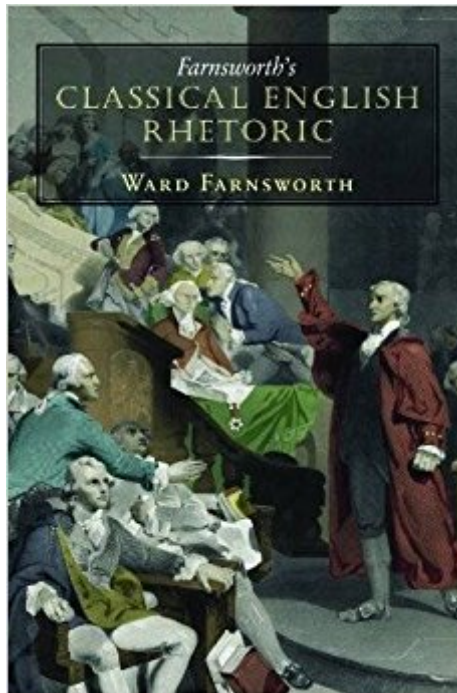




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# Farnsworth's Classical English Rhetoric



## Synopsis

Masters of language can turn unassuming words into phrases that are convincing, effective, and memorably beautiful. Lincoln and Churchill had this power: having heard their words once, one can scarcely imagine the world without them. What are the secrets of this alchemy? The answer lies in rhetoric, among the most ancient of academic disciplines. This book contains a lively set of lessons on the subject, a tutorial on eloquence conducted by virtuoso faculty: not just Lincoln and Churchill, but Dickens and Melville, Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine. The result is an indispensable book for the writer and the speaker, a highly useful reference tool, and a rewarding source of instruction for all lovers and users of the English language.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The most immediate pleasure of this book is that it heightens one's appreciation of the craft of great writers and speakers. Mr. Farnsworth includes numerous examples from Shakespeare and Dickens, Thoreau and Emerson, Winston Churchill and Abraham Lincoln. He also seems keen to rehabilitate writers and speakers whose rhetorical artistry is undervalued; besides his liking for Chesterton, he shows deep admiration for the Irish statesman Henry Grattan (1746-1820), whose studied repetition of a word (No lawyer can say so; because no lawyer could say so without forfeiting his character as a lawyer) is an instance, we are told, of conduplicatio. But more than anything Mr. Farnsworth wants to restore the reputation of rhetorical artistry per se, and the result is a handsome work of reference.

--Henry Hitchings, Wall Street Journal

So, dear reader, I say it even if I say it myself -- get this book!

No, really, get this book! Read clever Farnsworth, and read him again, and you may become more clever yourself. --Carlin Romano, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* Many things, from dictators to advertising, have made modern people suspicious of and cynical about language mobilized to move us. Fortunately, Ward Farnsworth's delightful swim in a sea of well-chosen words should help to rehabilitate the reputation of rhetoric. --George F. Will, syndicated columnist

Advance Praise for Farnsworth's *Classical English Rhetoric*: Not only educational but delightful. - David Mamet I must refrain from shouting what a brilliant work this is (*præfatio*). Farnsworth has written the book as he ought to have written it - and as only he could have written it (*symploce*). Buy it and read it - buy it and read it (*epimone*). - Bryan A. Garner, author of *The Elements of Legal Style* Many things, from dictators to advertising, have made modern people suspicious of and cynical about language mobilized to move us. Fortunately, Ward Farnsworth's delightful swim in a sea of well-chosen words should help to rehabilitate the reputation of rhetoric. - George F. Will, syndicated columnist Every writer should have this book. - Erin McKean, editor of *Verbatim: The Language Quarterly* Ward Farnsworth's invaluable review of classical English rhetoric is not only a vital tool for aiding clear expression, but a timely reminder that, despite the confusion of the present technological age, human nature, and our ability to communicate in clear and often beautiful ways, are unchanging. - Victor Davis Hanson, co-author of *Who Killed Homer?: The Demise of Classical Education & the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

What a delightful masterpiece of enlightenment and erudition! I had been seeking to collect works that contained the elements of rhetoric taught to me in high school and college speech and debate courses in order to hone my current writing and public speaking skills and was pleasantly surprised to find practically every element I sought in this one book. An added enjoyment is found in the examples from English historical and literary figures from the 17th to the 20th century. Mr. Farnsworth has done great honor to a great and honorable discipline which has been suffering from neglect in our education and public communication to our detriment.

For those who enjoy the aesthetic possibilities of written and spoken English, "Farnsworth's *Classic English Rhetoric*" must be in their library. Farnsworth's compilation of choice examples is comprehensive; it is not easily rivaled. He reviews 22 rhetorical figures (chapter 1 reviews 3 figures; chapter 7 considers antithesis with isocolon). All 22 figures were selected for their practicality: all can be readily employed. A reviewer, *Rhetorician* (July 15, 2011), criticized this book for its

incomprehensive treatment of rhetoric. That complaint can be dismissed. But Rhetorician is right, I think, to criticize Farnsworth's lack of specification. Farnsworth could at least have explicitly stated that he covers only rhetorical schemes; rhetorical tropes are important too and deserve treatment ( Farnsworth, in the preface, agrees; hopefully he will compile a book of tropes). The distinction would have helped those less familiar with the various aspects of rhetoric. This does not affect my rating , however. This is a great book.-----For those interested in tropes: I recommend looking at "Style and Statement" by Edward P. Corbett--though it is not as comprehensive as Farnsworth. Also worth looking at is "Power Writing, Power Speaking," an older book. The book is listed in the bibliography; it is not as comprehensive as Farnsworth either.

Collection of quotes from great (English) writers demonstrating rhetorical devices. Informative and inspirational.

This is the best book I have ever seen on how to craft an argument, how to write persuasively, using hundreds of examples from Chesterton to 19th century British politicians to Shakespeare. As might be expected Professor Farnsworth decomposes the types of rhetoric into categories, but avoids reader boredom by including fantastic examples. The reader who masters the concepts explained in this book will be a better writer, a better speaker - and probably a better thinker, able to understand how to persuade others with interesting, elegant prose. A must read for anyone who has to persuade others with writing (which includes a lot of potential readers).

I think this is a very necessary book; not just academic, but FULL of examples, cataloged in detail, with commentary. One reviewer harshly noted that this isn't really great for a cover-to-cover read; I agree. But, I do not think that diminishes Farnsworth's accomplishments here. Just do not read it cover-to-cover; read some, savor, have some fun, set it down. Don't make a slog of it; this stuff is very enjoyable, probably best in small joyous doses.

Most books on usage or rhetoric are compendiums of bad usage or bad rhetoric: what not to do. They are often amusing, but there is something lacking. After brief discussions of a rhetorical figure, Farnsworth's book cuts to the chase and gives the reader example after example of the best writers using the figure beautifully. And beautiful writing is much more enjoyable, and instructive, to read than page after page of barbarisms. Very highly recommended.

The definitive work on the subject of Rhetoric.

This is a brilliant book! If you're a writer, editor, or speaker, you can benefit immensely from learning scores of rhetorical devices to express yourself more powerfully and eloquently.

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