teacher’s aim of involving students with multiple genres and texts, but she also argues that Literature can encompass these genres.

Finally, in the last essay in the collection, Mary T. Segall addresses student responses to the teaching of literature in the composition classroom. With an analysis of student responses to a questionnaire, she shows that there is no universal answer to the question, as students go to college for a variety of different reasons, all of which contribute to their interest in or understanding of literature.

The afterword to the collection provides one possible solution to the disconnect between literature and composition: focusing on the reading process (rather than on literature) as we have focused on the writing process (rather than the final product of student writing). This idea fits neatly into literary arguments for reading as interpretation and into composition’s arguments for focusing on student writing processes. By extending our “process, not product” theory to reading, Patricia Harkin ends the collection with a possible meeting ground for literary theorists and rhetoric and composition scholars.

Atlanta, GA


Reviewed by Joyce Adams, Brigham Young University

In *Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual*, Patricia Bizzell has compiled the presentations given at the Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) conference held in 2004. This assemblage of writings illustrates some of the current rhetorical trends in composition. This book contributes to serious, scholarly discussions on the use of rhetoric in diverse settings. The value of the book lies in its convenient aggregation for those interested in the diversity of rhetorical agendas.

Bizzell, as President for the Rhetoric Society of America 2004-2005, sent out a Call for Proposals to encourage submissions of papers on the political, ethical, and spiritual elements of rhetorical agency. For Bizzell, in the papers that were received, patterns emerged which she grouped as “History,” “Theory,” “Pedagogy,” “Publics,” and “Gender.” The papers in each section are not mutually exclusive to that section; for example, there is no separate section for spiritual because Bizzell felt that every section treats religious discourses in one way or another.
Bizzell included the talks of the conference’s featured speakers in Section 1, “Rhetorical Agendas.” The motif of diversity begins in this section. The text begins with Lester Faigley, who promotes “slow rhetoric,” such as that found at a conference. He says that the readily accessible “glut of information” has not increased global understanding; rather, it has led to increased “fragmentation, confusion, and exhaustion” (6). He concludes by prophesying that the future generations’ success will depend on how well students are taught to use slow rhetoric. This pattern of including various rhetorical agendas without concrete suggestions to apply them remains invariant throughout the book.

Section 2, “History,” includes a variety of papers on rhetorical history, including a look at Methodist preaching; the visual culture inherent in Milton’s *Areopagitica*; the use of acumen, memory, and imaginative universals in Vico’s *Institutiones Oratoriae*; spiritual and secular happiness rhetoric used by Joseph Smith, an early prophet for the Mormons, and John Stuart Mill, a professional rhetorician, who published widely throughout his lifetime. This section also includes an explication of Campbell’s view of argument as comparison. Of particular interest was Connie Kendall’s article on literacy as a means of avoiding being hanged. In a period that lasted more than 400 years of British history, clergymen were often exempted from legal punishments. To “prove” that a person was a member of the clergy, he had to read a passage to the members of the courts. This “neck verse” was the deciding factor in whether or not a member of the clergy would be hanged for his crime, or merely branded (97). The ability to read was limited at that time to clergy and the wealthy. Kendall then cleverly ties this history into the value or misuse of literacy testing.

This history section will interest the devotee of historical rhetoric. However, this readership would be well advised to peruse the book for additional historical papers that have been placed in other categories.

Section 3, “Theory,” combines a blend of historical rhetoric and theory. Historical rhetoricians will be able to read about Aristotle, Kenneth Burke, Levinas, and Archbishop Whately. Rhetorical theorists may enjoy insights into theories of the ethical practice of private commitments and public rhetoric, usability and image in electronic texts; moral-emotions, and rhetorical problems of music. This section does not contribute in-depth treatises on new theory; rather, it offers a variety of theories for which more studies should be done. However, it does include a variety of such insights as Lynda Walsh’s “The Scientific Media Hoax: A Rhetoric for Reconciling Linguistics and Literary Criticism.” Walsh apprises the reader of a brief history of media hoaxes, including Poe’s moon hoax. She then explains that she began her search to
explain the approaches to hoaxes by using H. Paul Grice’s four basic maxims formed from the cooperativity principle:

• Maxim of Quality: Tell the truth
• Maxim of Quantity: Be as informative as expected
• Maxim of Relevance: Make your contribution relevant to what has come before
• Maxim of Manner; Be brief, orderly, and clear. (166)

Walsh claims that these maxims, which are “usually adhered to in most ‘normal’ communication, written and spoken” have been violated in the use of scientific media hoaxes. She then presents her solution: the Optimality theory, which results in a new philology.

Section 4, “Pedagogy,” has practical implications for the use of rhetoric. Unfortunately, there are few papers included in this section, and each is short. So pedagogical buffs, like me, are left with a “taste” of what could be done with these insights, but without in-depth evidence or explanations. This section includes broad current topics such as community-based partnerships, speaking and writing exercises that can be used in home schools, electronic versions of collaborative pedagogy, as well as brief insights into Jasinski’s Sourcebook on Rhetoric, one Filipino’s view of reclaiming hybridity, and teacher training at two colleges in Massachusetts in the 1930s. There is much more of theory than pedagogical applications in these papers.

Section 5, “Publics,” puzzled me as to the method of choice of inclusions. Bizzell does not define “publics,” “counterpublics,” or “public spheres,” which she briefly mentions in her short preface. She simply claims that responses to these topics have been prolific over the past few years. Unfortunately, this severely limits the value of this text to only those who are part of the “conversation” on publics. In seeking for an explanation of the concept, I turned to Professor Greg Clark, one of the contributors to the text. Clark explained that in general, “public” refers to “the sorts of communities that are addressed by public discourses—people who have common concerns and must decide them together.” He offered the example of the election: “The US election discourses addressed local publics this week. In two years they will address a national public.” Clark emphasized that this is a current topic in rhetoric: “It comes out of Habermas on public spheres and a John Dewey book, The Public and Its Problems.”

This section addresses a broad spectrum of rhetorical topics, including rhetorical landscapes and religious identity, the doxicon, Byron de la Beckwith, Thomas Sloane, Niels Bohr, the master-planned community, weapons of mass destruction, victim impact statements, and “difference” as found in Will and Grace. I struggled to find a common thread for these essays, especially since several of the essays could also be sorted into the section on history.
Section 6, “Gender,” includes work on historical events and persons (Esther, the Christian Temperance Union, and American clubwomen of the 19th century), texts (Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, and Margaret Fell’s volume on women’s right to speak), and a form of child abuse where a caregiver, usually the mother, “fabricates or intentionally creates illness in her own child.” This section illustrates a rich variety of gendered rhetorical agendas.

I was occasionally surprised at the helpful content in essays whose titles gave no hint of the internal practical applications. Peter Mack writes of “Rudolph Agricola’s Contribution to Rhetorical Theory.” In spite of Mack’s goals to persuade the reader that Agricola significantly contributed to rhetoric, the real value of the essay for me lies in an explication of the value of planning a composition based on subject-matter, speaker’s intention, and audience. Mack distinguishes between exposition and argumentation which “[reflect] the speaker’s view about what the audience will believe willingly and what it will resist” (26). He says that in exposition, “we concentrate on clarity and order,” whereas in argumentation, “we add reasons and emotions” (26). Mack further explains emotional manipulation and the use of amplification. He recommends building up emotion gradually. In doing so, he claims, “You can make something seem important to an audience by linking it to things which are important to everyone or to the deepest interests of a particular audience” (30). Mack’s insights into the rhetorical triangle enhance the worth of this collection of papers.

I believe the worth of the volume would be enhanced if Bizzell offered more explanation of her rationale for assigning the various papers to given categories. I found it disconcerting to have a treatise on the use of white space as “rhetorical space” follow a study of Archbishop Whately. Rhetorical Agendas: Political, Ethical, Spiritual is informative, and may lead to further in-depth, well-developed treatises on the given subjects. For the reader looking for a quick review on current heterogeneous topics on rhetoric, this is a good volume to skim.

Provo, UT