

Rhetoric AND THE Body



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The discipline of rhetoric has been around for an estimated twenty-six centuries, and, for the majority of that time, it has been described as an art of language. While the measured performance of writing, speaking, debating, arguing, and persuading in words has long been at the heart of rhetoric, so too have veins of rhetorical thinking long been concerned with bodies. Bodies have been variously read as conduits of, compliments to, or liabilities in rhetorical performance; they are sometimes seen as objects to be trained or styled in the service of persuasion, sometimes as themselves arguments persuasive precisely because they bypass words. This seminar will explore theories of the body as it has emerged in rhetorical thinking, ancient to contemporary. Coursework will focus on key concepts from rhetoric (e.g., delivery, gesture, elocution, comportment, style, ethos, timing, spectacle), but it will also draw on ideas that animate thinking about bodies across disciplines (e.g., performativity, materiality, affect) and mobilize various matrices for complicating how we think of “able” and “ideal” bodies (e.g., disability, gender, race, class, sexuality). In addition to reading theories of rhetoric and the body, this course will invite you to engage in and reflect on embodied activity.

Key questions for the seminar will be:

- What do scholars mean exactly when they speak of “the body” or “bodies”? Do they presume a natural, biologically-determined body, a socially constructed and culturally-inscribed body, something else entirely—human, animal, inanimate, environmental?
- When, why, and how has the body been prominent in rhetorical thinking or training, historical to contemporary? Which bodies or embodiments have mattered and which have not? How have those inclusions and exclusions influenced the field of rhetoric?
- Methodologically, what does it mean to insist on the connection between rhetoric and the body? Does it mean we look to bodies as conduits of meaning, legible like language? Do we look for bodies as actors in complex networks of communication? Do we seek to understand bodies as themselves a product of rhetoric or discourse?
- To what extent is a rhetorical concern with the body coincident with other fields of study, perhaps most saliently feminist rhetoric but also material rhetoric? What might be the benefits and liabilities of such scholarly twinings?

English 584 (Topics in Discourse and Writing) is the same as Curriculum and Instruction 565 (Topics in Discourse and Writing).

Artwork: Jess Riva Cooper, Viral Series, 2013; ceramic, glaze, decal

POLICIES

Moodle: Materials for the course—including the syllabus, calendar, and most readings—will be made available through Moodle. Login with your NetID and password at <https://learn.illinois.edu>.

Late Work: In the interests of fairness and efficiency, late work and work submitted via email will not be accepted. Exceptions are made only in cases of extreme and extraordinary circumstance.

Attendance and Distractions: Attendance at all classes is expected, as is advanced notice of unavoidable absence. It is your responsibility to consult with colleagues about material missed. Silence and stow technological gadgets for the entirety of the class period unless they are necessary to your participation. Sleeping, texting, and internet browsing are highly noticeable, prohibitive of your participation in the class, and strongly discouraged. Failure to attend or attend *to* class will adversely affect your participation grade.

Accommodations: If you need accommodations, please let me know so I can work with you and the Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (www.disability.illinois.edu) to develop a plan.

Academic Integrity: By registering for this class, you have agreed to adhere to the UIUC student code (<http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code>) which outlines your rights and responsibilities in terms of academic integrity. Your work, your words, and your ideas in this class should be your own and germane the material for this particular course. Work that involves the words or the ideas of others should include proper credits and citations; work that involves words and ideas of your own generated or articulated elsewhere may be submitted for credit only with prior approval from me. Students found to have plagiarized or cheated on any portion of their work in this course will receive a failing grade for both the assignment in question and course participation; related assignments may also be subject to reevaluation; and certain cases may be referred to department and university committees for formal review. While I am unwilling to read unoriginal work, I am happy to field questions about responsible academic behavior at any time.

ASSESSMENT

Anatomies	30%
Circumlectio	05%
Syntheses	25%
Synthesis Final	25%
Participation	15%

READING & WRITING ABOUT READING

Required Texts

Readings for this course are mostly **articles** and **chapters**—all of which will be available online and for free via the library website or our course website (location indicated on the attached Tentative Calendar).

Anatomies (30%)

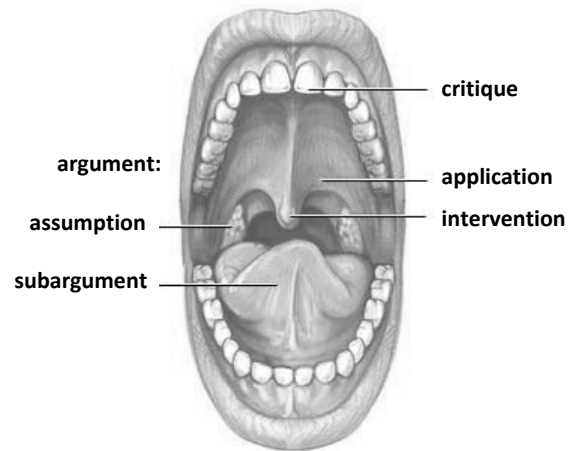
Anatomies are a means of facilitating and focusing your reading for the course. The word *anatomy* describes the process and product of dissection: when a thing is artificially separated into different parts in order to better understand where those parts are, what they do, how they participate in larger, more complex structures and functions. You'll be asked to take an Anatomy of a third of the readings we do in this class—to pull each reading apart, describe its key components, and consider the implications of those parts as they act together.

Each Anatomy should be a polished 1–2 page single-spaced, typed, and edited paper (though you may print your work on double-sided or recycled paper). Grounded in and supported by the text, each Anatomy should address the following, in order:

- (1) clearly identify the central **argument** (articulate it simply but with necessary nuance);
- (2) outline pertinent **subarguments** (choose your battles as necessary by identifying *key* subclaims);
- (3) identify the fundamental **assumptions** that enable the author to make this particular argument, the spoken and unspoken principles upon which the work is founded;

- (4) offer a cautious and sympathetic **critique** of the reading; assess its argument, subarguments, and assumptions: are the assumptions sound? does the evidence support the argument? what is the argument or archive useful for? Remember that harsh critique will often lose sight of what can be useful, even in work somehow wanting;
- (5) consider **applications** for this work in relation to your own; imagine a way in which its ideas, methods, or archives might be generative in conjunction with your own ideas, methods, or archives;
- (6) posit **interventions** you might make in this work; what parts of it needs extension, elaboration, correction, or continuation...by you in some future work of your own? (...not by the author)

Anatomies should be turned in at the end of the class period on which they are due (see Tentative Calendar). You may (and are expected to) **submit only 10 of the 35ish Anatomies listed in the calendar**. That is, whenever and for whatever reason, you may “miss” a few Anatomies but this does not also excuse you from completing the required reading. You must have read and considered all required readings before you arrive in class and this exercise simply ensures that outcome. You are welcome to complete and submit as many Anatomies as you like, and I will respond as I’m able.



Circumlectios (5%)

At three points in the semester, “required readings” will be of your own choosing. Rooted in a medieval pedagogy that understood exploration to be most rewarding when self-directed, the circumlectio assignments are an opportunity to do just that—read (*lectum*) around (*circum*). You’ll begin by formulating a few critical questions that you feel assigned readings and class discussion have left unanswered; then you’ll investigate possible answers by looking to scholarly articles, chapters, and books that appear promising to you. You should keep a list of texts you consult; scan through a handful, focus on a few; read as many as interest you, but move on from a source or a question when it *stops* interesting you. You need not read anything all the way through; you can skip over material you find uninteresting or irrelevant to your own purposes. The function of this project is not to cover any area exhaustively or to answer any question definitively but rather to widen your awareness of the conversations and answers that are circulating in and animating the field. For each Circumlectio, you’ll complete and submit a list of citations for what you (sort of) read; it is recommended but optional that you include a brief annotation for all or some of the items (a sentence or two indicating what drew you to it and what you got from it, but you may also write more if you choose). You may also complete an Anatomy for one of the texts you consulted. You should be prepared to share your findings with the class.

SYNTHESES

Syntheses 1, 2, and 3 (25%)

At three points in the semester, you will be asked to synthesize your thinking in a 3 to 4 page essay or concept map. The first synthesis will consider bodies in classical rhetoric, the second in the age of elocution, and the third in feminist and contemporary theory. These Syntheses should be polished scholarly summations of your current thinking. That is, they will offer cogent summaries of what we’ve read and discussed (pulling out key themes and tensions from assigned and Circumlectio readings) but they will also move toward arguments about how you understand rhetoric and the body in light of those readings: how the two connect, how we research them, what that research stands to reveal, etc.

Synthesis Final (25%)

Similar to an exit paper, the final Synthesis is an opportunity for you to reflect on rhetoric and the body in relation to your graduate work. How have the critical perspectives you’ve encountered over the semester changed your thinking and how do you imagine they will inform your future work? Depending on your personal inclinations and your academic progress, your Synthesis might consider any number of topics: the pathways that brought you to your graduate interests; the supports or barriers you’ve encountered in your disciplinization; your dissertation project in relation to cross-disciplinary or interdisciplinary studies; the problems readings or discussions have raised for your future research (an upcoming thesis, dissertation, article, or performance, for instance); the influence you imagine these ideas will have on your performance of future teaching, service, and research responsibilities; and so on. As a chance to directly consider your own work in relation to the course content, your final Synthesis is meant to be a useful exercise in

scholarly self-reflection that both commemorates and makes useful for the future the long process of thinking you’ve accomplished over the term.

PARTICIPATION

Participation (15%)

Attendance and involvement are minimum expectations of participation; you should be present in the course—physically and intellectually. This means there should be *talking*—contribute actively to class discussion, even when you might be uncertain about the content. Anatomies will prepare you to share your own developing ideas but *listening* will afford you access to the ideas of others. Most important is that your *thinking* and *writing* and final projects demonstrate a willing and willful engagement with the course material—a spirited pursuit of academic discovery, a conscientious contribution to scholarly exchange, and a marked quality of intellectual growth.

In addition to participating in traditional discussion, this course invites you to engage in a number of other physical activities that depart from and may take place outside of our seminar classroom. At scheduled class meeting times, we may meet elsewhere to work with actors, archers, musicians as we try out movement work or voice training, and we might collectively suggest other activities of interest beyond the spaces and times assigned to our work.

COLLEAGUES, NOTES, WHAT YOU WILL...

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

The following calendar is tentative and subject to change.

INTRODUCTIONS: consideration of end goals

about read write	26 Aug		Week 1
	Questions, Directions	What are we doing here? What do we want to do here?	
	n/a		
	n/a		
	2 Sep		[2]
	No Class - Labor Day Holiday		

TENTATIVE CALENDAR (continued)

KEYTERMS: an introduction to intersecting subfields

9 Sep					Week 3
about	Body		What are bodies? Why and how do we account for them?		
read	Judith Butler	1993	<i>Bodies That Matter</i> : preface, introduction, chapter 1 (ix-55)	website	
	Chris Shilling	2016	<i>The Body</i> : introduction, chapters 1 & 6 (1-6, 7-23, 97-108)	website	
	Carey Jewitt et al.	2017	"Conceptualizing and Researching the Body in Digital Contexts: Towards New Methodological Conversations across the Arts and Social Sciences" (37-53)	library	
write	Anatomies (up to 2)				
16 Sep					Week 4
about	Rhetoric		What is rhetoric? Why does it matter and how have bodies mattered to it?		
read	Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg	2001	"General Introduction" to <i>The Rhetorical Tradition</i> (1-16)	website	
	Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley	1999	<i>Rhetorical Bodies</i> : introduction, afterword, & table of contents (3-15, 357-364)	website	
	Debra Hawhee	2015	"Rhetoric's Sensorium" (2-17)	library	
write	Anatomies (up to 3)				

RHETOR: an exploration of classical ideals of embodiment

23 Sep					Week 5
about	Bodies in Contest		How did classical rhetoric conceive of and train the body? Which bodies?		
read	Gorgias	BCE	"Encomium of Helen" (76-84)	website	
	Epictetus	108	"On Finery in Dress" (199-205)	website	
	Christopher Lyle Johnstone	2001	"Communicating in Classical Contexts: The Centrality of Delivery" (121-143)	library	
	Debra Hawhee	2004	<i>Bodily Arts</i> : "Contesting Virtuosity: Agonism and the Production of <i>Areté</i> " (15-43)	website	
	Joy Connolly	2007	"Virile Tongues: Rhetoric and Masculinity" (83-97)	website	
write	Anatomies (up to 5)				
30 Sep					Week 6
about	Bodies of Aspasia		How can we remember the rhetorical lives of classical bodies?		
read	Aspasia	BCE	fragments (~ 7 ms pages)	website	
	Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong	1995	"Aspasia: Rhetoric, Gender, and Colonial Ideology" (9-24)	website	
	James Fredal	2002	"Herm Choppers, the Adonia, and Rhetorical Action in Ancient Greece" (590-612)	library	
write	Anatomies (up to 3)				
7 Oct					Week 7
about	Circumlectio 1: Classical Bodies				
read	around...				
write	Circumlectio (be prepared to share), Anatomies (up to 1), and Synthesis 1 (be prepared to share)				

ORATOR: an exploration of the age of elocution

14 Oct					Week 8
about read	Corporeal Eloquence	How do bodies matter when delivery and elocution are paramount in rhetoric?			
	Thomas Sheridan	1762	<i>A Course of Lectures on Elocution</i> : excerpts (v-vii, 29-36)	website	
	Gilbert Austin	1806	"Introduction" to <i>Chironomia</i> (1-26)	website	
	Dwight Conquergood	2000	"Rethinking Elocution: The Trope of the Talking Book and Other Figures of Speech" (325-341)	library	
	Debra Hawhee and Cory Holding	2010	"Case Studies in Material Rhetoric: Joseph Priestley and Gilbert Austin" (261-289)	library	
write	Anatomies (up to 4)				

TENTATIVE CALENDAR (continued)

ORATOR: an exploration of the age of elocution (continued)

	21 Oct				Week 9
about	Corporeal Styles		How do we account for the oratorical practices of marginalized bodies?		
read	Nan Johnson	2002	"Parlor Rhetoric and the Performance of Gender" from <i>Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life</i> (19-47)	website	
	Susan Kates	1997	"The Embodied Rhetoric of Hallie Quinn Brown" (59-71)	library	
	Carol Mattingly	2002	"[Re]Fashioning a Proper Image by Dressing the Part" from <i>Appropriate[ing] Dress</i> (107-134)	website	
	Lisa Suter	2013	"The Arguments They Wore: The Role of the Neoclassical Toga in American Delsartism" (134-153)	website	
write	Anatomies (up to 4)				
	28 Oct				Week 10
about	Circumlectio 2: Corporeal Control				
read	around...				
write	Circumlectio (be prepared to share), Anatomies (up to 1), and Synthesis 2 (be prepared to share)				

HAG: an exploration of feminist body rhetorics

4 Nov					Week 11
about read	Tongues Gone Wild		What happens to bodies when they're theorized in explicitly feminist rhetoric?		
	Hélène Cixous	1976	"The Laugh of the Medusa" (875-893)	library	
	Luce Irigaray	1980	"The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine" and "When Our Lips Speak Together" from <i>This Sex Which Is Not One</i> (68-85, 205-218)	website	
	Hélène Cixous	1981	"Castration or Decapitation?" (41-55)	library	
	Donna Haraway	1985	"A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s" (190-233)	website	
	Gloria E. Anzaldúa	2002	"Now Let Us Shift...The Path of Conocimiento...Inner Work, Public Acts" (540-578)	website	
write	Anatomies (up to 4)				

BEING&: an exploration of embodied imbrications

about	Wordlings Worlding		What happens when we think about the body and rhetoric as relational effects?		Week 12	
read	Sarah Ahmed	2006	<i>Queer Phenomenology</i> : "Introduction: Find Your Way" & "Conclusion: Disorientation and Queer Objects" (1-24, 157-179)	website		
	Kathleen Stewart	2009	"Atmospheric Attunements" (445-453)	library		
	Stephanie Springgay and Sarah E. Truman	2018	<i>Walking Methodologies in a More-than-Human World</i> , introduction & conclusion (1-15, 130-142)	website		
write	Anatomies (up to 3)					
	18 Nov					
about	Circumlectio 3: Radical Bodies				Week 13	
read	around...					
write	Circumlectio (be prepared to share), Anatomies (up to 1), and Synthesis 3 (be prepared to share)					
	25 Nov					
	No Class - Fall Holiday					
						[14]

FUTURES: what else, what next?

2 Dec			Week 15
about	People's Choice	How might we account for rhetorical bodies in future scholarship?	
read	...to be determined together...		
write	Anatomy (up to 1)		
CONCLUSIONS: a consideration of futures			
9 Dec			Week 16
about	Conclusions	What have we done here? What do we want to do from here?	
read	n/a		
write	Synthesis Final		