

CONTENTS

Preface to the Second Edition	xi
Acknowledgments for the First Edition	xv
Exordium	xix

1	HOW TO DO A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF ECONOMICS, AND WHY 3
	It's Not Philosophical Reading, It's Rhetorical 3
	The Old Word "Rhetoric" Is a Good One 4
	The Scientist Must Establish Her "Ethos" 7
	Point of View Is a Scientific Choice 9
	"Mere" Style Is Not Mere 10
	Style Is Often an Appeal to Authority 11
	Economists Are Poets 12
	And Novelists 13
	Be Not Afraid of Deconstruction and Other Terrors 15
	Writing Is Performance 17
2	THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF ECONOMIC SCIENCE 20
	Science Uses Literary Methods 20
	Proofs of the Law of Demand Are Mostly Literary 23
	Linguistics Is an Appropriate Model for Economic Science 28
	Literary Thinking May Improve Applied Economics 31
3	FIGURES OF ECONOMIC SPEECH 35
	Even a Mathematical Economist Uses, and Must Use, Literary Devices: The Case of Paul Samuelson 35
	Most of the Devices Are Only Dimly Recognized 38
	Models Are Nonornamental Metaphors: The Case of Gary Becker 40
	Both Mathematical and Nonmathematical Reasoning in Economics Rely on Metaphor 44

	The Master Tropes Rule Economics: The Case of Robert Solow	48
4	THE RHETORIC OF SCIENTISM: HOW JOHN MUTH PERSUADES	52
	Muth's Article Was Ill-Written but Important	52
	Muth's Main Points Can Be Expressed in English	54
	Muth's Article Engages in the Usual Appeals to Scientific Method	58
	Muth's Appeal Is in Fact to the Community of Scholars	61
	The Explicit Arguments Are Rhetorically Complex	63
	Muth's Rhetoric Is Indistinguishable from That in Other Fields	66
5	THE PROBLEM OF AUDIENCE IN HISTORICAL ECONOMICS: ROBERT FOGEL AS RHETOR	74
	The Text Was Important	74
	It Is a Most Rhetorical Book	77
	It Uses Intensively the Common Topics	79
	The Book Also Uses the Special Topics of Economics	82
	The Text Invented an Audience	84
6	THE LAWYERLY RHETORIC OF COASE'S "THE NATURE OF THE FIRM"	87
	Coase Solved His Problem of Ethos by Appeal to Axiom and Proof	87
	But Coase Was an Advocate, Not a Prover	89
	The Lawyerly Rhetoric Appeals to the Facts	91
	And Yet Coase Is Indubitably an Economist	94
	His Article Was about the Rhetoric in the Economy	95
	Coasean Economics Is Anti-Modernist, "Gothic," Postmodern in Its Rhetoric	98
7	THE UNEXAMINED RHETORIC OF ECONOMIC QUANTIFICATION	100
	Rhetorical Standards, for Example, Are Necessary to Measure the Integration of Markets	100
	In Like Fashion, Rhetorical Standards Are Necessary in Linguistics to Measure the Similarity of Languages	104

	That Is, the Speech Acts of Scientists Are Conversations, Good or Bad 107
	The Conversation on Purchasing Power Parity, for Example, Is Rhetorically Muddled 109
8	THE RHETORIC OF SIGNIFICANCE TESTS 112
	Statistical Significance Has Ruined Empirical Work in Economics 112
	Econometrics Confuses Statistical and Scientific Significance 115
	The Rhetorical History of Statistics Is the Source of the Difficulty 120
	A Lot Can Go Wrong When Using Statistical Significance 125
	A Lot Did Go Wrong 129
9	THE POVERTY OF ECONOMIC MODERNISM 139
	The Mathematization of Economics Was a Good Idea 139
	But a Philosophy Got Mixed Up in the Mathematics 140
	The Official Methodology of Economics Is "Modernist" 141
	Modernism Is a Poor Method: For One Thing, It Is Obsolete in Philosophy 147
	And Falsification Is Not Cogent 148
	Profitable Prediction Is Not Possible In Economics 150
	Modernism Is Impossible, and Is Not Adhered To 151
10	FROM METHODOLOGY TO RHETORIC 156
	Any Rule-Bound Methodology Is Objectionable 156
	Methodology Is Middle Management 159
	Good Science Is Good Conversation 162
	Rhetoric Is a Better Way to Understand Science 163
	Other Sciences Have Rhetorics 164
11	ANTI-ANTI-RHETORIC 168
	The Alternative to Modernism Is Not Irrationalism 168
	The Political Arguments for Methodology Are Weak 171
	We Wish to Make Plausible Statements, Whether "Scientific" or Not 175

Contents

	The Philosophical Objections to Rhetoric Are Not Persuasive	179
	Anti-Modernism Is Nice	183
	Rhetoric Is Good for You	184
12	SINCE RHETORIC: PROSPECTS FOR A SCIENTIFIC ECONOMICS	187
	Bibliography	195
	Index	219