As I understand Professor Garver's paper, he wishes to argue for the proposition that "the purpose of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* is to reconquer practical discourse from the sophists and win it back for the πόλεις" (p. 75).1 Aristotle accomplishes this, for Garver, by insisting on two points. The first point is that when rhetoric abstracts from moral character it becomes sophistic and so a threat to civic life. Rhetoric cannot be, or ought not be, "a substitute for the kind of deliberation that depends on character" (p. 81). Thus the key to saving rhetoric is to insist on its connection to ethics. Here and elsewhere in the paper Garver seems to have deliberative rhetoric particularly in mind, and not without reason. Garver cites 1355b17-18, where Aristotle says that "what makes the sophist is not the faculty (δύναμις) but the moral purpose (προοίμιον)." But προοίμιον, as Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1139b6-11) is naturally oriented towards what would be otherwise, and so towards the future. Choice or moral purpose is naturally linked to deliberation.2

The second point on which Aristotle insists in order to "make speeches ethical" (1395b12-13; cf. 1391b25-26 and 1418a38-39) specifies how rhetoric and ethics are connected.3 According to

1. Unless otherwise indicated, all page references advert to Garver's paper.
2. All translations of the *Rhetoric* are those of J.H. Freese (1982). At 1357a1-2 Aristotle says, "The function of Rhetoric, then, is to deal with things about which we deliberate...."
3. At 1395b10-17, Aristotle writes, "Wherefore the speaker should endeavor to guess how his hearers formed their preconceived opinions and what they are, and then express himself in general terms in regard to them. This is one of the advantages of the use of maxims, but another is greater, for it makes speeches ethical. Speeches have this character, in which the moral purpose is clear. And this is the effect of all maxims, because he who employs them in a general manner declares his moral preferences: if then the maxims are good, they show the speaker also to be a man of good character."
Garver, for Aristotle the rhetorician must possess \( \phi \rho \omicron \nu \eta \sigma \varsigma \) and moral character both in order to find the available means of persuasion—for rhetoric requires the grasp of the relevant particulars, and this is the task of \( \phi \rho \omicron \nu \eta \sigma \varsigma \)—and in order to actually persuade his audience. Garver did not cite a passage directly supporting the first of these demands (to the effect that the rhetorician must be \( \phi \rho \omicron \nu \eta \sigma \varsigma \) in order to discover proofs); but in support of the second he cites 1378a6-8 ("For the orator to produce conviction three qualities are necessary; for, independently of demonstrations, the things which induce belief are three in number. These qualities are good sense (\( \phi \rho \omicron \nu \eta \sigma \varsigma \)), virtue, and goodwill"). Given both demands, it seems to follow that the art of rhetoric cannot just be an "art" that is separable from its ends. The art of rhetoric cannot be related to politics as product to user, or bridle-maker to general. To adapt an example from Plato's Gorgias (456d ff.), the art of rhetoric cannot be (contrary to Gorgias) like the art of boxing, which can be used legitimately in the ring or unjustly outside the ring. By contrast, the sophists held, for Garver, that rhetoric has nothing to do with character, and was instead a teachable \( \tau \epsilon \chi \eta \eta \). That is, Garver suggests that for Aristotle the real threat of sophistical rhetoric is not that it deceives its audience about the good or the sophist's own character, but rather that it pretends to dispense with the issue of character and the moral good altogether. Presumably this would constitute a deep difference between Aristotle's and Plato's responses to sophistry.

I would like to suggest that the purpose of Aristotle's Rhetoric cannot simply be, contrary to Garver, to reclaim political discourse from the sophists, though I do agree that a treatment of rhetoric ought to do so. I do not deny that Aristotle says some things that might contribute to that end. Nor do I deny that there is much to be gained from studying the Rhetoric with that purpose in mind. But to insist on it too strongly seems to me to read the book too Platonically. Aristotle certainly never announces any such program. Rather, Aristotle presents himself from the very start as analyzing the art of rhetoric, or better, as reducing to a system (\( \delta \delta \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \omicron \)) and so to a \( \tau \epsilon \chi \eta \eta \) the means of persuasion embedded in ordinary life and inadequately analyzed in the manuals of rhetoric.

It seems to me that Aristotle's chief aim is neither to deal with the ethical shortcomings of the sophists nor to show that to be persuasive rhetoric must be used for morally good ends. The situation parallels