Although the canon of invention can be understood as a kind of techné, especially when it serves an enabling function as new discourse and knowledge are produced, it is invention as a heuristic strategy, not techné as a value, that has been the focus of many contemporary compositionists. The publication of Janet Atwill's *Rhetoric Reclaimed* in 1998, however, has served to powerfully recuperate and supplement an important conversation among the Greek sophists, one in which the notion of techné emerged not only as a rhetorical strategy, but also as a way of being and as an attitude about knowledge. In the following pages, I will note the importance of Atwill's book and suggest that attention to techné can enlarge our understanding of rhetoric in general and the theorizing and teaching of cooperative approaches to writing in particular. Moreover, I will attempt to show that *Rhetoric Reclaimed* has heuristic potential to help compositionists imagine and teach formal strategies for arranging written dialogical discourse. Such imagining and teaching seem especially challenging for those of us who are interested in the problem of inscribing dialogue (a practice that ordinarily relies on conversational interchange) in written discourse (an extended text that is advanced as authored monologue).

From the outset, I hope that my writing will reflect a commitment to another value that informs Atwill's work, especially the last chapter:
aidos, the "attitude of respect toward others that is inextricably tied to the respect one can expect for oneself" (211). Thus, as I problematize accepted views of invention and arrangement, and as I consider how textual form might be seen as a techné that is axiologically commensurate with good-faith dialogue and is epistemologically productive, I intend to "listen" as I invent, to learn as I paraphrase what others have produced.

In order to begin what I want to say (an extended "saying" that will be delivered in arranged written discourse), I evoke the artistic spirit of techné, a muse-like spirit that no doubt inspired Protagoras and Isocrates but that is best recuperated and defined in Atwill's words:

(1) A techné is never a static normative body of knowledge. It may be described as a dynamis (or power), transferable guides and strategies, a cunningly conceived plan—even a trick or trap. This knowledge is stable enough to be taught and transferred but flexible enough to be adapted to particular situations and purposes.

(2) A techné resists identification with a normative subject. The subjects identified with techné are often in a state of flux or transformation.

(3) Techné marks a domain of intervention and invention. (48)

This spirit, then, has to do more with art, more with invention and production, than it does with the iteration of static theoretical or practical knowledge. And at least for many of us who teach the art of writing and who are thus interested in invention, it is probably the first of the five classical canons—invention—that associates most readily with techné. For me, this association in turn suggests a variety of "transferable guides or strategies," including Aristotle's topoi, Burke's pentad, and Young, Becker, and Pike's tagmemic grid.

The trouble with lumping techné with a canonical sense of invention, however, is that in different historical contexts, and in association with different "transferable guides or strategies," the canon of invention loses its status as a fixed and clearly defined category. Indeed, as Janice Lauer reminds us in her insightful "Issues in Rhetorical Invention," the relationship between judgment and invention is treated in different ways by textbooks influenced by rhetorical traditions that are axiologically and epistemologically different. "Some," she writes, illustrating with Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, "offer students exploratory guides with a supportive function to aid their search for material to
develop a thesis already in hand” (131). She adds, illustrating with Young, Becker, and Pike’s *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*, “Others propose guides with a predominantly investigatory role to help them prepare for discovery of theses or insights” (131). The kind of techné advocated by Protagoras and Isocrates, and celebrated by Atwill, seems to resonate more with Young, Becker, and Pike’s assumptions concerning invention, but Corbett, drawing on an Aristotelian version of invention, would most certainly want to claim that the topoi are themselves, if not a manifestation of techné as it is defined by Atwill, at least a variety of invention.

Corbett never explicitly associates topical invention with techné; instead, in a discussion of the kind of dispositio developed and recommended by Cicero and Quintilian, he asserts that the Aristotelian notion of techné is best exemplified by the canon of arrangement: “an art by which one adapts means to an end” (257). Thus, for Corbett the formal strategy of starting with exordium and narratio, moving on to confirmatio and refutatio, and concluding with peroratio—always with an eye toward an end or purpose—is seemingly commensurate with Aristotle’s definition of techné. Although it seems improbable that such a formal, linear strategy of arrangement might somehow be associated with the kind of techné envisioned by the sophists, and the kind of techné with which I am concerned here, I would like to maintain the association as a productive one but modify the classical strategy in a context of different axiological and epistemological assumptions.

Richard Young and Alton Becker, in an article entitled “Toward a Modern Theory of Rhetoric: A Tagmemic Contribution,” argue that, indeed, the view of arrangement advanced by Corbett is problematic in the context of an epistemic rhetoric because it imposes an artificial separation between discovery-oriented invention and the formal product of such invention. Thus, the “heuristic procedure” recommended by Young, Becker, and Pike—the tagmemic grid, indebted metaphorically to work in modern physics—resists commitment to prior intention or knowledge. Instead, it is proposed as a generative strategy capable of producing not only new knowledge, but also new form and language. Moreover, their procedure seems to be commensurate with the logon techné envisioned by the sophists and defined by Atwill:

1. It is a dynamis capable of producing new knowledge, form, and language.

2. It is situated in the context of a rhetoric that resists identification with a normative subject.
(3) It marks a domain of intervention in human conflict that is perpetuated by the iteration of old knowledge and static claims.

Nevertheless, Young, Becker, and Pike, despite their emphasis on epistemic invention as both a content and form-producing strategy, and despite their aversion to the separation of invention and arrangement, persist in recommending an approach to arrangement that structurally resembles the classical form, the "techne," described by Corbett. They introduce this approach with the following disclaimer: "The following outline is a set of instructions, a heuristic procedure for reconstructing the reader's image; it can help you develop both your argument and its context. By using this procedure you increase your chances of producing a well-developed first draft" (234). They then proceed to develop a linear list of formal components: a problem-oriented "introduction"; a "background" component, resembling the classical narratio; an "argument" component that includes a space for refutation; an action-oriented "conclusion" (234). It is, of course, possible to read Rhetoric: Discovery and Change as a book that, in its advancement of mediatory and dialogical values, itself seeks to mediate, to reconcile an epistemic rhetoric with the classical canons. But it is also possible to read it as a conflicted text that provides not a poros, a path, to a transformed sense of rhetoric, but an aporia, a problematic blockage that needs to be encountered and resolved.

Young, Becker, and Pike themselves provide a way to read around and beyond such an aporia. In a chapter that focuses on Rogerian argument, they suggest that a discourse of negotiation (as opposed to a discourse that aims to assert truth) might consist of, if not formal components, several discrete "phases." Their use of this word is interesting, suggesting as it does not textual space, but communicative time. They write, "And if the writer does not use a conventional, sharply defined structure, there are at least phases to his argument" (283). They then go on to list these "phases":

(1) An introduction to the problem and a demonstration that the opponent's position is understood.

(2) A statement of the contexts in which the opponent's position may be valid.

(3) A statement of the writer's position, including the contexts in which it is valid.
(4) A statement of how the opponent's position would benefit if he were to adopt elements of the writer's position. If the writer can show that the positions complement each other, that each supplies what the other lacks, so much the better. (283)

Although Young, Becker, and Pike do not explicitly assert that their list of phases might be used as an arrangement strategy, I believe that seeing the list as an approach to organizing Rogerian writing might provide a way to reconcile the values of dialogue and discovery with the specification of a textual form. Indeed, the so-called phases might well be the path, the poros, that would lead to what I would like to call, here, "a techné of dialogical arrangement."

As I write this review essay, imagining its publication and reception, I attempt to deliberately employ a techné of dialogical arrangement. At the risk of oversimplifying their work, I try to imagine that I am "conversing" with representatives of two different rhetorical positions—Corbett, at one extreme, and Young, Becker, and Pike at the other. Corbett argues that the classical dispositio recommended by Cicero and Quintilian might be used strategically as a techné, even though it is dislocated from topical invention. Young, Becker, and Pike develop an epistemic, new-rhetorical approach to invention, suggesting that tagmemic invention generates both content and form, but they persist in recommending a classical approach to arrangement. I find both positions somewhat inconsistent and problematic, but in the spirit of aidos, of mediation and negotiation, I attempt to listen to both, to find what seems valuable in each, what I can accept as significant as I endeavor to find the poros to a techné that is not only productive, but that also is capable of reconciling the value of aidos (and its manifestation in dialogue) with textual form.

From Corbett, I take the notion that arrangement itself may be employed as a techné, but I discard the classical model of form that he recommends. From Young, Becker, and Pike, I take the four "phases of argument" that they so strongly associate with Rogerian negotiation, and I foreground these phases as a dialogical arrangement strategy, but I put into the background their emphasis on tagmemic invention and discard their recuperation of classical arrangement. As a result, I am able to characterize, to value, a techné of what I want to call, here, "dialogical
arrangement." And I hope it is obvious that it was a techné of dialogical arrangement that in fact led me both to value and produce such a techné. In other words, a techné of dialogical arrangement is capable of inventing itself as a techné. In so doing it recuperates values of aidos and deliberation that were constructed thousands of years ago in sophistic discourse—values that Atwill reclaims in her book.

In rereading my own text, I find that I have problematized the formal arrangement of dialogical discourse, listened to different and differing voices, and suggested the possibility of reconciliation and transformation. Thus, I now prepare to enter the last phase of the four-phase process, a deliberative phase that will clarify what is being produced and that will propose it as a techné that might enable writers to construct and be constructed by dialogue.

As a techné concerned with the art of writing, then, what is dialogical arrangement? At first glance, the phrase seems to be an oxymoron. How is it possible that a written text might be reconciled with dialogical praxis, with a discourse that seems to have more to do with time than with space, with spontaneity than with studied reflection, with presence than with distance, with orality (in which, as Walter Ong would argue, the word is "present") than with literacy, and with aidos than with agonism?

In their efforts so far to address the problem of developing alternative discursive strategies for inscribing dialogue as extended text, compositionists have experimented with new ways of naming such strategies and their formal results. Krista Ratcliffe’s recent work with "rhetorical listening" helps us imagine how listening, which is at the heart of dialogue, can be positioned as a mode of invention, as a techné, vital to a code of cross-cultural conduct. And in their textbook, *The Aims of Argument*, Timothy Crusius and Carolyn Channell name and define a dialogical genre, "the mediatory essay," in which the writer assumes the ethos of a neutral mediator and works to stage in text an interchange between opposing voices that might lead to discovery of shared values and mutually beneficial compromise.

Indeed, a techné of dialogical arrangement will require a different language for productively discussing a textual form that aims to enable cooperative interchange, that is intimately related to human beings speaking back and forth to each other. Such a language, I believe, might
be further developed by borrowing from speech-act theory and from the study of conversation. The work of J.L. Austin and John Searle helps us understand that what is being done with language can be understood as “speech acts” and that those acts can be categorized broadly on the basis of “illocutionary force.” According to Searle’s taxonomy of speech acts, we can “represent” an external world; we can “direct” others to do what has not yet been done; we can “commit” ourselves to do what has not yet been done; we can “express” an internal, psychological world; and we can “declare” that something will be the case from now on. Thus, in the language used by Austin and Searle, dialogical arrangement might be understood in terms of illocutionary forces, each component of the written text more of a speech act than a visual space.

In addition, we might look toward the work and language of Mikhail Bakhtin, who discusses the dialogical character of writing and the relationship of “simple speech genres” to “complex written genres.” His notion of “addressivity”—that we make utterances with a sense that they will provoke a response, that they will be followed by another conversational turn—especially helps explain the “sense” of discourse that needs to underlie the dialogical arrangement of writing.

Finally, work in the ethnography of speaking and conversational analysis (summarized richly in Malcolm Coulthard’s An Introduction to Discourse Analysis) provides a perspective and language relevant to understanding the communicative norms and the discourse competence that must inform a comprehensive view of dialogical arrangement. Synthesizing speech-act theory and work in conversational analysis gives us a new vocabulary for discussing dialogical writing and for developing a techné for its arrangement:

1. Instead of “written page,” we might use the word “floor.”

2. Instead of “introduction” or “exordium,” we might use the phrase “conflict representation.”

3. Instead of “paragraph” or “chunk” or “component,” we might use the phrase “conversational turn,” each turn concerned with “representing” or “expressing” a point of view, with “requesting” some action of a listener or “committing” oneself to a future course of action—and each turn, in its “addressivity,” evincing a willingness to share the floor and anticipating the turn of another conversant.

4. Instead of “refutation,” we might use the phrase “response.”
Instead of "conclusion" or "peroration, we might use the word "move"—or, even better, "suggestion" or "offer."

Returning, now, to Young, Becker, and Pike's notion of four "phases" of negotiation, and using the language of conversational analysis, it is possible to envision and describe a techné of dialogical arrangement that might be applied to the production of writing. On the floor of the written page, writers would be enabled either to mediate or negotiate, depending on whether they are detached from, or involved in, a conflict.

In the rich literature concerning the theory and practice of mediation and negotiation, those processes are almost always linked to the notion of oral interchange, and often to the notions of ethical dialogue developed by Martin Buber, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Carl Rogers. And almost always in that literature, distinctions are made among the categories "negotiation," "mediation," and "arbitration." One of the most helpful explanations of these distinctions is offered by Christopher Moore. In The Mediation Process, Moore employs a continuous arrow to theorize what he calls a "continuum of conflict management and resolution approaches" (5). The arrow begins on the left with "conflict avoidance" and ends on the right with "violence." Intermediate points on the continuum evince different assumptions about power and the need for "coercion." Thus, negotiation is situated far to the left, mediation moves to the right, and arbitration moves even further to the right. Negotiation, mediation, and arbitration, however, are closer to the kind of dialogical ethics developed by Buber than are the categories that are even further to the right: "judicial decision, " "legislative decision, " "nonviolent direct action," and, finally, "violence."

Although Moore does not use the word "ethos," the rhetorical stance of the speaker (or writer) is constructed differently as approaches to conflict resolution and assumptions about coercive power shift to the right. Moore’s work considers the oral process of mediation, and also the roles of the mediator in that process, but we can use his language to clarify how a shift in ethos (from mediator to negotiator, say) would affect a techné of dialogical arrangement.

Assuming the ethos of detached mediator, the writer endeavoring to resolve a conflict from a disinterested point of view would create the following "components": a fair representation of a salient conflict; a turn
in which (using careful summary, paraphrase, and quotation) the writer would “listen” fairly and carefully to the argument of one of the conflicting voices; a turn in which (again using careful summary, paraphrase, and quotation) the writer would “listen” fairly and carefully to the argument of the other competing voice; an offer of a compromise that might encourage both conflicting voices to respect the voice of the other while seeking shared values and inventing position, value, or action that would be preferable to ongoing conflict. If the writer were involved personally in the conflict, then the writer would assume the ethos of a self-interested, but cooperative, negotiator. The writer again would create four components, but this time the second component (still using careful summary, paraphrase, and quotation) would be presented as though the writer were listening directly and respectfully to the turn of a personal opponent. And the third component this time would provide a turn where the writer’s own strong argument could be presented. The fourth component would again offer, after a search for shared values, a compromise in the spirit of aidos.

I believe that the techné of dialogical arrangement that I propose is axiologically commensurate with the logon techné envisioned by the sophists and beautifully explicated in Rhetoric Reclaimed, but that it is also a product of such a techné—something new, something that itself has been created from dialogue and the synthesis of diverse rhetorical voices. A techné of dialogical arrangement would not only produce new knowledge, but also new technés. In its movement from respectful listening to creative offering, it would privilege the deliberative instead of the forensic, and it would use arrangement as a means of invention. It would still employ the deductive advancement of arguments, but those arguments would cooperate to produce a new, shared argument.

In “From Debate to Dialogue: Toward a Pedagogy of Nonpolarized Public Discourse,” Bruce Hyde and Jeffrey Bineham, both teachers of speech communication, ask the question, “Can dialogue be taught?” After acknowledging that “dialogue, as a discourse form, is characterized by a commitment to openness and indeterminacy, making precise formulation or pedagogical explication problematical,” they go on to recommend that we might characterize two kinds of dialogue. Dialogue 1, they suggest, is a “form of discourse,” while Dialogue 2 is a “relational space.” Whereas the form of Dialogue 1 results from “the fusion of all perspectives to enable a larger, more inclusive view,” the way of being of
Dialogue 2 is an ontological state characterized by “openness, trust, presence, and an understanding of the other that arises not from psychological compatibility but from shared humanity” (211–12). Hyde and Bineham do not believe that Dialogue 2 can be taught directly; instead, they believe that participation in the form of Dialogue 1 has the potential to lead the way to the relational conditions of Dialogue 2.

The same transformative potential may well be true of a techne of dialogical arrangement for writing. Like Dialogue 1, such a techne, with its formal guidance, has the potential to teach our students, and to teach us, the sort of discourse that might construct horizontal rather than vertical human relationships. In such relationships, we might enjoy the kind of “grace” that Buber associates with dialogue, a kind of grace that the sophists perhaps had in mind when they stressed the value of aidos, a value that can only be instantiated (or constructed) when human beings listen to one another with respect.

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire helps us understand that something like Dialogue 1—what he calls “the naming of the world”—exists in a dynamic with something like Dialogue 2, which is at the heart of human love. Once Dialogue 2 is present, then the naming of the world, the formalizing of dialogue, takes care of itself:

> Founding itself upon love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence. It would be a contradiction in terms if dialogue—loving, humble, and full of faith—did not produce this climate of mutual trust, which leads the dialoguers into ever closer partnership in the naming of the world. (79–80)

Thus, from Freire’s perspective, we can see that a techne of arrangement would not be the end of a pedagogy focused on dialogue; instead, it might be a formal strategy capable of setting into motion a way of being, a way that would dynamically shape future dialogical discourse. Such a pedagogy would not ensure the eradication of material inequalities and injustices; it would not ensure that those seeking dialogue would enjoy dialogical reciprocity; and it would not prepare students for all rhetorical situations. However, it would most certainly help our students imagine and enact the kind of civility, community, and healing that dialogue promotes. And it would help them move away from the kind of objectification that Freire associates with monological discursive practices.
Several summers ago, before I had read Janet Atwill's book and before this essay took shape, I spent four days in Greece as I traveled to Italy to visit my daughter, who lives in Florence. Seeking an island not frequented by tourists, I took a ferry to Poros, not thinking then of the significance of that name. One evening I rented a motorbike and rode up a primitive road to the highest point on the island and the ruins of the Temple of Poseidon, where Demosthenes took his life centuries ago. As I sat on a crumbling stone wall, gazing out across the wine-dark sea, I reflected on my life as a teacher of rhetoric and writing, and as one who endeavors to write about rhetorical matters. I was at a point, then, of seeking new direction as both teacher and writer.

For me, the Greek island of Poros now stands as a port of departure and discovery. Shortly after leaving, I read Atwill's book and began to participate in a technē of dialogical arrangement, an artistic voyage that will most certainly affect my own writing and my teaching of writing as I seek to instantiate values that I deeply hold: the deliberative production of new and helpful knowledge, the dialogical negotiation of truth, and, most of all, the observance of aidos in all of my discourse.

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Works Cited


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