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John W. O'Malley: Scholar of Eloquence and Eloquent Scholar

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John W. O'Malley, S.J.: Scholar of Eloquence and Eloquent Scholar

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Abstract

As the essays in this volume attest, John O'Malley, S.J., has been an intellectual force in the proud tradition of the erudite, generative, multi-lingual polymaths of the early Society. In this epideictic piece (one of O'Malley's favorite genres for analysis), we want to share some of the ways in which he "backed into," participated in, and ultimately sponsored the emerging field of Jesuit rhetoric, nationally and internationally, over the last several decades, *albeit somewhat unwittingly*. We briefly trace his changing relationship to rhetorical study, from his first efforts to use it as a frame for textual analysis, to seeing it as an enduring centering principle for Jesuit society and ministries writ large, and finally as a set of valuable principles that can be renewed for Jesuit education today. And we share the perspectives from a sampling of those who have been influenced by his work across these areas internationally and within an American higher education context. Please note that this essay pairs with another in this issue, "[John W. O'Malley as a Guide for *Eloquentia Perfecta*, Community-Engaged Work, and Graduate Education](#)" by Allen Brizee, Stephanie Hunter Brizee, Colten Biro, and Meha Gupta.

O'Malley's Serendipitous Journey into Rhetoric: Another "Strange and Wonderful Story"¹

Reading the recent memoir on his rich scholarly life over several decades, *The Education of a Historian* (2021),² viewing the wonderful Georgetown interview (2021),³ and having had the chance to interview him in Baltimore on May 26, 2022,⁴ we are struck by O'Malley's relentless curiosities across multiple fields of historical inquiry and his willingness to follow his questions over decades as they took on new forms and incarnations, both alone and with many others. We witness his meticulous and deep commitment to understanding original sources of the Renaissance on their own terms, his work to

modernize the historiography of confessional and religious history, and his capacious analytic and synthetic prowess in bringing historical moments, movements, institutions, and figures "to life" to make more present pasts, and to participate in the present itself.

While we appreciate O'Malley's primary identity as a new historian of religious history and his reluctance to call himself a rhetorician, we think it is important to acknowledge his serendipitous and fertile encounters with rhetorical studies. Certainly, O'Malley's intellectual engagements with rhetoric have not gone completely unnoticed. The eminent scholar Anthony Grafton, in his chapter on the Jesuits, "Entrepreneurs of the Soul, Impresarios of Learning,"⁵ which considers the

global religious and educational reach of the Jesuits during the early modern world, comments on O'Malley's use of rhetorical arguments. In his discussion of the humanist classicist schools the Jesuits became so famous for, he explains that training in the arts of speech and writing, including confessional persuasion and polemic, prepared students for all kinds of religious and civic life:

As O'Malley shows in some of his most interesting pages, they also seem to have felt a special affinity for the classical art of rhetoric. At the heart of classical rhetoric lay the precept that an effective speaker tailors every utterance to its immediate context, taking account of listeners' needs and desires. The Jesuits, who expertly 'accommodated' their clothing, diet, and language to new circumstances took naturally to a discipline that gave them systematic training in sizing up occasions and audiences.⁶

Jesuit philosopher and historian of intellectual life Stephen Schloesser, S.J. takes up O'Malley's multiple treatments of early Jesuit rhetorical accommodation in his important essay, "Accommodation as a Rhetorical Principle: Twenty Years after John O'Malley's *The First Jesuits*."⁷ This remarkable work assembles many of O'Malley's claims about the rhetorical threads woven into every aspect of Jesuit life and joins them to insights of Stephen Toulmin to make a case that the early Jesuits were remarkably modern in their thinking with their intellectual breadth, flexibility, and openness. He uses what he calls the O'Malley-Toulmin Paradigm to reconceive the whole periodization of intellectual life and the nature of modernity itself. He argues that "Both O'Malley and Toulmin employ 'rhetoric' as a central organizing concept."⁸ Specifically, he states,

O'Malley ... organizes his account of sixteenth-century Renaissance Jesuits around the concept of rhetoric. O'Malley argues that this rhetorical principle extended far beyond the obvious reach of methods employed in preaching, teaching, and other oratorical crafts. Rather, it functioned as a principle of

accommodation and shaped almost every aspect of Jesuit thought, action, and self-identity.⁹

So how could O'Malley play a central role in the creation of a new area of studies, yet not see himself as central to it? Both in his intellectual memoir and in our recent interview, O'Malley traces his accidental journey into rhetoric in the service of his historical work as one of coincidences and serendipities. Certainly, his early education did not foster any conscious interest or formal preparation for rhetorical study, though he clearly had extensive training in Latin—an important prerequisite for the academic work he would take on.

Even after his decision to join the Jesuits and undergo the extended rigorous intellectual formation required (including three years of scholastic theology), he told us that he had little or no contact with rhetoric as theory or pedagogy. However, his graduate education in Renaissance history at Harvard brought him access to the kinds of rich cultural exposure across the arts and humanities (American Academy of Arts and Science, I Tatti, American Academy in Rome) that would eventually lead him to discover the power of rhetoric for understanding Renaissance texts, while being a Jesuit gave him access to the rich verbal and visual treasures of the Vatican and its archives. These experiences certainly help explain his profound interest in the arts as forms of multisensory inspiration and persuasion, a view fully aligned with the early capacious notions of Jesuit rhetoric in the early Society as integrating the verbal arts with art, architecture, dance, theatre—even history!

First Encounters: *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome*

While he is possibly best known as a church historian through his works on various Vatican Councils and the popes, as well as his history of the early Jesuits, his personal favorite scholarly work is *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome* (1979).¹⁰ This breakthrough book was the one that brought him to rhetorical studies, even though he resisted its charms initially. In the preface, he explains, "In Rome, in the summer of 1971, the sacred oratory of the papal court first attracted my

attention as a distinctive body of literature.”¹¹ Invited to give a paper on his initial findings at the International Medieval Conference, one of the participants and a mentor, Professor Paul Oskar Kristeller, recommended that O’Malley research the influence of the revival of Renaissance humanist rhetoric on these sermons. While O’Malley didn’t immediately take up this suggestion, his student, John McManamon, S.J., became interested and undertook a serious self-study program with the renowned Swarthmore classicist Mary North, whom O’Malley knew from the American Academy in Rome and who “taught me some of my first lessons in rhetoric.”¹² Gradually, O’Malley saw the importance of this work, though as he notes, for a time “my interest was still tepid and my comprehension dim” (vii). Somewhat later, reading Aurelio Brandolini’s¹³ Renaissance rhetoric manual “*De ratione scribendi libri tres*,”¹⁴ he finally saw “what rhetoric might mean for many of the questions in the Renaissance I had been intrigued with, and I decided to write this book.”¹⁵ As O’Malley’s comments show, it was the serendipitous (and repeated) suggestions by Kristeller and the ongoing conversations with classicist Mary North and John McManamon, S.J. that helped him “back into” his first encounter with rhetoric in *Praise and Blame*. Specifically, he used his developing understandings of rhetorical analysis (genre and style)—an emergent expertise granted largely through informal work and self-study—primarily as a *tool* for his historical treatment of the changing functions of the papal sermon during this transitional period. However, his work on the importance of the connections between rhetoric and religious studies is becoming increasingly recognized:

A 2022 course at the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome describes “John O’Malley’s brilliant study *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome* ... puts epideictic rhetoric practised in early modern sermons centre stage for the first time. O’Malley’s seminal work did more than merely alert students to the extraordinary impact of rhetoric on curial practice and theory: it paved the way for a new assessment of the role of sermons in early modern literature on the one hand, and

the impact of rhetoric on Renaissance theology on the other.”¹⁶

From Encounter to Engagement: *The First Jesuits*

The other key monograph, at least for secular scholars of rhetoric and rhetorical education, is *The First Jesuits* (1993),¹⁷ O’Malley’s best-known book, translated into ten languages. This book is critical because O’Malley makes the striking claim that the Jesuit society can be fruitfully understood as a rhetorical system. As O’Malley puts it, “Rhetoric in the humanistic tradition was not simply a discipline, not simply the culminating discipline, but the discipline that imbued the whole system with its finality and gave it a life shaping force.”¹⁸ This is a claim that he would explore and amplify across all aspects of Jesuit life and their multiple *ministries of the Word*, with special focus on the ways in which the distinctive history of Jesuit education held the rhetorical arts as the center of its world-wide *college system*.¹⁹ This notion of rhetoric as a unifying aspect of all Jesuit ministries is apparent in the following extended passage:

One aspect of the rhetorical *forma mentis* was its imperative for accommodation, an aspect that coincided with the Jesuits’ way of proceeding on a profound and pervasive level. In the classical treatises, rhetoric was geared to produce the successful orator. Essential to this success was the orator’s ability to be in touch with the feelings and needs of his audience and to adapt himself and his speech accordingly. Beginning with the *Exercises* themselves, the Jesuits were constantly advised in all their ministries to adapt what they said and did to times, circumstances, and persons. The “rhetorical” dimension of Jesuit ministry in this sense transcended the preaching and lecturing in which they were engaged and even the rhetorical foundations of the casuistry they practiced—it was a basic principle in all their ministries, even if they did not explicitly identify it as rhetorical.²⁰

From Scholarly Engagement to Pedagogical Advocacy: *Eloquentia Redux*

In the last several years, O'Malley made a series of scholarly excursions from the Renaissance to the current—and future—landscape of Jesuit higher education. Having written extensively on the rediscovery of classical rhetoric (especially Cicero and Quintilian) remade through Christian humanism and humanistic schooling, he documented the ways in which Jesuit rhetors (teachers, orators, and writers) repurposed classical texts and pedagogies for the creation of eloquent and moral citizens through its global educational system, encoded in the great *Ratio Studiorum of 1599*. In the Jesuit educational system, the humanistic “college” that operated from the 1550's for over two hundred years before the Suppression, the chief aim was *eloquentia perfecta*.²¹ In this third and last turn, O'Malley refocused his attention on the potential for reclaiming rhetorical education in the service of *eloquentia perfecta* for the 21st century, writing a series of short essays directed to Jesuit higher education and beyond, for example, “Eloquentia” in *America* and “Not For Ourselves Alone: Rhetorical Education in the Jesuit Mode With Five Bullet Points for Today,” in *Conversations*.²² In the latter, O'Malley provides this important overview:

In this student-centered system as it developed historically, literature in all its forms, which included history, was the core of the curriculum. These “humane letters” were subjects not taught in the universities. The humanist educators of the Renaissance saw them as crucial to true education because they treated questions pertinent to human life—questions of life and death, of virtue and vice, of greed and redemption, and of the ambivalence in human decision-making. They dealt with such questions not so much through abstract principles as through stories, poetry, plays, and historical examples that illuminated moral alternatives and, supposedly, inspired students to want to make choices leading to a satisfying human life.

In this tradition a satisfying human life was seen not as self-enclosed and self-

absorbed but as directed, at least in some measure, to the common weal. That finality, which is what made the tradition appealing to the Jesuits, was imposed upon the system by rhetoric, the culminating and defining discipline in the curriculum. The *rhetor* was a certain kind of person.²³

With this context, O'Malley offered several short trenchant insights for renewing “eloquence,” emphasizing the importance of literary studies and humane letters, attending to precision, clarity and elegance in speech and writing, accommodating to situation and to audience, and joining of wisdom and virtue in the service of the larger community. These short essays have been very widely read and used in curricular and pedagogical conversations over the past fifteen years, especially in the US as we will see in the next section.

How Does O'Malley Get Taken Up in Modern Rhetorical Studies?

Since the late 1960s, two overlapping intellectual currents made the emerging field of Jesuit Rhetoric possible. First, the development of new historiographic approaches opened up religious historical scholarship to less confessional bias, and encouraged lay and secular scholarship of many kinds, led by O'Malley and others.²⁴ Similarly, that era saw the emergence of international interest in the history of rhetoric from the classical period to the present, with considerable attention paid to the legacy of the Renaissance, that last great renewal of the classical tradition, reforged through Christian humanism that dominated all public discourse for centuries (such as Bizzell and Herzberg, Conley, Fumaroli, Kennedy, Kraus, Mack, Murphy).²⁵ Other than in *Praise and Blame*, O'Malley participates directly in this tradition as well, if rarely, with works like “Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth Century Treatises on Preaching” in James Jerome Murphy's *Renaissance Eloquence*.²⁶ Even so, it is easy to see how O'Malley's work joins both of these movements, and thus becomes visible to rhetorical scholars, even if he does not participate in their scholarly organizations, such as the Rhetoric Society of America, the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (ISHR), or the International Society for the Study of Jesuit

Rhetoric (ISSJR), or publish in journals devoted to rhetorical scholarship (*Rhetorica*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*). Significantly, given the Jesuits' very extended histories in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and globally, and their much more recent and often marginalized history in US education, with its primarily Protestant origins, O'Malley's influence on modern rhetorical scholarship, both historical and pedagogical, takes somewhat different forms in international and US contexts.

John O'Malley's International Influences

It's fairly easy to see how O'Malley's work would be taken up by international classicists, Renaissance scholars, historians of European education, scholars interested in sacred genres or their own national histories of humane letters, as well as those interested in center-periphery and post-colonial work, who are by their very nature working in aligned areas of inquiry. There has not been much international interest yet in O'Malley's most recent work on rhetorical pedagogy, as Jesuit higher education has been diminished in most European and other transnational contexts since the Suppression, though it is now being renewed. When members of the new International Society for the Study of Jesuit Rhetoric (ISSJR) founded in 2017 were asked how they were informed by O'Malley's work, several well-known international scholars responded.²⁷ Their comments speak to the multiple scholarly threads they have found useful, especially in his earlier works on sacred oratory and Jesuit orators, his works on educational history in international contexts, research on rhetorical exchanges in missionary work, and his written and edited works on the Jesuits' complex relationships to the arts, culture, and the sciences—all of which bear the impress of the capacious and polysemous rhetorical principles and practices associated with the Jesuits.

*Sophie Conte, Professor, UFR de Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne, France*²⁸

John O'Malley's work has always been an essential reference in my research on Jesuit rhetoric and sacred rhetoric in general, beyond his well-known works dedicated to the history of the Society of Jesus. Thus, *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome:*

Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521 allows us to understand many issues of sacred rhetoric, even before the creation of the Society of Jesus. In particular, I have drawn on the article "Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching" in *Renaissance Eloquence*²⁹ for several articles on ecclesiastical rhetoric before and after the Council of Trent, which was a necessary building block in the development of my research. I also think it's important to point out that John O'Malley's work beyond Jesuit rhetoric helps us better understand it and put it in perspective in the rich field of medieval and early modern ecclesiastical rhetoric.

*Manfred Kraus, Professor Emeritus, Department of Classics, University of Tübingen, Germany*³⁰

John O'Malley's book on the first Jesuits was the first book I ever bought on Jesuit matters. I had gotten interested in the Jesuits because of my work on early modern progymnasmata handbooks, but O'Malley deepened my knowledge on Jesuit education and rhetoric. So, yes, O'Malley's work had great influence on my research interests with respect to Jesuit rhetoric, even before Jerry Murphy ventured the idea of Jesuit rhetoric as a field of research of its own.

*Patrick C. Goujon, S.J., Professor of the History of Spirituality and Systematic Theology, Centre Sèvres, Facultés Jésumites de Paris, France*³¹

O'Malley struck me when I discovered in his *First Jesuits* a balanced and unapologetic study of the Jesuits. He was the first to situate the place of rhetoric in Jesuit culture without restricting it to the Spiritual Exercises or the Ratio, but truly rooted in a view of what the Jesuit missions were. Then, all his work on Jesuit history has always suggested to me a way for studying Jesuit cultures (plural) rather than only concentrating on a so-called "spirituality" which seems to float above concrete notions of space, time, and people.

Hanne Roer, Associate Professor of Rhetoric,
University of Copenhagen, Denmark³²

My first ‘meeting’ with O’Malley was his book: *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521*. I still find that this book is something extraordinary because with its focus on a limited time period, O’Malley succeeds in making this very important period stand vividly in front of the reader’s eyes. The book is, of course, exemplary in the depth and precision of the historical research, also showing a deep understanding of the functions of rhetoric in the period right before the Reformation in which Catholics used rhetoric handbooks including Lutheran treatises, seemingly not quite realizing the implications of the northern reformation taking place around 1521 (which O’Malley describes with a hint of humor, I think). And now, of course, his two edited volumes on the Jesuits (*Arts, Cultures, and Sciences*)³³ are simply indispensable.

Bartosz Awianowicz, Professor of Classics,
Nicolaus Copernicus University, Torun, Poland³⁴

While John O’Malley’s publications on early modernity are most important to me, what makes his work unique, in my opinion, is his courage to deal with the history of 16th and 20th centuries with equal freedom. Three outstanding scholars of ancient, medieval and early modern rhetoric died in 2022: while to George A. Kennedy I owe an excellent synthesis of the history of rhetoric from antiquity to the twentieth century, and to James J. Murphy a still up-to-date comprehensive study of medieval rhetoric, to John W. O’Malley I owe an understanding of cultural-social-religious context for the rhetoric of the early modern period, elaborated so reliably and objectively that when reading, I forget that the author belonged not only to one of the rival confessions in the 16th-18th centuries—the Catholics—but was a member of the Jesuit order. For me, the most important are: *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome: Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court*, *The First Jesuits*, and *Religious Culture in the Sixteenth Century: Preaching, Rhetoric, Spirituality, and Reform, sine ira et studio*. He wrote his books with lightness, and even wit, which makes them

recommendable to undergraduate students as well as graduate students.

(Dr. Awianowicz also notes that many of O’Malley’s works have been translated into Polish to make them accessible to scholars there.)

Maria Violeta Custodio Perez, Catedrática de Filología
Latina, Departamento de Filología Clásica,
Universidad de Cádiz, Spain³⁵

Both *Praise and Blame* as well as the compilation *Religious Culture in the Sixteenth Century* have come to be bedside books for me, as they are a basic source not only for understanding Jesuit spirituality, but also for understanding the relationship between the evolution of sacred rhetoric in the Catholic and Protestant spheres in the Renaissance. O’Malley’s research on an immense number of sermons delivered before the papal court has always been a source of great admiration for me, as he dealt with mostly manuscript material—difficult to read and unstudied. This impressive work on primary sources should be more fully acknowledged and valued. Moreover, his works “Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching” and “Erasmus and the History of Sacred Rhetoric: The Ecclesiastes of 1535” have been of great help to me in studying the relationship between Catholic and Protestant sacred preaching, as well as the flow of information that passed back and forth and largely escaped the Spanish Inquisition, as in the case of Fray Lorenzo de Villavicencio and his adaptations (currently we could say plagiarisms) of Hyperius’ rhetorical and theological work.

Aiko Okamoto-McPhail,
Department of French and Italian, Indiana University³⁶

The historiography of the Society of Jesus can be divided between two styles: before and after the generation of O’Malley. After the restoration of the Society, for a long time, history of the Society of Jesus was written by the Jesuits for the Jesuits. It was defensive and introverted. When we were reading, we felt that incongruous matters were intentionally omitted. I do not know if O’Malley is the first, but he is certainly the most famous among the new breed of Jesuit historians. With

him, we feel sure to have a more nuanced and objective account, and with such an erudition!

My work concerns the rhetorical encounters related to the Jesuits' remote mission to Japan. When cultural conventions are historically entirely different, there is no such thing as a transparent means of expression to convey spirituality. Familiar expressions in Europe become unfamiliar and opaque, and we need to overcome/translate these mutually alien codes of expression that stand as material obstacles to reach the meanings hidden behind them. (For example, oil painting with a linear perspective did not exist in East Asia.) O'Malley's histories pay close attention to the history of the complex forms of rhetorical accommodation and attunement required for productive exchange between radically different East/West cultures, which is really important to current scholarship.

The Jesuits: Arts, Cultures and Sciences, Volumes I and II, cover the diverse fields of Jesuit activities, not only in foreign missions but also in various artistic fields (fine arts, performance, etc.). As for *The First Jesuits*, it showed me that in fact the European past can be sometimes as alien as a foreign culture that requires a thorough explanation. So, geographically, culturally, and historically, O'Malley put the Society of Jesus in the world. In his books the Society of Jesus is living and breathing in diverse societies and cultures.

O'Malley's Influence on American Jesuit Rhetorical Studies

For American rhetoricians (other than those who are classicists, Renaissance scholars, or historians of rhetoric), the history of influence is a bit less linear and straightforward, given that rhetorical history as it has been traditionally studied in the US is primarily Anglo and Protestant rather than Catholic and continental. Instead, much modern secular interest in Jesuit rhetoric has been generated from the twenty-seven US Jesuit colleges and universities seeking to understand the history of Jesuit education and to recover and renew 'a usable past' from that history. As Jesuit institutions became increasingly staffed by lay faculty and deliberately open to students of all confessions (or no religious affiliation), it became increasingly important to give faculty an

understanding of the history and aims of Jesuit education. And as Jesuit higher education has attempted to meet the challenges of the current age, yet retain its distinctive mission, the serendipitous publication of *The First Jesuits*, both erudite and accessible, became a very popular resource for faculty orientation and development.

For writing, rhetoric, and communication faculty, engaging with O'Malley's powerful claims on the early Society's extended program of rhetorical training to promote *eloquentia perfecta* and create informed, ethical, eloquent adults able to *act* for their personal, cultural, and public good was very exciting. Interested faculty across many Jesuit institutions started a series of informal discussions around 2000, intending to discover more about this history and its possible uses for renewing these vital principles for the current moment. *The First Jesuits* and other shorter works by O'Malley became indispensable texts for our collective self-education projects. Serendipitously, new historiographic perspectives provided for more nuanced histories of American rhetorical history and renewed interest in religious and spiritual rhetorics. Indeed, Catholic and Jesuit education, always marginalized—and mostly erased—from these histories could now be studied as a legitimate topic for scholarly research, so our collective inquiries began to take up these scholarly and pedagogical questions.

In May 2005, Drs. Peggy O'Neill and Cynthia Gannett from Loyola University Maryland organized a Rhetoric Society of America Summer Institute on Jesuit Rhetoric with participants from several Jesuit universities to teach each other about the role of rhetoric in the history of Jesuit education, examine the role of rhetoric in contemporary Jesuit colleges, and create a plan for promoting rhetoric and composition in Jesuit education.³⁷ Faculty from Loyola Maryland, Saint Louis University, John Carroll University, St. Joseph's, Marquette, Holy Cross, Loyola Marymount, and other schools participated.

Shortly thereafter, we established the Jesuit Conference on Rhetoric and Composition, a working group with nearly 100 members from almost every US Jesuit college and university under the American Jesuit College and University

organization: [Jesuit Conference on Rhetoric & Composition \(JCRC\)](#).


Steve Mailloux, President's Professor of Rhetoric at Loyola Marymount (Emeritus), an eminent scholar of modern rhetorical theory, and a prominent scholar of Jesuit rhetorical studies in both transnational and US contexts offers this representative and summative view of O'Malley's influence on his scholarship and his institution's efforts at curriculum reform:

John O'Malley's *The First Jesuits* was, of course, part of my crash course on the history of the Jesuits when I left University of California Irvine for Loyola Marymount in 2009, and I had him on my reading list for the fall semester independent study I did with a graduate student, Maureen Fitzsimmons, on Jesuit rhetoric when I arrived. I was really pleased to discover the strong connection O'Malley made between rhetoric and the Jesuit practice of accommodationism in their way of proceeding. Indeed, O'Malley makes a point of emphasizing the rhetorical nature of Jesuit accommodation, so much so that his index entries for "accommodation" and for "rhetoric" cross-reference each other.

I've cited this point in most of the writing I've done on Jesuit rhetoric. Beyond my scholarly debt to Father O'Malley, I am also personally indebted to his generosity. In 2011 he accepted our invitation to speak at the LMU Bellarmine Forum on "Ignatian Imagination in the World: The Future of Education, Faith, and Justice." A year and a half later, when I had just joined the editorial board of *Conversations*, Father O'Malley contributed the lead essay, "Not for Ourselves Alone": Rhetorical Education in the Jesuit Mode with Five Bullet Points for Today," to our special issue "*Eloquentia Perfecta*: Writing and Speaking Well." As for LMU curricular reform, O'Malley's *First Jesuits* was in the intellectual background and the 2013 *Conversations* essay on *eloquentia perfecta* with his short essay was widely

distributed among faculty and rhetorical arts instructors."

John O'Malley graciously provided the important forward to the first American collection on Jesuit rhetoric, *Traditions of Eloquence: The Jesuits and Modern Rhetorical Studies* (Fordham, 2016), with essays by over twenty-five scholars on many historical and pedagogical topics. His influence shows all the way through the collection: in the first two sections on the history of Jesuit rhetorical education, O'Malley's many works on the educational project of the early society provided the touchstones for many of those scholarly essays. O'Malley's later essays on the possibilities for eloquence education anchored and informed the third and final section on recent efforts to recuperate and remake Jesuit education, featuring initiatives at Seattle, Fordham, Loyola Marymount, St. Joseph's, Marquette, Loyola Maryland, and Saint Louis University. Jesuit Rhetoric was identified as one of the featured seminars at the national Rhetoric and Religion Seminar (2018) and will be represented as a subject area in the collection on rhetoric and religion coming out in 2023, bringing this work into mainstream American conversations on rhetoric.³⁸ Indeed, we have seen a surge of specialized scholarship in several languages, including conference papers at multiple research societies, both national and international.³⁹ The new field of Jesuit rhetoric is well and truly launched, thanks in large part to John O'Malley's historical acumen, his devotion to the Jesuits' *ministries of the word*, and his generosity of spirit—using his own rhetoric for the larger community.

Afterword: We prepared this essay to present to John personally and are saddened by the knowledge that he will not be able to receive it. Even so, we offer our remarks to honor him for his contributions and his personal commitment and enthusiasm for this work. Simply put, what we have come to realize is that he was not only a scholar of Jesuit eloquence, he was also an exemplar of it. 

Notes

¹ This is the subtitle of his intellectual memoir on becoming a historian.

² John W. O'Malley, S.J., *The Education of a Historian: A Strange and Wonderful Story* (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2021).

³ Georgetown University Campus Ministry, "The Education of a Historian: Discussing the Life, Work, and Education of John W. O'Malley, S.J.," streamed live on November 12, 2021, YouTube video, 1:27:41, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNZWjQgX2-0>

⁴ John W. O'Malley S.J., interviewed by Allen Brizee, Cinthia Gannett, and John Brereton; Baltimore, Maryland, May 26, 2022.

⁵ Anthony Grafton, *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2009), 160-175. Grafton also uses O'Malley to discuss the discursive nature of the Spiritual Exercises, the uses of casuistry and polemic, as well as the persuasive power of visual, architectural, and dramatic arts, which O'Malley takes up in several works.

⁶ Grafton, *Worlds Made by Words*, 169.

⁷ Stephen Schloesser, "Accommodation as a Rhetorical Principle: Twenty Years after John O'Malley's *The First Jesuits*," *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 1 (2014): 347-372.

⁸ Schloesser, "Accommodation," 349.

⁹ Schloesser, "Accommodation," 350. In a footnote (360), Schloesser discusses O'Malley's gradual "immersion into rhetoric" starting with his dissertation, which later became the monograph, *Giles of Viterbo on Church and Reform: A Study in Renaissance Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), <https://brill.com/view/title/5158>, which prefigures his interest in epideictic discourse. O'Malley is much more cautious/ circumspect in tracing his interest in rhetoric to suggestions from Paul Oskar Kristeller, which led to *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome*, and demurs about the nature of his remarks on rhetoric, suggesting he has used it a "method of analysis" (*Education of a Historian*) rather than a subject of inquiry per se (175).

¹⁰ John W. O'Malley, S.J., *Praise and Blame in Renaissance Rome, Rhetoric, Doctrine, and Reform in the Sacred Orators of the Papal Court, c. 1450-1521* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1979), Georgetown interview, 2021; Baltimore interview, 2022.

¹¹ O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, vii.

¹² O'Malley, *Education*, 136. O'Malley's student John McManamon, also a Jesuit, also focused his scholarship on oratory—including his Ph.D. dissertation (1984), revised and published as *Funeral Oratory and the Cultural Ideals of Italian Humanism* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989; *Pierpaolo Vergerio the Elder: The Humanist as Orator*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 163 (Tempe: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Arizona State University, 1996); and the edition and translation of *Sermones pro Sancto Hieronymo*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 177 (Tempe: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Arizona State University, 1999). See https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/history/faculty/cvs/McManamon_CV_2018.pdf

¹³ Aurelino Lippo Brandolini (1447-97) was an Augustinian rhetoric teacher at the University of Rome, who delivered panegyrics in Florence and Rome and wrote this significant textbook on rhetoric.

¹⁴ O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 47.

¹⁵ O'Malley, *Praise and Blame*, 47.

¹⁶ See the course syllabus for "Epideictic Rhetoric and the Medieval & Early Modern Sermon Staff," taught by David Rijser and Bart Ramaker, at https://www.knir.it/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Epideictic-Rhetoric-and-the-Early-Modern-Sermon_6.pdf

¹⁷ John W. O'Malley, S.J., *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

¹⁸ Cinthia Gannett and John C. Brereton, eds., *Traditions of Eloquence: The Jesuits and Modern Rhetorical Studies* (Fordham University Press, 2016).

¹⁹ He reiterates and expands on these claims in several of the chapters, in many of his essays in the excellent collection *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, Studies in Jesuit History, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), and in his short pedagogical essays in *America* and *Conversations* (cited in n. 21 of this article). In our interview, O'Malley himself made special mention of Robert Maryks for organizing the collection *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, which includes several essays that treat Jesuit rhetoric.

²⁰ O'Malley, *The First Jesuits*, 255.

²¹ In the Renaissance, subjects like history and literature were taught in the *college*; university work was confined

to Theology, Medicine, Law, and sometimes Philosophy. The standard authority on this is Paul Grendler, *The Jesuits and Italian Universities, 1548-1773* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2017.)

²² “Eloquentia: A Short History,” *America*, May 16, 2011, <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/776/article/eloquentia>; “Not for Ourselves Alone’: Rhetorical Education in the Jesuit Mode with Five Bullet Points for Today,” *Conversations* 43, no. 1 (2013): 3-5, <https://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1803&context=conversations>.

²³ O’Malley, “Not for Ourselves”, 3-4.

²⁴ O’Malley, “Historiographic,” 3-37. Interestingly, O’Malley’s own historical scholarly trajectory parallels the historiographic claims he makes about the changes in scholarship by and about the Jesuits in the second half of the 20th century.

²⁵ Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, eds., *The Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present* (Boston: Bedford-St. Martin’s Press, 2001); Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in the European Tradition* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Marc Fumaroli, *L’Age de l’Eloquence*, 3rd ed. (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1994); Lawrence D. Green and James J. Murphy, *Renaissance Rhetoric Short Title Catalogue, 1460-1700*, 2nd ed. (Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, 2006); George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Jiri Kraus, *Rhetoric in European Culture and Beyond*, trans. Petra Key (Prague: Karolinum, 2014); Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380-1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); James J. Murphy, ed., *Renaissance Eloquence* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); James J. Murphy, ed., *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Contemporary America*, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 2012). We have only listed some key books in English. There are certainly others in other languages.

²⁶ Since O’Malley rarely wrote for an audience of rhetorical scholars, it is interesting that O’Malley contributed an essay to this collection on *Renaissance Eloquence*. But noticing that both his mentor and colleague Paul Oskar Kristeller wrote the opening essay and another colleague, Charles Trinkhaus, contributed an essay, it might have been an attractive invitation to write in their company.

²⁷ We want to acknowledge two other important early sponsors of Jesuit rhetorical studies: James Jerome Murphy and Marc Fumaroli.

²⁸ Dr. Conte has written extensively on Nicolas Caussin and Louis Cressolles, two important French Jesuit preachers and authors of key Jesuit rhetorical treatises, and well as a recent monograph on Quintilian. She is the most recent past president of the International Society of Jesuit Rhetoric (2019- 2022).

²⁹ John W. O’Malley, S.J., “Content and Rhetorical Forms in Sixteenth-Century Treatises on Preaching” in *Renaissance Eloquence*, 238-252.

³⁰ Dr. Manfred Kraus is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Classics at the University of Tübingen. He has served as both President of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric and of ISSJR (2017-2019). His research interests focus on the history of classical and Renaissance rhetorical texts.

³¹ Patrick C. Goujon, S.J, is a professor of the History of Spirituality and in Systematic Theology at Centre Sèvres, Facultés Jésumites de Paris. He has published several books and many papers (*Etudes, Christus, The Way, Ignaziana*) on Ignatian spirituality, both from a historical viewpoint and for a contemporary understanding. His works lead him to revisit the development of a Jesuit spiritual literature and to focus on the model—spiritual, anthropological and theological—of accompaniment. Among his books: *Les Politiques de l’âme. Direction spirituelle et jésuites français à l’époque moderne* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2019), and *Counsels of the Holy Spirit: A Reading of St Ignatius’s Letters*, trans. Joseph Munitiz, S.J. (Dublin: Messenger, 2021).

³² Dr. Hanne Roer is Vice President of The International Society for the History of Rhetoric (<https://ishr-web.org/aws/ISHR/pt/sp/board>). Her key research areas include the history of Danish rhetoric and the reception of Augustine’s rhetorical writings from 430 to modern rhetoric, especially medieval and Jesuit rhetoric. Her papers, book chapters, and journal articles have for the past years been dedicated to Danish orators and issues, as well Augustine’s rhetoric and its impact on later rhetorical writers in the Middle Ages, the early modern period as well as 18th century rhetoricians (such as Dante, Petrarch, Strada, Melanchthon, Reggio, Segneri, Panigarola, Fenelon, Noghera) and modern rhetorical theorists such as Kenneth Burke.

³³ John W. O’Malley, S.J., Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven Harris, and T. Frank Kennedy, S.J., eds., *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences and the Arts, 1540-1773*, vols. I and II (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

³⁴ Dr. Bartosz Awianowicz is professor at the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland at the Institute of Literary Studies, Faculty of Humanities of the NCU. His research areas are ancient rhetoric and its reception in its reception in the early modern period by Catholic (Jesuit) and Protestant confessions, neo-Latin panegyrics, ancient (especially Roman imperial and provincial) and numismatics. He is the incoming co-Vice President of ISSJR.

³⁵ Dr. Custodio Perez is Professor of Latin Philology (Department of Classical Philology) at the University of Cádiz, Spain. Her areas of research include Renaissance rhetoric, handbooks of rhetorical progymnasmata in early modern Spain, and Jesuit rhetoric. She is incoming Vice President of ISSJR.

³⁶ Dr. Okamoto McPhail is Adjunct Assistant Professor in Department of French at Indiana University. She is also an Affiliated Faculty at the Institute for European Studies Indiana University and the newly elected President of ISSJR. She studies the complex educational and cultural history of the Jesuit

engagement with Japan in the early modern period in the rich forms of linguistic, discursive, and artistic exchange.

³⁷ Peggy O'Neill and Cinthia Gannett (unpublished RSA Summer Institute Workshop Proposal, 2005).

³⁸ John Brereton and Cinthia Gannett, "We Are Not Born for Ourselves Alone," in Michael-John DePalma, Paul Lynch, and Jeff Ringer, eds., *Rhetoric and Religion in the Twenty-First Century: Pluralism in a Postsecular Age* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, forthcoming, 2023).

³⁹ ISSJR is currently organizing a major collection of international scholarship on Jesuit rhetoric to be dedicated to John W. O'Malley and James J. Murphy. We would also like to acknowledge the important work of the Institute for Advanced Jesuit Studies, which has also provided many resources through its Fellows Program, publications, conferences, and speaker's series. O'Malley was a featured speaker on multiple occasions there.