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Sounding Out the *Progymnasmata*

This article positions the progymnasmata*, an ancient sequence of rhetorical exercises, as a rich resource for contemporary scholarship on rhetoric and sound. Drawing on work at the intersection of rhetoric and sound studies as well as scholarship that repurposes ancient rhetorical concepts to study digital media, I argue that refiguring the* progymnasmata *can significantly expand rhetorical studies of digital sound. I ground my argument in podcasts, a popular sonic medium that has garnered attention in rhetoric and writing scholarship, ending with a series of six exercises designed to help students learn to make podcasts.*

Few aspects of rhetorical education have survived longer than the *progymnasmata*, a "series of set exercises of increasing difficulty" meant to prepare students for the writing and speaking they would do in their public and professional lives (Kennedy ix).[1] The sequence took shape as early as the fourth century BCE and, despite periods of relative obscurity, remained a pedagogical staple well into the English Renaissance (Kennedy xi; Woods, "Boys"; Enterline 20). In this article, I argue that the exercises are particularly resonant with emerging sonic media as well as recent scholarship on sound. I propose a reworked *progymnasmata* designed to help students and scholars conceptualize and create with sound.

This project is part of an ongoing progymnasmatic revival. While the exercises' popularity waned in recent centuries, David Fleming points to a recent resurgence of interest that began in the late twentieth century and has continued into the twenty-first ("Quintilian" 132). Fleming advocates for "the very idea behind this cycle of exercises, the attempt to make rhetoric . . . a complete and developmentally attuned curriculum in written and spoken discourse" ("The Very Idea" 114), arguing that the *progymnasmata* should be tied to a broad "civic humanist" mission as part of a "comprehensive language-arts curriculum" à la Quintilian ("Quintilian" 125).

Fleming notes some challenges involved in resituating the *progymnasmata* within contemporary curricula: "The very stability of the progymnasmatic tradition . . . suggests that it was a highly conservative pedagogy in a culture given to educational inertia" ("Quintilian" 132-33). His concerns and hopes resonate with those of Kathleen E. Welch, who claims that we "need the tremendous knowledge base of the Greek and Roman classics . . . [b]ut we do not need the racism and sexism" with which that rhetorical tradition is entangled (196). However, in addition to Fleming's "Quintilianistic" framework, the *progymnasmata* have recently been reimagined as exercises in "translingual style," incorporated into the textbook *Ancient Rhetorics for*

Contemporary Students, and used to explore the role of nonhuman animals in the history of rhetoric (Ray; Crowley and Hawhee; Hawhee). That is, the *progymnasmata* have been integrated into frameworks that both work against the chauvinistic systems that concern Welch and are a far cry from the inert, skills-driven applications Fleming sees as the bleakest possibilities for a reanimated *progymnasmata*.

Given the compelling cases already made for *progymnasmata* redux, I won't spend much time defending their general relevance (Fleming, "The Very Idea"; Woods, "Weeping"). Rather, I'll stick to emphasizing the sequence's particular promise for pedagogy and scholarship around sound—an area that, like the *progymnasmata*, has been on rhetoric's radar for a long time, but has been reenergized by recent disciplinary developments. While rhetoricians interested in sound have focused on a wide range of sonic phenomena, I ground my sonic *progymnasmata* in podcasts, a roughly fifteen-year-old medium that has attracted pedagogical interest from rhetoricians and become an increasingly popular way of producing and distributing rhetoric scholarship (Bowie; French and Bloom; Tremel and Jesson). Circulated as digital audio files, podcasts are typically free, episodic, and available for listeners to download and stream online. Many are hosted and aggregated by digital services like Stitcher Radio and Podbean. Podcasts grounded in rhetoric include *This Rhetorical Life, Mere Rhetoric* (Hedengren), *Rhetorical Questions* (Amsden), *Plugs Play Pedagogy* (Stedman), *Red Rhetor* (Faris), *Zeugma*, and *Rhetoricity* (Detweiler). Rhetoricians are also involved in the podcasts *Lean Back* and *Not Your Mama's Gamer*, and journals like *Kairos* and *College Composition and Communication* have launched podcasts of their own (*KairosCast; CCC Podcasts*).

Why the *Progymnasmata* and Sound?

The interdisciplinary field of sound studies has emerged in tandem with a wave of sonically inclined rhetoric scholarship (Ball and Hawk; Davis; Gunn et al.; Stone and Ceraso). Scholars have positioned Kenneth Burke's music reviews as forerunners to current rhetorical work on sound (Overall), considered how "sonic rhetoric" can accentuate the urgency of climate change (Comstock and Hocks), and explored sound's pedagogical possibilities (Ceraso; Hocks and Comstock).

While such work draws on cutting-edge scholarship and is itself remarkably inventive, sound is not a new area of interest for the field. Given rhetoric's roots in the crafting and delivery of speeches, it's perhaps more challenging to find a moment when rhetoricians *weren't* interested in the aurality of language and other persuasive media. As James E. Porter argues, "through most of the history of rhetoric, delivery referred to the oral/aural and bodily aspects of an oral speech or performance" (207). Moreover, Porter demonstrates how internet-based communication invites us to refresh and rethink longstanding rhetorical concepts. Similarly, the media and technologies that are the focus of much recent work on rhetoric and sound—some distinctly digital (such as podcasts and audio-editing software), some not (for example, music and analog sound art)— offer new ways of thinking and teaching about sound's rhetorical resonances. But that doesn't mean setting aside the history of rhetoric. Rather, using established rhetorical concepts and structures as sounding boards allows rhetoricians to make unique contributions to current work on sound. To paraphrase Fleming and Welch, it's a matter of articulating the contemporary relevance of rhetoric without allowing rhetoric's vibrant traditions to become static traditionalism.

Some rhetoricians interested in digital media have walked this line by rethinking rhetoric's five canons (Brooke; Porter). For example, Damien Smith Pfister advocates a "refiguration" of the canons that forwards their "productive elements . . . while making accommodations to account for networked media" (188). My subsequent refiguration of the *progymnasmata* is influenced by such work. However, I argue that refiguring the *progymnasmata* offers work on sound and rhetoric something that refiguring other longstanding components of rhetoric does not. Before I lay out a sequence of sonic exercises, then, let me offer a few notes on the specific possibilities of the *progymnasmata* as a framework for linking rhetoric to sound.

As Porter's comments on "oral speech" suggest, the types of sonic work and exercises I am dealing with here are more indebted to ancient models and genres than many other contemporary media. This debt is also suggested by one of Pfister's lines of argument about the canons. As he sees it, the canons "dynamically interact," but

> can be disentangled for analytical purposes. This analytic disentanglement usually implies a particular linear sequence that a rhetor moves through: begin with a creative spark, organize arguments so that others can follow them, stylize in an attention-sustaining fashion, memorize the speech, and deliver it orally. This sequence is quite sensible for rhetoric in the speech tradition, for if oral communication is the endpoint of rhetorical production, then the creative process can be backmapped within the norms of orality. (189)

On one hand, aspects of Pfister's "linear sequence" remain applicable to word-heavy sonic media like podcasts which are often distributed as prerecorded "oral communication" stylized and organized to help listeners follow along and pay attention. Certain "norms of orality" are still at work in contemporary sonic media. On the other hand, even the most traditionally discursive of these media are inflected by the networked considerations that inform Pfister's project. Consider Michele Hilmes's description of radio's transformation into a "screen medium": While radio was once a distinctly sonic medium, "online materials can provide a *new visual dimension* to audio material, from photographs to videos to charts and graphs" (49; 50). Intra- and intermedia invention has become even more pronounced with podcasts, which often have robust web presences. As radio producer Jonathan Kern noted in 2008, even though podcasts often draw inspiration from radio's paradigms and practices, "the podcasting landscape is varied, vast, and growing; it may be unrecognizable in a decade" (324). All things considered, rhetoricians engaging sonic media should heed Pfister's suggestion for the canon of arrangement: "[P]ay more attention to the interaction between different modes of communication and take seriously the possibilities of rearrangement" (191).

In short, while sound resonates with aspects of extant rhetorical traditions, the rhetorical study of sound also opens plenty of opportunities to reshape commonplace concepts and invent new ones. A reworked *progymnasmata* offers a way to engage this tension: Rhetoricians can put concepts involved in the sequence (for example, *enargeia* and *ethopoeia*, which I elaborate on below) in conversation with emerging scholarship. These concepts function differently in contemporary media ecologies, but can nevertheless enrich rhetorical approaches to sound. Moreover, the *progymnasmata*—structured but flexible—offers a more nuanced version of the "linear sequence" described by Pfister. A rote version of the sequence might deserve the same criticisms postprocess theorists have leveled at ossified versions of rhetoric and composition's process

movement, but a dynamic adaptation can help rhetoricians develop theoretical vocabularies for analyzing sonic media as well as pedagogical frameworks for teaching students to produce sonic projects which constitute a major thread in sound and rhetoric scholarship (Lynch 32).[2] While a great deal of such scholarship emphasize critical approaches (Gunn et al.; Sterne), the framework of the *progymnasmata* opens post-critical avenues for rhetoricians interested in teaching and producing sonic projects (see Walsh and Boyle). It allows for *invention with* as well as *intervention in* sound and the scholarship surrounding it.

Moreover, a sonic *progymnasmata* can engage rhetoricians rooted in writing studies and communication studies. While students often wrote their *progymnasmata*, the exercises were meant to be performed (Enterline). They were exercises in both writing and speech. Sonic exercises that require students to both write and perform or record their compositions thus gel nicely with the progymnasmatic tradition, offering a way to bring together rhetoric's writing-focused and speech-focused constituencies (Keith and Mountford).

That said, writing and communication scholars might also be united by a less sunny sentiment: For those encountering the *progymnasmata* for the first time, the sequence can seem idiosyncratic and constrictive. What's the value of requiring students to write and perform fables? What's the difference between "personification" and "characterization," and why should contemporary teachers care (Aphthonius 115)? Fleming affiliates the exercises with "pedagogical machinery," and they might strike some as a Rube Goldberg machine: impressively intricate but lacking utility ("The Very Idea" 110). It's worth recalling, however, that the *progymnasmata* were developed and implemented with real-world situations in mind. A later exercise requires students to introduce a law—a serious task given that ancient rhetoric students might go on to participate in legislative bodies or record legislative happenings for posterity. The earlier exercises were meant to help students practice skills and genres they would redeploy in more complex combinations in later ones. For instance, a former student of rhetoric might include a maxim (*gnome*) in a legislative proposal as a way of linking their position to established wisdom valued by their audience. More immediately, students would be expected to apply the facility they developed via the *progymnasmata* when they delivered declamations, set speeches that served as the sequence's educational culmination.

It is in a similar spirit that I use podcasting to ground the following sequence of exercises: As an established but flexible medium, podcasts consist of various sonic components that, while analytically distinguishable, ultimately function together. For example, a single podcast episode can incorporate narrative, description, and invective: a podcaster reviewing a video game might narrate her experience of buying and playing the game, describe its visuals, and excoriate its developers.

But this brings me to a final caveat. As they're usually construed, narrative, description, and invective are discursive exercises (Fleming, "The Very Idea" 114). However, Steph Ceraso argues that rhetoricians should attune themselves to "a wider range of nondiscursive materials and modes" and that "[s]ound is an especially ideal medium" for doing so (104). Moreover, Mary E. Hocks and Michelle Comstock point out that the field of sound studies was "generated by R. Murray Schafer's concept of the soundscape," and while soundscapes "can potentially draw together music, speech, and nonverbal sound," they do not typically signify in the ways speeches or written narratives do (135; Ceraso and Ahern). Because the *progymnasmata* were designed to help students develop facility with written and spoken words, the sequence I propose risks reiterating rhetoric's relentless emphasis on discourse, dragging sonic rhetorics and sound studies into the realm of semiotics and meaning-making. As a straightforward way of addressing this risk,

I include "soundscape" as one exercise. Moreover, because a podcast is ultimately defined by how it's distributed, there is no reason nondiscursive sonic projects couldn't be circulated as podcasts. For example, in a 2004 piece on the emergence of podcasting, Ben Hammersley mentions QuietAmerican.org, "a beautiful collection of sound recordings made while travelling around south-east Asia."

However, I would also note a connection Debra Hawhee draws between the *progymnasmata* and "the components of rhetoric that are . . . *alogos*, outside the bounds of both verbal language and rationality, but nevertheless crucial for a comprehensive account of the art" (15). Focusing on fable, the first exercise in many extant *progymnasmata* handbooks, Hawhee argues: "Through their sensuous engagement with and development of the faculty of *phantasia* early in the lives of children, fables establish a partnership grounded in the *aloga*—the without-logos" (73). That is, fables, while discursive in the sense that they are made up of words, are also bound up with nondiscursive sensations and feelings.

Echoing Hawhee, I would note that just as discourse can evoke nonverbal affective responses we cannot put into words, soundscapes and other "nondiscursive" forms of sound can be rendered in ways that reduce them to language. And so, while I wholeheartedly agree with Ceraso's claim that rhetoric scholarship often pays too little attention to "nondiscursive materials and modes" and include potentially wordless exercises in the following sequence, I also suggest the line between "discursive" and "nondiscursive" sonic phenomena is fuzzier than we sometimes assume. This is implied in the sequence to which I now turn.

A Sonic *Progymnasmata*

I developed the following exercises for Rhetoric and Recorded Sound, an undergraduate course. The course's final project is a collaboratively produced podcast series, so these exercises build toward a tangible, cumulative sonic-rhetorical challenge. I focus here on the exercises' conceptual structure and set aside practical technological questions, many of which are addressed elsewhere (see Stedman, "Audacity"). Each subsection includes a one-sentence description of the exercise followed by an overview of its scope and rationale. While I emphasize pedagogical practices, I interweave theoretical considerations in the hope that readers will hear pedagogical and theoretical possibilities playing in stereo—not readily separable even if they can be analytically distinguished.

0. Transcription: Find an existing podcast episode that has not been transcribed and transcribe a five-minute segment

In positioning transcription as exercise zero, I'm taking a cue from Sean Zdenek, who writes: "Students with disabilities are in danger of being excluded from the new media revolution or accommodated as after-thoughts of pedagogies that fail to anticipate their needs." In "On Podcasts and Access: A Collective Response," Brenda Brueggemann et al. powerfully elaborate on Zdenek's points. Moreover, Melanie Yergeau et al.'s "Multimodality in Motion: Disability and Kairotic Spaces" advocates the importance of "work[ing] toward . . . universal design" in all

manner of multimodal compositions. Such pieces make clear the ethical and practical urgency of considering accessibility when composing projects like podcasts.

I thus begin with transcription to encourage students who are not deaf or hard of hearing to think about how they can avoid excluding potential audience members and anticipate accessibility matters that attend subsequent projects. For instance, unscripted "on the fly" podcasts are common inside and outside of academia (Zdenek). While it is possible to transcribe such podcasts after the fact, it is generally easier for podcasters to create accessibility materials when they work from a written script in the first place. Some genres (for example, interviews) may have to be transcribed after the fact, but in any case, beginning with transcription rather than tacking it on as a final supplementary exercise is one way of "anticipat[ing]" accessibility matters rather than situating them as "after-thoughts" (Zdenek). Moreover, transcribing existing podcasts can help students acquaint themselves with podcasts' rhetorical conventions.

This exercise should also prompt teachers with normative hearing to anticipate the presence of deaf and hard-of-hearing students. How can a course focused on sound maximize accessibility for students, not just outside stakeholders? How might this sequence, including this transcription exercise itself, be reimagined with (not simply for) those students? Scholars interested in producing their own podcasts might ask themselves related questions about potential audiences and collaborators.

1.   *Dialogue: Record an in-person dialogue between yourself and another person*

Dialogue is a common feature of podcasts. It can be broken into two generic subcategories, both of which are themselves commonplace: interviews and roundtables.[3] Podcasts like *WTF with Marc Maron* feature a host interviewing a rotating slate of guests, while podcasts like *Another Round* feature a regular pair or group of cohosts, plus occasional guests, participating in round-table discussions. In interview-based podcasts, the interviewer's persona often plays a significant role in attracting listeners, but individual episodes typically center on the interviewee. In round-table-based podcasts, the chemistry and banter between the usual participants is more central to the show's tone and draw, and the topical range is often more narrowly defined.

I position dialogue as exercise one for two reasons: First, in-person dialogue is fairly simple to record. Unlike later exercises, this one doesn't require students to gather B-roll or work with multiple layers of audio.[4] Second, it can serve a function analogous to early-stage *progymnasmata*. Per Fleming, the *progymnasmata* were part of a traditionalist pedagogical framework. It's easy to see this framework operating in the earlier exercise: Maxim typically required a student to restate a piece of received cultural wisdom—for instance, "Earth bears nothing frailer than man"—then praise the person to whom the saying was attributed and amplify the maxim to demonstrate its soundness (Hermogenes 78). In a sense, students were entering into pious dialogue with the words and values of established cultural authorities. The dialogue exercise I'm describing here is meant to give students a more flexible opportunity to consider how they want to situate themselves in relation to their interlocutor and subject matter: Do they, like an ancient student amplifying a maxim, want to take a deferential role in relation to a conventionally respectable interviewee? Do they want to adopt a more agonistic role, offering earnest or feigned resistance to an interviewee's claims? Do they want to engage in a casual roundtable-style dialogue in which the parties occupy a level playing field? Planning, recording, and listening back to the dialogue gives

students a chance to consider the personae and affects they might cultivate for subsequent assignments.

Before moving on, let me note that qualitative researchers have put a great deal of thought into the work of conducting interviews (Clandinin and Connelly 110-12; Newkirk). While their scholarship has some applicability to podcast interviews, qualitative researchers generally have a different set of concerns than podcasters. For example, while ethnographers are often justly concerned with protecting their subjects, podcasters can find themselves in more contentious relationships with interviewees. Interviewing sources for an IRB-approved study in which your primary concern is accurately representing your anonymous sources' perspectives is a different undertaking than, say, interviewing a prosecutor whose questionable legal tactics resulted in a wrongful conviction. That said, rhetoricians might consider the extent to which concerns articulated by qualitative researchers can or should inform audio projects undertaken by scholars and students.

2. *Narrative: Record yourself narrating an event you observed firsthand*

In some ways, this exercise is the most straightforward reiteration of an ancient precursor. Narrative (*diegema*), "an exposition of something that has happened or as if it happened," is the second exercise in many progymnasmatic handbooks, coming before maxim and a related exercise, *chreia* (a pithy statement or action attributed to a person in a particular context) (Hermogenes 75). However, Aelius Theon, whose treatise is "the earliest surviving work on exercises in composition," positions it after *chreia* (Kennedy 1). While my decision to put narrative after dialogue reflects Theon's sequencing, the two exercises are relatively interchangeable. I position dialogue before narrative because the latter puts more of the burden for composing and carrying the exercise on the student, while dialogue distributes some of that burden to an interlocutor.

In any case, narrative is central to the wave of radio shows that, made available for download through digital platforms, helped popularize podcasts in the late 2000s and early 2010s. As author and artist Jessica Abel puts it: "Radio, especially public radio and the podcasts that have sprung from it . . . is the most fertile ground for narrative non-fiction in English-language media" (2). If rhetoricians have sometimes claimed everything's an argument, many of podcasting's most recognizable voices suggest everything's a narrative. For students and scholars studying and creating podcasts, then, understanding narrative principles are key.

Progymnasmatic handbooks identify qualities that ostensibly make for good narrative. Aelius Theon dwells at length on three "virtues (*aretai*)": "clarity, conciseness, credibility" (29). Regarding conciseness, Theon warns his audience not to "stick digressive phrases or clauses in the middle of sentences" (32). Many recent works on writing for radio indirectly echo Theon's counsel. For instance, *Writing for Television, Radio, and New Media* advises: "In broadcast writing, *be brief*" (Hilliard 55).

But for rhetoricians working with podcasts, it is worth asking to what extent this still applies. In the realm of radio—with set deadlines, broad audiences, and limited airtime—the advice makes sense. However, one of the characteristics (perhaps even "virtues") of podcasts is that they are not necessarily beholden to the scheduling constraints of radio programs (for example, see Kern 315-16). A podcaster can release two episodes one month, five the next, then go dormant for a year. A twenty-minute episode can be followed by a seventy-minute episode and vice versa.

A serialized investigative podcast might thus spend a good portion of an episode, even an entire episode, on an apparent digression without losing time that could be devoted to more obviously central parts of the investigation. In some cases, attention to esoteric minutiae might even heighten a podcast's niche appeal.

Narrative sequencing is also a site of increasing inventiveness for narrative-driven nonfiction podcasts. For example, popular shows like *Serial* and *S-Town* begin by adhering to the conventions of true crime stories, but twist these conventions en route to fine-grained examinations of small-town life, legal procedures, and antique clocks. *S-Town*, which employs the hedge maze as a narrative conceit, upsets basic assumptions about what constitutes a "digression."

For the sake of this exercise, then, the conventional "virtues" of narrative might be called into question. Considering the breadth of podcasts' narrative possibilities, students might experiment with the order in which they narrate an event's parts. While their narratives might challenge some ancient conventions, they might also fit with Aelius Theon's observation that it is possible to "weave narration into narration" or "begin with events in the middle, go to the end, and stop with things that happened first" (35).

At a more theoretical level, rhetoric scholars might question the possibilities and limits of "narrative" or "storytelling" as a way of describing what podcasts do. In recent years, rhetoricians have demonstrated the power of story as a persuasive, scholarly, and theoretical mode (Powell et al.). Making a case for the rhetorical utility of story has become more pressing as political developments have suggested the practical limits of traditional forms of critical argument, prompting rhetoricians to pursue "post-critical" scholarship that includes narrative modes (Rivers; Walsh and Boyle). On one hand, then, dwelling with this exercise might help us consider narrative's rhetorical affordances. On the other, podcasters' totalizing view of "narrative" and "story" might prompt us to examine the *limits* of narrative. After all, *narratio*—for Cicero, one of an oration's six parts—is a longstanding rhetorical concept (Cicero 1.143). Reflecting on the difference between *narratio*, in which an orator provides a narrative account of a case, and something like *confirmatio*, in which the orator lays out appeals in defense of the case, could allow us to consider what nuance is lost when podcasters lump all parts of a composition into the category of "narrative."

3.   Review: Review a piece of media that involves some aural component (for example, a film, a song), incorporating audio clips from the piece you're reviewing

While less widespread than narrative and dialogue, the review is another podcast staple. Some programs (for example, *Song Exploder, How Did This Get Made?*) consist almost entirely of critical considerations of music or movies—assuming "critical" covers everything from musicians offering careful breakdowns of their own songs to comedians roasting notoriously bad movies. Podcasts have also allowed for novel approaches to engaging and discussing media, as in the case of *The Worst Idea of All Time*, in which two people document their experience watching the same mediocre film once a week for an entire year.

The review exercise builds on aspects of the dialogue and narrative exercises: As with dialogue, students might consider what attitude they want to take toward their subject. As with narrative, students might consider how to sequence their review and, in the case of narrative media, how to summarize the object being reviewed. The exercise resonates with a handful of other *progymnasmata* exercises: encomium (in the case of a glowing review) and invective (in the

case of a negative one) as well as common-place (*topos* or *koinos topos*).[5] Aelius Theon differentiates common-place from encomium and invective "in that the latter are concerned with specific persons," whereas common-places are concerned with more generic commentary on stock vices and virtues (Kennedy 43). Common-place is often associated with judicial contexts, the sort of "language amplifying evils that are attached to something" that the prosecution might level at the accused (Aphthonius 105). However, to the extent that it takes a deductive approach to associating generally accepted evils with particular subjects and objects, common-place offers an approach to negative judgment that differs from the specifics of invective, thus affording students multiple approaches to reviewing. By requiring students to incorporate outside clips into their own audio projects, the exercise also constitutes a technical challenge and provides an opportunity to discuss copyright issues, including matters like fair use.

For rhetoricians, this exercise can open considerations of how present-day reviews overlap with and diverge from the rhetorical norms of ancient forms and how the review itself shifts as it moves into new media.

4. *Soundscape: Using existing sound files and your own field recordings, but avoiding spoken narrative or description, create a soundscape of a particular place*

As sound artist and theorist Salomé Voegelin puts it: "Soundscape compositions work to make the listener aware of [their] acoustic environment, to extend auditory awareness, and stretch the processes of the listener's own sonic engagement" (31). Consider David Al-Ibrahim's *Calling Thunder*, which lets listeners navigate present-day Manhattan while hearing what it sounded like prior to European colonization. Soundscapes have been of particular interest to rhetoricians interested in sound (Ceraso and Ahern; Hocks and Comstock 135). As an ambient genre that often doesn't incorporate human speech, the soundscape is a paradigmatic form of nondiscursive sound that can extend our sense of what it means to encounter sound as rhetorical.

The soundscape exercise offers students a few challenges. First, it requires them to create their own field recordings and layer those with existing sound files they find online. This sort of recording and combining of sounds adds a layer of complexity to what students were required to do when incorporating clips into the review exercise. It also gives students a significant rhetorical challenge: How can they evoke a place without using words to describe it?

As my use of the verb "describe" suggests, this soundscape exercise is derived from *ekphrasis* or description, a standard part of the *progymnasmata* sequence. As one handbook puts it, *ekphrasis* "is descriptive speech, . . . vivid (*enarges*) and bringing what is being shown before the eyes" (Hermogenes 86). Other handbooks likewise link *ekphrasis* with vision and, more specifically, *enargeia*. While the Greek notion of *enargeia* isn't necessarily tied to vision, it is often associated with speech so vivid that it brings what is being described before the eyes of the speaker's audience (Newman). Podcasters often articulate a surprisingly similar idea. Consider "Radio Is a Visual Medium," an episode of the podcast *HowSound* that cites a maxim attributed to Ira Glass, host of *This American Life* and ubiquitous radio sage: "Radio is your most visual medium." That said, critiques of "ocularcentrism"—privileging seeing over hearing—are well-established in scholarship on sound (Gunn et al. 486; Voegelin xi). For scholars and students alike, then, creating and attending to soundscapes might help us rethink not only ambient and nondiscursive sound, but longstanding rhetorical concepts like *enargeia* and *ekphrasis*. What changes when we don't assume that *ekphrasis*'s

and *enargeia*'s goal is vicarious visual s(t)imulation, granting instead that bringing-before-the-*ears* might be an end in itself? Given soundscapes' frequent association with physical places, they might also help us rethink location-based rhetorical concepts like *topos* and *chora* (see Rickert).

5.   *Ethopoeia: Choose a historical speech of which no sound recording exists, research the rhetorical ecology in which that speech occurred, and produce a version of the speech that adheres as closely as possible to what the original speech would have sounded like*

The final exercise in my proposed sequence takes its name from one of the final exercises in the *progymnasmata*. Aphthonius the Sophist subdivides *ethopoeia*, an "imitation of the character of a proposed speech," into three forms: "apparition-making (*eidolopoiia*), personification (*prosopooiia*), and characterization (*ethopoiia*)" (115; see also Church 237-38). Because it encourages students to inhabit the character and context of an actual speaker, my remastered version of *ethopoeia* most resembles characterization. The exercise builds on questions concerning: (1) a student's relationship to another (in this case, the original speaker) raised by the dialogue exercise; (2) genre and oral/aural modes raised by the narrative and review exercises (for example: Is the speaker drawing on particular speech genres—encomium, jeremiad, and so forth? What do extant sources suggest about the sonic conventions of the environment in which the speech occurred?); and (3) ambience, place, and sonic layering raised by the soundscape exercise.

Feminist and queer scholarship on listening as a rhetorical practice becomes especially salient in connection with this exercise (Campbell; Oleksiak; Ratcliffe). While such scholarship could be addressed earlier, both with students and in the context of this article, it is crucial in the context of *ethopoeia*. As Marjorie Curry Woods points out, it was common for boys in medieval rhetoric classrooms to compose and deliver *ethopoeia* in the voices of women—often women who had recently experienced some form of violence ("Boys"). While it is possible such exercises encouraged boys to empathize with women's experiences, Woods argues it is at least as likely that such exercises fostered a misogynistic solidarity that male students carried into their adult lives—a solidarity that contributed to the exclusion and marginalization of living, breathing women. Analogically, it is not hard to imagine the ethical issues that could quickly arise if a classroom full of students at a predominantly white university imitated Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?", even if a well-intentioned teacher meant for the imitation to be an immersive exercise in empathetic listening.

In recent years, rhetoricians have not only written about the ethics of imitating others; they have created multimedia projects in which they have imitated and inhabited others' voices (Campbell; Shipka). These projects prompt important questions about the limits of empathy. What voices ask to be forgotten or left to themselves? At what points do attempts at empathy slip into exploitation and appropriation? In light of such work, I advocate that *ethopoeia* be approached not as an exercise in achieving mastery over another's voice, but as an exercise in unmastery that asks after the unbridgeable gaps and ethical limits that attend imitation. In short, there are unavoidable issues of appropriation at stake in *ethopoeia*. It is tempting to think that, by virtue of being a researcher who's put in significant time with the archive or person we're imitating, we are prepared to empathize sufficiently if not fully with those being imitated—participating, perhaps, in an ethically justified project of recovery-by-way-of-remediation. There is room for playful, even parodic, *ethopoeia*, and there are researchers who approach imitation

with painstaking responsibility (Woods, "Weeping"). However, like a well-heeled high schooler pretending to be homeless for a weekend in order to experience what homelessness is "really" like, there is a very real possibility of *ethopoeia* leaving the imitator with a stereotypical, voyeuristic sense of what it's like to be another, particularly if that other speaks from a marginalized perspective. Especially in such cases, it's worth debriefing about where we might have missed the mark and what we still do not or cannot understand about the person for and as whom we attempted to speak.

But for the sake of relative simplicity and specificity, let me close by turning to a particular speech by an orator who is far from marginalized in Western rhetoric: Demosthenes' "On the Crown" (Yunis). As John Muckelbauer notes, Demosthenes was a chronic imitator (77). In imitating Demosthenes, then, students are honoring—or at least enacting—the rhetor's own protocols, which alleviates some concerns about reiterating a speech in a manner to which the speaker himself would object. Students might begin by reading portions of an English translation of the speech (imitating the original Greek would probably have to be optional), then reading biographical accounts of Demosthenes' life (Philostratus; Plutarch). Students might consider frequently cited aspects of Demosthenes' self-imposed rhetorical education: "[T]aking pebbles in his mouth and then reciting speeches," or "discoursing while running or going up steep places" (Plutarch XI.1). After recording parts of the speech in the style of Demosthenes, they might research the likely acoustics of the space in which he delivered the speech, using audio-editing software to add reverberation and ambient sounds (such as echoes, human reactions, nonhuman sounds) based on the space and the norms of Athenian oratory. In short, the exercise could allow students not just to acquaint themselves with the orator's words, but to consider the material, bodily, and technological factors that affect human speech. Such considerations can translate to the podcasts students might listen to and create as part of a course on rhetoric and sound. For instance, if an investigative reporter reads from police records or trial transcripts in the course of a podcast episode, what is added and left out by the way the reading is performed and produced? Even when a podcast includes recordings of statements by a podcaster's sources, what is gained and lost as the vocal vibrations of a particular human body are transduced into digital audio? How might such gains or losses be exaggerated, downplayed, or otherwise acknowledged in students' own projects?

For rhetoricians, such an exercise also provides an avenue for concretizing and communicating aspects of aurality that, while increasingly central to written scholarship on rhetoric and sound, are easily overlooked and not readily re-presented in the pages of monographs and journals.

Tag

While podcasting is increasingly bound by the kinds of conventions that crystallize around any emerging medium, it remains remarkably flexible. A podcast can involve interviews, round-tables, narratives, clips from other media, and nondiscursive sounds. Any of the exercises delineated above might be reordered, amplified, fast-forwarded, or muted. As a starting point, however, they demonstrate one way in which the *progymnasmata* sequence resonates with contemporary media. The exercises let students and rhetoricians analytically disentangle and practically recombine different components of digital sonic media as well as theoretically and practically refigure both emerging sonic phenomena and ancient rhetorical concepts in reflexive ways, helping us speak about and through new media forms. Moreover, podcasting itself offers

voluminous possibilities for rhetorical research on sound. Ethnographic studies of those involved in producing podcasts, new methods for tracking podcasts' digital distribution and circulation, and collaborative research with students producing podcasts: All these possibilities ring out and reverberate through the pages of this article.

Notes

[1.] Copious thanks to *RR* reviewers Steph Ceraso and Hugh Burns. Their generous and astute feedback greatly improved this manuscript.

[2.] In addition to scholarship about incorporating sonic projects into rhetoric and writing pedagogy, consider courses like Casey Boyle's "Writing With Sound" (http://caseyboyle.net/project/writing-with-sound-rhe-330c/) and Steph Ceraso's "Sound, Composition, and Culture" (https://soundnevertastedsogood.wordpress.com/).

[3.] Aspects of this dialogue exercise are prefigured in John Hagaman's "Modern Use of the *Progymnasmata* in Teaching Rhetorical Invention." Hagaman's 1986 article describes a class in which students are "divided into two groups, one of which brainstorms an imaginative written dialogue between . . . two sides as it might occur on a televised interview show, while simultaneously the other group conducts an impromptu interview or videotape" (27).

[4.] In practice, two-person interviews are often recorded using two tracks. For the sake of this exercise, I encourage students to record everything as one track.

[5.] In the context of the *progymnasmata*, "*topos*" (Aelius Theon's term) and "common-place" (Aphthonius's term) are different from other rhetorical concepts with the same names. Despite etymological connections, this exercise is neither *topos* in the sense of a place for discovering arguments nor "common-place" in the sense of a piece of conventional wisdom that can be deployed in an argument.

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