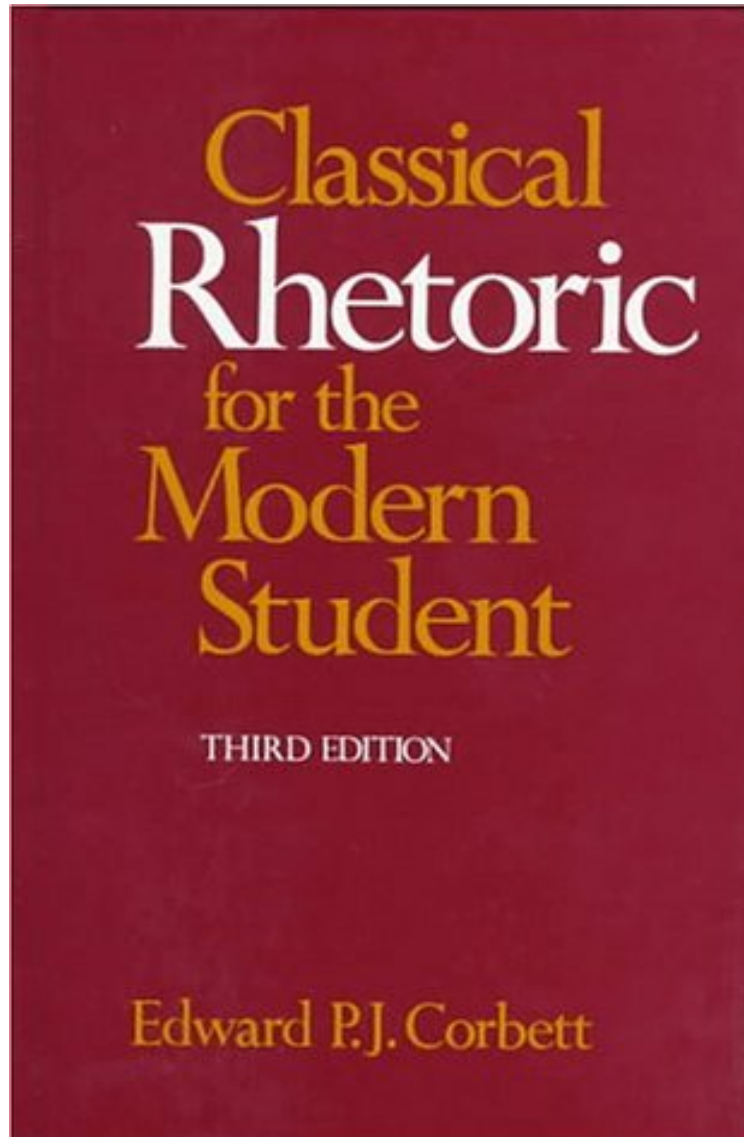


Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student

Edward P. J. Corbett

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Edward P. J. Corbett : Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. ServiceableBy CustomerPersonally I have gotten the 2nd edition in addition as it is written for a different audience, one that is , possibly more sophisticated than the later audiences.But this edition is serviceable.12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. How to analyze and order your thoughts, and express them effectivelyBy Paul VitolsThis college textbook, first published in 1965, is much more than

a mere aid for students trying to learn how to come up with essay topics and then how to write the essay; it is a labor of love, even a *cri de coeur*, by a man who wants to revive the ancient and much-examined art of rhetoric. This book can be studied with great profit by anyone who wants to write effectively. The author breaks his text into five parts: 1. an Introduction, in which he defines rhetoric and presents examples of effective discourse, ancient and modern 2. the Discovery of Arguments, or formulating your thesis and finding persuasive points for supporting it 3. the Arrangement of Material, or how to present your points in an effective way 4. Style, and examination of sentences, diction, usage, and figures of speech 5. and a concluding Survey of Rhetoric, in which the author gives a brief history of rhetoric as it has affected English prose. Each of these sections is filled with interesting and useful material. As might be expected, the core classical text for this book is Aristotle's Rhetoric, but Corbett draws freely on other sources as well, including Quintilian, Cicero, Longinus, and many others. The ability to speak persuasively in public was a key skill for the citizen of an ancient city-state, and over the centuries this skill became thoroughly examined and analyzed by the best minds of the period. Speaking for myself, as someone who was born with significant writing talent, who has written professionally since 1978, and who has written millions of words in a variety of formats and genres, I learned a lot from each section of this book. When I was in school, writing was not taught with anything like this level of depth, rigor, or precision. Corbett's text treats rhetoric as an art but an art in the Aristotelian sense. From this point of view, it is a knowledge of principles that elevates a knack into an art. This book is concerned with the principles of effective writing: the skeleton, flesh, and skin of a persuasive or moving discourse. Following Aristotle, Corbett presents the three modes of persuasion—the so-called rational, emotional, and moral arguments. The rational argument makes its appeal to our reason by the use of logic; the emotional argument makes its appeal to our feelings; and the moral argument makes its appeal based on our perception of the speaker or writer as a person. Interestingly, Aristotle felt that this last was the most persuasive appeal of the three; we are most inclined to accept the argument of someone that we like and admire. These three modes of persuasion permeate all the specific strategies and techniques presented in the rest of the book. Corbett gives the reader lots of work to do along the way. I did most of it, and still felt I was only making the very first beginnings. He has you analyzing Aristotelian syllogisms; breaking down sample discourses into their component topics or specific argumentative strategies; breaking down more discourses into their structural components; even copying individual paragraphs written by excellent writers of the past—that's right, copying them out longhand, as you might have done early in grade-school, to absorb some of the stylistic prowess of the author. Along the way you'll read a lot of excellent writing by authors such as Pericles, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Jefferson, Matthew Arnold, and many others. Furthermore, you'll read them in an alert, critical way that you might not in any other context. The individual paragraphs he gets you to copy will take you all the way from the King James Bible to Edmund Wilson, by way of Thomas Hobbes, Daniel Defoe, Edward Gibbon, Washington Irving, Walter Bagehot, and Mark Twain again, among many others. As long as there are human beings and speech, there will be rhetoric. Perhaps my greatest takeaway from this book is the realization of how poorly and sloppily I use language for the most part, and how poorly and sloppily others do as well, even when they really don't want to. Now I can glance at a letter to the editor, see the topics and appeals used, and note how successful, or rather how unsuccessful, they are. Friends, were all rhetorical flops. Are you satisfied with that condition? If not, there's a remedy. It's this book. Get it, read it, work it. Let's become citizens in the full sense. 17 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Cogent college rhetoric textbook By Joe I read this book twice now. I focused on every single page and made sure I understood to the best of my ability the meaning of what Corbett was writing. The exception to this being that I couldn't get through the tougher section on syllogisms and enthymemes, and also the history of rhetoric in the back of the book was too dull for me. That said, I would recommend this book (if not the newer 1990 4th edition, but I've never read that version) to my family, friends, strangers. Anyone who wants to understand, be understood; write, speak, and think better should get the book. I spent sometimes an hour on single pages because my critical thinking and rhetorical skills were so low. They don't teach these two things to the average student at public schools in America. This book was a blessing, and, man, it was difficult! To paraphrase, the more difficult you fight to earn something, the more rewarding that something will be. So don't be fooled in thinking you'll just learn a lot, you have to earn it to learn it. Sticking it out and reading the whole thing, twice made me a better person. It's my favorite book next to the Bible, which is literally where it is right now.

A standard in its field, this new edition provides the most up-to-date current thinking on rhetoric.

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of composition studies, a work that has shaped the discipline. Sorts out the often confusing writings of classical rhetoric and shows how the ancient art can help contemporary students negotiate the realm of persuasive discourse."-- Gary Layne Hatch, Brigham Young University"Remains the essential practice-oriented text in the field, and the third edition has avoided the temptation to 'modernize' away its primary purpose and value."--Patrick Scott, University of South Carolina"Corbett's work is very readable and has generous excerpts from various rhetoric sources; the integration of classical rhetoric with contemporary approaches is of particular appeal."--Sr. Marie Brinkman, Saint Mary College"I am now using this text....I think it is superb and have ever since I was first introduced to it as a new graduate teaching assistant myself in 1983....I need a text like this to introduce classical rhetoric, as I believe it to be the backbone of all writing courses."--Jerri Williams, West Texas State University"Not only is this a widely respected text, but I enjoy using it because it enables me to involve students in modern rhetorical issues--making clear the ways media, institutions, and individuals use language to influence their beliefs, attitudes and behavior--as well as impress them with the historical tradition of the analysis and practice they have just begun."--Sam McCool, Carlow College

About the Author Edward P. J. Corbett, Professor of English, Ohio State University, Columbus.