English 540 Spring 2009: Rhetoric in Nineteenth-Century US Culture
Meetings: Tuesdays 2-3:15 in HUM 226; Thursdays on line.
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Course Objectives
Practical
- Assemble a bibliography of primary materials for future use in research and teaching
- Practice conjoint reasoning orally in class and in writing on line
- Use a particular text and rhetor to measure generalized cultural phenomena
- Develop a research question, plan its pursuit, and begin its execution

Conceptual
- Examine the cultural, philosophical, practical, technological, and social imperatives that shaped the “classical tradition” in the nineteenth century
- Study nineteenth-century theoretical principles (e.g., perspicuity, taste) and their dissemination via educational publications
- Study nineteenth-century topoi for rhetorical action (e.g., abolition, gender, race, temperance, voting rights, women’s rights) as sites of invention, agency, and conflict
- Track nineteenth-century speaking, writing, and teaching traditions via contemporary scholarship that challenges dominant narratives and expands the database

Course Requirements
20 points: oral presentations on adopted rhetors and text books or conduct books.
20 points: take-home exam
20 points: research proposal (includes well-developed question & annotated bibliography)
20 points: writing project
20 points: collaborative assignment-making
Attendance: mandatory, including weekly online participation
Books Required

Books Recommended

Reading Schedule
Note: We’ll take up Johnson’s work on the New Rhetoric legacy (*Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric in North America*) and Royster’s work on literacy paradigms (*Traces of a Stream*) piece by piece across the semester. I’ll be supplementing the schedule below with articles in PDF format.

Week 1: Introduction
   Legacy of Republican Motherhood and True Womanhood
   Contemporary populist rhetoric by Palin, Clinton, Obama, and Obama

Weeks 2 – 6: Antebellum topoi and podium rhetoric
   Bacon; Logan; Kohrs Campbell; Johnson *Nineteenth-Century* selections; Royster, selections.

Weeks 7 – 11: Post-war scenes of education and the oral-to-literacy shift
   Johnson, *Gender and Rhetorical Space,* Enoch; Gold; Johnson *Nineteenth-Century* selections; Royster, selections.

Production Schedule
Across the semester: Collectively assembling lists of key terms and topoi; textbooks and conduct books; rhetors. This assembly and its process will constitute material for the exam and for your oral presentations on your adopted rhetors and books.
Across the semester: collaboratively constructed writing assignments grounded in principles of nineteenth-century rhetorical theory.
Weeks 12 – 15: Research Proposals; Writing Projects; Exam; Oral Presentations