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THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF WOMEN IN RHETORIC: RHETORICAL SEQUENCING AS A RESEARCH METHOD FOR HISTORICAL SCHOLARSHIP

Abstract. For well over a decade, a number of scholars have argued that a more thorough and representative account of the history of rhetoric can only take place after women are accurately included in the rhetorical tradition. If we are to provide a sensitive accounting of women in the rhetorical tradition, current methods of and perspectives on, historical research need to be reconsidered and adjusted in three respects. First, our mentality toward rhetoric must expand beyond civic, agonistic discourse to include alternative modes of expression used by women. Second, our efforts to discover primary evidence must intensify so that a more representative body of sources becomes available. This expanded body of evidence must include non-traditional sources that provide insight to the oral and literate practices of women. Third, historians of rhetoric must create methods of research and analysis that will provide a more sensitive accounting of primary material than current historical methods were designed to yield. This essay argues that these needs can be met by an archaeological approach to historical rhetoric. A method called “rhetorical sequencing” is offered as an heuristic to facilitate historical research on women in the rhetorical tradition.

So far as the objects of research are concerned, then, we deal with texts in a very wide range of genres, and can, I think, justify our practice in doing so. But what about the subjective? What about the scholars who study such works, the positions they take and the methods they use? And who are they? Although many of them are women, some are men. Some, both women and men, but by no means all, use feminist methods; others study the texts by more traditional means. Just as there is no specific kind of text or discourse, so there is no particular method that distinguishes those who study women and the rhetorical tradition. And this is as it should be. Here again, I think that it is essential to keep the area as wide as possible” (Christine Mason Sutherland, “Women in the History of Rhetoric: The Past and the Future,” The Changing Tradition: Women in the History of Rhetoric, pp. 11-12).

I. INTRODUCTION: “. . . I ALMOST PASSED BY THREE, VERY LITERATE ATHENIAN LADIES IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.”

This essay is intended to illustrate that the history of rhetoric, to be more inclusive and comprehensive, must expand its range of evidence from extant literary sources to archaeological artifacts. In substance,
we need to expand our history of rhetoric by including sources that are not only visible but tangible. This perspective is critical with respect to recovering the place of women in the history of rhetoric, for much of our information about women is available in non-traditional sources. A recent anecdote illustrates the importance of this point. In the Summer of 2001 I was doing research on Hellenic rhetoric in the British Museum. As I entered Room 69 of the Greek and Roman Antiquities section, I noticed some interesting pottery in cases 6 and 7. Like most of the six million visitors who annually stroll by these cases, I almost passed by three, very literate Athenian ladies in the British Museum. Case 6 contains a beautiful *hydria* (water-jug) from Athens depicting an Athenian lady of apparent distinction sitting and reading from a scroll. The same case also holds a small terra cotta statue of a well-born lady sitting and reading. Case 7 contains yet another *hydria* jug with another red-figure lady also sitting and reading from a scroll. It is obvious that the artists of these fifth-century B.C. works deemed these subjects important enough to be focal points of their work. It is also clear that while the literate ability of these ladies was praiseworthy, they were not depicted as aberrations but rather as a mark of pride.

If we but pause to consider these three small, apparently insignificant artifacts we must recognize that these distinguished ladies conflict and confuse our present characterization of women and rhetoric in classical Athens. These artifacts fly in the face of our belief that Athenian women were essentially illiterate. If nothing else, these isolated pieces of evidence only add support to the growing belief held by many historians of rhetoric that the long-standing characterizations of women in the rhetorical tradition, particularly in the classical tradition, are inaccurate generalizations (Bizzell and Herzberg 27). These small bits of archaeological evidence found in the British Museum unmistakably counter our stereotypes of ancient women and they should be taken as a prompt that signals us that not only is our history of rhetoric constrained when its sources are only literary but that our mentality toward the history of rhetoric itself is in need of revision. By re-visioning the place of women in the history of rhetoric I mean not only an awareness of their "place" but also an awareness of our limited methods of research. This essay is intended to illustrate that if we are to expand the present chronicling of the history of rhetoric to include women we must, and can only legitimately, do so by also adjusting our perspective on what rhetoric is, our sources of evidence and our methods of retrieval and analysis. If not, like the pottery in the cases of the British Museum, we may literally walk by—and walk away from—invaluable primary sources of evidence.
II. THE STRATA OF OUR RESEARCH ON WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF RHETORIC

The present state of scholarship on women in the history of rhetoric is best understood metaphorically as archaeological strata. The first level of excavation, and perhaps the most difficult, has already been accomplished: the identification of the problem. At this level, we noted that several individual scholars wrote essays identifying the "problem" that existed in the history of rhetoric: women were not represented accurately nor representatively. This problem nurtured a movement that evolved into a stabilized community of scholars concerned with women in the history of rhetoric. I was present at some of these initial meetings and found immediately that the attitude in all respects was inclusive, even to the extent of inviting such male speakers as Edward P. J. Corbett. Out of this effort very important research emerged. Some scholarship was in the form of collected essays (e.g. Reclaiming Rhetorica) other in book-length projects such as Cheryl Glenn's Rhetoric Retold. I have commented on several of these works over the years and my specific remarks are listed under my reviews in the "Works Cited." What is important here is to note that these pioneering studies did several important things. Extant sources were copiously re-examined to highlight what work on and by women had been done. This early work also recognized that limiting rhetoric to agonistic, civic discourse did not capture what many women did with language. This nascent work also did not make restrictions on either literate or oral rhetoric but pursued both forms of expression. Finally, this scholarship not only stressed theory but also rejuvenated long-established (but dormant) methods of rhetorical criticism. In brief, this stratum of research established that a problem existed, re-viewed extant scholarship, embraced oral and literate rhetoric, and activated established methods of rhetorical theory and criticism. Yet, this nascent level of scholarship also exposed a need: our established scholarship and our conventional methods of research were limited. To expand our knowledge of the history of rhetoric, new sources of evidence and new methods of research must be found and created. Hence, the need to excavate the next stratum of research: the development of new methods, and a new mentality, toward research.

III. THE RESEARCH METHODS OF LARA CROFT AND INDIANA JONES: TWO UNLIKELY MODELS FOR HISTORIANS OF RHETORIC

Movie-goers of the previous generation have been thrilled by the "Indiana Jones" films. More recent patrons of the cinema have witnessed the exploits of the female version of that famous artifact hunter, "Tomb Raider" Lara Croft. Part of the fascination with these popular heroes is the adventure associated with their unconventional (and unrestricted) swashbuckling method of "research." Both Indiana Jones and Lara Croft are archaeologists, but
their methods are far removed from the Oxford Don model we have been encouraged to emulate as graduate students and (to use a very British expression) to "carry on" as professors. Yet, the rough-edged methods and passion that motivate both Jones and Croft are in much greater need in our field than the arm-chair research that stereotypes the scholarship of Victorian academicians. Why should we—even for a moment—take seriously these Hollywood fabrications? Because Indiana Jones and Lara Croft cut through the pedantic refinery, exhibiting two traits essential to research: a passion for discovering primary sources and the cavalier, but resourceful, methods by which they go about solving their research "problems."

For the most part, historians of rhetoric are neither field researchers like Indiana Jones and Lara Croft nor ethnographers like many of our colleagues in composition studies. Current research in composition studies has adopted principles of ethnography to engage in fieldwork. The results have provided new and valuable insights that have both given us a more sensitive understanding of composing processes as well as broadened the field of composition studies beyond the classroom. The need for new research methods in the history of rhetoric has been well articulated by scholars such as Patricia Bizzell. In her recent and thorough review of feminist methods of research in the history of rhetoric, Bizzell observes that "in order to get at the activities of these new rhetors, researchers have had to adopt radically new methods as well, methods which violate some of the most cherished conventions of academic research" (16). Specifically, what methods are available to help us understand what has taken place not before our eyes but long after the event has passed and decayed? How can we bring rhetorical events back to life and make them as vivid and meaningful as our colleagues in composition? The gains in composition studies that have been achieved by using ethnographic research methods can serve as an illustration for historians of rhetoric who can hope for similar achievements by using the archaeological model of research outlined in this essay. We do not engage in the sort of adventurous fieldwork that pushes back the frontiers of our discipline. Instead, we are far distant cousins, primarily stay-at-home textual commentators who are more akin to the new critics of the previous generation of literary scholars. Can we change our status from distant cousins to kindred brothers and sisters? Can we, in this respect, "keep up with the Joneses," let alone the Crofts? Perhaps this Indiana Jones/Croft model will become clearer—as well as the need to engage in basic fieldwork—by contrasting such methods with how we typically research the history of rhetoric.

One of our first obligations is to realize that understanding better the place of women in the history of rhetoric can only be accomplished by expanding our range of evidence beyond extant literary sources. If there are degrees of guilt for the crime of clinging to "text only" scholarship, then
historians of rhetoric must be convicted in the first degree and on all counts. No group, and this claim is put forth after thirty years of personal observation, is more tenacious at clinging to extant texts as the sole material for scholarly study than historians of rhetoric. Any reader who questions this assertion need only select (at random) any essay on historical rhetoric and check the primary sources used as references. There one will find an array of materials: speeches, histories, letters, plays, etc. Yet, what will also be apparent is that all of these diverse primary sources share one common denominator: all of the primary materials can be found on library shelves and most in faculty offices.

The limited range of our primary sources has limited our sources for evidence on women in the history of rhetoric. Moreover, we have also been dependent on earlier generations for making our present resources available. In Tennessee Williams’ Pulitzer Prize-winning play, A Streetcar Named Desire, the character Blanche DuBois utters her famous line, “Whoever you are—I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.” We too are entirely dependent on the “kind” scholarship of preceding generations (“whoever” they are!) for the material we study. We rarely “discover” new evidence. Rather, and like the practitioners of New Criticism of the previous generation, we have a distinct fondness for squeezing out clever new meanings of texts that have been examined for centuries and put before us by “the kindness of strangers.” In this respect, we are this generation’s New Critics, for we not only limit ourselves to printed texts but, as with the previous generation, even laud the rigor of our “close readings” as sufficient for the domain of inquiry.

IV. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD WORK IN RHETORIC: NEW CONSTRAINTS FOR EXCAVATING WOMEN

Roughly one hundred years ago, archaeology moved from being a fashionable way that the rich could steal ancient statuary and priceless treasures to a serious academic study of the past. That is, about one hundred years ago, archaeologists began to complement the study of ancient texts with physical evidence. If this marking of time is accepted for the sake of argument, then our research sophistication in rhetoric in this area—as seeing non-textual artifacts as historical evidence—lags behind by about a century. As did our colleagues in classical studies, we also need to dilate the range of primary sources to include non-literary evidence.

In 1974, while I was studying at the summer program of The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, the potential for studying archaeological and epigraphical sources for historical rhetoric was dramatically—but casually—brought home to me by my late professor, Fordyce Mitchell. On our trip to Boeotia, we stopped at a small sanctuary about 30 miles outside of Athens called the Amphiareion of Oropos. Knowing my interest in rhetoric,
Mitch (as he liked to be called) pointed out a marble inscription that listed victors at rhetorical and literary contests that were regularly held at this small site. That moment was an epiphany! At once the possibility of new sources for rhetoric was made literally visible to me. Over the years I returned to Greece and that small sanctuary, eventually publishing the study in 1985. In a similar vein, I was recently encouraged when Christopher Johnstone, a professor in the Speech Communication Department at The Pennsylvania State University, did a study of acoustics in Athens’ general assembly, the Pnyx (Theory, Text, Context: Studies in Greek Rhetoric and Oratory). Johnstone, along with student assistants, traveled to Greece and did on-site testing of speaking conditions. His research provides many valuable observations about the physical conditions and acoustical constraints of Greek oratory (see my review in Rhetoric Review, Fall 1997). I am sorry to report that no such work in the history of rhetoric stands as a complementary example. This essay is a further effort to show the availability of primary evidence that awaits further study and the methods to use to make the most sensitive analysis of this material. My hope is that this information will promote both fieldwork and the creation of new research methods needed for such studying women in our history—if you will, an archaeology of rhetoric.

Much of this essay centers on problems with presumptions, what we presume to be the case before we engage in our research. The world of academia is full of dangerous presumptions. Apocryphal or otherwise, there is a wonderful story about the way Greek was removed as a requirement from Oxford University. The reason, the story goes, is that the powers-that-be thought that there was no need to formally require Greek because the merits of studying Greek were so obvious that the requirement was unnecessary! Of course, the cost was high and the price was dear for such a presumption. For most of us, direct access to an entire body of literature is unavailable; not the least of these works is the New Testament.

One condition that students of rhetoric quickly learn is that there is no such thing as a prima facie argument in rhetoric. We might well benefit by extending this thought to say that unreflected presumptions can cause researchers to begin work in the wrong direction. There is very little that we can (or should) infer as “self evident” about the mentalities that we are studying. Rather, our task should be to re-co-create the meaning of what is uttered or written as well as the epistemology that is generating such discourse. To engage in rhetorical archaeology we must reconstruct not only the discourse and the cultural context but also the mentalities that are indigenous to the period. One of the first facts that I point out to beginning students of classical rhetoric is that most Greeks and Romans could not read silently (Stanford 2). Students are startled to learn that reading without saying the words aloud is not “natural” but an acquired skill, a talent so rare that it was noted as a
curiosity in Antiquity. My point in making such an observation is not merely to shock students, but rather to make them aware of the tacit assumptions that we make at even the most basic levels of communication. That is, even the most basic presumptions—such as reading silently—must be verified. Such presumptions have constrained our study of women in the history of rhetoric. We presume that since Athenian women, for example, were not educated in the gymnasium-style of males that they were not educated at all. Yet, we are aware that the symposium was a form of home-schooling. Would it not be possible that prominent Athenian females would be tutored at home in subjects beyond household economics? Moreover, we also presume that Athenian women represent the women of all Hellenic cities. Yet, there is epigraphical evidence suggesting that some Greek cultures had advanced co-educational programs.

My belief about the importance of being sensitive to the most basic components of our discipline in scholarly studies is in harmony with Janice M. Lauer and Andrea Lunsford’s view about the training of our doctoral students. “Very much at issue in current historical work,” Lauer and Lunsford argue, “are several deceptively simple questions: What has it meant to be a reader or a writer in, say classical Athens or Medieval London?” (107). To do this “reconstruction” well we must understand both the culture and mentalities of the participants operating in that culture. My favorite illustration of this reconstruction is Dante. There is little doubt that when Italy decided to select one of her many dialects as the national language (Italian) the choice of the Florentine dialect was due in large part to the literary genius of Dante, whose work in the vernacular helped to create Italian literature. Dante (like Homer, Virgil and Shakespeare) had supreme control over his language, to the extent that he could express whatever he wished in the most poignant way possible. Yet, I suspect that if you asked Dante how he composed these literary masterpieces he would not be aware of his own epistemic rhetorical process. We may say in exasperation, “Well, if Dante could not understand how he expressed himself what hope do we have of revealing his genius?” Here is our great challenge. If we can somehow reconstruct the rhetorical processes of luminaries such as Dante, we will unlock heuristics that could be invaluable in refining our own systems of expression, let alone capture the high art of Renaissance expression in Italy. The great merit of current composition research is that efforts have been advanced in just this direction.

For much of our research, the presumptions about mentalities and cultures was not only a starting point but also an essential understanding within the academic community. Much of the research done by earlier generations of literary scholars was directed at understanding the intellectual and social forces that stimulated artistic production. No work better illustrates the presumptions that researchers believe that they share with their readers about
their topics than Richard Altick's *The Scholar Adventurers* (see my review in *Rhetoric Review*). I will be the first to admit *The Scholar Adventurers*, written in 1950, is directed toward research in English literature and nowhere (to my knowledge) discusses rhetoric. Further, this work has a male-dominated perspective and, for that reason alone, may appear to be an ironic illustration for an essay that argues for the necessity to develop new research methods for studying women in the history of rhetoric! What, then, makes this apparently out-dated and irrelevant work so valuable to rhetorical research a half-century later? The answer, as alluded to earlier, comes from its indirect messages about the desire, the tenaciousness, the creativity, and the passion for historical research on discourse. Altick's chronicling of the research practices of literary scholars provides a model for our current projects in rhetoric. The chapter "Hunting for Manuscripts," for example, is a lively discussion of anecdotal (and tireless) efforts to bring to light new primary sources. In fact, the final chapter, "Discoveries," is a sample of the gains that have resulted from such archival labor. Not the least of these retrievals is last century's restoration of *The Book of Margery Kempe*, a work that Cheryl Glenn has shown to be of immense importance in relocating the place of women in the history of rhetoric (*Rhetoric Retold*). In parallel, readers will find the chapters "The Destructive Elements" and "Shades of Mrs. Grundy" fascinating accounts of efforts at textual restoration, criticism, and the general tracking of the descent of manuscripts. The comparison between scholars of Altick's generation in literary studies and (for example) *Reclaiming Rhetorica* (1995), the recent efforts of historians of rhetoric to re-position women into the rhetorical tradition, is nothing less than amazing. Efforts, such as those enacted by Altick to enrich our knowledge by extending research beyond the text are best understood by us as sites for the archaeology of women in rhetoric.

These and other chapters illustrate exciting and tenacious efforts to better understand the social, historical, cultural, and psychological forces that shaped not only literature but also the authors who composed such enduring pieces of writing. The efforts of our past generations of literary scholars are unquestionably different, and often nascent, when compared to current scholarly practices in historical rhetoric. What I believe has not diminished, however, is the obvious exhilaration and passion of knowing about discourse, the genuine sincerity to contribute to the repository of disciplinary knowledge. Especially noteworthy is the remarkable openness of so-called "traditional" scholars to acquire and experiment with new research methods and "new" technologies—such as microfilm and photo-duplication—for the sake of a more thorough understanding of their subjects and the assimilation of data.

To better understand the need for field work in historical rhetoric, it is important to identify the constraints facing such research. Most of us consider collecting data as walking over to the library or rolling the office chair
over a few feet to the rhetoric shelf. While “field work” may literally involve an archaeological site, it can also be any locale where primary evidence can be gathered and studied. In this sense, the holdings of a monastery in Italy, or the private collection of the British royal family, would constitute sites for field work. Field work in historical rhetoric can offer a whole new dimension and, with it, a range of constraints that do not accompany conventional armchair scholarship. One of the characteristics of Greek rhetoric that generally is consistent with Hellenic culture was the proclivity to record what appears to be everything that was considered important. Many of these inscriptions appear on such durable material as stone, which itself is an index of how long ancient Greeks desired to have their records maintained. In the last one hundred years, archaeologists have unearthed such writings. There is, however, a “trickle down” effect in the chain of research that ultimately limits the availability of primary material. After these inscriptions are catalogued, a few may be studied by epigraphists, whose expertise centers on examining the physical features of inscriptions but not their contents or rhetorical importance. Few epigraphists are interested in rhetoric, which means that the task remains for us to provide insights into literary habits, preferences and composing techniques. These stone inscriptions are heavy, bulky and lack the popular visual appeal of statuary and pottery. These inscriptions often remain on site, ignored by classical rhetoricians who have, for whatever reasons, chosen not to visit them. Yet, these inscriptions hold some of our potentially most valuable evidence about our discipline’s history (Millar 98-9). In short, on-site field work brings with it a whole other set of research methods that we do not even consider while we are sitting in our offices or browsing the stacks of the library.

The discovery and acquisition of this primary material places us in an entirely new domain of research, requiring different methods. Each project in the history of rhetoric will dictate its own agenda of sensitive field methods. For the sake of illustration, here are some methods that come to bear with field work in classical rhetoric. First, learning classical Greek well enough to read works is critical, but learning to speak modern Greek well enough to be functional is valuable, especially in remote, non-Athenian sites. Second, physical stamina is essential since most of the work is done during the heat of the summer and at rural locations. These conditions mean enduring the hot Greek sun and walking a minimum of 9-10 miles a day, which will take its toll over a long period. Third, it is essential to learn the bureaucratic process of the Greek Ministry of Science and Culture, the Greek Archaeological Service, and the practices of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Greece is a country of protocol and procedures; securing proper permission could be terminated or delayed by any one official who is offended or does not take your project seriously. Becoming a Fellow of the American
School of Classical Studies at Athens is a great aid in working through the necessary steps for doing field research. Fourth, learning how to identify literary sites that are likely sources of evidence for rhetoric and composition is critical when time and finances are limited. My personal success rate, by an albeit informal tally, is about a 1:20 ratio. Fifth, Greek rhetoric and composition and relevant history must be known by heart, since the research “library” often will be limited to as many reference books as can be carried in a backpack. Sixth, one must be prepared to meet hardships; my experiences have included overly protective sheepdogs, swarms of bees, and the 1974 Greek revolution when my classmates and I were stranded on an island in the Cyclades. Seventh, learning how to take field notes, to use a video camera at site locations, to take photographs of inscriptions, and especially to draw on graph paper are all skills that enhance the assimilation of evidence.

The seven items on this “laundry list” are neither inclusive nor typical methods but they are—I firmly believe—inextricably associated with on-site research for Greek rhetoric. These items are offered to illustrate that training for field work in historical rhetoric requires additional, different procedures than we now offer students. Without attending to these necessities, preferences and incidental concerns, the collection of material for analysis cannot take place. Attention to these items will enable one to gather information at archaeological sites and museums allowing new primary evidence to be studied.

V. RHETORICAL SEQUENCING: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL MOTIF

The constraints of fieldwork may be new to historians of rhetoric, as stated earlier, because we are accustomed to the excavation of primary material being done by others and not directly at our archaeological sites. Our problems do not end once we have collected this primary material from the field. Our other research task is to re-contextualize this material so that we can determine and reconstruct its intended and received meaning at the time of expression. Engaging in reconstruction is the second phase of our archaeological motif. That is, after digging and excavating (so to speak) our primary material, we need to present it in such a manner that makes sense. An illustration should illuminate the problem. Back in 1977, I was working at the Epigraphical Museum in Athens. Near to me was a very old, distinguished epigraphist who, for the purposes of this illustration, will remain nameless. He was in the process of recording an ancient inscription on what I remember being a marble statue base. My professor, Fordyce Mitchell was with me and we struck up a conversation with this old scholar. During our discussion, I asked him what he thought his inscription meant, what historical significance it might have. With an air of surprise, he looked up at me from his work and said matter-of-factly, “Oh, that is not my job! My job is to record
what is written, not what it means historically.” At the time I thought that it was odd for a scholar to be content merely to be descriptive. I now realize twenty plus years later, that the old scholar was intent on recording but not making meaning. That task, he believed, was for others. We are those “others,” for our job is to research meaning in discourse and that is the essence of rhetorical archaeology, the effort to reconstruct intent and meaning in the theory and practice of historical rhetoric.

Here is a final archaeological analogy that should provide a perspective on the social imperative of our research methods. Imagine that we were digging in Greece and discovered a statue of Praxiteles. Should we excavate this priceless artifact only to sell it illegally to the highest black-market bidder where it would remain virtually unseen in some unscrupulous collector’s private horde? Should it be boxed, catalogued and (in a sense be reburied) by remaining in the backrooms of a museum’s storage area, never to be seen again? If you recall my introductory remarks about Indiana Jones, you will recall that that is exactly how the film Raiders of the Lost Ark ended, with the Ark of the Covenant boxed and stored in a security vault in Washington, D.C. Should we study this work of art more in line with my initial example of the British Museum; that is, present our research in such a manner that we “display” our work for all to see and display it in a way that best explains its value and significance to the public? Anyone who did not select the last option has missed entirely the point of this essay.

Our work in historical rhetoric is a parallel to this archaeological motif. Imagine that we have gone to Greece and discovered a lost work on rhetoric by Aspasia, or perhaps a sermon by St. Augustine, or a treatise by Erasmus. How do we “display” our historical treasure when it is not one of the plastic arts but rather one of the verbal arts? There is a very simple research heuristic proposed here which will provide a structure for archaeologically reconstructing our verbal artifact, what I have termed “rhetorical sequencing.” It involves four layers that must be done in sequence but, after reconstruction, can then be analyzed for their dynamic interaction: discovery, reconstruction, analysis, and display. In the first layer, discovery, we must realize the social and cultural conditions by identifying the political structure, the social patterns, and cultural hierarchies of values. All of these will help us understand the mentalities in operation. For the second layer, reconstruction, we must model or recreate what Lloyd Bitzer calls the “rhetorical situation” or what James Kinneavy terms “kairos.” That is, we must reconstruct the conditions that induce and explain why rhetoric and composition were brought into existence. By isolating the exigencies, audience and constraints (in Bitzer’s terms), we will be able to reconstruct the context within the social dynamics of the culture. The third layer, analysis, requires that we examine the actual discourse. There are several rhetorical theories that provide schemes
for analysis, but the most appropriate one will have to be determined by how sensitive it is to the context. For example, in an agonistic situation, theoretical explanations of argument offered by Aristotle or by Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca may offer the most sensitive heuristics for analysis. In other situations, such as in Christian discourse, an Augustinian perspective of education and charity might be the most appropriate approach. Issues that focus on cooperative discourse may be best understood through Kenneth Burke's theories. Capturing the expression of women—as will be discussed below—may require approaches recently advocated by such historians of rhetoric as Cheryl Glenn. The point is that the archaeological motif allows historians of rhetoric to reconstruct the meaning of discourse by reconstructing the social and cultural context within which thoughts and sentiments are expressed. Such a reconstruction will reveal the interaction between the dynamics of mentality, expression and social conditions. At the fourth layer, display, results are presented in a manner by which we "exhibit" our artifact in a reconstructed context that will help readers grasp the utterance at the moment of kairos, much as we do an exhibit at a museum.

As mentioned above, Cheryl Glenn illustrates this method of rhetorical sequencing well in her book, *Rhetoric Retold* (see my review in the December 1999 *CCC*). Glenn parses *Rhetoric Retold* into the three conventional "schemes of periodization" of the history of rhetoric: Classical, Medieval, and Renaissance (ix). In each of these major historical periods Glenn sequences her analysis in four layers. First, she provides an overview of the major forces shaping the period and culture. This step is absolutely essential, for Glenn helps the reader to know the events of the period. Knowing what happened helps to set up her discussion of why and how these events took place. Second, Glenn isolates rhetorical contexts in each of the respective historical periods, often using this topic as a way of acquainting the reader with social norms, cultural values and prevailing temperaments. That is, many events that shaped history are often problems of discourse that can be solved by rhetoric. These are our history's moments of kairos or rhetorical situations. They are questions of value or preferences in conflict. The place of women in Athenian and Roman education, the role of women in the Church, and the literary limitations of women in the Renaissance are all rhetorical situations which provide the opportunity for discourse to affect thought and action. Third, Glenn continues the layering by introducing a woman (or women) of the period who engages in rhetoric. That is, a particular woman (or women) provides some response to a problematic situation that constitutes a major social or cultural issue. Typically, and as mentioned above, this woman's rhetorical practices will be different from the prevailing rhetorical practices of the period, often because the activities of the period were performed by males and later studied by historians who concentrated on male-
dominated events. Moreover, as Glenn illustrates, the discourse practices of this woman will often be characterized as unconventional by contemporaries and viewed by historians as such an aberration that both subject and topic are dismissed from serious study. The real credit of Rhetoric Retold is in how Glenn reconstructs such presumptions—both on the part of contemporaries and later historians—so that a “space” is made to consider the discourse practices of this woman in a way that is accurate, thorough and representative. At the fourth layer, display, Glenn explicates a particular woman’s communication process—whether that be in theory or in oral or literate practice. Glenn then shows how such discourse is rhetorical, both for its time and by current standards. In each of the three periods, Glenn seeks to establish a paradigm which makes it apparent that the rhetoric of the period under examination must be reconstructed to include women. This inclusion, in turn, means that the characterization of rhetoric must be re-composed to provide an accounting of the practices illustrated by women.

VI. CONCLUSION: THE BENEFITS OF RHETORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Reconstructing how meaning is made and shared through discourse is the primary task of the historian of rhetoric. Yet, our established methods will not meet the needs we face in making a sensitive accounting of women in the history of rhetoric. Far from chronicling an event or weaving a tale, this reconstruction is an “argument” that offers evidence to the reader as a way of validating an interpretation. Two important phases in the process are treated here: the first phase is the need for field work akin to, and in collaboration with, archaeological research methods; the second phase is the reconstruction of the artifact by employing the heuristics of rhetorical sequencing. These two phases will enable us to add to and amend the rhetorical tradition by serving as both normative and regulatory methods for adjudicating the validity of our historiography. In the process, our historiography will continually prompt inclusive, representative and thorough accounts that reconstruct the dynamic and complex ways that we have sought to express our thoughts and sentiments across time and within cultures. We enhance our research skills and expertise by limiting unwarranted presumptions and grounding observations within the context from which the discourse emanated. Rhetorical sequencing consists of four interactive strata of analysis: discovering the social, political and cultural conditions; reconstructing the rhetorical situation or kairos that induces discourse; analyzing the actual discourse; and finally, displaying of this work in a manner that reconstructs the dynamic interaction of these layers. Reconstructing this event will then help in choosing the most sensitive heuristics to analyze discourse or theory and, consequently, explicate the event for public display. If I may close with an organic analogy, archaeology and rhetoric may have seemed to be far apart
in the groves of academia, but their cross-fertilization enriches both disciplines and offers fruits for analysis that yield a bountiful harvest. To reap such a harvest we must think of ourselves not so much as dutiful farmers tilling established soil, but rather as bold adventurers who push back the frontiers . . . much like our will-of-the-wisp colleagues, Indiana Jones and Lara Croft. If we do not adopt a more non-traditional approach we may well pass by our three very literate Athenian ladies, as do the millions of others who tour the British Museum annually and, in so doing, risk that our terra cotta ladies remain unheard in the history of rhetoric.

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Works Cited

Some comments about the works of Richard Altick, Cheryl Glenn, and Christopher Johnstone are taken from earlier reviews. References to my original remarks are listed below and noted in the text of this essay.