Modern Rhetoric

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The three trends in rhetoric that characterized the modern period are epistemological, belletristic, and elocutionist. Epistemology is the study of the origin, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge. Epistemological thinkers, such as Bacon, sought to change classical approaches in terms of modern developments in psychology. They attempted to understand rhetoric in relation to the psychological process and contributed to the development of a rhetoric premised on human nature. The Epistemological Tradition. Modern Rhetoric is a textbook that covers all of these items and more. It is sometimes dry and pedantic but overall it is very informative and effective. The dryness comes from the book being a textbook intended for a College Course. The book was published back in 1958 since I have the second edition. This makes for an interesting read since some of the things you read about just don’t occur anymore. For instance, the book discusses the methods used in advertising by talking about what brand of cigarettes to buy. Classical And Modern Rhetoric An interpretive option for historicists of classical rhetoric and composition lies waiting: Platonic rhetoric. Two primary issues need to be reconceptualized and integrated into contemporary rhetoric and composition studies in order for this option to work: (1) what Plato says about rhetoric and writing in dialogues such as Phaedrus, Gorgias, and Protagoras and in Letter VII and (2) as significantly, the nature of Plato’s writing as writing.