *Chironomia* as a complete, total source for elocutionary *theory*, he criticizes Austin's *practical* system of gesture as "tedious," "frustrating," and "pointless" ("Real" 25-26, my emphasis). Mohrmann assumes that Austin's scholarly treatments of elocutionary theory somehow can be separated from his system of notation for gesture in appraising the historical-theoretical value of his work. He does not, however, seem to perceive how this separation disrupts his closing characterization of the treatise as a "coherent entity" with "unified thrust" ("Real" 27).

The patterns of arrangement that Wilbur Samuel Howell employs in his extended treatment of the elocutionary movement in *Eighteenth-Century British Rhetoric and Logic* conform principally to a systems approach, yet with some features of an influence study; the latter pattern emerges more strongly in his article "Sources of the Elocutionary Movement in England: 1700-1748." Both these discussions, however, differ from the commentaries I have already analyzed because the British elocutionists are represented as the "anti" figures within Howell's historical narrative. Commenting on Howell's book as a whole, James Berlin notes how its narrative of Locke "as the historical bearer of the true rhetoric after ages of trial and error" presupposes a progressive view of civilization and of the role of the "new" rhetoric in that progression ("Postmodernism" 173). As a whole, then, Howell's history adopts primarily a systems pattern of organization, dividing rhetoric into "old" and "new" systems, and privileging the dramatic improvements that the latter introduced to rhetoric "in an era of important change" (*British* 695).

But what about the position of the elocutionary movement within this narrative? On which side of the conflict does Howell place it and what were its implications for the future progress of rhetoric? Despite the recognition that eighteenth-century elocutionary studies offered in many ways a new and distinctive consideration of the canon of delivery within

the discipline of rhetoric, Howell effectively relegates this movement to the "old" (read "bad") rather than the "new" (read "good") camp. He does this by introducing the elocutionary works within the context of classical views of delivery (e.g., those of Cicero and Aristotle). But aligning the elocutionists with the limitations of the classical tradition (that is, its limitations according to Howell) is not enough: the work of the elocutionists falls far below even this level because of its ostensibly reductive focus on the canon of delivery as if this canon were the whole art of rhetoric. Ultimately, Howell uses the elocutionary movement as the scapegoat, the anti-progressive figure in his narrative of the progression of the "new" rhetoric. By endorsing "a futureless idea which was destined against logic and common sense to have a two-hundred year future in England and America" (*British* 146), the elocutionists are to be blamed for the subsequent degeneration of rhetoric's reputation:

> By separating themselves from any obligation to consider the theory of content and arrangement as parts of rhetorical doctrine, and by stressing instruction in voice and gesture as a mechanical rather than an intellectual or philosophic matter, the elocutionists made rhetoric appear to be the art of declaiming a speech by rote, without regard to whether the thought uttered were trivial or false or dangerous; and under auspices like these rhetoric became anathema to the scholarly community and sacred only to the anti-intellectuals within and without the academic system. (*British* 713)

Although Howell's main pattern of arrangement is a progressive one, with the elocutionists acting as the anti-progressive poison to the improvements of the "new" rhetoric, he also incorporates features of an influence study. In this case, though, it is not the elocutionary texts which figure as the foundational, influential sources to which current scholars should return; rather, virtually the only legitimacy that Howell grants to the eighteenth-century elocutionists depends on the extent to which they followed the acceptable influences and theories of rhetoricians culturally and historically outside the British movement itself. In effect, Howell creates a dissociation between the "real" non-British sources of elocution, and the merely "apparent," derivative nature of late eighteenth-century British views. Thus, for example, Howell faintly praises Austin's *Chironomia* because it demonstrates "a real grasp of classical learning" and because Austin kept "his readers

constantly aware of the actual [non-elocutionary] writings upon which the theory of delivery rested" (*British* 251). In both *British Logic and Rhetoric* and "Sources of the Elocutionary Movement," Howell reveals an almost obsessive desire to prove that the real, true foundation for all the British texts is to be found in the seventeenth-century Continental rhetoric of Michel le Faucheur entitled *Traitté de l'action de l'orateur, ou de la Prononciation et du geste*. Having established this text as the ultimate source of British elocution, Howell is able to deny the originality of subsequent British treatments, or alternatively he can note variations from the theories of Le Faucheur as unfortunate deviations. As Carole Blair explains:

> The historian who traces influences attempts to find in a theory only what has been said before. S/he tries to locate characteristics of a theory that render it similar to antecedent theories. In so doing, the historian is almost certain to pass over the unique features of a theoretical text, seeing in it only those characteristics that are reminiscent of an earlier theory. (406).

By taking this approach, Howell can construct a historical narrative which dismisses the British elocutionary writers and theories as essentially derivative or merely reminiscent of the earlier true sources of elocution.

Whether one considers the generally more friendly twentieth-century treatments of the elocutionary movement which I discussed in the first parts of this section, or Howell's more condemnatory narrative, both the systems and influence patterns of organization seem to be at work, with the former predominant but not exclusive. The systems approach in particular privileges the "modern" American cultural and disciplinary situation out of which these critics write: examination of eighteenth-century British elocution clearly is motivated by, and in the service of, these writers' contextual concerns for legitimating their own scholarly and teaching practices. The influence pattern also represents the British movement from the (necessarily) partial perspective of mid-twentieth-century speech educators, though in this case the critics argue that their own contemporary discipline needs to pay more attention to the originators of speech education in order to remedy the limitations of current views and practices. Howell's history, by contrast, occurs outside the immediate context of speech education and therefore places the elocutionary movement not within the history of speech education specifically but within a more general,

"philosophical" approach to rhetorical theory. Perhaps not surprisingly, this difference of context and academic interest permits Howell to characterize the elocutionists as essentially *against* rather than part of the progress of rhetoric.

b) Scholarly Respectability

In the two hundred years between the time of the early elocutionists and the movement's main critics and historians, the question of the scholarly respectability and disciplinary decorum of this field of inquiry remains central. Just as the British elocutionists showed themselves aware of the problematic nature of their attention to the neglected canon of bodily delivery and thus worked in complex ways to try to demonstrate its academic legitimacy, so too twentieth-century commentators foreground this issue within their discussions. The stress placed on determining the scholarly value of the (sub)discipline of elocution indicates not only the continuing instability of the reputation accorded to the early elocutionary works but also the uneasiness of twentieth-century speech educators about the academic legitimacy of their own work. Whether or not the early elocutionists are judged as respectable scholars therefore affects the disciplinary credibility of twentieth-century teachers of speech. In both situations, the primary criterion of judgment addresses principally the theoretical or "intellectual" status of elocution as an academic field of inquiry, rather than its more practical dimensions in teaching students effective styles of embodied performance. This stress indicates the emphasis within traditional histories of rhetoric on developments in rhetorical *theory*, rather than on its diverse practices or on handbooks directed primarily toward practice, and it reconfirms the standard privileging of mind over body in rhetorical (as well as other) inquiries.

As the preceding citation from his conclusion reveals, Howell does not attempt to establish the scholarly respectability of the elocutionary movement but instead condemns it absolutely on the basis of its "intellectual" and "philosophical" deficiencies. The elocutionists, he claims, have no place within the discipline of rhetoric because they failed utterly to consider "the *theory* of content and arrangement as parts of rhetorical doctrine" and because they made delivery into a wholly "mechanical" art divorced from "thought" (*British* 713, my emphasis). This harsh condemnation clearly takes for granted the

unquestionable value of such abstract concepts as "intellectual," "theoretical," and "scholarly." Deploying an oppositional form of dissociation, Howell constructs a plot that pits the respectable forces of philosophy and theory against the disreputable forces of mechanical practice. By aligning the elocutionists with the latter, he places them not only outside the domain of scholarly respectability, but actually in opposition to the disciplinary ideal of philosophic intellectualism that motivates his symbolic hierarchy of rhetorical history. In this narrative, the elocutionists become the identifiable representatives of the evil force of anti-intellectualism against which Howell wages his war. That Howell perceives this battle as one of high moral consequence is evident from his use of such terms as "anathema" and "sacred" to describe the effects of the elocutionists' introduction of the false idol of anti-intellectualism to rhetorical worship.

Further, although Howell suggests that, to achieve a respectable scholarly status, the elocutionists needed only to infuse their work with more "thought" and philosophy, he seems to believe that bodily delivery, by its very nature, is incapable of being thus purified (and disembodied). Howell's approving reference to Aristotle's representation of the role and position of delivery in rhetoric as the lead-in to his section on the elocutionists suggests that he, like Aristotle, considers delivery to be "—very properly—not regarded as an elevated subject of inquiry" (*Rhetoric* 3.1404a). But Howell's judgment of the elocutionary movement as "anti-intellectual" and therefore scholarly disreputable not only acts as an accusation of disciplinary guilt for this particular episode in the history of rhetoric; rather, Howell extends the elocutionists' guilt to encompass the whole ostensible degeneration of rhetoric's scholarly reputation in the nineteenth century and beyond. The eighteenth-century elocutionists thus become responsible not only for their own intellectual deficiencies but for the curse of academic disrepute under which Howell claims the entire discipline of rhetoric subsequently suffered. The identification and characterization of this curse, which according to Howell drastically affected rhetoric from the early nineteenth century and into the twentieth, thus legitimates his own focus on eighteenth-century developments in rhetoric and logic as the last era during which rhetoric had some scholarly significance.

By contrast, other commentators with greater personal-professional stakes in the outcome have laboured to establish the scholarly credibility of the elocutionary movement, in this way indirectly legitimating their own academic work. Importantly, those who

defend the elocutionists' disciplinary decorum invoke the same general values as the basis for their judgments. That is, like Howell, they presuppose the unquestionable value of abstract concepts such as "scholarly," "intellectual," and "philosophical" in determining the final judgment. In addition, several invoke the related value of the "scientific" as the basis for their evaluation, a strategy which recalls the elocutionists' own attempts to represent their field of study as a scientific, systematic enterprise.[7] Though less forcefully than Howell, these commentators likewise contrast, at least implicitly, the ideals of scholarship, theory, and science with the devalued concepts of the merely practical or mechanical. Generally, the defense of the elocutionists' scholarly respectability is measured not against a set of internally generated standards–that is, standards intrinsic to either the study of elocution or even the larger rhetorical discipline–but instead according to the external standards of other, more established and academically respected fields. Ironically, then, in their very efforts to establish the academic legitimacy of elocution as a significant dimension of rhetorical study, these commentators subordinate it to apparently superior domains, such as philosophy and science.

G. P. Mohrmann's "The Language of Nature and Elocutionary Theory" exemplifies this effort to demonstrate the elocutionists' intellectual respectability by appealing to criteria outside the specific area of elocution.[8] To justify his approach, Mohrmann opens his article with an account of the scholarly disrepute that the eighteenth-century elocutionists suffer from in twentieth-century views. In response to the problem as he has constructed it, Mohrmann offers evidence to show that this perception is incorrect:

> [T]oday the elocutionary movement is regarded as hardly more than a shallow response to pedagogical expediency. A variety of forces that supported the movement are cited in historical surveys, but the elocutionists seem to have been intellectually dormant. They appear to have plunged blindly onward, so engrossed in teaching delivery and in writing textbooks that they paid little heed to the thought of their age. The evidence has not

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[7]Those who invoke the value of science include Haberman and Parrish.

[8]The very title of this article indicates Mohrmann's desire to represent the elocutionists' as "theorists," not mere mechanists or technicians or teachers.

> suggested that they anchored their contributions in an intellectually respectable position.
>
> This paper presents evidence indicating that a philosophical justification for elocutionary theory had widespread currency during the eighteenth century. ("Language" 116)

In this introduction, Mohrmann dissociates the *appearance* of the elocutionists as intellectually "dormant," blind, heedless, and drifting, from the *reality*, which he is about to demonstrate, of the philosophical substance which anchors their theories. This vivid dissociation thus creates the motivation and rationale for his enquiry into the influences of Scottish common sense philosophy on elocutionary doctrines. Although Mohrmann initially describes the relationship between these two fields of study as one of "parallel" doctrines, the remainder of his discussion clarifies his presumption of a one-way, hierarchical relationship between them. The important point to prove is that elocutionary theory was strongly influenced by the more intellectually respectable field of philosophical enquiry, not that there was any cross-fertilization between them. Constructing the relationship in this way, Mohrmann appeals to a criterion of scholarly credibility extrinsic to the field of elocution or rhetoric: he makes the academically privileged forms and history of philosophical enquiry the standard against which the intellectual legitimacy of elocutionary theory should be judged.[9]

While Mohrmann's discussion displays firm conviction about the intellectual respectability of eighteenth-century elocutionary doctrines, this conviction in no way destabilizes the disciplinary devaluation of the merely practical or pedagogical aspects of elocution. Rather, as his vivid opening characterization of current views indicates, he accepts the association of the "teaching of delivery" with the negative motive of "expediency" and the unappealing image of shallowness. Although he argues mainly that this characterization falsely represents the truth of eighteenth-century elocution, clearly if

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[9]This relationship of subservient indebtedness also figures in Mohrmann's exploration of the influence of the aesthetic-literary theories of Henry Home (Lord Kames) on the elocutionary writers, despite an acknowledgment that Sheridan published and lectured on elocution before the publication of Kames' key work, *Elements of Criticism*, in 1762. See Mohrmann, "Language of Nature."

this false appearance were true then Mohrmann would condemn it. Thus, his validation of elocutionary doctrines–like Howell's condemnation–perpetuates a hierarchy which privileges abstract theorizing as distinct from educational practice.[10] This validation also recalls the strategies of disciplinary decorum performed by the original elocutionists: like the eighteenth-century writers whom they study, twentieth-century commentators appeal to the values of theory as opposed to practice, and of the intellectual scholar as opposed to the student-performer, to validate or condemn not only the original elocutionary movement but, more importantly, the position of delivery within the twentieth-century discipline of speech communication.

c) The Natural-Mechanical Debate

One way in which the question of the elocutionists' disciplinary respectability plays itself out in twentieth-century commentary occurs in the ongoing debate about the so-called "natural" versus "mechanical" schools of elocution. This debate, essentially constructed by secondary critics, feeds the pages of *their* scholarship by providing a continuing source of discussion and disagreement about an issue that they represent as of crucial scholarly significance. The opportunities for diverse formulations and distinctions that this debate provides help to give the secondary criticism an impression of critical depth and complexity. At the same time, by taking for granted the positive value of the "natural" and the negative value of the "mechanical," this debate reveals some of the ideological assumptions and tensions which inform and work to naturalize twentieth-century American views of socially-appropriate bodily behaviour. In some ways, these assumptions and tensions recall eighteenth-century views, while in other ways, they reflect the cultural specificity of the commentators' situations.

In its initial formulation by Robb, Fritz, and Ehninger, the natural-mechanical debate proposed the simple division of eighteenth-century elocution into two categories: the

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[10]This sharp separation is not, however, characteristic of all the discussions which try to show the scholarly respectability of the elocutionary movement. For example, Robb, as we have seen, draws a strong connection between improvements in teaching delivery and improvements in understanding the historical-theoretical background of elocution.

"natural" school, fathered by Thomas Sheridan, and the "mechanical" school, led by John Walker. The main basis for this division is Sheridan's endorsement of a mode of public speaking that models itself on the "naturalness" of a private, conversational manner compared to Walker's apparently excessive enumeration of specific rules for mechanically learning and regulating delivery.[11] As subsequent critics are quick to point out, however, such a division oversimplifies the situation. Some writers, such as Donald Hargis in "James Burgh and *The Art of Speaking*," counter the undesirable relegation of eighteenth-century figures to the "mechanical" category by arguing that these writers also took "Nature" or "natural" modes of expression as the ideal standard for elocution.[12] Hargis, for example, closes his reconsideration of Burgh's *The Art of Speaking* by stressing the premise of "nature" that underlies his mechanical system:

> Considering Burgh's basic premises only, his theory of elocution emerges as contemporary. He recognized elocution as a teachable art in which the speaker must have a thorough comprehension of an idea and must communicate it meaningfully and unaffectedly with a responsive vocal-physical mechanism. And, as the foundation stone of delivery, he turned to what he thought were universal modes of expression to be found in nature and which were to be tempered by thought and individual difference. However, as these precepts were shrouded in understatement, confusing exposition, and practical emphasis on mechanics . . . they had little influence. (284)

Hargis admits in this assessment that Burgh's work suffers from too much attention to the details of the mechanics of delivery, but he counterpoises this negative judgment with the positive assessment that "nature" acted as the "foundation" to the mechanical system. By claiming that this (understated) premise makes his work "contemporary," Hargis indirectly

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[11]This reference to Sheridan's endorsement of a "natural" conversational manner is, as far as it goes, quite accurate. However, these writers do not mention that Sheridan identifies the exclusive social context of fashionable court society as the source of the standard for this "naturally" polite conversational style.

[12]David Grover in "John Walker: The 'Mechanical' Man Revisited" makes a similar argument.

validates and defines the ideal of naturalness that he believes should motivate not only eighteenth-century treatments of elocution, but "contemporary" approaches as well. This ideal includes the ability to speak "meaningfully," "unaffectedly," thoughtfully, and individually, yet also somehow universally. Hargis' qualification of "universal modes" with the positively valued concepts of "thought" and "individual difference" reflect, I suggest, a continued cultural privileging of mind, or "thought," over body as well as a specifically American ideology of individualism which mystifies the social forms and meanings of bodily behaviour. The qualities that Hargis specifies for the ideal of natural delivery also diminish the responsibility of the instructor for the student's ability to speak effectively, since these qualities exceed–and even oppose–the boundaries of prescriptive instruction.

Other participants in this debate also focus on the question of the nuances and intricacies that underlie the overly-simple division between natural and mechanical. In particular, they attend to the multiple dimensions of the concept of the "natural," pointing out, for example, how this term can refer in a neo-classical sense to "the ideal of regularity" and the imitation of approved models, or in a more Romantic sense to concepts of "variety," "individualistic" expression, and spontaneity (Mattingly 82-84; Vandraegen 59-60); the natural approach to elocution might also refer, on the one hand, to the *speaker's* personal sensation of naturalness or, on the other hand, to the *audience's* impression of the speaker's naturalness. As Parrish explains, "we must distinguish between the spontaneous or habitual utterance which feels natural to the speaker, and utterance that *seems* natural to the audience" ("Concept" 451). By making such distinctions, these critics are not merely describing some of the tensions and assumptions which they take to inform the original elocutionary texts; more significantly, they are addressing questions and ambiguities at the heart of their own educational practices.

These discussions indicate a tension between a desire, as teachers of speech, to legitimate explicit instruction to their students in the methods and conventions of effective delivery, and a simultaneous presumption, as modern Americans, of the value of spontaneous, individualistic self-expression. Notably, these critics–perhaps even more than the eighteenth-century elocutionists–do not question the appropriateness of the "natural" as the ideal motivating their own field of study, no matter how this mysterious ideal may be defined. Daniel Vandraegen, for example, counters the separation of elocution into a

"natural" and a "mechanical" school by arguing that both groups shared a laudable commitment to the ideal of the natural as an educational objective:

> Both groups, now referred to as the "natural" and the "mechanical," pursue the same prime objective. Both endeavor to teach students to speak and read naturally. Robb's assertion that two separate schools followed "opposing pedagogical ideas" is misleading. Internal evidence reveals that while there are differences of method, both groups completely agree on the central pedagogical objective of directing students to perform in a natural manner. (59)

Making this argument, Vandraegen clearly takes for granted the inherent value of the "natural" as a pedagogical objective, not only for the eighteenth-century elocutionists but for twentieth-century speech educators as well. The assumption that delivery should, somehow or other, be "natural" in order to be right or acceptable reflects, I suggest, the *bodiliness* of this dimension of rhetorical theory and practice. In what other areas of rhetoric is the issue of "naturalness" so consistently taken to be the most important criterion of evaluation? Instead of demystifying the socio-political structures and significations of the bodily behaviours inscribed within elocutionary texts, twentieth-century commentators for the most part work to reinforce the naturalization of these practices by masking, as Bourdieu might say, their arbitrary cultural content and their role in manifesting and perpetuating a particular social order.

Only Parrish demonstrates an explicit awareness of the social dimensions of "natural" elocution, though he nonetheless maintains the ideal of "Nature" as the proper "norm and guide." Parrish's construction of the ideal of natural delivery works through the dissociation of the concept of natural delivery into two senses, the generally accepted but inappropriate sense, and Parrish's own more accurate explanation:

> There are involved here two applications of "naturalness" which may lead to different, and even contradictory results. When we instruct a student to read naturally we can only mean that he is to speak and behave as he ordinarily does, that he is to be himself. But when we praise a reader's performance for its naturalness we probably mean something quite different, since we may not know what his ordinary, or customary speaking is like. We mean rather

> that it *seems* natural–seems appropriate to the material or the character he is representing. The interpreter . . . must design a pattern of expression that will conform to the audience's conception of what is natural for the given content and situation. . . . Such expression may not *feel* natural to the reader, may not conform to his instinctive or accustomed manner of speech, for in this sense "naturalness" is not necessarily good. Natural speech is good speech when it *seems* natural to a properly qualified audience–or, what is the same thing, to a properly qualified teacher. (Concept 451-452)

Paradoxically, Parrish's dissociation between ineffective or inappropriate "naturalness," and appropriate, effective "naturalness" defines the latter in terms of the *appearance* of naturalness that the audience perceives in the speaker's conduct. Though he does not state this explicitly, Parrish's conception of proper naturalness invokes the classical doctrine of decorum, making the speaker's effectiveness depend on his ability to suit his style of delivery to his subject matter and rhetorical situation. This representation of decorum constructs an asymmetrical power relationship between audience and speaker: the audience occupies the superior position of arbiter, while the speaker's subjection to this external judgment suggests a performative life of predicament, not of heroic potential (Whigham 52). Parrish's specification of the "properly qualified teacher" as the audience entitled to pass judgment on the speaker's naturalness or lack thereof recalls the elocutionists own privileging of the "scrupulously 'classificatory' eye of the master" (Foucault, *Discipline* 147) in assessing the student's conformity to the norms of respectable bodily behaviour. Strategically, Parrish conflates the normal with the natural, while ensuring that the judgment of normality is unrelated to the student's own "instinctive or accustomed manner" and lies wholly in the power of the schoolmaster.

His recognition of the social structures and significations of bodily behaviours does not cause him to question the ideological assumptions or sociopolitical interests which inform these structures. Instead, he endorses the same general structure of cultural elitism and the same subjugating pedagogy of bodily decorum that we find in the original elocutionary movement. In twentieth-century American speech education, as much as in eighteenth-century British elocution, aspiring speakers who have not been blessed with the *habitus* of "good speech environments" ("Elocution" 5) must purify themselves of indecorous

habits in order to achieve higher status. Speech educators, like the early elocutionists, continue to create a disciplinary space and role for themselves as the "properly qualified" gatekeepers who both instruct and evaluate students in the exclusionary standards of decorous behaviour. And, like their forerunners, they simultaneously naturalize, or place beyond question, the hierarchic social structuration and signification of bodily conduct by invoking the mysterious ideal of the "natural" as the highest form of delivery.

Current Concerns and Future Orientations

Since the early 1970s, critical discussions of the elocutionary movement within speech communication studies have been, to my knowledge, virtually non-existent. Perhaps one reason for this is the emphatic finality of Howell's 1971 judgment that the writers and texts of this movement deserve no place in the rhetorical tradition, except as the guilty source for the post-eighteenth-century decline of rhetoric's scholarly reputation. More recently, though, at least two general histories of rhetoric have afforded the elocutionary movement a relatively privileged, or at least fairly equitable, position within their arrangement of rhetoric's historical episodes. These works are Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg's anthology *The Rhetorical Tradition* (1990) and Thomas Conley's *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (1990). In my opinion, the significance of these inclusions derives not simply from the space allotted to the elocutionists, but especially the attention paid to the socio-political situations and implications of their enterprise. For example, Bizzell and Herzberg comment on the eighteenth-century operations of "linguistic discrimination" which created a "ravenous market" of Scots, Irish, and even Americans anxious to secure social standing by educating themselves in the exclusionary standards of "proper" English (649), while Conley argues that both the elocutionary movement and the study of *belles lettres* can be best understood "against a background of social aspiration" characteristic of eighteenth-century British culture (212).

Other recent, and to my mind fruitful, developments in the treatment of elocution as part of the rhetorical tradition(s) include more specific attention to its contributions to

eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century rhetorical theories and practices. For example, Ulman's study of language theory within late eighteenth-century rhetoric reconsiders Sheridan's distinctive contributions along with those of Campbell and Blair. This reconsideration takes seriously the theoretical value of Sheridan's views within their own terms, rather than attempting to legitimate elocutionary doctrine, as Mohrmann does, according to how much it reflected more reputable philosophies of communication. *Oratorical Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (1993), a text that exemplifies the increasing research and re-evaluation of nineteenth-century American rhetoric, includes an article by Nan Johnson on "The Popularization of Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric: Elocution and the Private Learner." In this article, Johnson highlights "the practical uses of rhetoric in business, community, and private life" and situates its popularization as part of "shifting economic and class distinctions that demanded more of rhetorical education than the training of a comparatively small number of young men for a few highly placed professions" (141, 140).[13]

I am encouraged by the treatments of elocution emerging in the 1990s, primarily because these discussions explicitly acknowledge the complex social dimensions of the practices as well as the theories of elocution within any particular historical moment. In this way, they begin to counter what James Berlin calls the traditional valorizing of "the sacred theoretical over the practical profane" by attending to the "consequences for behaviour" that the "concepts of rhetoric" always have ("Postmodernism" 185). Further, these discussions at least implicitly recognize the important, though intellectually devalued, role that bodily behaviours play in the acquisition and distribution of social power and prestige. And, unlike the assumptions of some earlier critics of the movement, they are beginning to take seriously (as, for example, Ulman's discussion does) the distinctive contributions of elocutionary theory to larger issues in eighteenth-century rhetoric.

But what of the situated interests and concerns that inform my own selective account of the elocutionary movement? Contemporary theorists of historiography argue that writers

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[13]These features of elocution that Johnson identifies were, as my study suggests, by no means exclusive to nineteenth-century manifestations but were already, in different, culturally specific ways, part of the eighteenth-century landscape.

of rhetorical history should self-consciously explain the particular motives and ideologies which inform their interpretations. In Berlin's words, "The historian must . . . be aware of her own ideological position" and must "identify her predisposition, understanding it herself and making it available to the reader" ("Revisionary" 56-57). As well, historiographic critics generally agree that one of the primary functions of the writing of history should be its *future* orientation. For example, Blair, in her formulation of "critical history" (her alternative to "influence" and "systems" approaches) suggests that "[i]t poses the question of history precisely for the purpose of prodding the future" (420).[14] While I tend to agree with Hans Kellner's critique of Berlin's imperative that such a self-conscious revelation itself acts as a rhetorical device of "sincerity" and hence contributes to, rather than comments disinterestedly on, the writer's own attempt to write a persuasive narrative (Kellner 249), I would like nonetheless in closing to (re)foreground some of the disciplinary interests and concerns which have motivated my selective analysis of the elocutionary movement in the hope that they may continue to encourage future rhetorical studies.

First and foremost, the question of the rhetorical nature of rhetorical history seems to me to be very relevant for our field since it engages the terms and forms of knowledge by which rhetoricians claim to interpret the world. As Blair and Kahl point out, "The historian of rhetoric occupies an authorial role that is arguably equivalent to that of the rhetorical critic" (148). Strangely, though, the value of taking a rhetorically critical approach to the construction of our disciplinary histories only recently has begun to interest rhetorical scholars. And these historiographic discussions by and large focus on the rhetorical constructions of the secondary histories, rather than–as I have done–on the rhetoric of the primary texts, the sources or documents that the historian analyzes.

Motivated by the work of rhetorical critics such as Michael Cahn and David Goodwin, I have been concerned in the preceding study to foreground precisely this issue of the rhetoric of the primary texts within the rhetorical tradition. And, again consonant with the interests of Cahn and Goodwin, one of the main rhetorical features that intrigues me is the complex set of strategies of self-constitution that the author of a rhetorical treatise

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[14]See also Jarratt, "Feminist Historiography"; Biesecker, "Attempts"; Lundsford, "On Reclaiming Rhetorica"; Berlin 1990, 185.

employs both to try to legitimate his or her own specific work within the discipline of rhetoric at a given historical moment, and simultaneously to re-affirm a particular version of the whole field of rhetorical studies. As Goodwin explains, "Rhetorical handbooks are rhetorical, not only because they explicate the theories and practices of persuasion, but, more importantly, because they attempt to persuade the reader to believe in, and act on, a particular image of what rhetoric is and should be as a discipline" ("*Imitatio*" 26).

I hope my study of a few handbooks from the elocutionary movement may persuade my readers to appreciate how the interpretation of these (or other) handbooks as themselves rhetorical actions can enrich our understanding of the intricate self-constitutions that the discipline of rhetoric performs within every different occasion of its utterance. This kind of approach, then, offers an alternative to the tendency of historians of rhetoric to focus on the content of a particular rhetorical theory and to measure its value primarily by the extent to which it contributes new ideas or concepts to previous theories. By contrast, a rhetorical reading of one, or several, treatises privileges the specificity and complexity of the rhetorical motives and structures at work in those particular texts, and attempts to understand how these textual structures imply and address the rhetors' (i.e., the writers') socio-historical situations. In the case of this study, I have drawn on both classical and contemporary theories of persuasion to show how the elocutionary texts employ the appeals of *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos* to address a mixed implied readership of scholars and students. The particular rhetorical strategies that Sheridan, Walker, and Austin employ, I have argued, respond to a complex historical context which associates scholarly interest in standardizing and codifying language use with the status aspirations and social mobility of the middling ranks in late eighteenth-century British society.

A rhetorical approach to works on rhetoric makes the traditional, lengthy historical narrative that extends over several centuries much more difficult to construct. But, as Takis Poulakos points out, a more narrow focus on limited or individual contributions to rhetorical history is "indicative of a growing impulse across disciplines to conceive history in terms of brief, multidirectional strands and complex, interdependent networks, rather than unidirectional, extensive, and comprehensive narratives" (3). Given this presumption of the intricacy and unevenness of the textual and contextual dimensions of any handbook, I would argue that a final evaluation of its apparent success in responding effectively to its

rhetorical situation is less significant than developing an appreciation of the tensions and incongruities that structure its rhetorical attempts to negotiate the complex dynamics of its social occasion. As John Schilb suggests, a rhetorical reading of the texts of history is valuable precisely because it attends to the "signs of internal difficulty," the "disruptions" that traverse writers' efforts to construct coherent plots (17).

Further, attending to the rhetorical complexities of particular primary texts and contexts within rhetorical history provides opportunities for creating more textured characterizations of episodes which traditionally have been neglected or marginalized. This is because, no matter how "minor" the influence of a treatise may appear or how theoretically insignificant it may seem compared to "major" works, if one looks at it as a situated rhetorical action then it may acquire as much presence and depth as any other work. While I hesitate to categorize such an approach as wholly or exclusively "postmodernist," I do agree with Berlin's call for "a plurality of micro-narratives, limited and localized accounts that attempt to explore features of experience that the grand narratives typically exclude" ("Postmodernism" 172). As part of this effort, Berlin stresses the significance of attending to, and valorizing, the material *practices* of rhetoric in any given moment, rather than only its ostensibly "intellectual" or "theoretical" formulations ("Postmodernism" 185). I too advocate such an emphasis, though I wish to foreground the relevance of perceiving the texts of rhetoric not only as having implications for the practices of their students or readers, but as themselves rhetorical practices.

In addition, developing fuller rhetorical characterizations of particular moments not formerly treated in this manner will affect the relative presence and positionings of other characters and events in our discipline's historical narratives. In the words of T. Poulakos, "attention to the local makes an impact on the global in precisely the same way that the rearrangement of a few links makes a great difference in the way the entire chain turns out" (4). For example, by giving in my study a detailed presence to a few of the elocutionary texts, I have attempted to demonstrate the intrinsic rhetorical interest of these texts, writers, and contexts. This characterization, however, also has implications for how other moments within the narrative of eighteenth-century rhetorical studies are perceived. If indeed, as I hope to have shown, the "minor" elocutionary texts are themselves as worthy of attention—within this framework of rhetorical analysis—as any other aspect of eighteenth-

century rhetoric, then the partiality of narratives that privilege the "new" rhetorics of George Campbell, Hugh Blair, Joseph Priestley, and so on at the expense of other players becomes more apparent. But my point is not to assert the primacy of the elocutionists and to downplay the significance of the latter writers to the disciplinary formations of eighteenth-century rhetoric; rather, I would suggest that a detailed rhetorical reading of any works in the eighteenth-century canon could yield new and interesting insights into their particular versions of disciplinary self-constitution. By extension, I believe such an approach might be fruitful as one way of understanding virtually any moment in rhetoric's multi-faceted writing of its own historical narratives and disciplinary identities.

A second basic issue that has prompted the preceding study and which I hope may continue to prompt further rhetorical inquiries concerns the traditionally devalued role of the body, or bodies, in rhetoric. Such a devaluation reflects the embedded Western hierarchy of mind over body (Porter, "History" 206), and its associated hierarchies of theory over practice and of reason over the emotions and senses. One of my ideological predispositions, then, is to interrogate such hierarchies by revealing their social and political significations. Unlike the dominant tradition of Western philosophy, the rhetorical tradition has recognized and, to a certain extent, permitted the material practices of bodies and their apparently non-rational forms of persuasion a limited role within the construction and communication of knowledge. However, as we see in the case of the elocutionary writers, because of the entrenched devaluation of bodily conduct in Western intellectual culture, the effort to reposition delivery as a legitimate field of study requires a kind of disembodied, scientifically objectified representation of their bodily subject matter. Rather than dissolving the traditional dualism of superior mind over inferior matter, the elocutionary movement primarily models a pedagogic programme in which the speaker's body becomes the site of an analytic regulation, exerted both by the extrinsic control of the schoolmaster's supervision and by the speaker's own self-conscious mortification in which the mind governs the body (Porter, "History" 213). The ongoing assumption of twentieth-century criticism that the elocutionary inquiry into bodily delivery can be scholarly respectable only if its abstract "intellectual" and "theoretical" dimensions can be proven shows the continued pervasiveness of this basic mind/body hierarchy.

What possible future orientations do I see then emerging from the preceding study?

First, if others like me are concerned about the fate of bodies within the rhetorical tradition(s), then I would encourage more attention to how the marginalized canon of delivery has been represented and enacted in our disciplinary histories. And I would encourage such critical attention to focus on the complex issues of social power, cultural elitism, and political interests which inform these bodily rhetorics. By perceiving texts of and about bodily rhetorics as selective narratives in which "the territories of mind and body are not fixed–least of all fixed by biology–but possess boundaries subject to negotiation within particular systems of values, judgments, and duties" (Porter, "History" 224), we can begin to interrogate these boundaries and the systems of values on which they rest. In particular, a critical approach to the rhetorical construction of bodily rhetorics at different historical moments can call into question the ubiquitous appeal to the "natural" which seems to pervade discussions of delivery and which serves to naturalize the ways in which the ostensibly insignificant forms of bodily conduct "constitute the most visible and at the same time best-hidden (because most 'natural') manifestation of submission to the established order" (Bourdieu, *Outline* 95). Further, inquiries into past and present rhetorics of the body could examine the educational functions of these rhetorics as prescriptive *technai* that offer a "repertoire of rules" as a substitute for the practical mastery of highly valued competencies in bodily conduct. And the recognition that certain forms of bodily behaviour do hold high social value begs the question, whose interests and what sociopolitical agendas do these embodied values serve?

A second orientation to the role of the body in rhetoric is to reconceptualize future rhetorical theories and practices to avoid the traditional denigration of the body beneath the privileged realm of the rational mind. I believe that such an orientation finds its greatest source of possibility in feminist approaches to rhetoric. Recent work in feminist historiography emphasizes the value of looking at the past differently in order to be able to re-write the future differently. As Jarratt explains, "The question here is how feminists writing histories of rhetoric can . . . create histories aimed at a more just future" (190). Given that the Western hierarchy of the rational mind over the non-rational body frequently has been rendered as a gendered hierarchy of masculine over feminine, then any attention to the bottom half of this hierarchy implies a reconsideration and disruption of the

asymmetrical relationship that this hierarchy legitimates.[15] The elocutionists themselves mainly perpetuated, rather than disrupted, established social hierarchies of class, gender, and ethnicity in their representations of properly regulated bodies in rhetoric. In so doing, they largely duplicated rather than questioned the conventional superiority of masculinized-mind over feminized-matter, even as they sought to rescue the body from neglect and disrepute (Porter, "History" 206). But understanding the rhetorical complexities and social presumptions that inform this particular episode in the history of bodily persuasion prompts the question: what other representations and reconfigurations, that avoid the perpetuation of the "old hierarchies" (Porter, "History" 207) might be possible?

Responses to this question lie beyond the pages of this study, and in the voices of other rhetoricians beside myself. In particular, though, I believe that the work of feminist scholars in diverse areas, including feminist epistemology, French feminism, and feminist science, have much to offer rethinkings of the roles and meanings of bodies in theories and practices of rhetoric.[16] By attempting to deconstruct the traditional binary oppositions between (masculinized) mind/reason and (feminized) body/senses, feminist scholarship is working to create future spaces for alternative forms of knowing and acting, forms that better reflect the embodied realities of women's, and others', lives. Within rhetorical studies, such alternatives might, for example, reconceive in a more holistic and equitable manner the relationships between the traditional appeals of *pathos*, *ethos*, and *logos*, and between the five canons of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery; they might re-think the role of the body not as, to quote Austin, that of "external" oratory opposed to the internal operations of the "understanding" (*Chironomia* 1), but instead as a crucial source and site of invention; they might work to undo the social elitism intrinsic to historical (and even mid-twentieth-century) studies of delivery by validating, rather than suppressing, the diverse bodily conducts of contemporary rhetoric's culturally

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[15]For more on this gendered hierarchy, see for example Bordo, Haraway, Hekman, and Lloyd.

[16]For example, in feminist epistemology, the work of Judith Butler, Lorraine Code, E. A. Grosz, Alison Jaggar; in French and Quebécois feminism, the work of Nicole Brossard, Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, Monique Wittig; in feminist science, the work of Haraway, Sandra Harding, Evelyn Fox Keller, Helen Longino, Janet Sayers.

heterogeneous community of practitioners.[17] Above all, they would interrogate the appeal to the "natural" that mystifies the sociopolitical interests which motivate the articulation of acceptable and unacceptable forms of bodily communication in particular contexts. These initial thoughts are merely tentative and partial possibilities in what I see as a rich field for future exploration. My hope is that others too may be, if they are not already, motivated to participate in reformulations of rhetoric's disciplinary identities by reconsidering the implications of bodies, in all their cultural diversity, to its theories and practices.

[17]For two recent examples of these kinds of rethinkings, see Ede, Glenn, and Lundsford, "Border Crossings" and Spoel, "Re-inventing Rhetorical Epistemology."

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