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*Positioning LINKD in a wide discourse perspective:
From Rhetoric
to New Rhetorics
to New New Rhetorics?*

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Rhetoric

Rhetoric is the art of [discourse](#), an art that aims to improve the facility of speakers or writers who attempt to inform, persuade, or motivate particular audiences in specific situations.^[1] As a subject of formal study and a productive civic practice, rhetoric has played a central role in the Western tradition. Its best known definition comes from Aristotle, who considers it a counterpart of both logic and politics, and calls it "the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion."

As part of the [trivium](#), rhetoric was secondary to the study of logic, and its study was **highly scholastic**: students were given repetitive exercises in the creation of discourses on historical subjects (*suasoriae*) or on classic legal questions (*controversiae*).

Notable modern theorists

[Chaim Perelman](#) was a philosopher of law, who studied, taught, and lived most of his life in Brussels. He was among the most important [argumentation](#) theorists of the 20th century. His chief work is the *Traité de l'argumentation - la nouvelle rhétorique* (1958), with Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, which was translated into English as *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (1969). Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca move rhetoric from the periphery to the center of argumentation theory. Among their most influential concepts are "dissociation," "the universal audience," "quasi-logical argument," and "presence."

[Kenneth Burke](#) was a rhetorical theorist, philosopher, and poet. ... He described rhetoric as "the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols."^[51]

New Rhetorics

New rhetorics is an [interdisciplinary field](#) ^[1] approaching for the broadening of [classical rhetorical canon](#).^{[2][3]} The New Rhetoric is a result of various efforts of bringing back rhetorics from the marginal status ^[1] it attained by its image and 'negative connotations' of "political lies, corporate spin, long list of Greek and Roman terms for patterns of expression no one knowingly uses, purple prose, boiler-plate arrangement schemas, unimaginative reproductions of bullshit and so on" ^[4] if not to its previous place of a discipline "associated with social and intellectual prestige" ^[1] then at least to the level of the other contemporary fields in the social, cultural and linguistic studies.

Notoriously the field emerged after the work of [Chaim Perelman](#) in his book *The New Rhetoric* (1969) ^[5] but we can trace both the notion and the idea for the need of "new" rhetoric, different from the "old" one in the works of [Kenneth Burke](#) - *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950) and *Rhetoric - Old and New* (1967),^[6] and even before that.

New rhetorics attempts to preserve the original field but it also has tense relationship with it.^[1] For example New rhetoric will attempt to break up with the [formalistic](#) and [logocentric](#) (i.e. [patriarchal](#)) [Neo-Aristotelian](#) analysis in favour of interplay between [text](#) and [context](#), but according to DeGenaro it does not succeed to place itself outside the "Western-patriarchal" with being unable to departure from "elite backgrounds and scopes of study" ^[3] to a diversity of voices, topics, etc. This probably makes New Rhetoric rather a ground for the **Postmodern rhetoric** ^[7] which "puts into question the identities of the speaker, the audience, and the messages that pass between them" ...

Rhetoric of science

Rhetoric of science is a body of [scholarly literature](#) exploring the notion that the practice of [science](#) is a [rhetorical](#) activity. It emerged from a number of disciplines during the late twentieth century, including the disciplines of [sociology](#), [history](#), and [philosophy of science](#), but it is practiced most fully by rhetoricians in departments of English, speech, and communication.

[Rhetoric](#) is best known as a discipline that studies the means and ends of [persuasion](#). Science, meanwhile, is typically seen as the discovery and recording of [knowledge](#) about the natural world. A key contention of rhetoric of science is that the practice of science is, to varying degrees, persuasive. The study of science from this viewpoint variously examines modes of inquiry, logic, argumentation, the ethos of scientific practitioners, the structures of scientific publications, and the character of scientific discourse and debates. For instance, scientists must convince their community of scientists that their research is based on sound scientific method. ...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhetoric_of_science

Rhetoric of science: critique

Critique of rhetoric of science

Renewed interest today in rhetoric of science is its positioning as a [hermeneutic](#) meta-discourse rather than a substantive discourse practice (Gaonkar 25). [Exegesis](#) and hermeneutics are the tools around which the idea of scientific production has been forged.

Criticism of rhetoric of science is mainly limited to discussions around the concept of [hermeneutics](#), which can be seen as follows:

Rhetorical hermeneutics is about a way of reading texts as rhetoric. Rhetoric is both a discipline and a perspective from which disciplines can be viewed. As a discipline, it has a hermeneutic task and generates knowledge; as a perspective, it has the task of generating new points of view (Gross *Rhetorical* 111). Whether rhetorical theory can function as a general hermeneutic, a key to all texts, including scientific texts, is still today a point of interest to rhetoricians. Although [natural sciences](#) and [humanities](#) differ in fundamental ways, science as enterprise can be viewed hermeneutically as a suite of texts exhibiting a study of knowledge (epistemology) based on understanding ...

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New rhetorics: significance

The new rhetoric introduces a fundamental change in the philosophical outlook. Insofar as it aims at directing and guiding human action in all of the fields in which value judgments occur, philosophy is no longer conceived as the search for self-evident, necessary, universally and eternally valid principles but, rather, as the structuring of common principles, values, and *loci*, accepted by what the philosopher sees as the **universal audience**. The way the philosopher sees this universal audience, which is the incarnation of his idea of reason, depends on his situation in his cultural environment. The facts a philosopher recognizes, the values he accepts, and the problems he attends to are not self-evident; they cannot be determined *a priori*. The dialectical interaction between an orator and his audience is imposed also on the philosopher who wishes to influence his audience. Therefore, each philosophy reflects its own time and the social and cultural conditions in which it is developed. This is the fundamental truth in the thought of G.W.F. Hegel, a German Idealist: the history of philosophy is not regarded as an abstract and timeless dialectic that proceeds in a predetermined direction but as an argumentation that aims at universality at a concrete moment in history.

To the extent that the new rhetoric views all informal discourse and all philosophical discourse from the viewpoint of its action on the minds of the hearers, it integrates into the analysis of thought valuable elements from both Pragmatism and Existentialism. In stressing the effects of discourse it allows Analytical philosophy to be given the dynamic dimension that some scholars believe it has heretofore lacked. The new rhetoric can thus contribute to the development of a [theory of knowledge](#) and to a better understanding of the history of philosophy.

Chaim Perelman in <http://www.britannica.com> s.v. new rhetoric

Features of new rhetorics of science

analyses/teaches

- **effective (not beautiful) discourse(s) (function, not form)**
- **of the international (research) community**
- **focuses on pragmatic results (audience/readership)**
- **combines process and output**
- **is based on genres (text-types)**
- **is aware of cultural conventions and interaction**

New New Rhetorics

includes developments of the last 50 years, esp.

- **applied linguistics**
- **new media**
- **web 2.0**
- **?**

Features of a New New Rhetorics

- effective (not beautiful) discourse(s) (function, not form)
 - of the international (research) community
 - focuses on pragmatic results (audience/readership)
 - combines process and output
 - is based on genres (text-types)
 - is aware of cultural conventions and interaction
- **includes the New Media, esp.**
 - digital data
 - hypertext
 - multimodality
 - global comparisons
- **includes Web 2.0, esp.**
 - interactivity in blogs, twitter
 - new democratic ways of knowledge dissemination?
 - networks of social media as communities of practice?

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