According to Thomas De Quincey, modernity sounds the death knell of rhetoric: the age of rhetoric, like the "age of chivalry, has passed amongst forgotten things." Taking its point of departure in this obituary for rhetoric, this course will attempt to show that the art of rhetoric -- far from passing away or "drying up" (Heidegger) -- has come to play an ever more central role in modern thought since De Quincey penned these words in 1828. After examining the rhetorical dimensions of tragedy, poetry, and philosophy, we will explore several new sites of inquiry opened up by the "rhetorical turn" in the humanities and social sciences: feminism, semiotics, anthropology, propaganda, psychoanalysis, media studies, and advertising.

January
6 Introduction
13 Shakespeare, Hamlet
20 Shakespeare, (Branagh)

February
3 No Class
10 Gerard Manley Hopkins, Selections
17 Reading Break

March
2 Marshall McLuhan, the "Playboy Interview"
9 Louis Althusser, "Ideological State Apparatuses"; Noam Chomsky, "A Propaganda Model," "Conclusions"
30 Conclusions...

Requirements
15% Weekly Responses and Participation
Write a paragraph in which you offer three reasons why the text under discussion is important to the study of rhetoric (double spaced; 1.25 margins; 12 point type). Be prepared to read and/or discuss your paragraph in class. Please submit responses at the end of each class. Late submissions will not be accepted. Responses will be read but not graded (you will receive credit for completing the assignment).

30% Class Presentation (4pp.)
Write an essay in which you explain the significance of your text for the study of rhetoric (double spaced; 1.25 margins; 12 point). Do not summarize the text. Instead, offer an interpretation of the text and assess its contribution to the field of rhetorical studies. Be sure to support your argument with relevant citations from the text. Since you will be reading your essay like a conference paper, strive for a formal but accessible style of presentation. Please submit your presentation the day it is read in class.

55% Final essay (10 pp.)
Compare and contrast any two texts on the syllabus (1.25 margins; 12 point).