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The Licensing of the Poetic in Nineteenth-Century Composition-Rhetoric Textbooks

This historical exploration tracks changes in rules concerning figurative language in nineteenth-century composition-rhetoric textbooks. The century's lessening of millennium-long restriction of the poetic allowed not only creative writing into academia but composition as well, as composition at its beginning was intertwined with creative writing. In order to advance as a discipline, creative writing needs to investigate its history in addition to developing its theory and practice. Understanding the initial but largely overlooked union of creative writing and composition can help reconfigure English studies.

When creative writers today hear the phrase “poetic license” in relation to their work, they feel uneasy, and for good reason. Poetic license has always been an outsider’s perception of the work of creative writers—and an unsympathetic one at that. The term implies a dismissal of the careful formal choices writers have made in order to complete their work. It posits creative writing as a deviation from a valorized discourse, usually academic, and puts into play a marginalization of creative writers that is both historic and ongoing inside academia. The phrase “poetic license” first emerged in classical treatises as an attempt by rhetoricians to curtail the popularity of poetry and build up the

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newer and less popular genre of prose. A great deal of licensing of the poetic occurred in classical rhetoric, and that licensing involved portraying the use of figurative language as hazardous. In classical Greco-Roman rhetorical treatises, elaborate taxonomies of style—and specifically figurative language—attempted to regulate the impact of poetry and creative expression. The pervasive classical view of figuration and of metaphor and simile in particular was that they were potentially aberrant, confusing, far-fetched, impalpable, unhealthy, unduly effeminate, and laughable. For centuries, rhetorical treatises included pages and pages of rules for figuration in order to limit the impact of poetic license in discourse and, by implication, the influence of those whom we now think of as creative writers.

In the nineteenth century, composition-rhetoric textbooks changed their approach to figurative language, shedding both the elaborate taxonomies and gloomy prohibitions of these linguistic devices, and thus showed an increasing receptivity toward “poetic license” and creative writing. The millennium-long policing of the main linguistic device of the poetic, figuration, was called to a halt in the nineteenth century. For instance, Alexander Jamieson’s *A Grammar of Rhetoric and Poetic Literature: Comprehending the Principles of Language and Style*, its first edition printed in 1818 (a successful textbook that went through thirty-two editions by 1852), contains a significant amount of licensing of the poetic. By 1884, Brainerd Kellogg, in *A Text-book on Rhetoric, Supplementing the Development of the Science with Exhaustive Practice in Composition*, lauded the practical and aesthetic power of figuration, comparing its effect to the way a “diamond pin may adorn while it does toilet duty” (112). The nineteenth century was a remarkable time for writing instruction in the United States. The last twenty years witnessed both the first composition and academic creative writing courses in the country. Changes in the presentation of figuration in textbooks published in the century were a bellwether for changes in attitudes toward creative writing in the university. While creative genres certainly continued despite rhetorical sanctions throughout the centuries after Aristotle, their writing happened outside of formal education and was not performed by students. By the end of the nineteenth century, a new approach to writing instruction and not just the metaphor or simile was admitted into academia. Creative writing is the explicit instruction in the composing of literary genres that happened because figuration—and, by extension, the poetic—became increasingly less constrained during the nineteenth century.¹ More than the eventual emergence of creative writing as a discipline, these changes in the amount of the poetic allowable in academia were also formative for composi-

tion. At the moment of its emergence, composition was significantly intertwined with creative writing—perhaps even relying on creative writing for its direction. D. G. Myers has proposed that the first composition courses in the United States *were* creative writing courses developed at Harvard. At the very least, creative writing was present at the start of composition as an academic discipline—and significantly present.

Previous historical accounts of figuration in the nineteenth century have overlooked the significant role creative writing played in the emergence of composition. Albert R. Kitzhaber in his seminal account, *Rhetoric in American Colleges: 1850–1900*, altogether omits the evolution in figuration that occurred in the nineteenth century: “Like the discussions of other aspects of style in this period, that of figures of speech showed little that was new” (175). These earlier textbook authors, according to Kitzhaber, displayed a “generally uncritical attitude” toward previous taxonomies that were inherited primarily from Cicero via Blair (176). The authors of the more recent *Archives of Instruction* argue for the rhetorical and intertextual complexity of nineteenth-century textbooks but don’t extend that complexity to figuration and instead adopt Kitzhaber’s view that nineteenth-century treatments were reproductions of Blair (Carr, Carr, and Schultz 36). Nan Johnson’s *Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric* is the one account to hint at the development of creative writing alongside of composition. Textbooks by the end of the nineteenth century, in Johnson’s depiction, seemed to have changed their approach to figuration from one that emphasized a view, derived from faculty psychology and the eighteenth-century New Rhetoric, of figures as devices to affect the reader’s mind to one in which figures can be mastered to become a writer who can “aspire to eminence” (221). Late nineteenth-century rhetoricians like A. S. Hill and Barrett Wendell operated out of the “belletristic conviction that the rhetorical elements that confer excellence on literature and composition are one and the same” (Johnson 221). This is a key moment because in Johnson’s interpretation, poetic license as a constraint separating the creative from the rhetorical is fading as creative and rhetorical texts share elements such as figurative language. Moreover, what unites the triad of literary studies, composition, and rhetoric is the notion that students of composition and rhetoric may aspire to be literary or creative writers.

Johnson’s work seems to be an anomaly; other composition scholars posed changes in taxonomy as problematic since those changes were connected to the demise of rhetorical education in the nineteenth century. Means to measure these taxonomical changes in those accounts have therefore been fairly negative. Robert Connors and James Seitz, joining Kitzhaber, have argued that one

way to measure changes in the treatment of figuration is to look at the length and breadth of taxonomies. Both suggest that diminishment in the number of pages of taxonomic treatment that occurred during the nineteenth century is an indicator of the diminishing status of style and figuration in composition-rhetoric. According to Connors, until the 1850s, figurative language was deemed significant enough to receive book-length treatment. After 1850, the amount of treatment of figuration decreased. This could be attributed to the way in which authors of textbooks by the end of the nineteenth century relied on “intuitive theorizing about writing” rather than the inherited taxonomies of the rich rhetorical tradition (Connors, “Textbooks” 101). Likewise, Seitz argues that coverage of figurative devices significantly dwindled between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. According to Seitz, similar to classical Greco-Roman rhetoricians, seventeenth-century rhetoricians still included a range of figuration in their treatises, but in the nineteenth century both the page length and range of topics diminished. The length of treatment became so cursory that figuration was only mentioned in appendices, and shortly afterward, that extensive list of figures treated in classical rhetorical taxonomies was largely reduced to metaphor (Seitz 26–28).

To Connors’s measure of page length, Seitz offers a second way of tracking what he construes as deterioration in the taxonomies. According to Seitz, composition-rhetoric’s handling of figuration, from Blair’s *Lectures* to the twentieth-century handbooks routinely bought by college students, has consistently depicted metaphor as aberrant, as a discourse convention to be used only with great caution.² These textbooks followed what Seitz calls a “pattern of praise and blame” (31). This pattern runs as follows: “The first step is to describe the virtues of metaphor as a figure of speech. . . . Yet no sooner have these virtues been named than a second step follows the first—whereupon all discussion of the assets of metaphor is curtailed (and in many cases overwhelmed) by the presentation of its flaws. . . . the values attributed to metaphor are quickly subsumed by anxiety over its defects” (Seitz 29). As an experiment, I opened up my desktop handbook. In the index under “metaphor” appears the following encouraging list: “Metaphors: dead, 798; mixed, 356; worn out, 357.” Indeed, few grammatical entries carry such a foreboding message, including predictable grammar villains such as “slang” and “dangling modifiers.” “Writer’s block,” for instance, is listed with the affirmative, “Writer’s block: beating, 78–79.” While “blame” may be too strong a term for these discursive restrictions, carrying as it does the connotation of wrong-doing, the way in which figuration is routinely portrayed is more than a call for moderation. Moderation or commonsense

regulation is a matter of not indulging too much in something pleasurable; telling someone to limit how many daiquiris they imbibe is different from saying, “Watch out, don’t drink that rat poison,” which is similar to how classical rhetoricians “served” figuration. Moderation is a matter of restricting quantity; prohibition altogether restricts the item under question. In classical treatment of figuration, then, classical rhetoricians couldn’t altogether prevent individuals from using figures, but they surely could instill distrust. Thus classical treatment of figuration rides somewhere between caution and prohibition. Regardless, this combination of limited coverage and caution-prohibition results in a brief and negatively charged treatment of a complex linguistic device: a marginalization of metaphor (Seitz). While Seitz overlooks the fact that a negative approach to figuration was also evident in classical rhetorical treatises, his conclusion that it results in the marginalization of metaphor is useful. Marginalization, after all, is the essence of poetic license, no matter the era.

As I show, the diminishment in page time allotted to figurative language in nineteenth-century textbooks was not a thoroughly negative development for figuration. It certainly happened: nineteenth-century textbooks often engaged in an explicit streamlining of classical approaches to style. These changes in classification do not necessarily represent inattention or are not necessarily as problematic as Seitz and Connors claim. Such claims embody the “classicist approach,” one that tries to unify the rhetoric of the nineteenth century to Greco-Roman rhetoric (Johnson 12–13). In this limited view of history, when deviations from classical rhetoric occur, they are construed as losses rather than developments. Contrary to the classicist view, I maintain that with the diminishment of coverage came a reduction in the previously heavy-handed management of figuration that had appeared in classical treatises. I suggest that instead of looking only at length of treatment, we examine other more nuanced developments that emerged in textbooks. These developments would culminate in the textbooks and scholarly publications of two of the arguable founders of modern composition, A. S. Hill and Barrett Wendell, in the latter part of the century.

First, while textbook authors did abridge taxonomies of style as Seitz and Connors suggest, these nineteenth-century authors also departed from their classical predecessors by allowing figuration a greater role in meaning making. Whereas classical treatises depicted figuration as ornament or ancillary to meaning, nineteenth-century textbooks altered that superficial role. An indicator of this move is the way in which nineteenth-century books gradually shed the classical figuration used for figuration: that of dress or costume. (One

of the ironies of classical rhetorical treatises is their reliance on figuration to define figuration, despite their insistence that figurative language had little rhetorical value.) Second, textbooks began to discuss students as writers, both in the composition classroom and in the greater world. As part of that change, textbooks increasingly emphasized the act of writing and included exercises on figuration for students. Third, nineteenth-century textbooks showed an emphasis on the imaginative element of writing. Fourth, textbooks, influenced by Campbell and faculty psychology, described figures as devices of pathos capable of generating valuable emotional responses in an audience. Lastly, nineteenth-century textbooks shifted the praise-blame/caution pattern evident since classical rhetorical works to suggest that the context for figuration be taken into account and that problems in usage result from problems with the writer, not an inherent quality in the linguistic device.

These revisions of the classical approach to figuration and the categorization of discourse accumulate into a new and more dynamic writing pedagogy by the end of the century. By altering taxonomical approaches, nineteenth-century textbook authors abandoned rules-based instruction for a more generative approach to writing instruction. The abridged taxonomies allowed a greater emphasis on “doing,” on asking students to write rather than memorize rules. This “doing” also involved creative writing—more displays of “poetic license” inside the nascent composition classroom. In turn, greater poetic license in composition allowed writing instructors to envision their students as future professional creative writers and journalists. It allowed instructors to facilitate and be engaged in the rising tide of creative writing that would steadily happen in the twentieth century.

Figurative Language and Poetic License in Classical Rhetoric

To understand the significance of the changes in style taxonomies in the nineteenth century, we need to briefly examine the legacy of poetic license from classical rhetoric. The attempt in academia to reign in creative discourse and expression starts with classical rhetoric. Aristotle was the originator of the urge to classify discourse, an inclination that continued well into the twentieth century and that may have arisen from his role as an academic rather than a public practitioner of rhetoric (Bizzell and Herzberg 30). Unwieldy taxonomies of style would become a frequent source of complaint by nineteenth-century textbook authors who often saw their works as presenting figuration more clearly than their ancient predecessors. The term “poetic license” encapsulates the overall classical rhetorical view toward figurative language.

Although poetics since Aristotle was defined by elements such as meter and rhyme, figurative language consistently served as the element most associated with poetry. This tradition of identifying poetry with figuration would continue into the nineteenth century and is evident in Alexander Jamieson's 1818 textbook in which he says that "figures form the constant language of poetry" (137). Investigations into the tendency to classify discourse typically begin with Aristotle, who, for better or worse, has served as a constant authority on figurative language: "it is to him that we owe the terms in which the debate was framed for many hundreds of years" (Kirby 518). In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the poetic was defined as a "transgressive" excess of ornament; "psuchra" or "frigidities" were a category that included metaphor that he deemed inappropriate for use in prose because of their association with poetry (Graff 314–23). Aristotle's treatment of figuration suggests the praise-blame/caution pattern. In *Poetics*, direct coverage of figuration is limited to a single-sentence delineation of the four types of metaphors, followed by examples. As is the case with *Rhetoric*, Aristotle is more concerned with discussing the negative effects of figuration, and in *Poetics* that discussion occupies two brief chapters—hardly sizeable to the amount of classification Aristotle performs on other rhetorical matters such as enthymemes and hardly comparable to the lengthy treatises of later rhetoricians.

The overall classical view of figuration—and of metaphor and simile in particular—was that they were potentially aberrant and undesirable. Prose developed later than poetry, emerging in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE and signaling advancements in science as well as rhetorical education (Graff 303–4). Poetry was the more established genre, and classical rhetoricians promoted the newcomer prose by placing it in opposition to poetry and by denigrating poetry. Because prose was defined by its divergence from poetry, its category was perpetually unstable (Graff). Consequentially, figurative language, as the definitive characteristic of poetry, was the most regulated element by classical rhetoricians, since one way to differentiate the genres was to restrict and colonize the linguistic devices used by poetry.

Classical rhetorical treatises after Aristotle's spent a great deal of page space delineating and circumscribing figurative language. In their attempts to differentiate prose from poetry, Isocrates withheld figuration from prose, Aristotle limited the number of poetic elements a rhetor could use, and Alcidas advocated oral improvisation of speeches because written texts encouraged the poetic and thus the insincere (Graff 308). In *Rhetorica ad Herenneum*, the oldest surviving intact rhetoric manual in Latin, circa 84 BCE, style and

figuration receive the longest treatment of any section in the book including those on invention, delivery, and memory (Bizzell and Herzberg 241). Each of three kinds of style (Grand, Middle, Simple) are immediately shadowed by a negative style (Swollen, Slack, Meager), thus following a “praise-blame” or prohibitory pattern. After defining the Grand, Middle, and Simple styles, the anonymous author provides an equally long discussion of the faulty styles that have a distinct possibility of arising for a rhetorician (*Ad C. Herennium* 253–67). Figurative language is an instigator in the faulty styles because of its potential to be “clumsy,” inappropriate, or lacking “resolution or virility” in its ability to maintain an audience’s attention (265–66). After distinguishing the six kinds of style, he differentiates style in Figures of Diction and Figures of Thought. The author then files a range of stylistic devices into these two camps, providing a separate chapter for the most part for each device, and in Figures of Diction appear figurative devices that would be familiar today to a high school student: onomatopoeia, metonymy, hyperbole, metaphor, allegory, and others. While figuration is seen as affording some advantages (including pleasure, eloquence, and textual distinction), its misuse can lead to significant diminishment of a rhetor’s ethos, and its hazards have warranted as much if not more attention in rhetorical treatises than its advantages. Likewise, in Books VIII and IX of *Institutio Oratoria*, from 95 CE, Quintilian devoted a lengthy discussion to the general impact of stylistic devices peppered with prohibitions and then a long catalog of different figures. In Quintilian’s depiction, by and large, figuration posed problems to the rhetor who ran (and today still runs in some people’s eyes) the risk of contradicting a sort of rhetorical etiquette and therefore losing his ethos (Eubanks 192). Quintilian and the anonymous author of *Rhetorica ad Herenneum* were instigators in the classical denigration of figuration. Then, in the Hellenic period, progymnasmata, the dozen or so preliminary exercises given to younger students, were brief but restrictive in their inclusion of figuration. Theon, writing approximately in the first century AD, advises inside his discussion of narration: “one should avoid poetic and coined words and tropes”; Aphthonius in the fourth century AD in his unit on *êthopoeia*, or characterization, advises “a style that is clear, concise, fresh, pure, free from any inversion and figure” and in *ekphrasis*, or description, a student should “adorn it with varied figures” (Kennedy 30, 116–17), limiting figuration to an ancillary, cosmetic role. Since, as Kennedy suggests, the progymnasmata were compositional exercises that persisted well into early modern European education, these views on figuration propagated for centuries.

The term “poetic license” encapsulates the classical rhetorical view toward figurative language and labels the taxonomic dirty work. Quintilian was the first to employ the actual phrase “poetic license,” but the idea of license appears earlier in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* where it is equated at once with freedom of speech and limitation. License in its original meaning differs from today in that it meant freedom or taking of a freedom, albeit involving personal challenges. In *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, license is the ability to speak frankly before an audience that is intimidating, so that frankness needs to be tempered with praise: “It is Frankness of Speech when, talking before those to whom we owe reverence or fear, we yet exercise our right to speak out, because we seem justified in reprehending them, or persons dear to them, for some fault” (*Ad C. Herennium* 349). Quintilian responded negatively to his predecessor’s notion of license, believing that that freedom of speech was an unfortunate medium for flattery and falsity. Quintilian extended his suspicion of license to figuration, coining “poetic license,” which indicated the use of figurative language to adorn, something easily mishandled by students.

With Quintilian’s pairing of “license” with “poetic,” the freedom to speak now had to be *given* to the individual, more aligned with the modern sense of license as something applied for and provided—a documented permission to act—as in a driver’s or hunting license. Accordingly, this permission to “act,” in this case to communicate, comes with all sorts of regulations, which would shortly be provided by the elaborate taxonomies of the poetic in classical treatises. Quintilian, teacher of other teachers, is setting forth the stages of education required for future public orators, from toddlers to adults. In his educational system, the youngest students should begin under the tutelage of grammar experts and then graduate to rhetorical scholars. The instructional bridge between the two levels was narration. It is in the context of how to teach narration that “poetic license” first appears:

it ought not to be dry and jejune, (for what necessity would there be to bestow so much pains upon study, if it were thought sufficient to state facts without dress or decoration?) nor ought it to be erratic, and wantonly adorned with far-fetched descriptions, in which many speakers indulge with *an emulation of poetic license*. (Quintilian 225; emphasis added)

For Quintilian, imitation was central to rhetorical education: as crucial as drafts in today’s writing education. However, in his admonition, we see Quintilian barricading his students from the activity of poets. Either his students are not capable of pulling off poetic language, or poetic language is faulty, far-fetched,

and wanton. The passage also begs the question “*whose* poetic license?” By implication, a composing method called “poetic license” existed, a method practiced by a more experienced, if questionable, group of writers. And the implication is that these lessons in prose writing were not to include imaginative writing: a segregation that would be complicated in the nineteenth century as creative writing and composition emerged together as academic course work.

Despite their warnings about using figuration, classical rhetoricians relied on figuration as an important rhetorical device. Classical rhetoricians, when turning their attention to matters other than poetic license, routinely heaped on similes and metaphors. Furthermore, they frequently relied on figuration to do the crucial rhetorical work of definition, as Sara J. Newman has argued that, for Aristotle, metaphor served a key, if problematic, definitional function. And often not just *any* definitional work: they relied on figures to define other figures. These rhetoricians repeatedly resorted to comparing poetic language to jewelry and cosmetics or “style” in the *Vogue* sense.³ By comparing poetic language to ornament, rhetoricians diminish the meaning-making capacity of the device. However, this transgression of their own rules is significant for nineteenth-century composition for several reasons. For one, it shows the impracticality of isolable rules for writing and how rules will inevitably seem like a teacher’s—or rhetorician’s—idiosyncratic pet peeve. If discourse rules cannot be followed by their proponents, their universality of application is under question and all the more reason to simplify or drop the rules. More revealingly, classical rhetoricians are caught up in a tautology when they define figures with other figures. The tautological trap indicates the limits of rhetoricians’ understanding of figures as well as the discursive power of figuration. It belies their trivialization of figures as mere ornament or cosmetics when such figures are definitional and unavoidable. So thought Hugh Blair. Blair felt that figurative language historically lent itself to classification because of the way in which rhetoricians had been drawn to its discursive efficacy and how they needed to manage that attraction by regulation, “reduce[ing] them under separate classes and heads” (274). In composition-rhetoric textbooks, the use of “fashion” figuration for figures is apparent at the start of the nineteenth century but gradually disappears. This change occurs at the same time as a greater admission of the rhetorical and creative efficacy of figures.

Nineteenth-Century Textbooks and Taxonomies of Figuration

Nineteenth-century textbooks are worth examining because they occur at a time in which composition emerges as a pedagogical practice (if not a budding

discipline) and begins to distinguish itself from rhetoric. The textbooks contain significant departures from rhetoric, including a molting of elaborate taxonomies. Overall, these changes have been viewed by scholars as a loss for writing studies: the abandonment by composition of its rich rhetorical heritage (Berlin; Connors; Crowley; Russell; Wright and Halloran). Abandonment of rhetoric has even been attributed to composition's lack of disciplinarity throughout most of the twentieth century (Connors, "Composition History"). This time period, however, could also be understood as an opportunity for newness, for shedding many of the limitations of the dominant (rhetorical) pedagogy and history. For instance, composition-rhetoric textbooks for college-aged students in the latter half of the nineteenth century contained many innovations used in late twentieth-century writing instruction: emphasis on personal writing and invention, use of freewriting, and the separation of editing from composing (Carr, Carr, and Schultz; Schultz). Another new opportunity inside writing instruction was the rise of creative writing as a legitimate classroom practice. Had rhetorical history and its treatises maintained its firm regulatory grip on the textbooks of the nineteenth century, it is possible that the poetic or expressive would continue to have been excluded from the writing classroom.

It may be said that textbook publication is a highly conservative enterprise—slow to reflect changes in the discipline. More favorable examinations of textbooks have argued for a view of them as complex responses to inherited rhetorical tradition: whether it's textbooks as critical compilations and redactions (Carr, Carr, and Schultz); nineteenth-century textbooks as having a rich relationship with eighteenth-century rhetoric (Johnson); or textbooks as participating in a rhetorical history that invites ambiguity and invention (Covino). Furthermore, this complex relationship with the poetic is apparent even in the Greco-Roman originators of poetic stricture, as evident in Graff's portrayal of the various slippages in edict by Aristotle and others as they worked out how to use the poetic in the crafting of prose by themselves and others. Nineteenth-century textbooks defy that portrayal in the way in which they fairly rapidly—over the course of seventy-five years—shed a millennium of poetic restriction. One cannot entirely extrapolate what occurred in nineteenth-century writing classes from the content of writing textbooks. As Susan Miller has argued, we cannot "believe in the coherent stability of a textbook apart from its reader's situational, purposeful, constructive *use* of it" (22). While the size and pacing of the changes enacted by these textbooks may be debatable, what is indisputable is that by the end of the century, the study of the poetic had become a part of academia in the form of creative writing and that creative writing would flour-

ish in the twentieth century. The rapid change that occurred in both writing instruction and treatment of figuration during this time suggests tandem action. The textbooks examined in this article are among the most influential, as they were the most widely circulating in their time (Carr, Carr, and Schultz 26) as well as the most investigated for nonfigurative concerns in recent histories of rhetoric, including Connors and Seitz. For instance, Quackenbos's *Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric* saw thirty-two printings and was "the most issued U.S. rhetoric" (Carr, Carr, and Schultz 55). Later in the century, Wendell's *English Composition* underwent thirty editions, and Myers even suggests that the text "changed the name of rhetoric" (47). An examination of the treatment of figuration in these textbooks may lead to better understanding of the seminal pedagogical changes that occurred in writing instruction in the hands of A. S. Hill and Barrett Wendell by the end of the century.

Textbooks from 1818 to 1884

Alexander Jamieson's *A Grammar of Rhetoric and Polite Literature: Comprehending the Principles of Language and Style*, first printed in 1818, resembles classical rhetorical approaches to figuration in that it adopts similar taxonomies and contains a significant amount of prohibition of figuration. His discussion of metaphors and similes employs an Aristotelian comparison between species and a charting of the different types of relations between objects (139–40). The warnings about figuration reiterate those of classical rhetoric: students need to avoid far-fetched, jumbled, excessive, and strained figuration. The student needs to be carefully trained in figuration because of its risks to rhetorical etiquette: "ostentatious and deceitful display of ornament and pomp of expression, must be exploded from his compositions, if he would value substance rather than show, and good sense as the foundation of all good writing" (iii). In his preface, however, Jamieson distinguishes his approach to taxonomy of figures from those of previous rhetoricians, a distancing strategy that will be evident in textbooks throughout the nineteenth century and that will dominate Wendell's pedagogy. This move exemplifies what Carr, Carr, and Schultz have described as the redaction of earlier rhetorical principles that nineteenth-century textbook authors engaged in, making their textbooks hybrid texts and rhetorically complex compilations. Notably, the rhetoricians Jamieson has in mind are classical ones and not rhetoricians from a more recent century such as the sixteenth, one that produced abundant work on style. Explaining his presentation of rhetorical figures, Jamieson says he will not encumber the student with "catalogues from the ancient critics, of other figures, partly grammatical

and partly rhetorical, which would have furnished little instruction, and less amusement" (vi). Jamieson's presentation of figuration also involves a good deal of praise for the devices, allowing that they provide readers with pleasure and clarity and enrich language in way that literal language can never achieve.

Jamieson adopts the classical rhetorician's use of the word "ornament" for figuration and the habit of using dress or fashion comparisons to explain the impact of figuration. According to Jamieson, tropes "properly employed, have a similar effect on language, with what is produced by the rich and splendid dress of a person of rank; to create respect, and to give an air of magnificence to him who wears it" (137). Jamieson also alters this classical figuration for figures—one that historically placed figures in an ancillary position to meaning. Throughout Jamieson's presentation on style, figures are described as "accessory ideas," which is a revealing oxymoron, a contradiction between what is essential to a text (ideas) and what is nonessential to a text (accessories, figures). Figures here may be accessories—either applied after the fact to a completed meaning or simply not essential to that text—but they are nevertheless "ideas." When figures are permitted to be ideas, they are connected to meaning making in a way not necessarily seen in classical rhetorical treatises but one that anticipates twentieth-century discussions in composition and literary studies of figuration.⁴

An intriguing development in nineteenth-century composition-rhetoric textbooks is the discussion of the value of imagination and the ability of students to engage in imaginative writing or poetic license. Jamieson defines figures as "that language, which is prompted either by the imagination, or by the passions" (136). Likewise, in another definitional act, Jamieson differentiates similes from metaphors, saying that similes "differ chiefly from metaphors in the vigour of imagination with which they are conceived" and that with similes "we soar not so high, but content ourselves with remarking similitude merely" (152). In Jamieson's book, we also find the dawning of the possibility of students writing for contexts outside of the classroom: students as writers. Jamieson, in explaining the purpose of the full chapter on verse in his 1818 book, says, "the origin and different kinds of Poetry are handled more to form the pupil's taste for the study of Poetry, than to inspire him with the thirst of reaping fame in the doubtful field of poetic composition" (viii). Studying the "ornaments" of poetry, however, will be useful to anyone who is inclined toward the writing of poetry. Jamieson's discussion of students as writers contains reservations about student possibility, but later textbook authors will appear increasingly more optimistic in this regard.

Samuel P. Newman's 1839 *A Practical System of Rhetoric: Or the Rules and Principles of Style* valued taxonomies as a pedagogical device. The student's ability to understand classification enables him to acquire literary taste (vi). Newman's approach is different than other textbook authors until Barrett Wendell in its significant emphasis on the capacity of figures to generate emotional response in the audience. In his treatment, figures become the rhetorical device of pathos. Metaphors are bold, "not well adapted to a calm, deliberate, reasoning state of mind" and the "figure of passion" (88). Newman's designation of figures as pathos shows him to predate A. D. Hepburn by thirty-five years, whom Kitzhaber cites as one of the earliest textbook authors to link figures to the important use of feeling (179).⁵ Newman's depiction of figures as the device of pathos, since effective figures cause "emotions of beauty" or "emotions of taste," can be traced to Fénelon's eighteenth-century requirement that discourse persuade through its vividness as well as to Blair's subsequent emphasis on taste. According to Newman, these ornaments of style function to arouse emotions of taste because they allow a writer to address the original tendencies of the mind to feel those emotions when looking at the natural world (84). Newman also links imagination to the study of rhetoric: the development of a student's imagination is both an advantage and a consequence of rhetorical study: "I have stated as a second object to be attained by the study of rhetoric, the cultivation of a literary taste, and in connexion, the exercise of the imagination" (iv). Newman disputes the view that imagination is unteachable and argues that it is possible to construct a "discipline of imagination" (vi). As such, he anticipates the critique from composition and rhetoric scholars that creative writing is elitist because it deems imaginative writing to be a product of individual genius and therefore unteachable.

When Newman included imagination in the study of rhetoric, he emphasized its "exercise," suggesting that the student needs to engage in creative writing, not just study existent literature. This notion is supported by the extended comparison to the visual arts in which writers are compared to painters in using models to develop their own productions:

There is a close analogy to the cultivation of taste in painting, or in any of the fine arts. We may also learn something on this subject, from the course pursued by painters in the improvement of their taste. They visit the most celebrated galleries, and seek for models of excellence in their art; and these they make the object of close, long-continued and patient study. They inquire what there is to excite admiration in these paintings, and dwell on their different prominent beauties . . . in the same way that a literary taste is to be cultivated. And that the student may

skillfully use his models of excellence in literature, and unite with his observation of them the application of those principles on which they depend.” (v)

This aesthetic comparison, so different from the comparisons to ornament or dress, suggests that the status accorded to writing imaginatively, even poetically, is changing. The comparison to the visual arts is derived from Fénelon’s French belletristic theory in which persuasion was “a form of portraiture . . . suggest[ing] the impossibility of divorcing aesthetics from rhetoric (Warnick 51–52). As such, the comparison moves imaginative writing closer to an artistic act rather than a secondary, non-essential act such as putting on jewelry. It would seem that, in Newman, the Fénelon- and then Blair-influenced focus on the pursuit of taste is a code for creative writing or invention.

Newman’s approach differs from Jamieson’s in that he discusses the possibility (and it is more likely in his depiction) of students becoming creative writers outside of the classroom as well as emphasizing the importance of having students write while in class. Newman’s intention to make writers out of his students was evident in his preface where he discusses the efficacy of his method in engaging students, helping them to perceive their own abilities and experience pleasure from literacy so that “they both derive important aid in becoming writers themselves” (vii). Although it could be argued that Newman did not specify the genres he envisioned for his student-writers, from the context of the passage, with its emphasis on literary taste and the reading of literature, it can be postulated that he intended his students to try for literary achievement and creative writing and to use “poetic license.” In Newman’s textbook a student-centered approach to the teaching of writing and figures is apparent, as the teacher should strive to help each student develop a style that is unique to that student’s identity (xi). The emphasis, then, is on helping students as individuals develop their craft as writers. That said, twenty-first century compositionists who value perceiving students as writers may be seeing a false gleam of hope off someone like Newman; Newman’s perception of students as writers may be due to the nineteenth-century move from orality to literacy, from oral rhetoric to written composition. A textbook author such as Newman or Quackenbos could have referred to students as “writers” in order to differentiate rhetoric from composing. The encouragement these nineteenth-century textbook authors showed toward helping students become published creative writers outside the university suggests that something subtle and exciting was occurring in those references to students as writers and to the inclusion of exercises. Rather than a practicality in the field or a move

from orality to literacy, these moments indicate a shift in teacher perception of student ability and the role a student could play in the world outside the classroom as a user of words.

In Quackenbos's 1864 *Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric*, we find a balance between conservative influences and the changes toward written communication evident in the nineteenth-century textbooks. The classical metaphor of dress for figures appears in this textbook. As with classical treatises, figuration (of dress) is used to define figuration:

Definition.—Figurative language implies a departure from the simple or ordinary mode of expression; a clothing of ideas in words which not only convey the meaning, but, through a comparison or some other means of exciting the imagination, convey it in such a way as to make a lively and forcible impression on the mind. (239)

Figuration is depicted conventionally, as secondary to content: "As the body is more important than the dress, so the thought is of more moment than the mode of expressing it" (244). The figuration of dress is used to at once show the charms and drawbacks of using figures: "Properly used, they have the same effect on language that is produced by the rich and splendid dress of a person of rank; that is, by imparting a general air of magnificence, they exact admiration and respect" (243). While Quackenbos's textbook contains the usual cautionary note about mixed or strained metaphor, his presentation of figures is overall less restrictive than classical rhetoricians. He generally praises the devices that, while he calls them deviations, are "intentional deviations" and are "constantly occurring in every department of composition, and are a source of life and beauty to style" (246). Quackenbos's work also parts ways with classical rhetorical approaches to figuration, taxonomy, and instruction in communication on several fronts.

As had Jamieson, Quackenbos distances himself from classical penchant for lengthy taxonomies. Long taxonomies of the figures of rhetoric are useless:

Rhetoricians have devoted much attention to defining, analyzing, and classifying them; and, by making slight shades of difference sufficient ground for the formation of new classes, have succeeded in enumerating more than two hundred and fifty. Such minuteness is of no practical use; and we shall limit our consideration to the sixteen leading figures. (246–47)

Accordingly, rules for figuration should be "of service, as they are in every other department of composition" (244). Quackenbos differs from Jamieson and

Newman, whose textbooks appeared earlier in the century, in that he actually engages students in writing through exercises in figuration. His exercises ask students to convert figuration to “plain language” in supplied passages, to write their own figures into provided sentences, and to identify figures in passages (245). Students are not asked to extensively write but instead respond to sample texts. Quackenbos’s engagement of students as writers is less thorough than what will occur in textbooks later in the century. That his perception of students as writers is qualified is evident in his discussion of the potential of their writing outside the composition class. While he teaches poetry, he states that his intention is not to make great poets as such but to help strengthen the poetry that is written by students:

While it is admitted that no rules can make a poet of one whom nature has not constituted such, it is sincerely believed that a knowledge of the principles here set forth will have a tendency to produce more correct and better poetry. Not every one who goes through a course of syntax can write good prose; yet this does not alter the fact that a thorough acquaintance with syntax is essential to the good prose writer. (7)

Although skeptical about the ability of his students to become the next Coleridge, Quackenbos justifies the teaching of creative writing by comparing it to composition. He allows creative writing in the classroom to enjoy the same outcome of composition in which teaching success can be partial, not the drama of creating a “great” poet. This leveling of the playing field between creative writing and composition is the first to occur in these textbooks and is suggestive of a loosening of poetic license that will be fully evident by the end of the century.

John Seely Hart’s 1870 *A Manual of Composition and Rhetoric* also builds more of an equivalency between composition and creative writing genres. Hart suggests that style is concerned equally with prose and poetry and that they are united by their mutual use of figures of speech (20). Thus, what unites the two genres of prose and poetry and arguably of composition and creative writing (as the disciplines behind these terms begin to emerge in the nineteenth century) is figuration, a device formerly used to segregate them in poetic license. Hart’s textbook also contains a conservative element. His approach to classification embodies the classical rhetorical notion that figures are separate from meaning making. *A Manual of Composition and Rhetoric* is divided into two parts, one for style, the other for invention: thought occurs through invention, and style is concerned with the expression of thought (20). However, Hart deems

style more challenging than invention, and therefore presents style first as well as more exhaustively (nearly 300 pages rather than the 74 devoted to invention). Although he affirms the value of metaphor and simile, Hart includes a significant amount of prohibition in a praise-blame/caution pattern, and Seitz is therefore correct in his assessment of Hart (31). The drawbacks of figuration appear immediately after its pleasures, and this praise-blame/caution pattern notably does not appear in sections of the book that address other discourse conventions.

In his 1884 *A Text-book on Rhetoric, Supplementing the Development of the Science with Exhaustive Practice in Composition*, Brainerd Kellogg further streamlined taxonomies of figuration, simplifying metaphor and simile by placing it under “imagery” in the style section. Interestingly, Kellogg’s version of style is centered on the writer. According to Kellogg, style is composed of three elements: topic, the writer’s individuality, and authority. Stylistic instruction should help develop a student’s individuality as a writer: “It is not the business of rhetoric to rob one’s style of this element. It should only wear down the sharp angles and subdue the writer’s peculiarities, so that his style should be free from mannerisms—everything offensively characteristic of him” (84). The goal of developing style is to become “classic” and shed one’s authorial eccentricities. The trope of “dress” that had appeared in classical rhetoric as well as in some of the nineteenth-century textbooks is altered such that figuration is closer to a person’s identity and less defined as external ornament: “Every one has his manner of expressing thought, just as he has a cast of features, qualities of voice, and a carriage of body, peculiar to himself” (83). This move to depict figuration as less ornamental and more essential makes sense in light of Kellogg’s writer-centered approach to style. Poetic devices are becoming aligned with individual expression, and individual expression is more encouraged than in previous textbooks. Kellogg presents imagery née figuration in laudable terms: “The value to the pupil of the habit of using imagery is incalculable” (134). Additionally, Kellogg emphasizes the rhetorical nature of figuration, seeing similes as having “rhetorical value” and allowing the reader to understand the writer’s thought (112).

This textbook, as evinced in its subtitle, also contains a significant number of writing exercises in which students are asked to actually compose similes and metaphors. The goal of instruction in figuration is to make students wiser and more observant, and Kellogg emphasizes the importance of having students compose figuration in order to achieve those goals: “Pupils should be stimulated in all ways to the cultivation of this quality of style. Let the teacher . . . exact

it from them in their written efforts" (134). Some exercises ask students to convert metaphors into similes and note differences in effect. Another exercise reinforces the value of figuration: "Substitute plain language for the figurative, and note the loss of distinctiveness and of beauty" (113). Rather than simply prohibiting mixed or "faded" metaphors, Kellogg supplies this assignment: "Restore the color to these faded metaphors by looking up the etymology of the words italicized" (116). Contrary to Seitz's depiction of exercises in figuration in nineteenth-century textbooks as limited to fill-in-the-blank type activities (50–51), Kellogg's other exercises ask students to write figuration: "Recast these sentences, using at least a single metaphor in each" (117). By the end of the exercise section, students are no longer asked to adapt provided passages and are told to compose figuration on their own: "Bring into the class all the metaphors you have time to coin" (117). In this regard, Kellogg's emphasis on students as writers of original poetic text is more present than in Quackenbos.

Lastly, Kellogg is concerned that readers of his classification of figuration note the context of a metaphor or simile before judging it negatively and to root out the author's intention. Like Newman, Kellogg advocates a certain charitable reading when looking at figuration. Newman asks that readers not seek faults but rather seek excellence in figuration (119). Kellogg further softens the classical rhetorical critique of mixed metaphors, saying that they are not always "grotesque" but could just be a matter of carelessness (120). As such, these nineteenth-century textbook authors show a greater concern for the context of figuration than classical rhetoricians. As has been pointed out in the scholarship of metaphor, Aristotelian approaches to figuration often mistakenly view metaphor as abstract or isolable from context rather than as influenced by and influencing their discursive context (Eubanks). Seitz has issued a similar complaint about the treatment of figuration in twentieth-century handbooks in which examples of shoddy figuration are given without any consideration for their context (37). Samuel Newman and especially Kellogg are shifting the praise-blame/caution pattern evident since classical rhetoric to suggest that the context for figuration be taken into account and errors in usage result from problems with the writer and not a problem inherently in the linguistic device. Kellogg's text, however, is distinct from the other textbooks discussed in this article in that it contains all of the developments in the treatment of figuration.

A. S. Hill, Barrett Wendell, and Poetic License

Changes in writing evident in textbooks published during the nineteenth century coalesced by the end of the century into a new course of writing study,

a blend of creative writing and composition. The historic marginalization of creative writing that began with the notion of poetic license in Greco-Roman treatises on prose writing was halted at the end of the nineteenth century as the poetic and creative writing were fully invited into academic course work by two founders of what is now known as composition. The use of creative genres inside composition was seen as a way to invigorate student engagement, and Hill and Wendell, as well as Fred Newton Scott at the University of Michigan, “realized that freshman composition at best offered very limited training. . . . Creative writing could free and engage students, enabling them to play with words and meanings instead of constantly attending to restrictive forms of discourse” (Adams 72). A. S. Hill and Barrett Wendell at Harvard accepted and fostered student creative writing in these nascent composition courses that emerged between 1872 and 1885. Hill and Wendell’s influence, for good or bad, on what would become composition has been well discussed, but their influence was due to the fact that they were more than innovators of a single course. They actively engaged in public relations on writing matters, publishing and giving speeches to the general public, as well as teaching a whole wave of next-generation composition and creative writing instructors. What is interesting is that these two influential early compositionists were both active professional and creative writers outside the university: Hill, hired in 1872, had been a journalist. Hill’s successor, Wendell, was even more of a self-defined creative writer, a gothic novelist. The hiring of Hill as a writer working outside of academia by Harvard president Charles W. Eliot in 1872 was purposeful (Brereton 29; Myers 42). The hiring of Hill and then Wendell was followed by a spate of other nineteenth-century employment decisions that valued published writers over scholars, including William Dean Howells, Robert Browning, and Charles Copeland (Myers 22; Russell 109). Although it has been argued that the first composition courses at Harvard were synonymous with the first creative writing courses (Adams; Myers), the significance of the fact that the forerunners in composition were creative writers has been overlooked in the field. The poet—as well as the poetic—was admitted into the university. Early composition studies indeed benefited from creative writers and relied on the increased student engagement provided by the inclusion of creative writing, as well as the way in which creative writing allowed composition courses to partially justify themselves as training students for future writing outside the university.

The nature of a college education changed drastically in the nineteenth century from a training ground for upper-class males headed for the clergy to

increasingly more diversity in both student demographics and future professions (Berlin; Connors; Russell). Accordingly, writing instruction also changed, with less emphasis on the belletristic or the gentlemanly teaching of taste based on Blair and more emphasis on teaching students writing proficiency (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 223). Student preparation mirrored changes in the job market, which was calling for more writing from its employees. Careers in writing, both journalism and creative writing, were one avenue of job prospects for college graduates, constituting a broadening of professional prospects from the previous focus on developing students into ministers. Creative writing may have gained its acceptance into academia because of its practicality as professional training (Adams 71). Creative writing quickly bloomed inside universities, reflecting its viability in the non-academic world. Between 1885 and 1905, magazines in the United States saw an increase in circulation from 600,000 to 5.5 million, many of which began to publish short fiction (Adams 71). By 1900, 200,000 Americans identified themselves as professional writers (Adams 71–72). Creative writing subsequently gathered force throughout the first part of the twentieth century. Prior to World War I, 10–15 percent of American colleges offered one creative writing course, but by 1930, this number increased to 45 percent (Adams 74–95). By 1938, the popularity of creative writing as a career is evident in books such as George Williams's *Readings for Creative Writers*, which begins by saying: “The world is full of people trying to write. That fact is encouraging rather than depressing” (xi). Williams offers advice on how to become a better writer outside of academia, including a chapter, “Writing as a Career” by a professional writer, Mary Roberts Rinehart, which offers advice on practical matters such as manuscript preparation and submission and literary agents. Poetic license could no longer keep imaginative writing at bay, and creative writing became a legitimate field of study and legitimate profession.

Changes in approach to poetic licensing that had been accruing in textbooks in the nineteenth century are readily apparent in the textbook and scholarly writings of Hill and Wendell. Like the earlier authors, Hill and Wendell explicitly address their choice to abridge classical rhetorical taxonomies of figuration in “the old books,” as Hill calls them in his 1878 *Principles of Rhetoric* (88). In his 1891 *English Composition*, Wendell concurs with Hill on the uselessness of two particular devices often covered by classical rhetoric. Wendell does so by admitting his own challenges with taxonomies in a way that would make him the simpatico of any high school student suffering through rules-based instruction: “There is one called Synecdoche, for example, and another called

Metonymy, which I always confused until I discovered that there was no earthly use in keeping them separate" (245–46). Thus, Wendell perceives a problem in the taxonomies, not in figuration. Figures are linked to personal expression; Wendell's definition of style is that it is "the expression of thought or emotion in written words" and can be divided into three parts: the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic (4–8). Wendell emphasizes "good use" rather than rules. Good use involves the context, including the writer's disposition, unlike the vintage prearranged taxonomies in which figures were depicted as isolable statements. Wendell's slimmer treatment of figures, rather than a diminishment of figures as discursive force, can be instead seen as a streamlining of rules that are obstacles to composing. He praises the greater simplicity of style discussions in recent books (245). Wendell's relation to classical taxonomies of figuration reveal a definite change in perspective on style, from one that focuses on the linguistic devices to one that emphasizes the individual writer. Overall, Hill is more conventional than Wendell, essentially parroting many of the standard rules and prohibitions concerning figures that he classifies as gadgets for "force" (*Principles* 85–87).⁶ What is perhaps most noteworthy about Hill and Wendell is the way in which they perceive students as future professional writers.

In both Hill and Wendell, the idea of students as writers and the focus on the imagination that had begun to appear in nineteenth-century textbooks is ever more present. Their writings are replete with references to writing outside of classrooms and even to students as future "great writers." Hill and Wendell seemed to posit the possibility that students could use rhetorical devices to become writers, and their supportive stance does not correspond with the classical notion of figuration as mere ornament—or the depiction by Berlin and others of creative writing as elitist. According to Nan Johnson:

The difference between the models studied and the prose the student of rhetoric composed was only a matter of excellence yet to be achieved. Although nineteenth-century rhetoricians did not deny that some writers (and orators) have natural talent, they consistently downplayed the role of genius or special gifts in favor of an idealistic view of the consequences of rhetorical study: the intellectual and rhetorical achievements exemplified by the great authors can be attained by any writer who masters the principles of rhetoric, cultivates the powers of taste, and practices the techniques of composing. (225)

The whole poetic endeavor, once constrained through marginalization of its central devices, is valorized by the end of the century. Creative writing has become an end goal—a far cry from being relegated to the status of trinkets,

cosmetics, or costume. In Hill's treatment, that end goal is the professional development of students into writers. In his 1887 article published in *Scribner's Magazine*, "English in Our Colleges," Hill takes it as a given that colleges can produce great writers from their graduates and that this production of writers is one of the commonly accepted goals of teachers: "why, if the colleges do their duty, have we so few great writers in this country? Why are so few of the men who do good work with the pen college-bred?" (510) For Hill, that perennial question of whether English teachers are "doing their job" isn't just a matter of whether Johnny can write, of functional literacy, but a matter of whether Johnny becomes a "great American writer." In Wendell's hands, the goal is lofty but possible (and therefore inspirational): an ideal to which everyone is capable of striving.

Wendell demonstrates an esteem for figuration that is at once liberating from rules-based instruction, essentially the application of those elaborate taxonomies, and reflective of the new value of creative writing. While Wendell repeats many of the developments of the earlier textbooks in terms of taxonomies, he also takes appreciation of figuration to a whole new level: figurative language is elevated to the point that it is essential to written communication. The main power of language—its "secret of force"—is its connotative function, or the abject element of the poetic (*English* 244). Wendell equates figuration with all that is desirable in writing; figuration cannot and should not be constrained by notions of poetic license. It is tied to force, to the moving of emotions, which is reflected in Wendell's treatment of it under a chapter on force rather than on elegance. Wendell's elevation of figuration calls into question Connors's depiction of Wendell as "giv[ing] only a few pages to the more common figures—metaphor, simile, synecdoche—and his vastly reduced treatment became the standard" (*Composition-Rhetoric* 269). Wendell's esteem for figuration is linked with his overall view of imaginative writing. Clearly, fewer pages of treatment or an abridged taxonomy is not synonymous with a belittlement of figuration, as no other textbook author had so celebrated figuration and the poetic possibility, however lengthy their treatment. Wendell's appreciation for imaginative writing is clear from the number of times he describes composition in terms such as "an art," "creative," and "imaginative." Throughout his work, Wendell's descriptions of writing depict it as one of the noblest human endeavors, connected to truth, life purpose, and even, as in one of his commencement speeches published in his 1909 *The Mystery of Education*, the organization of the cosmos. In fact, Wendell suggests that the prime value or purpose of composition as a discipline is that it is imaginative and creative—an "act of

creative imagination,” foreshadowing twenty-first century conversations of the partnership of composition and creative writing studies (306).

In sum, changes in poetic license can be used to trace the initiation of two tracks of writing studies crucial to modern academia: composition and creative writing. Significantly, it appears that what would come to be known as composition studies required creative writing to the point that it allowed the poetic in, lessened its previous restrictions, and lowered its guard. Composition studies had to admit the poetic in order to evolve. On one level, what this admittance shows is the complicated relationship of composition and creative writing—including the ways in which composition benefits from creative writing. It also calls into question what further divisions/distinctions/barriers concerning creative writing and creative writers would be profitably abandoned by twenty-first-century composition studies—and, more importantly, how the past admittance of creative writing in composition should lead us to ask how our students could benefit from a reconfiguration of English studies. Such reconfiguration, as Tim Mayers so eloquently reminds us, helps make the field less fractured and allows English majors more opportunity in textual production. In point of fact, it could be said that composition twice shed its roots—first its rhetorical history and then its relationship with creative writing. We should wonder about the impact of its loss—both why it ended and why our awareness of the union has been buried in history.

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Notes

1. Composition and creative writing were not named as such in the nineteenth century. According to Myers, the term “creative writing” didn’t designate a field of study until the 1925 publication *Creative Youth* by Wendell’s student William Hughes Mearns: “It was not called creative writing until Mearns called it creative writing. And then it was rarely called anything else” (103). In Connors’s rendition, composition didn’t receive its disciplinary name until the late date of 1983. In this article, I adopt the term “composition-rhetoric” used by Connors as well as by Carr, Carr, and Schultz, a designation for instruction that used rhetorical theory to increasingly emphasize student textual production. In this article, “rhetoric”

refers to instruction and manuals with stronger connection to the classical tradition and with emphasis on oration. “Composition” refers to instruction of written communication that branched into discourse types other than argument or written-down speeches—for instance, personal writing, as Schultz describes in *The Young Composers*. “Creative writing” in this article refers to the explicit teaching of literary genres and the professional specialty that arose from the acceptance of that teaching.

2. As Addison has argued, rhetoricians since Quintilian have focused primarily on metaphor for good or bad, to the exclusion of devices such as the simile. Recent theorists of composition and figuration are no exception in this uneven treatment, including Seitz.

3. In *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, for instance, a simile is used to discuss the proper use of figuration: “Distributed sparingly, these figures set the style in relief, as with colors; if packed in close succession, they set the style awry” (269). Quintilian writes of proper style: “A translucent and iridescent style merely serves to emasculate the subject. . . . It is with a more virile spirit that we should pursue eloquence, who, if only her whole body be sound, will never think it her duty to polish her nails and tire her hair” (187-89).

4. This limitation of figuration’s involvement with meaning making continues. Lad Tobin, for instance, citing Janet Emig, has claimed that twentieth-century composition has perceived metaphor as mere ornament when in fact it can be the sole available means for learning new information (447). According to Tobin, metaphor only becomes ornament when we already know the subject of our writing. For a different view, see Sheehan for the way in which metaphors have been linked to meaning-making because they can change a reader’s perspective, a view of metaphor that is embodied in the term “trope,” which in ancient Greek meant “turn” (49).

5. Contrary to Kitzhaber’s presentation, several nineteenth-century textbook authors viewed figures as connected to the imagination and to pathos. Kitzhaber also suggests that rhetoricians in the nineteenth century, including Hill and Wendell, saw figures as “mechanical devices used to enhance thought.” Textbook authors at first did accept the classical rhetorical separation of figures from meaning making, but that situation changed by the time of Hill and Wendell.

6. In his article published in *Scribners*, “English in Newspapers and Novels,” Hill critiques figuration in his lament of the degradation of “pure” English in the new writing of his day. Adopting Kellogg’s terminology of images or for figures, Hill critiques “word-pictures” at the end of a list of problems including concision, slang, grammar, and clarity (376). He provides a lengthy list of examples of bad figuration from contemporary publishing—a list running the gamut of figuration: metaphor, simile, personification, and synesthesia—but does not explain why they harm discourse, unlike the other problems he identified.

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