This 40-item annotated bibliography is intended to introduce speech communication educators to some of the principal resources and case studies in the rhetoric of inquiry. The first two sections of the bibliography include works that explore the rhetoric of inquiry specifically. The following three sections cite theoretical works that have played a role in the development of the field. The final two sections of the bibliography deal with analyses of the discourse of entire academic fields and with case studies of specific academic discourses. The books and journal articles in the bibliography were published between 1968 and 1989. (RS)
An Annotated Bibliography on the Rhetoric of Inquiry

James B. McOmber
Communication/Theatre
Central College, Pella, Iowa
April 1990

The following bibliography is intended to introduce SCA members to some of the principal resources and case studies in the rhetoric of inquiry. The first two sections include works that explore the rhetoric of inquiry specifically. Sections three, four, and five cite theoretical works that have played a role in the development of the field. The final two sections deal with analyses of the discourse of entire academic fields and with case studies of specific academic discourses.

General Collections


Includes most essays presented at the 1984 Iowa Symposium on the Rhetoric of the Human Sciences. Such disciplines as anthropology, economics, history, law, literature, mathematics, political science, psychology, theology, and women's studies are explored.


Review Articles


Suggests that rhetoric of inquiry might focus especially on the functions of scholarly argument, on rhetoric's ability to socialize, on the narrative and figurative dimensions of scholarly discourse, on rhetorical critique, or on rhetoric as a means of empowerment.


Traces the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the rhetoric of inquiry in various resistances toward the claims of logical empiricism and other modern philosophies of inquiry.


Further reflections on the Iowa Symposium. Focuses especially on themes of relativism vs. objectivism, the problem of judging scholarship as narrative, and on the metaphor of scholarship as conversation.
Rhetoric of Science


Argues that every scientific discourse implies a persona. Contends that this conclusion stands at odds with the assumptions that science strives for objectivity, prediction, and control.


Reviews three works that create the possibility of a rhetorical study of scientific knowledge: Kline's Mathematics: The Loss of Certainty, Munévar's Radical Knowledge, and Weimer's Notes on the Methodology of Scientific Research.


Argues for a rhetoric of science that proceeds from the study of how individuals acquire the authority to speak as scientists to the study of how scientists become audiences of colleagues who judge scientific argument.


Explores the ramifications of treating scientific discourse as rhetoric by constructing a debate on the questions of whether scientific discourse differs from other forms of rhetoric and whether scientists actually use deceptive rhetorical practices.


Justifies rhetorical study of science by appealing to the role of science in public policy and the deference to scientific authority in contemporary culture.


Argues against "justificationism," or the view that knowledge must be certain.


One of the first arguments for an explicitly rhetorical conception of science. Contends that science is distinguished by the requirement for consensus among its practitioners.
Epistemics of Communication


Seeks to overturn modernism's commitments to certainty and systematic doubt. Suggests a rhetoric of "systematic assent" that recognizes the role of rhetoric in constituting the self and in providing usable grounds for assent in scholarship and public argument.


Argues that all human communication, including philosophical and technical discourse, can best be understood in narrative terms.


Argues that failures of communication are the major source of conceptual change, and that the major episodes in the history of the sciences are the collective unintended consequences of inquirers' actions.


Seeks a hermeneutical rapprochement between rhetoric and philosophy in the aftermath of the deconstruction of "foundationalist" philosophy and the "epistemological paradigm."


Treats argumentation as the proper context in which the justification of knowledge claims is to be understood, with special references to the problem of relativism and argument "fields."

Sociology of Science


A series of previously-published essays collected to reveal both the theoretical and philosophical origins of the sociology of science and the results of some current work.


Collects original essays that attempt to reveal the methodological and theoretical diversity among sociologists of science.


Contains ethnographic study of the Salk Institute for Biological Studies; focuses especially on the interpersonal and institutional processes whereby scientific ideas become "facts." In the Postscript, added to the 1986
edition, the author disavows both "social" and "cognitive" explanations of science.


Uses textual forms unusual to sociology, such as dialogue and dramatic writing, to explore the formal and informal discourse of a debate within the field of biochemistry.

The Rhetoric of Specific Academic Fields


Explores the use of economic metaphors in mainstream political theory as a linguistic and ideological strategy used to circumvent criticism of capitalism.


Illustrates through brief essays diverse understandings of the field of mathematics, revealing the ambiguities and contingencies of mathematical proof as well as the fallibility of mathematical truth.


Uses rhetorical analysis of several classics of anthropology to show how anthropologists constitute themselves as reliable observers.


Introduces rhetorical thinking to academic theology by analyzing the use of the four master tropes in the works of Barth and Heidegger.


Explores, in the first essay, the entailments of a rhetorical approach to history in contrast to the prevailing "documentary model" of historical scholarship.


Presents an extended recommendation for and illustration of the rhetorical study of economics. Case studies of economic texts illustrate the use of figures in even the modernists' economic discourse as well as the rhetorics of quantification and significance tests.

Uses the rhetorical tradition as a standpoint for criticizing the many sources and styles of recent political theory, e.g., objectivism, scientism, rationalism, academism.


Analyzes the nineteenth century's major historians from a literary point of view with special reference to their different narrative structures and organizing tropes.


Treats American law as "constitutive rhetoric" by exploring its relationship to other rhetorical communities depicted in the works of Sophocles, Aeschylus, Plato, Gibbon, and others.

**Case Studies of Specific Academic Discourses**


Argues for the application of a rhetorical model to the experimental scientific report.


Treats the longstanding debate between the evolutionary, teleological historians and the empiricist historians as a conflict between the metaphors of organism and mechanism.


Shows how Darwin's rhetorical success in *The Origin of Species* is partly attributable to his ability to make his theory comport with the prevailing "grammar" of science, natural theology, even though the theory itself seems to overturn natural theology.


Explores the ways scientists have used a rhetoric of "boundary-work" to separate their activities from religion, technology, and "pseudo-science." Also shows how similar strategies help protect scientists from unwanted governmental or industry control.


Contrasts Newton's unsuccessful early writings on optics with his later, more successful *Optikus*, showing that Newton's optical theory and the
experimental method itself triumphed only once. Newton has made his theory appear continuous with established Cartesian optics.


Illustrates the possibilities of a rhetorical understanding of social science with an examination of a representative research report on drinking and driving. Shows that while the form of the scientific article persuades partly because of its claim not to do so, the article actually constructs the drunk driver as a social deviant.


Reviews the tradition of rejection of figurative expression in theories of science and scientific discourse, and recommends wider recognition of the figurative dimension of language among teachers of scientific and technical writing.


Uses a simple structural model to analyze the narratives of human evolution in the works of several early twentieth century paleoanthropologists, finding that they differ with respect to their organization of terrestriality, bipedalism, and the developments of language and civilization.


Examines the public discourse of scientists defending themselves against the "scientific creationists," who threaten public support for the theory of evolution.


Outlines three general stances toward the relationship between rhetoric and knowledge and finds that each applies to a different audience addressed by the sociobiologist.


Reveals the difficulties encountered by paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould when his evolutionary theory of "punctuated equilibria" reached audiences outside his own discipline and outside the academy.

Distributed by the Speech Communication Association, 5105 Backlick Road, Annandale, VA 22003. This bibliography may be reproduced for free distribution without permission of the Speech Communication Association.