

Beyond the Speaker: the Audience in Seneca the Elder

by

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B.A, University of British Columbia, 2012

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department of Greek and Roman Studies

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## Abstract

Seneca the Elder's *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* (c. 39 CE) provide a window onto declamation (fictional forensic or deliberative oratory) during the reign of the Roman emperor Augustus (27 BCE–CE 14). Although widely practiced as a form of elite education and entertainment, declamation was maligned by contemporaries as detrimental to rhetorical development. Modern scholars, such as Bloomer, Gunderson and Imber, have demonstrated how declamation acted as a medium for learning and asserting elite cultural identity. Previous scholarship, however, has focused on only the speaker in declamation. In this thesis I examine the secondary voices present during declamation: other speakers and the audience.

In Chapter 1, I place Seneca the Elder and his work in context and examine how the format of his work allowed for the inclusion of voices beyond the speaker's. In Chapter 2, I examine how declamation allowed its participants to assert a claim on Roman identity and lay out Seneca's critical model, through which he validated or denied the identity-claims of the men in his work. In Chapter 3, I look at declamation as a multi-participant activity, examining speaker-to-speaker interactions in Seneca's text and the way he constructs a community of shared speech, one which is tied to successful performance rather than a particular time or place, to support these interactions. In Chapter 4, I argue that Seneca uses the voice of the audience to assert and maintain the boundaries of the community and that he applies the label of *scholastici* (men who viewed declamation exclusively as entertainment) to audience members who fail to maintain the boundaries and, thus, rebuts the main complaint against declamation by relegating its unsuccessful participants to another genre of speech.

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### Notes on Abbreviations, Editions, and Translations

All abbreviations follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. All Latin and Greek translations in this thesis are my own, unless otherwise noted. When quoting from Seneca the Elder, I have primarily used:

Winterbottom, M., ed. and trans. 1974. *The Elder Seneca: Declamations*. 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

I also make reference to:

Müller, H.J. 1887. *L. Annaei Senecae: Oratorum et Rhetorum Sententiae Divisiones Colores*. Vienna: F. Tempsky.

For quotations from other Latin and Greek texts, I have used the following editions, unless otherwise noted:

Baiter, J.G., and C.L. Kayser, eds. 1860-69. *M. Tullii Ciceronis Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia*. 11 vols. Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz.

Forster, E.S., ed. and trans. 1960. *Topica*. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Freese, J.H., ed. and trans. 2006. *Aristotle: The "Art" of Rhetoric*. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Friedlaender, L., ed. 1967. *M. Valerii Martialis: Epigrammaton Libri*. Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert.

Halliwell, S., W.H. Fyfe, D.C Innes, W.R. Roberts, eds and trans. 1995. *Aristotle: Poetics. Longinus: On the Sublime. Demetrius: On Style*. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Heubner, H., ed. 1978. *P. Cornelii Taciti Libri Qui Supersunt*. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner.

Kaster, R., ed. and trans. 1995. *C. Suetonius Tranquillus: De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Müller, K. ed. 1961. *Petronii Arbitri Satyricon*. München : E. Heimeran.

Radice, B., ed. and trans. 1995. *Pliny. Letters, Volume I: Books 1-7*. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Reynolds, L.D., ed. 1965. *L. Annaei Senecae: Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shackleton Bailey, D.R., ed. 1985. *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*. Stuttgart: Teubner.

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Winterbottom, M., ed. 1970. *M. Fabi Quintiliani Institutionis Oratoriae Libri Duodecim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

## Acknowledgements

This work owes its completion to the wonderful support I have received during my time in the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria. I would like especially to thank my supervisor, Dr. Gregory Rowe, whose encouragement and willingness to talk through things carried me through the rougher patches and who taught me that it is sometimes better to study a single tree than gaze lost upon an entire forest. I also thank Dr. Cedric Littlewood, both for agreeing to be a member of my committee and for his patience and insight as I worked my way through this project. Further, I thank the entire Department of Greek and Roman Studies—the community of individuals across all levels that provided support and inspiration. Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family who have been extremely patient with me as I confront the successes and setbacks that a project of this nature inevitably faces.

## Introduction

In the public baths, a mixed group of students and enthusiastic amateurs gather in order to hear a wry and bitter man, full of confidence, deliver his *In Milonem*, a prosecution speech that they are sure will surpass Cicero's famous defence, only to have the performance interrupted by a loudmouthed brute (*Contr.* 3.pr.15-6). Meanwhile, in twin halls, two men deliver speeches that touch on the loss of a child. The first man is resolute, his eloquence enhanced by fortitude; the second is awash with emotions that carry away his audience (*Contr.* 4.pr.6). Across town, an aspiring philosopher acquires habits that it will take his whole life to unlearn from a brilliant teacher who is marred by effeminate rhythms (*Contr.* 2.pr.1).

These scenes represent only some of the ways that Romans participated in declamation, a cultural phenomenon that swept through the Augustan aristocracy. Declamations were speeches on artificial themes; contrived scenarios played out by folkloric characters, who obeyed laws only vaguely resembling those in actual use.<sup>1</sup> These themes could be subdivided into two types: (1) *controversiae*, speeches on the judicial model; and (2) *suasoriae*, deliberative speeches offering advice to a historical figure or, as in the case of *Suas.* 2, group. Together, these two types of speech comprised the final stages of a young man's education.<sup>2</sup> Declamation, however, was

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<sup>1</sup> Beard (1993) compares the practice of declamation to cultural myth-making as a means of exploring irresolvable conflicts. For a survey of the laws of declamation and their relation to actual Greek and Roman legal practice see Bonner 1969, 84-132.

<sup>2</sup> *Suasoriae* were regarded as the more elementary exercise and would be entrusted to children at a young age as Tacitus makes clear: "Ex his suasoriae quidem etsi, tamquam plane leviores et minus prudentiae exigentes, pueris delegantur..." ("From these, *suasoriae*, as being clearly lighter and less demanding of judgement, are assigned to mere boys..." Tac. *Dial.* 35.4).

not just for children. During the Augustan period, educated adults frequently participated as a form of entertainment.<sup>3</sup>

Our knowledge of the circumstances and personalities of declamation during the Augustan period derives primarily from the work of Seneca the Elder (hereafter, simply Seneca), who around 39 CE compiled two works of declamation—the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*.<sup>4</sup> These works represented the collection of the best *sententiae* (epigrams), pithy expressions initially intended to add rhetorical flourish to periodic sentences, from declaimers of Seneca's generation, assembled both for the edification of his sons, Gallio, Seneca the Younger and Mela (*Contr.* 1.pr.1), and so that they would not be forgotten during the current crisis of eloquence (*Contr.* 1.pr.6). These works, however, do not contain only excerpts from speakers, but also numerous anecdotes, pen-portraits, asides, and even criticisms that help to shape the context of performance. This allows insight into an oft-ignored aspect of declamation during the Augustan period; namely, that it was not a single-participant event. Speakers engaged with one another across performances through the production and repetition of *sententiae* and *colores* (rhetorical spin) and the audience helped to shape their speech through expression of praise or censure.

In this thesis, I will explore the role of participant interaction in shaping the discourse of declamation. My definition of participant is broad and encompasses both speakers and spectators, as the words of each had an impact on the discourse of declamation. (1) Speaker-to-audience interaction is the typical mode of thinking about declamation—a man stands in front of

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<sup>3</sup> Hömke (2007) does an excellent job of foregrounding this aspect of declamation, although I disagree with the distinction she makes between educational and recreational declamation. Bonner (1969, 39-40) suggests more gradual development as schools were slowly opened—first to parents and then rival instructors as means of demonstrating the *rhetor*'s wit.

<sup>4</sup> Sussman 1978, 93 believes that this process may have been iterative with the *Controversiae* being written first.

his peers and attempts to eloquently articulate their shared social values.<sup>5</sup> (2) Speaker-to-speaker interactions were iterative and, Huelsenbeck argues, occurred as *sententiae* were repeated across performances.<sup>6</sup> These iterations add a collaborative dynamic to the exploration of Roman social mores facilitated by declamation. (3) Audience-to-speaker interactions gave the broader community a voice, as it was able to articulate or deny consensus with the speaker's deployment of the shared values of the community and thus shape the transmission of those values as unsuccessful expressions were abandoned.<sup>7</sup> These three forms of interaction are interconnected and each depends on the others to be successful.

My study owes a great debt to two works of scholarship that have informed our understanding of the impact that an audience could have on speech. The first of these is Bablitz's *Actors and Audiences in the Roman Courtroom*, in which she uses the interaction between advocate and audience to provide a fuller image of the Roman courtroom.<sup>8</sup> Her work demonstrates the necessity of praise for speakers in an environment in which the approval of the crowd was beneficial but not necessary for victory. This is only magnified in the case of declamation, in which the audience determined success or failure. The second work is Bartsch's *Actors in the Audience*, in which she demonstrated the impact that the direct impact that the audience could have on a speech through the recognition of meaning—even when that meaning was unintended by the original speaker.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For declamation as assertion and inculcation of Roman values, see esp. Beard 1993; Bloomer 1997b; Connolly 1998; Gunderson 2003; and Corbeill 2007.

<sup>6</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015, 35-62.

<sup>7</sup> Lobur 2008. For the audience as the judges of successful performance, see Gleason 1994, xxiii.

<sup>8</sup> Bablitz 2007, 120-40.

<sup>9</sup> Bartsch 1994, 63-97 (esp. 82-4 as this section relates to Latro's unfortunate turn of phrase at *Contr.* 2.4.12-3).

Our understanding of declamation in the early Principate is necessarily mediated through the lens of Seneca's text. Therefore, in Chapter 1, I put that text as well as its author in context.<sup>10</sup> Seneca lived through a period of considerable unrest, in which the avenues for social advancement and elite competition were fundamentally altered.<sup>11</sup> He was also a wealthy provincial, a newly incorporated member of the Rome elite—in other words, the target audience for declamation.<sup>12</sup> The latter sections of Chapter 1 are devoted to exploring what the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* actually contain as well as how their unique format allows for the preservation of the audience's responses to declamatory speeches.

In Chapter 2, I explore declamation from the traditional perspective of single-participant activity and address the question of what one would actually see were they to attend a declamatory performance. In the first section, I establish how declamation came to Rome and the form that it took once it had arrived. This necessitates (in the next section) addressing a common Roman criticism of declamation, that it was not only an activity for children but also a defective form of education.<sup>13</sup> These criticisms exploited the massive unreality of the particulars of declamatory cases in order to demonstrate their worthlessness. This unreality, however, was in fact a boon, as it allowed young men to learn to navigate exceedingly complex social situations, in which the stock characters and scenarios provided fixed points of reference.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Griffin (1972) continues to be authoritative on the dating of Seneca's life.

<sup>11</sup> Roller (2001, 3-13) discusses how new avenues of competition were developed in response to the princeps' dominance of the traditional spheres of competition. Moatti (2015, 164) argues that this process actually began in the late Republic.

<sup>12</sup> For declamation as "recruitment tool" for the elite, see Sinclair 1995a; Bloomer 1997a, 199.

<sup>13</sup> Criticisms that are found within Seneca's own text (*Contr.* 3.pr and 9.pr).

<sup>14</sup> Kaster 2001, 325. Bloomer (1997b), Gunderson (2003) and Imber (2008) all articulate this education as learning to be *pater* (father).

The educational benefits of declamation do not explain its appeal to adult participants. Certainly it was entertaining and allowed speakers and audience members to relive fond memories of their youths.<sup>15</sup> More than this, however, declamation allowed individuals access to a sphere of competition that was simultaneously free from the dangers of public speech (and dominance by the princeps) and allowed for a sense of continuity with the past as it recalled the traditional sphere of rhetorical competition. This connection is reinforced by Seneca as he cites Cicero as an early declaimer (*Contr.* 1.pr.11-2).<sup>16</sup>

Here we first see the hand of our author as he works to legitimize declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition. I therefore conclude the chapter by examining Seneca's critical model—the framework by which he determines and indicates success and failure for the various declaimers within his work. This effort is divided into two parts. First, I examine how Seneca treats individual declaimers and then I place this in the broader context of his model of generational decline, which underpins the core of the work.

In Chapter 3, I examine declamation as a multi-participant activity through two divergent lenses. The first looks past participants to the broader community of shared speech created by declamation, membership in which is determined solely by one's capability to compete. While this does allow for easier incorporation of the provincial elite, it is also problematic as it allows for the inclusion of unsuitable individuals. Seneca responded to this problem through the construction of a more refined community, one which is dependent on memory, imitation and a belief in the decline of eloquence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Both Seneca (*Contr.* 1.pr.1) and Pliny (*Ep.* 2.3) discuss declamation in this way.

<sup>16</sup> For the importance of Cicero to declamation see Roller 1997; Kaster 1998; Richlin 1999; and Lobur 2008.

<sup>17</sup> For the use of memory in Seneca's text see Gunderson 2003, 29-58. For imitation see Trinacty 2009; McGill 2010; 2012, 146-77.

The members of this community are those men that conformed to Seneca's critical model. What is more, Seneca is able to bring his members together within his work to create a single meta-declamation by arranging speech from different instances of performance under a singular heading—for instance, “sacerdos prostituta” (“the prostitute priestess,” *Contr.* 1.2).<sup>18</sup> It is here that we see speaker-to-speaker interactions, both real and those constructed by Seneca.

In Chapter 4, I explore audience-to-speaker interaction. My aim is demonstrate that members of the declamatory audience were not passive, but participants in their own right. Indeed, they were the most essential participants as it was their judgements that determined who was worthy of being called a *vir bonus* (good man).<sup>19</sup> These judgements were rendered through vocal expressions of support or censure. Particularly for the former this was essential. Although the praise conferred by the declamation is typically rendered “applause,” recognizing its verbal nature elevates it to “call-response” and links it to other more legitimate forms of speech.<sup>20</sup>

As with the individual speakers and the broader community of speech, Seneca also constructs an idealized audience for declamation. This manifests primarily in the types of behaviours that instigated praise. For the former, the ideal audience is not misled by the “belle sonantis” (“fine-sounding,” *Contr.* 7.4.10) but empty *sententiae*. For the latter, it means concern with detecting plagiarism and insubstantial arguments rather than focusing on rebuking vulgar or antiquated vocabulary.<sup>21</sup> Chapter 4 then concludes with an examination of the various types of

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<sup>18</sup> How much Seneca is adjusting the context of performance is difficult to ascertain. He certainly incorporates men who could not possibly have been present, such as those who he himself tells us never left Spain (*Contr.* 10.pr.13-6). On the other hand, Huelsenbeck (2015, 41) has argued convincingly that the shared loci within each case suggest that many of the speakers were indeed simultaneously present.

<sup>19</sup> This term has special significance in Seneca's work as it is the base requirement for successful oratory (*Contr.* 1.pr.9-10).

<sup>20</sup> Aldrete (1999, 114-7) notes this call-response relationship in public political speech. Bablitz (2007) does the same for court oratory.

<sup>21</sup> The obsession with avoiding words that are everyday or base is strongly associated with the *scholastici* (*Contr.* 4.pr.9-10; 7.pr.3-4).

disruptive audience that appear in Seneca's work. The worst of these are the *scholastici*: men who obsessed over declamation and yet treated it with frivolity. This group allows Seneca to name, and then exclude, the part of the declamatory community which he finds most objectionable.

## Chapter 1: Life and Work of Seneca in Context

In preserving the declaimers who had been his contemporaries (*Contr.* 1.pr.1), Seneca is not merely presenting his sons with the preceding generation of declaimers but with the first.<sup>1</sup> These were men, like Seneca himself, for whom the civil war had been lived experience, rather than a painful cultural memory.<sup>2</sup> During this turbulent period—and, indeed, into the Principate—declamation offered the opportunity for rhetorical display decoupled from the dangers of public speech and thus, served as a refuge for both politically active men and those who had been marginalized by shifting political conditions.<sup>3</sup> The presence of men who had operated outside of this insulated community (and thus, as Lobur argues, engaged in actual *dictio* rather than *declamatio*) is essential to the hierarchy of speech on which Seneca constructs his model of ethical rhetorical engagement.<sup>4</sup> The discussion of the decline of eloquence, moreover, reinforces the need to distinguish the period preserved in Seneca’s work, roughly 30 BCE-30 CE, from the time of composition and, presumably, consumption.

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<sup>1</sup> This follows Seneca’s account of the emergence of declamation (*Contr.* 1.pr.12). While this account is suspect, and we may certainly trace exercises resembling declamation in all but name to well before this point (Fairweather 1981, 104-131), the transformation in the circumstances of performance (Bonner 1969, 39-43) allows for the consideration of this declamation as sufficiently distinct from its predecessors to warrant the distinction. Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 25.3, moreover, broadly agrees with Seneca’s account.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca’s primary complaint about this period is that it deprived him of the opportunity to see Cicero declaim (*Contr.* 1.pr.11). While this may seem a mild complaint, the centrality of Cicero to declamation (see Roller 1997; Kaster 1998; and Lobur 2008, 128-169) implies its gravity—Seneca was denied access to the font of Roman eloquence. For Cicero as the height of eloquence, see *Contr.* 1.pr.6-7.

<sup>3</sup> The introduction and development of declamation will be discussed in Chapter 2 (“An Audience for What?”). For declamation as refuge or consolation, see Cic. *Brut.* 23. For significant individuals declaiming while still being politically active, see Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 25; *Aug.* 84. For the success of declamation as dependant on the political conditions of the transition to Principate: Bonner 1969; Kennedy 1972; Sussman 1978, 13-17; Sinclair 1995; Corbeill 2007; Connolly 2007; 2009.

<sup>4</sup> Lobur 2008: esp. 136-140. Seneca himself acknowledges this distinction, although he attributes it to Calvus (*Contr.* 1.pr.12).

Seneca lived from approximately 50 BCE to 39 CE. It is difficult to speak with certainty about Seneca's life as he is mostly absent from the surviving sources.<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, necessary to infer details of his life from comments made in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, of which Griffin provides the most broadly accepted account.<sup>6</sup> We know with certainty that he was a Roman citizen of equestrian standing whose family came from Corduba, a small town in southern Spain which had been heavily involved in Rome's relations with that province.<sup>7</sup> The dating of his birth relies on the acceptance of his claim that he would have been able to see Cicero instruct Hirtius and Pansa in 44 BCE (*Contr.* 1.pr.11), had he not been prevented from travelling by the civil war. Griffin, arguing for the young age at which boys could be sent to Rome (*Sen. Helv.* 19), uses this to date his birth to around 50 BCE.<sup>8</sup> He most likely began his education in Corduba as he would have been detained there until at least 42 BCE, when Sextus Pompey left Spain. This estimate is conservative, as Griffin observes Sextus still threatened the seas west of Italy until 36 BCE.<sup>9</sup> In either case, Seneca came to Rome with his friend Latro to study rhetoric under Marullus (*Contr.* 1 pref. 22).<sup>10</sup> From this point, his movements between

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<sup>5</sup> It is possible, as Sussman (1978, 161-6) has suggested, that his absence from Quintilian may be the result of hostility generated by an attack on his father and/or grandfather (*Contr.* 10.pr.2; 10.4.19). This, however, does not explain his absence from Tacitus (except as the provincial father to his sons, *Ann.* 14.53; 16.17). Some information appears in Seneca the Younger's *Consolatio ad Helviam* and *Epistle 108*, but his *De Vita Patris* has been lost (for the surviving fragments see Haase fr. xv).

<sup>6</sup> Griffin 1972.

<sup>7</sup> Griffin (1972, 1-4) outlines the Romanization of Spain through the settlement of veterans.

<sup>8</sup> Griffin 1972, 5. Sussman (1978, 20) believes this is excessively premature and argues for a range of 58-53 BCE as this would make Seneca the Elder 12-16 years old and thus align with the customary age to begin studying rhetoric.

<sup>9</sup> Griffin 1972, 6.

<sup>10</sup> The location of Marullus' school is an issue of some contention. Griffin (1972, 6) asserts that it could not be in Spain as there is no evidence for schools of Latin rhetoric in the provinces before the reign of Augustus; Sussman (1978, 20f.) argues that the location of the school cannot be discerned and either possibility is equally likely. In either case, the precise dating of Seneca's arrival in Rome is impossible (Fairweather 1981, 5 n.13).

Rome and Corduba are largely unknowable although he seems to have spent significant time in each.<sup>11</sup> It is this period, roughly 30 BCE to 30 CE, that Seneca preserves in his work.

The composition date for the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* falls somewhere between 37-9 CE. Although contested, it certainly occurred near the end of Seneca's life. Two pieces of evidence suggest a date for the text. First, Seneca refers to Tiberius in the past tense (*Suas.* 3.7). He, moreover, quotes extensively from the writings of Cremutius Cordus (*Contr.* 1 pref. 10; *Suas.* 6.19; 23), suppressed by Tiberius in 25 CE, and had access to the works of Cassius Severus, which were burnt in 12 CE. Both texts were only reintroduced early in the reign of Gaius, and if Seneca indeed intended to circulate his own work, even within a limited circle, it would have been foolish to include material from them prior to this.<sup>12</sup> We may therefore be fairly certain that his work was composed after 37 CE. The window of composition closes with the exile of his son in 41 CE as that major event is not mentioned in the work. The terminus date for the work most likely aligns closely with Seneca's own death, which likely occurred around 39 CE.<sup>13</sup>

### 1.1 The *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*

The *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* of Seneca are difficult to categorize. In form, they most closely resemble other collections of declamations, such as the *Excerpta* of Calpurnius Flaccus

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<sup>11</sup> He was most likely in Spain when Latro took his own life in 4 BCE (Bornecque 1902, 188-9); he was in Rome before 5 CE to hear Asinius Pollio instructing his grandson (Griffin 1972, 8; *Contr.* 4.pr.3-4); the earliest datable anecdote (according to Fairweather, 1981: 5 n. 13) is the performance of Ovid (*Contr.* 2.2.9), which must have occurred in Rome before 24 BCE; excerpts from Asellius Sabinus (*Contr.* 9.4.17-21; *Suas.* 2.12), Vibius Rufus (*Contr.* 1.1.12; 1.2.21, 23; 1.4.10-12; etc.), and Junius Otho (*Contr.* 1.1.5; 2.1.33-4, 37-9; etc.) belong at least to the end of Augustus' reign (Griffin 1972, 8); in the company of his sons, he also heard Mamercus Aemilius Scaurus declaim in the house of Lepidus (*Contr.* 10.pr.2-3), which Griffin (1972, 8) dates to shortly before 33 CE.

<sup>12</sup> Sussman 1978, 23-4; Griffin 1972, 4 (although she also argues in n.44 that Seneca may have had access to a private copy of Cordus' work). Suppression (and reintroduction) of these works: Tac. *Ann.* 4.34; Suet. *Calig.* 16.

<sup>13</sup> For the range of 37-41 CE, see Sussman 1978, 24; Griffin 1972, 4 and 8; and Bornecque 1902, 12.

and the *major* and *minor Declamations* attributed to Quintilian. Unlike these works, however, Seneca's text presents excerpts from multiple declaimers and is peppered with anecdotal asides and comments on these speakers.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, while it does offer guidance on correct speech, this is achieved in a different manner than more standard rhetorical treatises.<sup>15</sup> Seneca's text does not contain single, perfect declamations or rules to govern an ideal rhetoric; rather, he presents declamation in the wild—an idealized wild distilled from a lifetime of participation, but a wild nonetheless.

The unique form of Seneca's work allows, and indeed encourages, insight into the world of declamation—particularly adult declamation.<sup>16</sup> The idealized form of that world necessitates caution, or at least an awareness that our author is not presenting perfect fact; this does not mean, however, that his work does not represent reality, merely that this reality may be distorted to support his own rhetorical ends. The series of *sententiae* that Seneca presents (as well as the further excerpts found in the division and subsequent *colores* section) not only provide a wealth of examples of treatment of the current theme, but also demonstrate the irresolvable nature of declamatory problems and bring to life the community of shared speech that surrounds them.<sup>17</sup> This is particularly true when considered with the pen portraits of individual declaimers, which add humanity to the attribution. While these pen portraits may be the most striking feature of

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<sup>14</sup> The form in question is theme, law, declamation (or in the case of Seneca excerpts), discussion. This is, admittedly, a very broad characterization and one that rapidly breaks down on close inspection. I believe, however, that there is sufficient consistency to warrant a connection. For a list of the declaimers present in Seneca's text, see Appendix 1.

<sup>15</sup> For an overview of these rhetorical treatises and their dates of composition, see Appendix 2.

<sup>16</sup> For the work of Seneca the Elder as containing predominantly adult declaimers, see Bonner 1969, 40 and Gunderson 2003, 3.

<sup>17</sup> Beard (1993) argues that being irresolvable was an essential feature of declamatory cases and the one which allowed them to act as vehicles for the exploration of private and social behaviours, obligations, and conceptions of self within Roman society.

Seneca's work, the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* include another element that reinforces the community of shared speech: the audience.<sup>18</sup>

The *Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae, divisiones, colores* of Seneca, to use the inclusive title commonly given to his work, comprises ten books of *controversiae*, each treating six to nine themes and being preceded by a preface, and one or possibly two book(s) of *suasoriae* constructed in a similar manner.<sup>19</sup> The work does not survive in full; rather, as Winterbottom observes, we are left with “two quite separate manuscript traditions.”<sup>20</sup> The first consists of the full text of five books of *controversiae* (Books 1, 2, 7, 9, 10) as well as one book of *suasoriae*, although the prefaces to *Controversiae* 1 and 2, and the *Suasoriae* are not included in this tradition. The second tradition includes excerpts from all ten books of *controversiae*, as well as the prefaces for books 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 10. The excerpts, as Winterbottom has observed, are problematic as they not only remove a good deal of content, but also adapt what remains.<sup>21</sup> While it is not my intention to comment on the reconstruction of Seneca's text, the limits of that reconstruction are necessarily the limits of any study which wishes to draw conclusions based on the agreed upon text of the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*.

The internal structure of each *controversia* and (with some modification, which will be discussed below) *suasoria* is consistent throughout the work. In most modern collections, one is first presented with the title of the case, although, Winterbottom observes, these are only found in

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<sup>18</sup> The role of the audience in declamation will be discussed in Chapter 4 (“The Audience and Declamation”).

<sup>19</sup> For the possibility of two or more books of *suasoriae* and the likely subject of their prefaces, see Sussman 1972; 1978.

<sup>20</sup> Müller (1887, vii-xxxxi) provides the most thorough overview of the MSS. See also Sussman 1978, 34-5; Winterbottom 1974, xix. For a visual representation of the material that survives in each tradition, see Appendix 3.

<sup>21</sup> Winterbottom 1974, xix. For a fuller treatment of the problems in the text, see Winterbottom 1974a.

the excerpted manuscript tradition.<sup>22</sup> Each *controversia* is then presented as follows: (1) the law that governs the conflict in the case; (2) the theme, which adds additional details (often ethical rather than legal) to the case and defines the characters who are in conflict;<sup>23</sup> (3) the epigrams (or *sententiae*), although there are several instances of longer excerpts being presented;<sup>24</sup> (4) the division, often drawn from Latro;<sup>25</sup> (5) *colores* (rhetorical spin), where Seneca is most likely to offer comment on the speaker; (6) Greek *sententiae*.<sup>26</sup> The *suasoriae* follow a similar pattern although, as Winterbottom observes, the theme follows the pattern: “X, in circumstances Y, deliberates.”<sup>27</sup> Because these are deliberative cases, moreover, the law and the *colores* are also absent. As Sussman observes, the reason for this presentation was that Seneca was writing for his sons (*Contr.* 1.pr.1-6), who were themselves adults and had already completed their rhetorical educations.<sup>28</sup> With this audience in mind, our author could omit elements, such as commonplaces and description, which were essential components of declamation but standardized.<sup>29</sup> The emphasis on *sententiae*, *divisiones*, and *colores* allows Seneca to showcase those instances where speakers distinguished themselves, while, as Sussman observes, omitting

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<sup>22</sup> Winterbottom 1974, xix.

<sup>23</sup> Sussman 1978, 58.

<sup>24</sup> Winterbottom 1974 translates as epigrams. Sussman 1978, 35-8, prefers to call them *sententiae*, although he also discusses how the excerpts found in the this section are too continuous to viewed as true examples of such statements. For an account of the longer excerpts found in Seneca’s work, see Bennett 2007, 8. The longest contribution by a single speaker occurs in *Contr.* 2.7, in which the entire *sententiae* section is devoted to a single speech by Latro, although the end of the section is lost. Fairweather (1981, 251-5) provides an excellent overview of Latro’s style as suggested by this passage.

<sup>25</sup> The importance of the division (and ethics in division) is highlighted by ps. Quint. *minor Declamations* 270. Seneca’s devotion to Latro may be suggested by how often his divisions are used to guide discussion in the works.

<sup>26</sup> The placement of Greek *sententiae* at the end of each case has been used as an argument that Seneca was decidedly anti-Greek. For some examples of this view, see Bornecque 1902; Edward 1928, xxix; Bonner 1969, 147; Sussman 1978, 26. For an argument against this interpretation, see Fairweather 1981, 23-5.

<sup>27</sup> Winterbottom 1974, xx. For a fuller description of why *colores* were inappropriate for *suasoriae*, see *infra*. p. 15-6.

<sup>28</sup> Sussman 1978, 43.

<sup>29</sup> Bonner 1969, 58ff.

aspects that would have been boring or repetitive if full declamations had been preserved.<sup>30</sup> As a result of these omissions, Seneca's text cannot be said to truly represent declamations (the individual fictive speeches) as they existed.<sup>31</sup> I contend, however, that the incorporation of excerpts from a large number of speakers gives an excellent impression of declamation as (to borrow Kaster's phrasing), a cultural phenomenon.<sup>32</sup>

The inclusive title of Seneca's work (as already touched on above) was the *Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae, divisiones, colores*. While we are uncertain if the title is Senecan, it may be worthwhile to examine each of these elements in order to illuminate the material that Seneca felt worthy of record.<sup>33</sup>

*Sententiae* (epigrams) were short clever expressions that offered punch at the end of a statement, which developed from (and, in their earliest form, were analogous to) the Greek γνώμη (Quint. 8.5.2-3).<sup>34</sup> Their versatility allowed them to be incorporated extensively into speech and *sententiae* were extremely popular with speakers who wished to grab the attention of their audience. As a result, "gnomic *sententiae* were soon supplemented by those with more limited applications."<sup>35</sup> As Sussman has observed, the quotations preserved by Seneca extend

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<sup>30</sup> Sussman 1978, 44.

<sup>31</sup> The *major* and *minor Declamations* Quintilian may provide a better model as they consist of complete treatments of themes by a single speaker.

<sup>32</sup> Kaster 2001, 318-9.

<sup>33</sup> An excellent treatment of *sententiae*, *divisiones*, and *colores* is found in Sussman 1978, 35-43. See also Bonner 1969, 54ff. For the uncertainty of the Senecan origin of the title, see Fairweather 1981, 3 n.1. For the development of each of these forms of speech, see Chapter 2.1 "Declamation in Rome."

<sup>34</sup> For Greek treatment of γνώμη, see Aristotle *Rh.* 2.21 (1394a-1395b). For the use of *sententiae* as universal maxims, see *Rhet. Her.* 4.24. For long *sententiae* (that still contain gnomic truth at their core), see *Rhet. Her.* 4.25.

<sup>35</sup> Sussman 1978, 36, who notes that both gnomic and more limited *sententiae* are used in the speeches of Cicero. For the broad range of *sententiae* and their subclassifications, see Quint. 8.5 (esp. 8.5.2 and 31 for contemporary overuse); see also Sussman (1978, 38 n.11) for a list of the varied ways *sententiae* manifest in Seneca's work; and Breij (2006a, 311-8) for a deeper analysis of the five most common types. For the three types of *sententiae* identified by Seneca (*epiphonemata*, *enthymemata*, and *sententiae* proper), see *Contr.* 1.pr.23; for expanded commentary, see Fairweather 1978, 202-7. For the attested popularity of *sententiae* (at least for Seneca's sons), see *Contr.* 1.pr.22; 1.8.1; 7.1.26; etc. For the overuse of *sententiae* to transition between parts of a speech, see Quint. *Inst.* 4.1.77.

beyond the *sententiae* themselves, incorporating broader sections of declamation, although this was done to increase legibility and should not be viewed as indicative of a broader definition for *sententiae*.<sup>36</sup>

*Divisiones* (divisions) were the bare bones of declamation and outlined the argument that the speaker was about to make (ps. Quint. *Decl. Min.* 270). They are therefore considered by modern scholars to be the most useful aspect of the exercise.<sup>37</sup> Seneca, however, deemphasizes this aspect of declamation as he fears his sons will find it tiresome (*Contr.* 1.pr.22); indeed, as Seneca himself complains, declaimers could hide a poor argument under rhetorical flourishes (*Contr.* 1.pr.21), but it was these flourishes that were of interest.<sup>38</sup> The primary tension in the divisions rests between *ius* (law) and *aequitas* (equity) and these two aspects (often framed through the lens of commonplaces) inform most of the questions.<sup>39</sup>

*Colores* were “clever twists of circumstance and argument by which the declaimers tried to alter the interpretation of the facts in a case.”<sup>40</sup> As moments of possible wit, *colores* often took the form of *sententiae*. While *color* was initially used to denote the tone or style of the speaker, in the Augustan period it came to encompass the way in which a speaker selectively presented

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<sup>36</sup> Sussman 1978, 36, also notes that in the *colores* section one finds short *sententiae* delivered without context. This suggests that Seneca the Elder understood a definition similar to the one employed by Quintilian (8.5), rather than simply labelling “any type of uttered expression” a *sententia*.

<sup>37</sup> Sussman 1978, 39.

<sup>38</sup> Seneca here has Latro deliver his divisions before he begins declaiming to show that his argument is sound. For the possibility of hiring a consultant on technical legal matters as explanation for low regard for divisions, see Kennedy 1972, 322.

<sup>39</sup> As Bonner 1969, 57 observes, *ius* refers to argument from a purely legal perspective (does the law allow the case to be brought?), while *aequitas* refers to the moral ramifications of the legal action (was it morally justified to bring the accusation?). Seneca attributes this method of examination to Latro and the “veteres” (in this case, the preceding generation of speakers rather than true ancients; *Contr.* 1.1.13) and contrasts it to the new questions put forward by the “novi declamatores Graecis auctoribus” (“new declaimers [his sons’ generation] following a Greek lead,” *Contr.* 1.1.14).

<sup>40</sup> Sussman 1978, 41.

the material of the case so as to best serve his own argument.<sup>41</sup> *Colores*, however, should not be confused with argumentation; they did not establish the innocence or guilt of the accused, but rather worked to mitigate or exacerbate their culpability.<sup>42</sup> The firm distinction between *colores* and *argumentationes* is clear as Seneca advises his sons, “si qua sunt ex utraque parte difficilia, non colorem sed argumentationem desiderant” (“if there are any difficulties on either side [of this *controversia*], they require not a *color* but *argumentatio*,” *Contr.* 7.5.8). As *colores* reinforced or weakened judicial culpability, making the accused more or less sympathetic to the audience, they were not used in *suasoriae* (deliberative cases).

Seneca preserves the speech of three groups: orators, rhetors, and *scholastici*. The second of these, despite being included in the title of the work, is somewhat problematic as Seneca’s work contains few actual *rhetores*, especially among those men who are highlighted in the prefaces.<sup>43</sup> This is less problematic, however, when one considers that Seneca is interested in preserving the *declamatores* of the preceding generation (*Contr.* 1.pr.1): a broad group that could include men from both of the bodies named in the title. *Declamatores* should not be considered restrictively to mean teachers and students; rather, one should understand Seneca to be using the term to denote simply one who participated in declamation, regardless of the circumstances of

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<sup>41</sup> The older usage occurs in Cic. *Brut.* 162; 171; and *De or.* 3.96. It also appears to be employed in this way once in Seneca (*Contr.* 10.pr.5) indicating that the older use of the term was still understood.

<sup>42</sup> For instance at *Contr.* 1.1.16, Latro, who is speaking the part of a youth being disinherited for feeding his starving natural father against the orders of his uncle and adoptive father, states that he only did so because he was physically overcome by the tragedy of the sight: “mens excidit, non animus mihi constitit, non in ministerium sustinendi corporis suffecerunt pedes, oculi subita caligine obtorpuerunt” (“Mind tumbling, my consciousness did not stand firm, my feet not sufficient to support my as body as they should, my eyes dulled in sudden darkness”). This use extends beyond declamation and “color insaniae” is used for pleas of insanity in the *Digest* (5.2.5).

<sup>43</sup> Bloomer 1972, 206-7: Latro was a professional teacher, although he only performed in front of his students rather than listening and offering direct instruction (*Contr.* 9.2.3); Fabianus was a philosopher; Cassius Severus, Asinius Pollio, and Haterius were non-professionals; C. Albucius Silus is the exception as he was a famous professional *rhetor*; Votienus Montanus was a lawyer-orator. Bloomer also stresses the omission of Cestius, who was one of the foremost declaimers of his day and features prominently throughout Seneca’s work.

that participation.<sup>44</sup> *Rhetores* (as well as forum orators), then, formed a subsection of the broader group of *declamatores*—men who participated in declamation, but in a specific capacity.<sup>45</sup>

Another subsection, one regarded much less favourably by our author, was the *scholastici*.<sup>46</sup> As Kennedy has observed, these enthusiastic amateurs treated declamation in much the same way as a modern sports fan might treat their favourite team: carefully tracking rising stars and enthusiastically cheering on their favourites.<sup>47</sup> While these three groups (*rhetores*, orators, and *scholastici*) can be identified as distinct subsets of the individuals who participated in declamation, it is worth repeating that they do not represent the totality of its participants; rather, although it is reasonable to suggest a spectrum of engagement existed, declamation should be seen as widespread activity and one in which many elite Roman of the early Principate participated, whether as speakers themselves or as members of the audience.

## 1.2 The Presence of the Audience in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*

The inclusion of the audience transforms Seneca's work. Declamation was a performance. As an epideictic genre, it provided speakers the opportunity to display not only their rhetorical prowess but also their ability to navigate the complex social situations that shaped the themes of each case. The arbiters of success in this process were the audience.<sup>48</sup> The majority

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<sup>44</sup> This definition is certainly employed in the first preface, when Seneca writes that he will give his opinion of all the *declamatores* that have been his contemporaries (*Contr.* 1.pr.1). This contrasts with his more limited use of *rhetor* in the same preface (*Contr.* 1.pr.22), which qualifies Marullus who instructed Latro and our author.

<sup>45</sup> Cic. *Planc.* 34.83; and *Orat.* 15.17 both contrast declamation with proper forum oratory. This contrast also occurs in Seneca, consider Cassius Severus' remarks (*Contr.* 3.pr.8-11), but our author differentiates primarily between types of speech, rather than speakers. *Rhetors* were men, who instructed others in declamation.

<sup>46</sup> For the negative qualities of the *scholastici*, see Chapter 4.7 ("*Scholastici*").

<sup>47</sup> Kennedy 1978, 175. For *scholastici* as neither teachers nor students of rhetoric (as well as the negative connotations of this designation), see also Winterbottom 1974, viii n.3. For the characterization of *scholastici* as professional teachers or perpetual students, see Sussman 1977, 320.

<sup>48</sup> Gleason 1994, xxiii. For audience approval as a mechanism of social consensus, see Lobur 2008, esp. 157-8.

of ancient texts concerning declamation, however, restrict their content to the speaker, offering him advice or laying out the proper habits and practices or else preserving his words to act as a model for others or a monument to his skill. As a result of this emphasis, the role of the audience is diminished—they are merely incidental bystanders witnessing a solitary act; their responses dependent entirely on the will of the speaker, rather than their own judgement of his speech. In the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, however, one sees an audience that actively participates, praising successful speech and challenging assertions that do not meet their approval.

Seneca does not merely present his sons with the most successful declaimers of the preceding generation, but with the milieu that allowed them to achieve their success.

Appearances of the audience are largely restricted to the *colores* section of each case, yet this only serves to highlight their critical function as this is also where Seneca himself passes judgement on the speakers' *sententiae*.<sup>49</sup>

While Seneca is not the only author to discuss the declamatory audience, the nature of his work allows him to use this body in a variety of ways.<sup>50</sup> First, the audience appears as a body—inserted as a comment on the currently excerpted speaker. In this capacity, it is usually shown expressing approval for the speaker. Seneca typically employs this as an intensifier; adding the weight of communal approval to his own praise.<sup>51</sup> Occasionally, however, it seems as though this inclusion is made in order to chastise the audience. In these cases, the audiences are often

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<sup>49</sup> The other avenue of criticism employed by Seneca deserves mention. Pen-portraits of speakers, which connect the quality of a man's speech to his broader character, appear throughout the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, although, primarily in the prefaces. These pen-portraits complement the shorter criticisms found in the *colores* section of each case and establish the link between morality and proper speech that lies at the heart of Seneca's critical model. The emphasis on the individual, however, means that the audience is largely absent from the prefaces. For the importance of pen-portraits to Seneca's critical model, see below (Chapter 2).

<sup>50</sup> Quintilian, for instance, discusses the correct behaviour of audiences (2.2.9) in a manner that calls to mind Votienus Montanus' remarks in preface of *Controversiae* 9.

<sup>51</sup> An example of this occurs at *Contr.* 1.7.13. Seneca discusses the virtues of Pompeius Silo's approach to the current case and then follows immediately by noting that there was applause at this point in Silo's speech.

labelled *scholastici* and their opinion may be contradicted by an established declaimer.<sup>52</sup> This highlights the second use of the audience in our text, as individuals critical of the current speaker.<sup>53</sup> This contrast is worth noting: the audience confers praise as a collective, but chastises as individuals. The final way in which Seneca incorporates the audience into his work is through attacks on contemporary rhetoric. I contend that these attacks are as much concerned with the qualifications of the audience as arbiters of the rhetorical process as with the speakers who fail to successfully perform.

A final observation on the inclusion of audiences in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. I do not wish to overrepresent their appearance in the text. The audience appears infrequently and, unlike in Quintilian, there is no section set aside to discuss them.<sup>54</sup> This does not make them irrelevant. Seneca's stated purpose was to preserve the best speakers of his generation.<sup>55</sup> In so doing, however, he also constructs the world in which these speakers were able to thrive. As the pen portraits establish a connection between good speech and personal virtue, the moments where the audience appears suggest a link between its function and collective virtue. They suggest that declamation as an activity was not confined to one instance of speech, but required the speakers to be heard in order for the act to have significance.

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<sup>52</sup> At *Contr.* 2.3.19 for example.

<sup>53</sup> Such as Severus' mockery of Cestius at *Contr.* 3.pr.16.

<sup>54</sup> A possible objection to this claim may be supported by the speech of Votienus Montanus (*Contr.* 9 preface). I agree with Gunderson (2003, 99 n.35), however, that this preface in particular may be seen to stand alone as a declamation against declamation, which has a unique place within the text.

<sup>55</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.11.

## Chapter 2: An Audience for What?

### 2.1 Declamation in Rome

As Kaster has observed, “when it emerges fully into view through the elder Seneca’s recollections of the Augustan Age, the cultivation of declamation has all the appearance of a cultural phenomenon both deeply rooted and widespread.”<sup>1</sup> What, however, is declamation? Who were its practitioners? As Gunderson states, “a declamation was a rhetorical piece on an invented theme.”<sup>2</sup> The nature of these inventions created further subdivisions: *controversiae*, modelled on judicial speeches; and *suasoriae*, deliberative speeches in which the speaker attempted to sway a historical or mythological figure (or group, such as in *Suas.* 2 and 5). While the latter was considered to be simpler and thus regarded as a more elementary exercise, both of these exercises together marked the final stage in the education of young aristocratic men.<sup>3</sup> Quintilian, as well as the *lesser Declamations* attributed to him, gives the clearest impression of this type of declamation: large classes of students (Quint. *Inst.* 10.5.21) sat on benches facing the *rhetor* (Quint. *Inst.* 2.2.9-12), who delivered a *sermo*—suggestions on how to divide the argument<sup>4</sup>—on a declamatory case before turning it over to his students. The *rhetor* would then also declaim on the subject himself as a model for them to follow.<sup>5</sup> The students’ declamations were written (and

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<sup>1</sup> Kaster 2001, 318-9.

<sup>2</sup> Gunderson 2003, 1.

<sup>3</sup> While there is no agreed-upon age for these exercises to begin, Kennedy’s (1972, 320) proposal of 14 seems reasonable. Sussman 1978, 11 give a range of 12-16. For students of declamation as “roughly as old as contemporary undergraduates,” see Gunderson 2003, 3. Quint. 2.1.1-6 complains of the late age of advancement to a *rhetor*, as in his view they have abandoned many of their duties to the *grammaticus*. For *suasoriae* as a more elementary exercise, see Tac. *Dial.* 35.

<sup>4</sup> Winterbottom 1974 argues that this was likely the most pedagogically useful stage of declamatory education.

<sup>5</sup> This structure of *sermo* and performance is certainly reflected in the structure of the *lesser Declamations*, which is the only text that truly preserves this style of declamation (Gunderson 2003, 3). Kennedy 1972, 320 cites Quint. 2.2.8 as evidence that *rhetors* declaimed the currently assigned declamation to act as a model for their students. Sussman 1978, 13 places this performance by the *rhetor* after the declamations delivered by the students. The passage by Quintilian is not clear on when these performances occurred, it merely advocates that they be conducted daily. For the *divisio* as an educational tool, see Quint. *Inst.* 2.6.

corrected by the *rhetor*) before being memorized and delivered, on occasion in front of invited guests (Quint. *Inst.* 2.7.1); thus, they reinforced the five qualities of classical rhetoric: memory, delivery, invention, argument and style.<sup>6</sup>

This characterization of declamation—as an educational activity for boys or young men—is the most common representation among Roman authors; it is, moreover, frequently accompanied by complaints of declamation’s inadequacy in this role.<sup>7</sup> Declamation, however, also functioned as a form of literate entertainment—one performed and observed primarily by adults. This “performance declamation” (to borrow Hömke’s term) is visible in a letter from Pliny the Younger to Nepos (*Ep.* 2.3) as he recounts how he hosted Isaeus, a Greek rhetorician, in order to hear him declaim.<sup>8</sup> One may also include in this category Calpurnius Flaccus’ collection of declamations as well as the *major Declamations* ascribed to Quintilian, as these works both represent the polished speeches of professional rhetoricians.<sup>9</sup> While presentation declamation should be recognized as distinct from educational declamation, the differences rest primarily in the context of their performance. These differences could be quite dramatic and they certainly had an effect on the speech that was being produced.<sup>10</sup> The social function of declamation (the

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<sup>6</sup> Kennedy 1972, 320. Persius is emphatic about his dislike for these public deliveries (3.44-7). Bonner (1969, 39-43) argues that the frequency of these ‘open house days’ increased steadily during the early Principate. For the five aspects of rhetoric in Seneca, see Fairweather 1981, 149-239.

<sup>7</sup> For declamation (and its inadequacy) as a pedagogical tool, see Petron. *Sat.* 1-5; Juv. 7.150-77; Tac. *Dial.* 35; Sen. *Contr.* 3.pr and 9.pr. See also Quint. *Inst.* 2.10.4-6, although he is complaining specifically of the inappropriateness of declamatory material divorced from reality.

<sup>8</sup> Hömke 2007. Although Pliny still frames this activity in the context of educational declamation: “Nam quid in senectute felicius quam quod dulcissimum est in iuventa?” (“For what is more enjoyable in old age than that which was the sweetest in youth?” Plin. *Ep.* 2.3). Compare Seneca, *Controversiae* 1.pr.1.

<sup>9</sup> Gunderson (2003, 3) does view the *Major Declamations* this way, but argues that the work of Calpurnius Flaccus is too fragmentary to determine. For the assertion that the *Major Declamation* had a pedagogical purpose see Sussman 1995, 191-2.

<sup>10</sup> Hömke (2007, 116-9) argues that presentation declamation operated by different rules due to its having an audience of lay persons rather than students of declamation. While I agree that the composition of the audience has an effect on the nature of performance, I believe she underestimates the typical audience member of adult declamation. These were men who would have themselves been trained in declamation and were well equipped to engage with the performance.

exploration, assertion, and inculcation of proper elite Roman male behaviour and ethics), however, remained consistent; as did the fictional world that supported this function.<sup>11</sup>

The fictional setting, in which declamatory cases occur, is a defining feature of the genre and, indeed, provided fuel for many of its detractors.<sup>12</sup> Russell, who first discussed this setting in the context of Greek declamation, dubbed it the “Sophistopolis.”<sup>13</sup> Bernstein (addressing Roman declamation) defines this space as, “a small, independently governed Hellenistic community [featuring] recurring characters such as tyrants, war heroes, step mothers and violent fathers.”<sup>14</sup> These stock characters, moreover, appear in scenarios that, while they may seem varied, are constructed from a limited pool of legal actions modified by a small number of what Simonds calls “side issues.”<sup>15</sup> The use of stock characters and scenarios has led to the suggestion that declamation owes much to New Comedy; indeed, declamation has been compared to a variety of other genres.<sup>16</sup> Declamation was a composite genre that appropriated elements of others as its producers strove towards novel constructions.<sup>17</sup> This borrowing, however, was not only perpetrated by declaimers. As Sussman has observed, “Roman poets in the early Empire often

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<sup>11</sup> For declamation as assertion and inculcation of Roman values see Beard 1993; Bloomer 1997b; Connolly 1998; Gunderson 2003; and Corbeill 2007.

<sup>12</sup> *Supra* n. 8 and compare Quint. *Inst.* 2.10, 3.8.51, 5.12.17-23.

<sup>13</sup> Russell 1983, 21-39. While Russell is addressing Greek declamation, his comments on Sophistopolis are equally applicable to its Roman counterpart. Alternative appellations are offered by Gunderson (2003), who labels this space “the wilderness of declamation” and Connolly (2007), who calls it “the republic of declamation.”

<sup>14</sup> Bernstein 2013, 4.

<sup>15</sup> Simonds (1896, 69-70) argues that there are only 29 distinction “points at issue” and nine “side issues” in the *Controversiae* of Seneca, although it should be noted that his categories are quite broad. For instance, he includes “Adultery, rape and incest” as a single entry in “side issues.” Bonner (1969, 84-132) provides a list of the laws that appear in Seneca, of which there are 40. The difference in these two figures is the result of Simonds categorizing by theme, whereas Bonner uses the actual text of the law. Despite the limited number of laws and ‘side issues,’ a great deal of variety was possible in the setting of individual declamations; especially as multiple laws (for instance, in *Contr.* 4.3) and/or “side issues” (*Contr.* 1.4) could be combined into a single case.

<sup>16</sup> For declamation’s debt to New Comedy see Connolly 2009, 347; Bloomer 1997b. For the relationship of declamation to the novel, see van Mal-Maeder 2007.

<sup>17</sup> Bernstein 2013, 5.

looked to *sententiae* in declamation for inspiration.”<sup>18</sup> Regardless of the origins of these stock characters and scenarios—whether they are viewed as inherent to declamation or imported from elsewhere—their importance to the genre cannot be overstated. As staple figures, they facilitate declamatory discussion through the provision of a shared body of terms that could be easily understood by all those who participated.

Broadly speaking then, declamation was practiced by young men as an educational activity and by adults (including those occupying significant political positions) as a means of entertainment; each group drawing on the same stable body of stock characters and scenarios. These two activities, moreover, need not be mutually exclusive. Seneca records the speech of young men alongside that of adult speakers. While this may be the result of his method (simply including excerpts from the best speakers grouped by theme rather than instance of speech), the overlapping details do seem to suggest concurrent performance. For instance, Quinctilius Varus, whom Seneca identifies explicitly as *praetextatus* (juvenile), and Aietius Pastor, a senator, both speak “apud illum” (referring to Cestius) and both have their speech ravaged by their host (*Contr.* 1.3.10-11). Cestius appears different from both the *rhetor* preserved by Quintilian and Pliny’s performer.

The stability of declamatory themes is often stressed in order to indicate continuity within the genre. This stability of content, however, is contrasted by radically different contexts of performance. In the Augustan period, declamation moved beyond the private sphere as performances became increasingly public. The effect of this transition was sufficient for Seneca to be able to assert that, while Cicero did declaim, it was not the *controversiae* with which he

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<sup>18</sup> Sussman 1978, 37. See also, *Contr.* 2.2.8 for Seneca’s discussion of Ovid’s adaptation of Latro’s *sententiae* in his poetry.

was familiar (“declamabat autem Cicero non quales nunc controversias dicimus,” “Cicero used to declaim, but not such *controversiae* as we speak now,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). Indeed, the novelty of this genre is essential to Seneca’s claim to authority in the first preface.

In his first preface, Seneca justifies his authority concerning declamation through asserting that he has known the genre since its first inception (“Modo nomen hoc prodiit; nam et studium ipsum nuper celebrari coepit: ideo facile est mihi ab incunabulis nosse rem post me natam,” “The name appeared recently, for the practice itself began to be popular not long ago: therefore it is easy for me to know it from birth since it was born after me,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). This statement has raised objections among modern scholars, who observe that activities resembling declamation (and that were, indeed, its precursors) are recorded as early as the fifth century BCE in the *theses* of the sophists.<sup>19</sup> Seneca himself was not ignorant of these precursors and identifies three stages in the development of declamation until his own day: the *theses*, spoken before Cicero; the *causae*, which Cicero spoke; and the *controversiae* of Seneca’s own generation. Suetonius too identifies these three phases, although he offers a fuller account the earlier two (*Gram. et rhet.* 25.8-9). Seneca deviates from Suetonius, however, in the addition of a fourth stage, *scholastica*, which is even more recent than *controversiae* (“scholastica, controversia multo recentius est,” “*scholastica*, is [a] much more recent [name] than *controversia*,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). This sequential model, in which each phase is regarded as a distinct activity, not only qualifies Seneca to act as the guardian of declamation but also underlies the moral program of his work. It is, therefore, worth examining the evolution of declamation in more detail. As Seneca distinguishes each phase with a unique name, this vocabulary will guide our examination.

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<sup>19</sup> Fairweather (1981, 104-15) provides an excellent overview of the Greek roots of Roman declamation and, indeed, pushes for an earlier origin than the fifth century.

The earliest stage identified by Seneca are the *theses*.<sup>20</sup> Aristotle connects them to broad refutations of philosophical tenets (“θέσις δέ ἐστὶν ὑπόληψις παράδοξος τῶν γνωρίμων τινὸς κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν,” “A thesis is a conceit contrary to general opinion but advanced by some eminent philosopher,” *Top.* 1.104b.20-1), but concedes that “σχεδὸν δὲ νῦν πάντα τὰ διαλεκτικὰ προβλήματα θέσεις καλοῦνται” (“now nearly all dialectical problems are called theses,” *Top.* 1.104b.36-7). For the Romans, this broad use is picked up by Cicero, although he labels them *quaestiones*, which he defines as “controversiam... sine certarum personarum interpositione” (“a dispute... without the insertion of definite individuals,” *Inv. rhet.* 1.6.8) and contrasts with *causam*, which contain specific individuals.<sup>21</sup> Quintilian also acknowledged this distinction, while expanding *causam* to include reference to specific times and places as well as people (*Inst.* 3.5.5ff.). While Suetonius supports Seneca’s narrative that *theses* were no longer spoken (“genus thesis et anasceuas et catasceuas Graeci vocant; donec sensim haec exoleverunt, et ad controversiam ventum est,” “a type of thesis the Greeks call destructive and constructive; but gradually these exercises faded out and were succeeded by *controversiae*,” *Gram. et rhet.* 25.8), their continued discussion in both Cicero and Quintilian indicates their longevity.

Cicero, in particular, continued to declaim θέσεις in his later life, as a letter to Atticus makes clear (*ad Att.* 9.4). As with later declaimers, Cicero uses the genre to insulate himself against political reproach while working through questions that are inherently political.<sup>22</sup> Unlike

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<sup>20</sup> Bonner (1969, 3) asserts that he was the first author to transliterate the term, rather than simply using the Greek.

<sup>21</sup> Cicero does use θέσις on several occasions (*Orat.* 14.46; 36.125; *Top.* 21.79; *ad Att.* 9.4). Cicero also employs other terms in an equivalent sense: *propositum* (*Top.* 21.79; *Part.* 18.61; cf. Quint. *Inst.* 3.5.5) and *consultatio* (*de Or.* 3.29.111; *Part.* 1.4; 19.67; *ad Att.* 9.4).

<sup>22</sup> The majority of the questions relate to the correct response to tyranny and what actions should be taken to oppose it. Critically, however, all omit specifics and thus can be safely categorized as θέσεις.

the declaimers of Seneca's day, however, this is primarily the result of the private nature of the speech.

The second stage of development, the *causae*, provides a neater parallel to the *controversiae* found in Seneca's text, although one that is much more grounded in reality. Suetonius, labelling them "*veteres controversiae*" (*Gram. et rhet.* 25.9), distinguishes them as involving historical or contemporary occurrence and actual named locations, which corresponded to the real world. Cicero employs the term to describe the declamations given to a small group of friends while at his house in Tusculum: "ut nuper tuum post discessum in Tusculano, cum essent complures mecum familiares, temptavi quid in eo genere possem. Ut enim antea declamitabam causas, quod nemo me diutius fecit, sic haec mihi nunc senilis est declamatio" ("recently, after you had left, in Tusculum, since there were several friends with me, I attempted what I could in this type [of exercise] For, formerly, I used to declaim speeches for the courts (*causae*), which no one did any longer, thus this is now a declamation of my old age," *Tusc.* 1.4.7). He even attaches the term *declamatio* suggesting a parallel to the activity preserved in Seneca, while explicitly acknowledging the Greek origins of the activity.<sup>23</sup> The parallel to the later activity is further reinforced by the division of *causae* into judicial, deliberative, and epideictic speech (*Inv. rhet.* 1.6.8), which, with the exception of epideictic, correspond to the later divisions of *declamatio* into *controversiae* and *suasoriae*.

*Controversiae*, then, are not different in substance from the *causae* of Cicero. Rather, we see the adaptation of vocabulary to lend more specificity to the variety of speech. This is borne

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<sup>23</sup> This is echoed in Quintilian, who asserts that he can find no author before Demetrius of Phalerum who records the practice (*Inst.* 2.4.41).

out by the specialized use employed by Seneca, which contrasts with the less limited use (as “argument” or “quarrel”) in Cicero.<sup>24</sup>

The changing of vocabulary rather than substance applies equally to *declamatio* itself. Other models of rhetorical instruction certainly predate the term *declamare*.<sup>25</sup> These methods were even sufficiently successful to warrant repeated expulsions of instructors by Romans worried about foreign influences.<sup>26</sup> These early instructors were Greek and it was not until Cicero’s childhood that the first Latin *rhetor*, L. Plotius Gallus, began to teach in Rome (*Contr.* 2.pr.5; Quint. *Inst.* 2.4.42; Cic. *De or.* 3.24.93; Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 26). Legitimacy, moreover, was not conferred until later when Blandus became the first *eques* to offer instruction (*Contr.* 2.pr.5).

The term *declamatio* initially only covered a small piece of this instruction. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (early 80s BCE) employs it to describe vocal exercises (3.20).<sup>27</sup> Cicero, moreover, omits the term entirely from the earlier *de Inventione*, although he does preserve an activity strikingly similar to declamation: “Tertium genus est remotum a civilibus causis quod delectationis causa non inutili cum exercitatione dicitur et scribitur” (“a third kind of *causa* withdrawn from public issues, which is recited or written for the sake of delight along with valuable training,” *Inv. rhet.* 1.19.27). The transition in usage (from vocal exercise to complete speech) is difficult to chart. Nevertheless, by the composition of Cicero’s *de Oratore* (55 BCE), the term seems to have expanded to encompass the whole delivery of fictive speeches and begun

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<sup>24</sup> For instance, it is used to describe a typical quarrel between shepherds (*Pro Cluentio* 59.161). For its possible use as equivalent to ἀμφοιβήτησις (the dispute that underlay the θέσις or ὑπόθεσις) see Fairweather 1981, 125-6.

<sup>25</sup> Bonner 1969, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Once in 161 BCE, and again in 92 BCE (Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 25; Gell. 15.11).

<sup>27</sup> Seneca suggests that such vocal exercises were still common (*Contr.* 1.pr.16). For an equivalent use in Cicero’s *Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino*, see Sussman 1978, 5.

to accrue the negative connotations that define its use by later authors.<sup>28</sup> One also sees the first use of *declamator* to denote a particular type of speaker (“Non vobis videtur cum aliquo declamatore, non cum laboris et fori discipulo disputare,” “You would think that he argued with some declaimer, not with a hardworking student of the forum,” Cicero, *Planc.* 34.83).<sup>29</sup>

The distinction between *declamatio* and *dictio* also appears in Seneca’s brief account of the genre.<sup>30</sup> As with the phases of declamation, this distinction is accompanied by restrictive language which denotes the separation of both kinds of speech. As we shall see, this clear separation of kinds of speech is central to Seneca’s critical model as it allows for the establishment of a hierarchy in which *scholastica*, as the most recent innovation, is at the bottom.

One topic on which Seneca’s account is frustratingly silent is the evolution of the circumstances in which declamation was conducted. Our earlier sources treat declamation as a private activity (consider the *Tusculan Disputations* cited above) or else exclusively as educational material designed for young men (the activities presented by *ad Herennium* and *de Inventione*); yet Seneca primarily preserves mature men gathered together in settings that, if not public, certainly do not restrict the audience to a handful of close friends. There is, moreover, a sense from our author that circumstances were not always such, as he states, for example, that Labienus did not declaim in public because “nondum haec consuetudo erat inducta” (“the custom had not yet been introduced,” *Contr.* 10.pr.4). How, then, did this educational or otherwise private form of speech come to be a social activity comparable to *recitatio*, in which enthusiastic

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<sup>28</sup> Crassus asserts, “facile declaratur, utrum is, qui dicat, tantummodo in hoc declamatorio sit opere iactatus, an ad dicendum omnibus ingenuis artibus instructus accesserit” (“it is made easily discernible whether the speaker has merely floundered about in this declamatory business or whether, before approaching his task of oratory, he has been trained in all the liberal arts,” *De or.* 1.16.73).

<sup>29</sup> For a complete account of Cicero’s evolving use of *declamare* and related terms, see Bonner 1969, 28-31.

<sup>30</sup> Although it is made through Calvus, who states, “enim declamare iam se non mediocriter, dicere bene” (“for he say that he now declaimed tolerably but spoke well,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12).

amateurs declaimed to win the admiration of their colleagues? The most widely accepted account of this evolution divides it into four stages: (1) declamation is practiced only in schools or at home among close friends; (2) professors then begin inviting the public to their schools on special occasions; (3) these invitations become more frequent, despite resistance from the traditionally minded; (4) the presence of outsiders encourages competition between professors, which become popular social events.<sup>31</sup>

While some may object to the exact form of this development, it is sufficient to assert that the change happened. It occurred, moreover, within the memory of Seneca as he recalls men for whom private declamation was the norm.<sup>32</sup> The memory of such a transition (of how declamation used to be) may also inform criticisms of the genre.

## 2.2 An activity for children?

The speech and participants preserved in Seneca's *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* reveal an activity that had broad participation across the aristocracy, both among young men (as an essential part of their educations) and mature adults (as a form of literate entertainment). This impression of declamation, however, is discordant with Seneca's own characterization of the genre as "iuvenilibus studiis" ("youthful studies," *Contr.* 10.pr.1). Rhetorically, declamation is presented as an educational activity for boys or young men.<sup>33</sup> This characterization, moreover, extends beyond Seneca's own work. The texts that discuss declamation not only treat it as the

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<sup>31</sup> Bonner 1969, 39-42.

<sup>32</sup> Pollio (*Contr.* 4.pr.2); Scaurus (*Contr.* 10.pr.3); and Labienus (*Contr.* 10.pr.4).

<sup>33</sup> Seneca, for instance, exclaims, "mittatur senex in scholas" ("let an old man be sent to school," *Contr.* 1.pr.4) and contrasts his old age with the period of youth when it was appropriate to engage in such activity. Consider also the attacks of Montanus and Severus in prefaces 9 and 3.

sole province of students and their teachers, but often malign those teachers (and through them declamation more broadly) as responsible for the decline of eloquence.

These criticisms are part of the contemporary metadiscourse surrounding declamation. Messala's second speech in Tacitus' *Dialogus* succinctly expresses this discourse. The *scholae*, run by so-called rhetors, are a (relatively) new development and violate the established ethics of the preceding generation (35.1).<sup>34</sup> There are two elements at work here: the novelty of declamation as a tool for rhetorical instruction and the unsuitability of its teachers (as implied by, "qui rhetores vocantur").<sup>35</sup> The novelty of declamation is also stressed in Seneca's text, although not necessarily negatively (*Contr.* 1.pr.12), and there is an effort to connect this activity to earlier forms of rhetorical exercise or entertainment through the figure of Cicero.<sup>36</sup> The fault of novelty, moreover, is transposed from declamation (as a form of speech) onto the new generation of speakers. In other words, Seneca does not so much refute the charge of novelty as relocate the associated faults to a particular subsection of speakers.

A similar effect may be seen for the rhetors themselves. Emblematic of this new mode of speech, they are used as representatives of the supposed faults of the broader genre.<sup>37</sup> This is reflected in Cassius Severus' attacks (both rhetorical and legal) on Cestius, which are conducted in order to demonstrate the inferiority of declamation (*Contr.* 3.pr.16-7). Severus is applying a

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<sup>34</sup> Echoing Cicero's "impudentiae ludus" ("school of shamelessness" *de Orat.* 3.94).

<sup>35</sup> I do not believe that it is necessary to read this in the English sense (as in, a 'so-called' friend). A literal rendition ('who they call rhetores'), nevertheless, conveys this group's distance from orators by branding them with a distinct title.

<sup>36</sup> Suetonius also links Cicero and, indeed, many leading figures of the late Republic to declamation (*Gram. et rhet.* 25).

<sup>37</sup> The trope of attacking teachers occurs in Tac. *Dial.* 35, Juv. 7.155-64, and Enclopi'us' speech at Petron. *Sat.* 1-2. Even Quintilian is not above blaming the teachers of rhetoric ("Eo quidem res ista culpa docentium reccidit ut inter praecipuas quae corrumpent eloquentiam causas licentia atque inscitia declamantium fuerit," "indeed so far the thing has sunk (and this is the fault of the teachers) that the license and ignorance of the declaimers have been the principle cause of the decline of eloquence," *Inst.* 2.10.3-4).

rhetorical construction in the real world—the rhetor, Cestius, is literally dragged before the praetor in order to demonstrate the inferiority of his rhetoric. This scene also emphasizes another typical criticism of declamation: it does not provide suitable preparation for court oratory.

The metadiscourse on declamation cites three broad flaws within the genre: (1) the space itself; (2) the individuals who populate it, all ignorant and irresponsible young men; (3) and the topics they cover, emphasizing their disassociation from real life.<sup>38</sup> These three faults are fundamentally interconnected; the space of declamation, for instance, is made unsuitable for instruction in rhetoric because it is occupied by ignorant young men. It is worth, however, considering them independently as each critic employs these formulaic elements with unique emphasis.

Criticisms of the space in which declamation occurred are the most dependent on other reproofs of the genre. Nevertheless, the space itself is described as damaging by its very existence.<sup>39</sup> As a discrete and enclosed space, it reinforces the social divide between public and private speech and situates declamation firmly in the latter. This manifests (in Seneca’s text) in the criticisms of Votienus Montanus, who contrasts the shady walls and closed ceiling of the *schola* with the bright and open air of the forum (*Contr.* 9.pr.3-5).<sup>40</sup> The enclosed nature of declamation damages its validity—it is impossible to engage in effective speech when that speech is performed away from the public sphere. Further, the enclosed space of declamation allows (or even encourages) limitation of the audience, whether actively on the part of the speaker (as, at *Contr.* 3.pr.16, when Cestius refuses to speak so long as Cassius Severus remains

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<sup>38</sup> This ordering follows Messala’s argument (*Tac. Dial.* 35.2-5).

<sup>39</sup> “locus ipse” (“the place itself,” *Tac. Dial.* 35.3) is listed as a damaging factor by Messala.

<sup>40</sup> Compare Cassius Severus’ similar view at *Contr.* 3.pr.13.

in the space) or reflexively as they self-select for entrance (and, thus, participation). The limited nature of the audience, complains Montanus (*Contr.* 9.pr.2-3), leads to undue and excessive support of the speaker.<sup>41</sup> In sum, then, the fault of the declamatory space is most easily expressed through the faults of those who occupy it; the truly problematic element, however, is that it provides a segregated space in which these faults may escape censure—an alternative discourse unmoderated by the normative force of public opinion.

Dismissals of the individuals who occupy this space as uninterested or negligent youths are one of the most persistent elements in descriptions of declamation. Messala articulates this notion: “in condiscipulis nihil profectus, cum pueri inter pueros et adulescentuli inter adulescentulos pari securitate et dicant et audiantur” (“there is no advantage among the schoolmen, since, boys among boys and young men among young men, all speak and listen with an equal lack of care,” Tac. *Dial.* 35.3). This characterization of declamation is echoed across works that discuss the genre: Juvenal employs it as he recommends that the *rhetores* seek another profession (Juv. 7.150-243); Agamemnon accepts it as he attempts to refute Encolpius’ attack on *rhetores* (Petron. *Sat.* 4-5) and, immediately following, it is *iuvenes* who leave the portico mocking the previous speaker (Petron. *Sat.* 6); Persius discusses the anxiety public performance gave him in his youth (3.45f.); and Quintilian, arguably the greatest authority on the genre, dedicated his *Institutio Oratoria* to its proper instruction. Seneca himself characterizes declamation in this way, citing his advanced age as providing separation from the genre.<sup>42</sup> This also extends beyond our author’s own voice—Cassius Severus tells us that it is *pueri* or *iuvenes*

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<sup>41</sup> For complaints about excessive applause, see Quint. *Inst.* 2.2.9.

<sup>42</sup> In the first preface, this is employed positively as fond remembrances of youth (see esp. *Contr.* 1.pr.1); by the tenth, this model has been inverted and the youthful folly of declamation grates on our author (see esp. *Contr.* 10.pr.1).

that frequent the *scholae* (*Contr.* 3.pr.15) and Votienus Montanus emphasizes its unsuitability for educating the next generation of orators (*Contr.* 9.pr.4-5).<sup>43</sup> Declamation, in short, is consistently portrayed as an educational activity for boys or young men. This portrayal, however, is primarily rhetorical.

When one pushes past the initial impression of declamation presented in our texts, it becomes apparent that participation in declamation extended beyond children and their teachers. Messala remarks that he is glad the other interlocutors do not confine themselves to declamation for their practice (“...non forensibus tantum negotiis et declamatorio studio ingenia vestra exercetis...” “...you train your intellects not only with legal business and declamatory study...” Tac. *Dial.* 14.3) which suggests that such behaviour was at least plausible for established orators. He, moreover, states that people are pleased that Aper continues to participate in declamation (14.4), suggesting a dedicated audience for adult declamation. The adult audience again appears in an epistle of Pliny the Younger (*Plin. Ep.* 2.3), in which he recounts how he hosted Isaeus, a Greek rhetorician, in order to hear him declaim.<sup>44</sup> Adult declaimers also appear much more frequently than young students in Seneca.<sup>45</sup> Further, there is no suggestion that these men were all teachers of rhetoric, yet Seneca still considers them to be declaimers for the purposes of his

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<sup>43</sup> Votienus Montanus, it must be acknowledged, does not explicitly label these ‘students’ as *pueri* or *iuvenes*. He does, however, employ the same metaphor of the gladiatorial school as Severus (*Contr.* 3.pr.13-14), which suggests that they are employing similar (or even the same) rhetorical figures in their arguments. This supports the notion of formulaic elements in criticisms of declamation.

<sup>44</sup> This epistle also reinforces some of the tropes found in Messala, but does not attach any negative value to them. He calls Isaeus a *scholasticus* (2.3.5) and distances himself from the activity in much the same way as Seneca, “schola et auditorium et ficta causa res inermis, innoxia est nec minus felix, senibus praesertim. Nam quid in senectute felicius, quam quod dulcissimum est in iuventa?” (“a false case in the school and lecture-hall is inoffensive, harmless and no less enjoyable, especially for old men; for what is more enjoyable in old age than that which was the sweetest in youth,” 2.3.6-7)

<sup>45</sup> Indeed, declaimers who are *pueri* or *iuvenes* are often labelled as such in the text. See, for instance, Quintilius Varus who is explicitly labelled *praetextatus* (*Contr.* 1.3.10).

text.<sup>46</sup> In short, there is sufficient evidence to show that adult non-professionals participated in declamation (both as speakers and audience members) and that this was not unusual. This, however, conflicts with the standard presentations of declamation and suggests a divide between the social conception of declamation and its reality: men are participating, but it is still portrayed as an activity for children.<sup>47</sup>

The third criticism (that the topics covered in declamation are too removed from reality to be useful) compounds the fault of the second and frequently appears alongside it. When taken together they create an unflattering picture of declamation: it is a genre practiced by youths, guided by their low-born teachers, in order that they might learn to be orators and it is not even particularly useful in this regard. These complaints, it must be acknowledged, and the cases they cite are not far removed from the actual examples that occur in Seneca's text.<sup>48</sup> Despite this problematic unreality (and the objections of Quintilian, *Inst.* 2.10.4-12), however, the topics covered by declamation remained remarkably consistent.<sup>49</sup> One wonders why. Why would the same topics, which are known to be ineffective preparation, continue to be employed? Our sources are largely silent; complaining of the unreality of declamation while offering no justification for that unreality beyond the general folly of all those involved. It cannot solely be a

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<sup>46</sup> *Latro* is the exception that proves the rule. This discrepancy has caused Bloomer to question Seneca's motivation in writing his work. I think it is safer to assume a broader definition of declaimer.

<sup>47</sup> This persistence of this dichotomy is illustrated in Pliny's letter, in which he too claims that seeing Isaeus recalled fond memories of his school days.

<sup>48</sup> Both Tacitus and Juvenal cite general topics of declamation rather than specific cases, which make a perfect parallel with Seneca impossible. There are instances, however, in which the cases recorded by Seneca could fall under the given headings. For example, Juvenal cites 'The Rapist' (7.168) which could be *Contr.* 1.5, 3.5, 4.3, 7.8, or 8.6 in Seneca as all deal with a rapist.

<sup>49</sup> Kaster 2001, 322.

matter of precedent, for the topics covered by Seneca are much less practical than those listed in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.<sup>50</sup>

This bundle of criticisms represents the most common ways in which the Romans themselves discussed declamation. Caution is necessary, however, and we cannot simply take these descriptions at face value. Juvenal condemns declamation, but declamatory themes and style dominate his own work.<sup>51</sup> Tacitus' interlocutors are not engaged in declamation explicitly, but their fictional contest is in many ways similar.<sup>52</sup> The author, moreover, makes extensive use of the sententious language that is regarded as a hallmark of the genre.<sup>53</sup> Encolpius acknowledges that he and Agamemnon are engaged in a declamatory contest, even while both condemn contemporary schools ("Non est passus Agamemnon me diutius declamare in porticu, quam ipse in schola sudaverat...") "Agamemnon would not allow me to declaim longer in the portico than he had sweated in the school," Petron. *Sat.* 3). One may similarly read the critiques of Votienus Montanus (*Contr.* 9.pr), one of the harshest critics of declamation in Seneca's work, as part of a speech against declamation; indeed, this interpretation helps alleviate some of the inconsistencies within the text.<sup>54</sup> Even Seneca himself, it has been argued, functions as a sort of arch-declamer exploring the value of declamation as literary form.<sup>55</sup> In short, the prevalence of declamatory style and thought is evidenced by its critics—men who themselves rely on it to not only support but shape their criticisms.

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<sup>50</sup> For a broad comparison of themes see Bonner 1969, 25-6.

<sup>51</sup> Braund 1997.

<sup>52</sup> Van den Berg 2014, 22, 42-7.

<sup>53</sup> Sinclair 1995.

<sup>54</sup> In brief, the condemnation of declamation given in the ninth preface is inconsistent with the portrayal of Montanus throughout the rest of the work, in which he is labelled a *scholasticus* (*Contr.* 7.5.12). For a fuller treatment of the 'problem' of Montanus, see Fairweather 1981, 47-9.

<sup>55</sup> For the label of "arch-declamer" see Bloomer 1997a, 214.

The disparity between presentation and reality may arise from declamation's inability to provide a perfect substitute for the public oratory of the late Republic. While the safe (depoliticized) space of declamation allowed for freer engagement with the rhetorical tradition, it also removed the stakes of that tradition and the ability of the speaker to effect real change—instead, allowing his rhetoric to bring order to a clearly fictional world. The infantilization of declamation may be seen as both a further means of insulating the genre and a (conscious?) reaction to that insulation—of course declamation is for kids, there is no risk! That this infantilization was not accompanied by reduced participation among adult men, some of whom occupied significant social positions, indicates that declamation fulfilled some need of this group.

### 2.3 Becoming a *pater*

The massive unreality of the particulars of declamatory cases should not distract us from their relevance as an educational practice. As well as the basic tenets of rhetoric, in taking on the role of speaker young men were provided with a space in which they could learn to be *patres*; literally talking their way through the complex social situations that would occur in their adult lives.<sup>56</sup> In composing declamations (particularly *controversiae*), young men engaged with and employed a variety of stereotypes to construct personas for those around them, ascribing to them motivations and actions and correct speech. This final point, as Bloomer observed, is of particular importance as when the declaimer actually spoke it was as a *paterfamilias* speaking on behalf of the other characters they had created. These characters (and by extension the groups/people they represent) are thus given a proper place and role, as well as problems that need

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<sup>56</sup> Imber 2008, 161-9.

resolution; such resolution, however, is only possible through the speech of a young man and his colleagues.<sup>57</sup> In this way, declamation served not only as a guide for young men, its caricatures acting as a crude model from which to base his own future interactions, but also as a reaffirmation of the speaker's own right to speech. Declamation, therefore, becomes a validation for the privileged position of aristocratic male speech within the broader social context, and participation in declamation demonstrated the speaker's right to call upon the authority inherent in that role.

*Controversia* 1.4 illuminates the complex social dynamics that underlie declamatory cases. A son is caught between conflicting filial obligations and may be disinherited as a result.

#### FORTIS SINE MANIBUS

Adulterum cum adultera qui deprehenderit, dum utrumque corpus interficiat, sine fraude sit. Liceat adulterium in matre et filio vindicare.

Vir fortis in bello manus perdidit. Deprendit adulterum cum uxore, ex qua filium adulescentem habebat. Imperavit filio ut occideret; non occidit; adulter effugit. Abdicat filium.

#### THE HERO WITHOUT HANDS

Whoever catches an adulterer with his mistress in the act, provided he kills both, may go free. A son too may punish adultery on the part of his mother.

A hero lost his hands in war. He caught an adulterer with his wife, by whom he had a youthful son. He told the son to do the killing. The son refused. The adulterer fled. The husband now disinherits his son.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Bloomer 1997b, 57-78.

<sup>58</sup> Trans. Winterbottom 1974.

Even for those who defend the son, the law is not at issue.<sup>59</sup> Rather, they illuminate the impossible moral choice that he faced.<sup>60</sup> This choice twists him into a mirror of his hero father, who is himself unable to act because of the loss of his hands. This equivalence legitimizes the son's inaction; domestic pressure (the choice between parents) is made equal to public pressure (the requirement of military service) as both have robbed an individual of their agency. On the other side, speakers reject this equivalence. They emphasize his denial of service to his father and draw a comparison to his unwillingness to perform military service in order to demonstrate his fault.<sup>61</sup> Here too, we see the relationship between the public and domestic spheres: the son fails to perform in either and thus twice wrongs his father. Neither of these arguments depend on minutiae of law, but rather the validity of the action for disinheritance rests on distinct prioritization within a consistent system of morality. The central argument, then, may be reduced to whether or not the son continued to operate within this system.

In *Controversia* 1.4, domestic issues are explicitly made to reflect public affairs. The case concerns disinheritance, but the domestic and public spheres are joined in the figure of the heroic father and his son's double inaction. The debate, then, transcends the presented issue. Speakers argue not only whether the son should be disinherited in this particular case but also about the boundaries of familial loyalty and the role of military service as a component of self-definition.

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<sup>59</sup> Seneca does mention that the "novi declamatores" (the new declaimers) did attempt to argue that it was illegal for the son to act as he had not done the catching himself (*Contr.* 1.4.6). While this approach is mentioned, it is quickly abandoned by Seneca in favour of the more moralistic responses.

<sup>60</sup> Blandus, for instance, states, "utrimque fili nomen audio" ("from both side, I hear the name of son," *Contr.* 1.4.9) and Cestius "pater recitabat legem de adulteriis, mater de parricidiis" ("my father was reciting the law on adultery, my mother that on parricide," *Contr.* 1.4.9).

<sup>61</sup> Argentarius is by no means the only one to make this argument, but does so quite succinctly: "ante patriae quam patri negavit manus" ("He denied his hands to his fatherland before [he denied them to] his father," *Contr.* 1.4.3).

An essential function of declamatory education was the exploration of such questions. Cases of adoption functioned as examinations of aristocratic values of exchange and luxury.<sup>62</sup> Rape similarly emphasized exchange and equity, while also justifying the speaker's authority through having them speak for individuals who would otherwise not have a voice.<sup>63</sup> Repudiation, the most common legal conflict in *controversiae*, allowed the speaker to negotiate with and from positions of authority in order to resolve conflicts that depended upon alternative interpretations of a broad range of social mores.<sup>64</sup> The same is true in cases of madness, although the perceived fault is perpetrated by the more powerful figure.

The exploration that declamation allowed was only possible because of its separation from public speech. This most obviously manifests in the circumstances of performance, but even within the cases themselves matters are often (at least nominally) domestic in nature.<sup>65</sup> A tyrant, for instance, may torture a man's wife to learn whether he is plotting to kill him, but the conflict under discussion is whether that man was ungrateful for later divorcing her (*Contr.* 2.5). By placing conflicts within the private sphere, declamation emphasizes the correct application of paternal authority. This paternal authority, moreover, was not an innate quality of declamatory fatherhood; rather it relied on adherence to an admittedly flexible code of conduct, deviance

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<sup>62</sup> Bernstein 2009, 331-53.

<sup>63</sup> Connolly 1998, 143-8; Kaster 2001, 329-30.

<sup>64</sup> Breij (2011, 338) asserts that 190 of 291 surviving cases deal with father-son relationships and the majority of these are concerned with repudiation.

<sup>65</sup> There are exceptions to this rule, but they are limited. The two clearest examples are *Contr.* 10.4 and 10.5, in which "rei publica laesae accusatur" ("[someone] is accused of harming the state"). Even in these cases there is some ambiguity. In *Contr.* 10.4 a man is mutilating children so that they can serve as beggars, as Bernstein (2009, 345-50) has observed this case still involves the negotiation of proper familial relationships as the man is acting as surrogate father to the exposed children. As similar move toward the private sphere is seen in *Contr.* 7.2. Popillius, Cicero's assassin, "accusatur de moribus" ("is accused of misconduct," *Contr.* 7.2). This charge, Bonner (1969, 124) notes, is more commonly associated with divorce; brought so that a husband could keep part of his wife's dowry.

from which resulted in the loss of paternal privilege. Navigation and successful deployment of this code of conduct is what is meant when we assert that young men learned to speak as *patres*.

The paternal authority of declamation also provided its participants with a useful model for other kinds of power imbalances that they would face. While nominally absolute, the cases themselves present paternal authority as such only when correctly applied. As correct application is consistently contested, individual speech (and, therefore, the individual speaker) is empowered as a mechanism of conflict resolution and allowed to negotiate with the rules—even when taking on a disadvantaged persona.<sup>66</sup> This was especially useful as the father-son relationship was also employed as a model for the relationship of the princeps and the aristocracy.<sup>67</sup> Declamation, therefore, allowed participants to explore their relationship to the princeps—insulated by both the depoliticized environment and the use of familial (private) language.

#### **2.4 The purpose of adult declamation**

What of adult declamation? Why would men continue to participate in this form of speech even after the lessons of youth had ended? As a genre, declamation has often been faulted for its lack of clear resolution—indeed, Seneca quotes Votienus Montanus as stating that the aim is “non ut vincat sed ut placeat” (“not to win, but to please,” *Contr.* 9.pr.1). Montanus’ statement is valid but only when one considers declamation as a mirror of forensic oratory, which places the genre at a distinct disadvantage.<sup>68</sup> The tension in declamation derives not from competition between two sides each advancing opposing positions, but instead on whether or not the speaker

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<sup>66</sup> Gunderson 2003, 125-9.

<sup>67</sup> Roller (2001, 233-46) contrasts this construction with that of the master-slave relationship and argues that father-son represented an essentially positive expression. Declamation, however, may represent a negative application of the model. For a fuller exploration of the princeps’ relationship to declamation see Chapter 4.5 (“Voices of Authority”).

<sup>68</sup> Gunderson (2003)

would be able to successfully engage with the discourse of declamation and carry off presenting himself as possessing sufficient authority to resolve the chaotic situation into which he was thrust.<sup>69</sup> The arbiter of success was not a judge but his fellows, the audience who filled the declamatory hall. That is not to say that there was no competition between individual declaimers—it was very much a zero sum game<sup>70</sup>—rather, that competition manifested along a distinct axis from forensic oratory, and two men arguing the same position could be fierce opponents. It was, moreover, possible to “lose” at declamation, even if no opponent was present; poor presentation, failure to engage with (or, perhaps more accurately, to dominate) the discourse or simply a hostile crowd could undermine a speaker.

What does this tell us about the purpose of adult declamation? The possibility of failure attracted audiences to see (and judge) whether the speaker would be successful.<sup>71</sup> Declamation, thus, became a form of educated entertainment as men were drawn to the schools for leisure.<sup>72</sup> For its participants, declamation offered the opportunity to assert their qualifications as speakers. Declamation, then, functioned as one means to display cultural capital—distinguishing authentic members of a community.<sup>73</sup> This was particularly advantageous for the provincial elite as the schools of declamation not only provided them with a unified body of *exempla* and language as youths, but also a space in which they were able to prove themselves in their adult lives.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Gleason (1994, xxiii) observed a similar dynamic in the rhetoric of the Second Sophistic.

<sup>70</sup> Suet. *Calig.* 20 makes this abundantly clear, although in a different context than the rhetorical contest preserved in Seneca.

<sup>71</sup> Gleason 1994, xxiii.

<sup>72</sup> Both Bonner (1969, 39-43) and Hömke (2007) see entertainment as the primary purpose of presentation declamation.

<sup>73</sup> Gleason 1994, xxi.

<sup>74</sup> Sinclair 1995a,

One of the most compelling reasons for an individual to continue to compete in declamation was that the genre allowed access to rhetorical discourse in an environment not dominated by the new political order. As the portrayal of Cicero as depoliticized hero of eloquence in declamatory texts demonstrates, such access was still vital to elite self-presentation and assessment.<sup>75</sup> Declamation provided a space in which the voices of its participants were still effective tools of conflict resolution. The judgement of the audience, moreover, allowed for distinction between speakers. These two factors allowed declamation to function as a balm for anxiety surrounding reduced opportunities to engage, under the Principate, with the tradition of eloquence. The validity of the interaction it allowed was always in question.<sup>76</sup> Nevertheless, for Seneca it provided an adequate successor to Republican oratory. Central to this function was its role as a mode of aristocratic competition.

## **2.5 Declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition**

Declamation was competitive. Speakers competed with one another to deploy eloquent *sententiae* and thus win the praise of their audiences. For some, this was practical: *rhetores* attracted students on the strength of their performance and men, such as Craton and Timagenes (*Contr.* 10.5.21-2), could be handsomely rewarded if they ingratiated themselves to the powerful. For the rest (the amateurs), motivations are more complicated. Declamation was enjoyable and men might compete, either privately or publicly, for their own amusement. This was not simply frivolity, however, as declamation also fulfilled the cathartic function of allowing men to safely compete in a field that had been diminished in the civil wars before being brought under the

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<sup>75</sup> Roller 1997; Kaster 1998; Richlin 1999; Lobur 2008.

<sup>76</sup> Messala, for instance, describes Latro as “sua lingua disertus est” (“eloquent in his own tongue,” *Contr.* 2.4.8). Griffin (1972, 13) reads this as a condemnation of the genre rather than any accent Latro possessed.

dominion of the princeps. It is this function that Seneca seizes upon as he presents declamation as both a legitimate successor to Republican oratory and a viable mode of aristocratic competition.

The influence that Seneca exerts on our understanding of declamation during the early Principate is considerable, as he is our primary source of information on this form of stylized speech.<sup>77</sup> One must therefore be cautious not to assume that his presentation of declamation expresses universal consensus. At the same time, however, he is clearly recording an extant phenomenon. While the constructed nature of Seneca's idealized community of shared speech and its relationship to the actual participants of declamation receives greater attention in Chapter 3 ("A Multi-participant Activity"), it is worth acknowledging here as the degree to which declamation represented an authentic means of aristocratic competition is largely the product of our text.

Aristocratic competition, in this context, is distinguished from generic forms of competition through its relationship to aristocratic self-representation. To succeed in aristocratic competition was to further legitimize oneself as an established member of that body. This legitimization was especially important for those declaimers who lacked the social standing for automatic inclusion—particularly those wealthy provincials for whom distance from Rome was the primary obstacle to inclusion.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Another contemporary source of information may be Valerius Maximus. If, as Bloomer (1992) has argued, we regard his work as a collection of declamatory *exempla*, then it may prove a useful counterpoint.

<sup>78</sup> "quibus quo minus ad famam pervenirent non ingenium defuit sed locus" ("ones who lacked the locale rather than the talent to arrive at fame," *Contr.* 10.pr.13). While Seneca is here discussing the fame accrued through declamation, it conveys the sense that location was important to success in this competition. For the anxiety about the inclusion of non-aristocrats, see Chapter 3.1 ("Defining a Community of Shared Speech). For the difficulties associated with knowing the demographics of declamation, see Chapter 3.5 ("Specific Composition of the Audience").

The necessity of new modes of aristocratic competition arose out of the changing political circumstances of the late first century BCE. During the Republic, aristocratic dominance of economic, social, and political life ensured that these provided viable metrics of competition. Under the new sociopolitical order of the Principate the emperor dominated these traditional modes of aristocratic competition and aristocrats were forced to find new avenues for competing with each other (as well as him).<sup>79</sup> In both the old and new models of competition, the results are primarily framed as ethically significant.<sup>80</sup> The primacy of ethical results allows for a perceived continuity between the old and new modes of competition despite the latter not enhancing a participant's economic, social, or political standing. Declamation provided an ideal novel mode of competition for three reasons: (1) the fantastic subject matter insulated it from public life (where the emperor was dominant); (2) rhetoric was already a traditional sphere of competition and this allowed a sense of continuity with the past; (3) declamation is (at its most reductive) concerned with speaking about, to, and from power—making it a useful “tool to think with” for its participants.

Do these things mean that it was certainly a mode of aristocratic competition? Perhaps—Seneca presents it as such. At the same time, however, one must acknowledge that there was no unified aristocratic consciousness and that individual authors presented unique constructions with the hope of persuading their audiences towards the validity of their models.<sup>81</sup> These models did tend to benefit their creators in some capacity—as Seneca's most likely did.

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<sup>79</sup> As Moatti (2015, 164) observes, this process actually began during the late Republic as power became increasingly concentrated in the hands of individuals. The increased stability of the Principate merely solidified the new dynamic.

<sup>80</sup> Roller 2001, 3-13.

<sup>81</sup> Roller 2001, 6.

In favour of declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition, we have a number of men producing collections of declamations in this period.<sup>82</sup> This suggests that some degree of cultural capital was available through declamation. We also see declamatory language and style become more common in other types of literature—even dominating those works that claim to be critical of the genre. At the same time, however, the very existence of these same works suggests that broad participation did not equate to ethical significance.

The prestige offered by declamation suggests a comparison to other non-traditional avenues for the generation of cultural capital—particularly, those dependent on literary renown. *Recitatio* (recitation), as another response to the changing function of *oratio* in the Principate, provides a strong starting place.<sup>83</sup> Like declamation, *recitationes* were private performances disconnected from the affairs of state; moreover, while the form of the *recitatio* was more variable than that of declamation (as they could be drawn from any genre, rather than just judicial or deliberative oratory), the judgement of the audience was, as with declamation, essential to its success.<sup>84</sup>

Unfortunately, there is no equivalent to Seneca for *recitatio* and it is difficult to know exactly what was read at these performances.<sup>85</sup> Pliny the Younger offers insight into their popularity as he informs Sosius Senecio that, “toto mense Aprili nullus fere dies, quo non

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<sup>82</sup> We hear, for instance, that Junius Otho has written four collections of *colores*, although Seneca the Elder thought they were too fanciful (*Contr.* 2.1.33).

<sup>83</sup> Seneca also attributes its invention to Asinius Pollio, one of the subjects of his fourth preface (*Contr.* 4.pr.2); Suetonius, on the other hand, attributes the first public reading of poetry to Crates in 2 BCE (*De Gram. et rhet.* 2). For *recitatio* as an attempt to preserve the cultural prestige of Republican *oratio*, see Dupont 1997 (esp. 44-5). For the characterization of declamation as simply lower-class *recitatio*, see Bloomer 1997a, 199.

<sup>84</sup> Dupont 1972, 47. Consider also Pliny the Younger’s complaints about the failures of contemporary audiences (*Ep.* 1.13.2-5).

<sup>85</sup> Maurus Servius Honoratus, writing in the late fourth/early fifth century, does state, “dicitur autem ingenti favore a Vergilio esse recitata, adeo ut, cum eam postea Cytheris...cantasset in teatro...” (“It is said that [the Eclogue] was recited by Virgil amid immense applause to the extent that, when afterwards Cytheris performed it in the theatre...” *Serv. Ec.* 6.11).

recitaret aliquis” (“a day does not go by throughout the whole month of April, on which someone was not engaged in recitation,” *Ep.* 1.13.1). Earlier examples are problematic. Horace’s objections to recitation, for instance, seem to involve a much more public venue (such as “spissis indigna theatris scripta pudet recitare...” “I am ashamed to recite my unworthy writings in crowded theatres...” *Epist.* 1.19.41-2).<sup>86</sup> Although his complaint that “in medio qui scripta foro recitent, sunt multi, quique lavantes: suave locus voci resonat conclusus” (“many are those who recite in the middle of the forum, many who recite in the baths: an enclosed space sweetly echoes the voice,” *Sat.* 1.4.74-6) recalls one of the few known locations of declamation (“balneo publico,” “public baths,” *Contr.* 3.pr.16).<sup>87</sup>

Strikingly, it is not the *recitatio* itself that is the source of cultural capital but the future publication of the work that it shapes. As Pliny the Younger makes clear in a letter, praise (*maxima laude*) will only manifest after the work has been made into a public object (*Ep.* 2.10). In so doing, he employs a familiar formulation: “habe ante oculos mortalitatem, a qua adserere te hoc uno monumento pote” (“Remember, my friend, the mortality of human nature, and that there is nothing so likely to preserve your name, as a monument of this kind,” *Ep.* 2.10).<sup>88</sup> This need for literary permanence illuminates an aspect of *declamatio*, namely the importance of leaving a written *monumentum*. Thus, Seneca states, “ipsis quoque multum praestaturus videor, quibus oblivio inminet nisi aliquid quo memoria eorum producat posteris tradetur” (“It seem I will be performing a great service for these men themselves, for whom oblivion is imminent unless

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<sup>86</sup> Markus (2000, 152-5) argues that Horace is discussing *recitatio* despite the reference to the theatre.

<sup>87</sup> The proceeding lines, “nec recito cuiquam nisi amicis, idque coactus, non ubi vis coramve quibuslibet” (“Nor do I recite them to anyone except friends, and only when pressed, not anywhere or before anyone publicly,” *Sat.* 1.4.73-4) also call to mind the hesitation of early declaimers to perform publicly (*Contr.* 4.pr.2; 10.pr.4).

<sup>88</sup> The same idea is present in Horace *Odes* 3.30: “exegi monumentum aere perennius” (“I have completed a monument more eternal than bronze”).

something, by which the memory of them is prolonged, is handed down to posterity,” *Contr.* 1.pr.11). It is explicit, moreover, that this fixing of material will transform their speeches into public objects (“ne ad quemquem privatim pertineant,” “so that they do not belong privately to someone,” *Contr.* 1.pr.10).

This move towards public object is problematic for a genre that relies on its private nature to insulate it against political reprisal. This may account in part for Seneca’s fixation on book burning in the tenth preface (*Contr.* 10.pr.5-8); he has transformed declamation into a public thing and in so doing has put it under threat of reprisal.<sup>89</sup> This is also a problem experienced by the Augustan poets, who needed to maintain the appearance of autonomy even as they were increasingly incorporated in structures of the state and gained public status.<sup>90</sup> This may account for the ludic language used by Seneca to describe declamation (he compares himself, for instance, to a *munerarius*, *Contr.* 4.pr.1),<sup>91</sup> which represents a significant divergence from the normal practice of participants.<sup>92</sup>

The competitive nature of declamation is immediately apparent in Seneca’s work. In his first preface, our author states that he is composing his work in order that his sons might be familiar with the declaimers of the preceding generation. This is not, however, a matter of mere preservation as his sons have also asked for his opinion of these men (*Contr.* 1.pr.1). This request emphasizes declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition—speakers are no longer performing in isolation but in the context of a broader community of shared speech, with whom

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<sup>89</sup> The whole of the seventh *Suasoriae* also deals with this issue.

<sup>90</sup> Roman 2014, 261.

<sup>91</sup> Compare Ovid’s description of poetry as “iuvenalia lusi” (“the youth I played,” *Tr.* 5.1.7).

<sup>92</sup> Gunderson 2016.

they are competing.<sup>93</sup> While I do not wish to argue that this approach was unique to Seneca (quite the opposite in fact), the treatment of declamation as a mode of competition informs the ideology of his text. This ideology is most apparent at *Controversiae* 1.pr.6-11, in which Seneca engages in an attack on the current age.<sup>94</sup>

The validity of declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition is reinforced through an association with public oratory. The lynch pin of this association is Cicero and it is telling that Seneca uses his life to define the height of Roman rhetorical excellence. Cicero was a man who succeeded under the old Republican model of rhetorical competition, but who was also known to have engaged in (proto-)declamation; thus, connecting the two in a single figure.<sup>95</sup> As public speech was diminished, competition moved to the untainted private sphere, in which personal excellence could still flourish. The lack of apparent external rewards for participation necessitated the development of new metrics for determining success in this field. Seneca connects proper (or skilled) speech with an inherent “goodness” in the speaker.<sup>96</sup> This internalization of qualification is a common feature of aristocratic modes of competition in the early Principate.<sup>97</sup> It is, therefore, the expression of this internalization (and not its presence) that bears examination.

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<sup>93</sup> The notion that declamation was competitive is most evident later, when Seneca the Elder supplies us with his first quartet (*Contr.* 10.pr.13). Consider also Severus’ complaint, “Pollionem Asinium et Messalam Corvinum et Passienum, qui nunc primo loco stat, minus bene videri dicere quam Cestium aut Latronem” (“Asinius Pollio and Messala Corvinus and Passienus, who is now in first position, are seen to speak less well than Cestius and Latro,” *Contr.* 3.pr.14).

<sup>94</sup> The first treatment of this theme according to (Winterbottom 1974, 6n.2), which became quite popular in the first century BCE.

<sup>95</sup> Seneca certainly includes Cicero among the declaimers as he expresses his regrets at not being able to see him perform (*Contr.* 1.pr.11). For the importance of Cicero as a figure in declamation, see Kaster 1998 and Roller 1997.

<sup>96</sup> This connection is given added authority as it is attributed to Cato.

<sup>97</sup> Roller 2001, 16.

An essential component of aristocratic competition was a consistent ethical model against which men could be judged. It is, therefore, worth considering the model established by Seneca and how it legitimizes declamatory speech. In the work of Seneca, masculinity acts to articulate the internalized virtue connected to proper speech. These two factors, as we shall see, are reciprocal—that is to say, that one is impossible without the other. “What is an orator?” asks Cato’s son. “Orator est, Marce fili, vir bonus dicendi peritus,” (“An orator, son Marcus, is a good man skilful in speaking,” *Contr.* 1.pr.9-10) the great man replies.<sup>98</sup> The importance of *vir* in this section must not be overlooked as it functions as the baseline, the bare minimum required for proper participation. So how does one properly perform masculinity?

The concept of masculinity can be problematic as it evokes modern conceptions of gender. Roman masculinity was, as both Gleason and Williams have argued, not a stable trait but a quality that had to be consistently reasserted to ensure its continued validity.<sup>99</sup> It was not, moreover, tied exclusively to one’s possession of male sex organs. The penetrative quality of masculinity—that is to say, its connection to “active” participation in a sexual relationship—made it a good allegory for more general power structures: direct interpersonal power dynamics functioning as a substitute for public power dynamics that were no longer accessible as the measurable successful outcome of aristocratic competition. Masculinity comes to represent an intersection of numerous avenues of aristocratic competition, including oratory. Successful performance in these fields is indicative of the successful performance of masculinity, and

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<sup>98</sup> Longinus (*Subl.* 44) advances a similar claim as he discusses the impossibility of a slave orator. The connection of slavery to lost of masculinity is established through a quotation of Homer, “ἥμισυ γὰρ τ’ ἀρετῆς...ἀποαίνυται δούλιον ἡμᾶρ” (“surely half of our manhood is robber by the day of enslavement” Longinus *Subl.* 44.4-5 = Hom. *Od.* 17.322; trans. Fyfe).

<sup>99</sup> Gleason 1995, xxiv; Williams 1999, 9-11.

successful performance of the shared body of values that make up masculinity is necessary for the former. Masculinity, then, becomes synonymous with (and the preferred language to express) the ideology that underlays Seneca's text.

The connection between successful oratory and masculinity is established early in Seneca's work. After supplying his three suggestions as to the decline of oratory, Seneca turns his attention on his sons' contemporaries, asking: "Quis aequalium vestrorum quid dicam satis ingeniosus, satis studiosus, immo quis satis vir est?" ("who of your contemporaries—what shall I say—is talented enough, is diligent enough, is indeed sufficiently a man?" *Contr.* 1.pr.9). The manhood being attacked is divorced from sexual action—indeed, Seneca the Elder himself is critical of their lust.<sup>100</sup> Masculinity, instead, forms a convenient binary with effeminacy to denote those who (Seneca believes) engage both correctly and successfully in declamation. The structure of his attack on the youth reinforces this interpretation: his initial complaints centre around the effeminacy of the next generation, his sons' contemporaries; he, then, transmits an oracle from Cato, in which masculinity, morality, and correct (or skilled) speech are intertwined; finally, he bemoans the present lack of orators. While this final point does attach a final effeminate quality to contemporary speakers, it is primarily concerned with their disregard for future renown. This lack of concern denotes a breakdown of oratory (declamation included) as a mode of aristocratic competition—the end goal of participation has changed. The dysfunction, moreover, is reinforced by Seneca's accusations of plagiarism, which represents both a shift in the understood rules of competition and an attack on eloquence past and present.

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<sup>100</sup> "Emolliti enervesque quod nati sunt in vita manent, expugnatores alienae pudicitiae, neglegentes suae" ("During their lives they remain as they were born, effeminate and powerless, taking the chastity of others by storm, neglecting their own," *Contr.* 1.pr.9); this may imply that they are also engaging as the passive party in sexual acts. Also, "in libidine viris" ("men in their lusts," *Contr.* 1.pr.10).

What, then did successful performance look like? What qualities did Seneca value in a speaker? These questions help to shape Seneca's critical model and guide his evaluation of the speakers he presents.

## 2.6 Seneca's model of individual criticism

As though a *munerarius* (*Contr.* 4.pr.1), Seneca parades before his sons the greatest declaimers of the preceding generation in order that they might not only judge these men for themselves (*Contr.* 1.pr.1) but also to provide models for imitation, against whom the current degraded state of eloquence will be exposed (*Contr.* 1.pr.6-11). It is not only the excerpted speakers, however, who provide models for his sons. Declamation is a performance and a performance demands an audience. Seneca, through his judgement of the speakers he presents, not only assumes this role but also instructs his sons in proper participation in this critical aspect of declamation.<sup>101</sup> The assessment of speakers in Seneca is twofold: (1) a "golden age" is posited, in which worthy men were able to participate in real eloquence and from which the art of speech has since declined; (2) the speakers who had been his contemporaries, men whose lives overlapped with (or, at least, abutted) the true age of eloquence, are judged according to their ability to project the ideals of that period in the novel context of declamation.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> For the audience as the arbiter of rhetorical success, see Gleason 1994, xxiii. The *Controversiae* opens with a promise that his work will allow his sons to judge them ("ut, quamvis notitiae vestrae subducti sint, tamen non credatis tantum de illis sed et iudicetis" ("so that, although you do not know them, nevertheless you do not believe so much about them but can also judge them [for yourselves]," *Contr.* 1.pr.1). The tenth preface forms a neat parallel as Seneca tells them, "reliquos ut vobis videbitur componite: ego vobis omnium feci potestatem" ("arrange the rest as they appear to you, I have produced the ability of every man for you [to judge]," *Contr.* 10.pr.13).

<sup>102</sup> Gunderson (2003, 55) argues that Seneca's "golden age" is located in the age which he recalls and is a construction created through citation of that age. While this model is valuable, I contend that we should take Seneca at his word and locate the golden age of eloquence in the time of Cicero, which he himself tells us he missed (*Contr.* 1.pr.11). Our author, then, is not describing the height of eloquence but the subsequent age, from which the current state of eloquence nevertheless represents a significant decline.

The competitive aspect of Seneca's text (or, more conservatively, if one does not wish to view direct competition as explicit, the awareness of the relative merits of his various *exempla*) is made clear when our author presents his first quartet of Latro, Gallio, Fuscus, and Albucius (*Contr.* 10.pr.13).<sup>103</sup> How, however, does Seneca come to select these four individuals? What are the criteria for judgement? As a critic, our author asserts that he is not concerned with outlining fixed rules for speech: "Nec sum ex iudicibus severissimus qui omnia ad exactam regulam derigam: multa donanda ingenii puto; sed donanda vitia, non portenta sunt" ("I am not counted among the most rigid judges, a man who will direct everything towards an exact rule; I think that many things should be granted to ability, but faults are granted, not monstrosities," *Contr.* 10.pr.10).<sup>104</sup> While this comment reflects his critical approach, which Sussman has labelled "individualism" due to the emphasis on the character of the speaker rather the use of terse critical or technical terms, it also suggests that there were limits to his tolerance.<sup>105</sup> These limits, broadly speaking, correspond to the natural abilities of each speaker, and men are most eloquent when their speech aligns with their nature—provided that their nature has not been rendered effeminate

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<sup>103</sup> Competition is reinforced by the sentiment that follows: "Hi quotiens conflixissent, penes Latronem gloria fuisset, penes Gallionem palma; reliquos ut vobisvidebitur componite: ego vobis omnium feci potestatem." ("now as often as they clashed, the glory would have belonged to Latro, to Gallio the prize; arrange the rest as they appear to you, I have produced the ability of every man for you [to judge]," *Contr.* 10.pr.13). All other uses of *gloria* occur within excerpts of declamations, although Gallio's use at *Suas.* 5.8, while included in the context of describing Gallio's approach to the current *suasoria*, does include a definition of *gloria* as not only lasting but linked to memory, which may have broader repercussions of our understanding of the term as it relates to Latro's place among the first quartet. One other use of *palma* occurs, "Antonius Atticus inter has pueriles sententias videtur palmam meruisse; dixit enim..." ("Antonius Atticus seemed worthy of the prize among these childish *sententiae*. He said..." *Suas.* 2.16.).

<sup>104</sup> Compare *Contr.* 9.6.11: "Tantus autem error est in omnibus quidem studiis, sed maxime eloquentia, cuius regula incerta est, ut vitia quidam sua et intellegant et ament" ("Truly, there is so great an error in every field of study, but especially eloquence, the rules of which are uncertain, that some men perceive their own faults and love them").

<sup>105</sup> For the lack of technical terms in Seneca, see Bardon 1940; Sussman 1978, 95-6. For Sussman's labelling of the approach as "individualism," see Sussman 1978, 107.

as is the case with his sons' contemporaries (*Contr.* 1.pr.8-10).<sup>106</sup> The metrics of eloquence, then, were not universal and men could arrive at it through different avenues and in different fields.<sup>107</sup>

Seneca's emphasis on eloquence as indicative of character is not novel. As early as Aristotle, we are presented with the concept that, "σχεδὸν ὡς εἰπεῖν κυριωτάτην ἔχει πίστιν τὸ ἦθος" ("moral character, so to speak, constitutes the most effective source of persuasion," *Arist. Rh.* 1.2.1356a13). Although Aristotle is speaking of moral character as credible for the speaker, for the Romans this came to be associated with an innate moral fibre.<sup>108</sup> For new men like Cicero, however, it was necessary to fashion an authoritative identity from speech, exploiting the cultural assumption that good speech was delivered by good men to fashion an ideal self from the impression left by speech.<sup>109</sup> This principle was doubly true for the declaimers of the early Principate, whose genre deprived them of the concrete results necessary to support assertions of eloquence. This disassociation of results from speech only strengthen the notion that good speech was the product of good men as there was little beyond it to demonstrate otherwise.

The assertion that Seneca's model of criticism was individualistic is, at its core, an assertion that it was primarily descriptive, rather than proscriptive. A parallel to this model of morality may be found in Seneca the Younger's *de Vita Beata*, which presents a model of stoicism that obeys many of the same rules.<sup>110</sup> The Younger Seneca's approach, as Asmis has

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<sup>106</sup> Van den Berg (2014, 44-5) demonstrates that the model of *eloquentia* as a tool for transmitting one's unique identity to others is also present in the works of Cicero and Tacitus.

<sup>107</sup> Compare the similar model of eloquence presented by Cassius Severus (*Contr.* 3.pr.8-11): "Magna et varia est eloquentia, neque adhuc ulli sic indulsit ut tota contingeret; satis felix est qui in aliquam eius partem receptus est" ("Eloquence is a great and varied thing, and thus far it has not indulged anyone so much that he grasped the whole thing; he is lucky enough, who is himself admitted into some part of it," *Contr.* 3.pr.11.)

<sup>108</sup> May (1988, 1-12) discusses the importance of *ethos* (character) to Roman judicial oratory. For instance, Cato's defence against the charges of luxury in *De Sumptu Suo* is to have benefactions of his ancestors read out as well as his own actions on behalf of the Republic (*ORF* 173).

<sup>109</sup> For an exploration of Cicero's self-fashioning, see Dugan 2005.

<sup>110</sup> Asmis (1990, 219-55) provides an excellent account of Stoic individualism as presented within this work.

observed, owes much to Panaetius, who argues that a man must follow his own individual nature as well as human nature in general.<sup>111</sup> Seneca the Younger refines this model by presenting a variety of virtues and definitions by which happiness (the ultimate aim) may be achieved.<sup>112</sup>

The critical model of Seneca the Elder functions in much the same way. The aim is always to be a *vir bonus* (good man), made visible and real through eloquent speech, but the route to achieve that eloquence could vary so long as it was in accordance with the speaker's natural character. The fourth preface of the *Controversiae* illustrates this model through the contrasting characters of C. Asinius Pollio and Q. Haterius. Pollio, faced with the death of his son, declaimed within three days and demonstrated an "ingentis animi...malis suis insultantis" ("a prodigious mind triumphing over its own evils," *Contr.* 4.pr.6). Haterius, in the same situation, was so overcome with grief that even much later he was unable to declaim about the death of a son without bursting into tears; after this, however, "tanto maiore impetu dixit, tanto miserabilius, ut appareret quam magna interim pars esset ingenii dolor" ("he spoke with so much more passion, so much more mournfully, that it became apparent how great a part of talent anguish sometimes is," *Contr.* 4.pr.6). Each of these men achieve eloquence by contradictory means that are suited to their characters.

The role that character plays in achieving eloquence accounts for Seneca's statement that "numquam par fit imitator auctori" ("an imitator is never the equal of his model," *Contr.* 1.pr.6). This is only problematic, however, when one imitates only one man; for Seneca at least, "plura exempla inspecta sunt, plus in eloquentiam proficitur" ("the more patterns have been examined, the greater one's advantage in eloquence," *Contr.* 1.pr.6). This is because in imitating only a

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<sup>111</sup> Asmis 1990, 226; 250. For Panaetius' views, see Cicero *De officiis* 1.107-21.

<sup>112</sup> Asmis 1990, 231.

single example the speaker is much more likely to engage in plagiarism: drawing exclusively on the eloquence of another with no regard to his own character. Even when words that were originally eloquent are spoken in this way, the speaker can not claim that label for himself.<sup>113</sup> While plagiarism is the most overt expression of this problem, it could also occur when an individual imitated the style of another without regard to their own character. Albucius is one such man, who “*ingenio suo inlusit*” (“made a mockery of his own abilities,” *Contr.* 7.pr.5) by constantly shifting his style to match the last eloquent speaker he had heard (*Contr.* 7.pr.4-5).

Successful imitation for Seneca involved the examination of many and varied models—such as those he presents to his sons. But what, then, did one do with these models? How did they help to shape a speaker’s eloquence without the risk of him crossing into plagiarism? Seneca is not explicit, being more concerned with identifying instances of plagiarism or successful imitation. Seneca the Younger’s *Epistle* 84 may, however, offer insight as he further develops his father’s model of *imitatio*.<sup>114</sup> In this *Epistle*, Seneca the Younger advocates concealing one’s models and only revealing the final result of their influence (84.7-8). This final product must reflect the character of the speaker, which is only possible after a period of digestion in which the speaker absorbs the material that he has encountered.<sup>115</sup> The success of this process is validated by external observers who, even if they recognize the components, acknowledge that the new eloquence is distinct (*Ep.* 84.5). This need for recognition adds an

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<sup>113</sup> “Sententias a disertissimis viris iactas facile in tanta hominum desidia pro suis dicunt, et sic sacerrimam eloquentiam, quam praestare non possunt, violare non desinunt” (“They easily speak *sententiae*, which have been uttered by truly eloquent men, as their own among so apathetic a body of men, and thus they do not cease violating most eloquence, which they are not able to exhibit,” *Contr.* 1.pr.10).

<sup>114</sup> Trinacty (2009, 264) has observed that this is accomplished through intertextual reference to Seneca the Elder’s work.

<sup>115</sup> The period of rest is suggested by Seneca the Younger’s two preceding metaphors: (1) bees producing honey (*Ep.* 84.3-6); and (2) the digestion of food (*Ep.* 84.6-8). Compare Quint. (*Inst.* 2.7.3), for the desire that reproduction of models should be subconscious. For further analysis, see Fantham 1978.

aesthetic component to Seneca the Younger's model of *imitatio*, one that is very familiar to those who practice declamation, in which the aesthetics of performance are paramount. The validity of this aesthetic persona, moreover, recalls Seneca the Elder's own text, in which the aesthetic quality of men's speech is equated to their characters.<sup>116</sup>

The ability of an informed observer to recognize that borrowing has occurred is one of the key distinctions between plagiarism and imitation in Seneca the Younger's model of *imitatio*. This makes explicit an idea that is only suggested by his father's work. This can be seen in *Epistle 79*, as he encourages Lucilius to write a poetic history of Aetna despite its already being well-treated: "praeterea condicio optima est ultimi: parata verba invenit, quae aliter instructa novam faciem habent. nec illis manus inicit tamquam alienis; sunt enim publica" ("further, the circumstances of the last man are best; he comes upon words already set out, which have a new face, when arrayed in another way. And he does not lay hands on these as though from another, for they are public," 79.6). This justification, that the words are *publica*, recalls one of the aims of Seneca the Elder's text; namely, "quaecumque a celeberrimis viris facunde dicta teneo, ne ad quemquam privatim pertineant, populo dedicabo" ("whatever [words] I hold, which have been spoken eloquently by famous men, I will dedicate to the public so that they do not belong privately to anyone," *Contr.* 1.pr.10). Broad knowledge, it would seem, is sure protection against malicious plagiarism.

The importance of character and the dangers of plagiarism justify Seneca's emphasis on the attribution of speech and correct imitation.<sup>117</sup> The character of a speaker determined the sort

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<sup>116</sup> For the validity of Seneca the Younger's aesthetic self-scripting, see Graver 2014 (esp. 276).

<sup>117</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.10-11 highlights plagiarism as problematic and connects it to the more general decline of eloquence outlined at *Contr.* 1.pr.6-9. For Seneca the Elder's theory of imitation, see *Contr.* 1.pr.6; compare Quint. *Inst.* 10.2 (esp. 11, 24-6).

of speech for which he was most suitable. When a speaker operated within his natural boundaries, flaws could serve to emphasize his eloquence by providing a counterpoint (*Contr.* 1.1.22); when he engaged in improper imitation, however, these flaws became monstrous.

The critical style of Seneca distinguishes his work from the rhetorical handbooks of Cicero and Quintilian. The latter employ “legislative” or “theoretical” criticism whereas our author favours a descriptive style more common among writers of other genres—particularly, biography.<sup>118</sup> This biographical style is most evident in the pen-portraits, which appear in the majority of the prefaces as well as nestled within our author’s commentary.<sup>119</sup> The second book of the *Controversiae* provides strong examples of both styles of pen-portrait, the former supplied by the philosopher Fabianus (*Contr.* 2 pref), the latter by the poet Ovid (*Contr.* 2.2.8-12). The treatment of Fabianus is indicative of more general Senecan tendencies. The rhetorical criticism, in this case of Arellius Fuscus, is put in sexual (and therefore moral) terms as we hear that Fabianus tried to distance himself from his teacher, whose “*conpositio verborum mollior quam ut illam tam sanctis fortibusque praeceptis praeparans se animus pati posset*” (“arrangement of words was more effeminate than a mind preparing itself for such virtuous and courageous heights could endure,” *Contr.* 2 pref. 1). Similarly, analysis of rhetorical speech depends more on

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<sup>118</sup> Fairweather 1981, 59, argues that, while they are often not recognized as critics, philosophers, *grammatici*, *scholastici*, epistolographers, historians, and biographers all employed the descriptive style found in Seneca. For a further comparison of Seneca to Suetonius, see Fairweather 1981, 59-61.

<sup>119</sup> The ninth preface is the exception; although it is fragmentary and a pen portrait of Votienus Montanus may have supplemented his criticism of declamation (as is the case with Cassius Severus in preface 3). The most prominent example of a pen-portrait occurring outside of the prefaces is the treatment of Ovid (*Contr.* 2.2.8-12).

an examination of the man himself than stylistic devices.<sup>120</sup> Fabianus, we learn, lacked the toughness of the orator and, therefore, was a temperate speaker better suited to descriptive *suasoriae* than the anger or grief of *controversiae* (*Contr.* 2 pref. 2-3). This mildness may also fulfill another standard part of the pen-portraits: the attribution of some flaw that fundamentally hampered the subject.<sup>121</sup>

The pen-portraits found within Seneca's commentary are shorter than their counterparts in the prefaces and, accordingly, reveal less robust information about their subjects. As was the case with Fabianus, we see a reduction of Ovid to a few key traits. He is defined first as a poet (*Contr.* 2.2.8); while this may be unsurprising, it is the totalizing application of this label that makes the point noteworthy.<sup>122</sup> Second, although he draws heavily on *Latro* as a model, Ovid is not charged with improper imitation as the transition of the *sententiae* to verse preserves their originality (*Contr.* 2.2.8). His skill as a speaker is made clear through the attribution of praise (*Contr.* 2.2.9). As with Fabianus, a flaw is attributed to Ovid: "...non ignoravit vitia sua sed amavit" ("he was not ignorant of his own faults but he loved them," *Contr.* 2.2.12). While this is explicitly attributed to his poetry, Seneca also identifies it as a common failing in eloquence (*Contr.* 9.6.11).

The tendency towards biographical description is by no means a feature unique to the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*—especially when one understands that description to rest on the

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<sup>120</sup> Sussman 1978, 95-6. Seneca the Younger adopts a similar model in *Epistle* 114 stating, "si ille sanus est, si compositus, gravis, temperans, ingenium quoque siccum ac sobrium est; illo vitiato hoc quoque adflatur" ("if this man is sound of mind, if he is composed, serious, moderate, his talent is also sound and sensible; when one has become debauched, the other is also blown this way," *Sen. Ep.* 114.3). Like his father, he also casts negative qualities as effeminate (*Sen. Ep.* 114.3). His criticisms of Maecenas, "quam delicatus fuerit, quam cupierit videri" ("how effeminate he was, how he loved to be seen," *Sen. Ep.* 114.4), recall Seneca's abuse of contemporary youths (*Contr.* 1.pr.8, 10).

<sup>121</sup> Sussman 1978, 96-100.

<sup>122</sup> "Oratio eius iam tum nihil aliud poterat videri quam solutum carmen" ("His oratory even then could be seen as nothing other than poetry unbound [from metre]," *Contr.* 2.2.8.).

reduction of individuals to one or two exemplary traits. Valerius Maximus engages in a similar reduction as he presents his body of rhetorical *exempla*, classifying and defining men by one virtue or vice.<sup>123</sup> The Forum of Augustus, moreover, may suggest that this trend extended beyond declamation.<sup>124</sup>

The clearest expression of this process of exemplification (in the context of declamation) occurs with Cicero, who became a cultural icon within the genre bearing only a passing resemblance to the historical figure. Kaster identifies four (simultaneously occurring) aspects to this phenomenon: (1) amplification, as demonstrated by the language of immortality and the sacred which is only applied to Cicero in our text; (2) competition: ‘Cicero’ becomes the standard against which later generations compete; (3) sentimentalization which facilitates emotional bonding and allows invocations to have a consistent relatable effect; (4) simplification: the removal of context and politics from the figure of Cicero so that we are left with an emblem of eloquence.<sup>125</sup> While these qualities are certainly most pronounced in the case of Cicero (as he is the icon against which the declaimers as a body are competing), a similar process occurs for the speakers preserved in Seneca: (1) the entire body is amplified through their inclusion in the prior generation, which is granted a degree of sanctity through its association with the oracle of Cato (*Contr.* 1.pr.9); (2) the prior generation becomes the standard against which the current generation may be compared; (3) Seneca’s use of memory in the first preface demonstrates emotional attachment, at least on the part of our author, to the preserved speakers (especially true in the case of Latro); (4) the speakers are simplified so that their

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<sup>123</sup> Bloomer 1992, 1; 203. Bloomer, moreover, argues that this was done in service of declamation so that they were better able to provide *exempla* to furnish speeches.

<sup>124</sup> For the figures in the Forum of Augustus as *exempla*, see Geiger 2008, (esp. 86-89).

<sup>125</sup> Kaster 1998, 254-261.

eloquence (or lack thereof) is shaped by a small pool of defining characteristics.<sup>126</sup> That is not to say that these men are made equivalent to Cicero. He is defined by eloquence; their eloquence is defined by its defects. Rather, they serve an equivalent role to the next generation, while simultaneously looking back themselves to the model that preceded them.

This descriptive style can obfuscate the fundamental rhetorical theories that underpin the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*.<sup>127</sup> The clearest expression of the qualities of a good declaimer are found in the third preface:

Omnia ergo habebat quae illum ut bene declamaret instruerent: phrasin non vulgarem nec sordidam sed electam, genus dicendi non remissum aut languidum sed ardens et concitatum, non lentas nec vacuas explicationes, sed plus sensuum quam verborum habentes, diligentiam, maximum etiam mediocris ingenii subsidium.

Therefore, he had everything which could equip him so that he declaimed well: diction neither common nor shabby but choice, a style of speaking not relaxed or languid but burning and excited, exposition neither lingering nor empty, but having more meaning than words, [and] attentiveness, the greatest support for even mediocre talent

(*Contr.* 3.pr.7).

This, however, is a description of Cassius Severus—a man who, by his own admission, failed to embody these qualities when he declaimed.<sup>128</sup> This excerpt, nevertheless, may serve as a guide to establishing the core metrics by which Seneca the Elder judged the speakers he paraded before his sons and which he wished to instil in them to aid their own judgements.

The first quality that Seneca identifies is proper diction, to which we may add vocabulary.

Seneca notes several impediments to good diction—all of which are attached to individuals

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<sup>126</sup> Sussman 1978, 85-6.

<sup>127</sup> Fairweather 1981, 55. The difficulty in unpacking Seneca's rhetorical theories has not prevented the attempt. For an early example see, Sochatoff 1939. For an attempt that conforms to the five part division of the *orandi ratio* (Quint. *Inst.* 3.3.1), see Sussman 1978, 111-36.

<sup>128</sup> The disparity between Cassius Severus' abilities as an orator and declaimer leads to his discussion on different manifestations of eloquence (*Contr.* 3.pr.8-11).

rather than given as general precepts: Moschus forces his speech into figures and it suffers as a result (*Contr.* 10.pr.10); Albucius, although naturally gifted, becomes a worse speaker through his insistence on vulgarisms (*sordidissimus* and *idiotismos* are both used) and tendency to emulate the last good speaker he had heard (*Contr.* 7.pr.3-5);<sup>129</sup> Florus succumbs to “mollem compositionem” (“effeminate rhythm,” *Contr.* 9.2.24); and Cestius lacked the necessary Latin to engage in sweeping descriptions especially when attempting to imitate others (*Contr.* 7.1.27).<sup>130</sup> While these are all given as individual cases, a trend emerges: diction suffers when men attempt to force their speech beyond its natural boundaries, especially when this is done in imitation.

As we have seen, this concept of natural capabilities informs Seneca’s critical ethos and men could achieve eloquence by quite contradictory means.<sup>131</sup> As seen above, however, the expression of eloquence follows fairly formulaic guidelines: proper speech is equated to masculinity and improper speech with a failed masculinity.<sup>132</sup> This sexualized language is one of the primary markers for the failure of a speaker in Seneca’s work as poor speakers are given feminine qualities (*mollis*, *effeminatus*, *delicatus*, *muliebris*, *fractus*), along with the label of *stultus* (foolish) and other similar words attacking mental acuity (*stupor*, *insanis*, *fatuus*).<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Ovid is accused of taking similar license, but it is restricted to his poetry (*Contr.* 2.2.12).

<sup>130</sup> Contrast Messala (*Contr.* 2.4.8); on the introduction of individual examples, both positive and negative, as a tool of instruction: “Omnia autem genera corruptarum quoque sententiarum de industria pono, quia facilius et quid imitandum et quid vitandum sit docemur exemplo” (“Moreover, I also intentionally cite all kinds of spoilt *sententiae*, because it is easier for us to learn both what to imitate and what to avoid by example,” *Contr.* 9.2.27).

<sup>131</sup> As is the case with Haterius and Pollio, *supra*.

<sup>132</sup> For more on this see Chapter 2.7 (“The generational model of criticism”).

<sup>133</sup> I agree with Williams (1999, 126), who suggests that many of the words used to expressed failed eloquence could be described as ‘feminine’ (indeed, his sons’ contemporaries are explicitly labelled as *effeminatos*, *Contr.* 1.pr. 8), the language functions primarily as a exclusionary binary with masculinity meaning ‘not masculine’ as opposed to truly feminine.

There is one more general rebuke against vulgarity (*Contr.* 1.2.21), although this is tied to a particular *controversia*.<sup>134</sup> The possibility that this may be viewed as a general tenet—that the tone of speech as well as choice of words should reflect the demands and circumstances of the case—rather than a unique instance of caution is realized when *Latro* later echoes the advice.<sup>135</sup> Due to *Latro*'s privileged position within the text, it is likely that he offers views that, if not directly equivalent to those held by Seneca, strongly reflect those of our author.<sup>136</sup>

Prohibitions against certain classes of words (such as *Albucius*' use of vulgarities noted above) also appear in Seneca's work. What, however, does Seneca mean when he asserts that *Albucius* "res dicebat omnium sordidissimas" ("could say the most sordid things of all," *Contr.* 7.pr.3)? The most concrete definition provided by our author is attributed to the *scholae*, which treat as obscene (*obscena*) words that are more vulgar in nature (*sordidiora*) or in everyday use (*cotidiano usu*) (*Contr.* 4.pr.9). This suggests a conceptual equivalence of *sordides* and *cotidiano* (as well as *idiotismos*, imported from Greek) as words that are too banal for declamation, in contrast to *obscena*, which are simply too crude. This dichotomy is reinforced at *Contr.* 1.2.21, in which Seneca states "Dicendum est...non sordide nec obscene" ("it is necessary to speak... neither vulgarly nor obscenely," *Contr.* 1.2.21) as both are inappropriate to the case at hand,

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<sup>134</sup> "Dicendum est in puellam vehementer, non sordide nec obscene." ("It is necessary to speak vehemently against the girl, but not vulgarly or obscenely.")

<sup>135</sup> At *Contr.* 7.4.6 (a delicate case involving conflicting parental obligations): "Aiebat itaque verbis quoque horridioribus abstinendum quotiens talis materia incidisset; ipsam orationem ad habitum eius quem movere volumus adfectus molliendam. In epilogis nos de industria vocem quoque infringere et vultum deicere et dare operam ne dissimilis orationi sit orator; compositionem quoque illis mitiorem convenire" ("he said, therefore, that it is necessary to abstain from rougher words whenever such material cropped up; the speech itself must be softened towards the character which we wish to invoke. In the perorations, we also purposely cast our voice down and make our faces disappointed and take pains lest the speakers does not conform to his speech; gentler rhythms are also fitting for these,"). Seneca offers similar advice at *Contr.* 1.2.21.

<sup>136</sup> Gunderson (2003, 50) describes *Latro* as Seneca's *âme*.

which concerns a virgin prostitute (see note) who seeks a priesthood.<sup>137</sup> The prohibition against obscenity, moreover, is universal in the text as it is not consistent with the dignity of *vir bonus*.<sup>138</sup> On the other hand, Seneca notes several instances in which a speaker effectively employed low or everyday language. The most striking example of this affirmation of vulgar speech occurs in the seventh preface as our author praises Gallio's rare talent in capitalizing on this often misused device.

Idiotismos est inter oratorias virtutes res quae raro procedit; magno enim temperamento opus est et occasione quadam. Hac virtute varie usus est: saepe illi bene cessit, saepe decedit. Nec tamen mirum est si difficulter adprehenditur vitio tam vicina virtus. Hoc nemo praestitit umquam Gallione nostro decentius. Iam adolescentulus cum declamaret, apta et convenienter et decenter hoc genere utebantur; quod eo magis mirabar quia tenera aetas refugit omne non tantum quod sordidum sed quod sordido simile est.

Everyday speech is a virtue which rarely succeeds among the orators; for it is necessary to have great restraint and a certain moment. [Albucius] made use of this virtue with varying success: he was frequently successful, frequently not. Yet, it is not to be wondered at, if a virtue so near a vice is more difficult to employ. No one ever employed this more fittingly than our Gallio. Already, when he declaimed as a youth, he used this type [of speech] aptly and suitably and properly; on which account, I was more amazed because a delicate age shrinks from everything—not only what is vulgar but things which resemble vulgarity.

(*Contr.* 7.pr.5-6).<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> *Controversia* 2.1 is titled "Sacerdos Prostituta" ("The Prostitute Priestess"). The law at issue is that "sacerdos casta e castis, pura e puris sit" ("a priestess must be chaste and of chaste [parents], pure and of pure [parents]"). The theme is an excellent model of the unlikely scenarios treated by declaimers: "quaedam virgo a piratis capta venit; empta a lenone et prostituta est. Venientes ad se exorabat stipem. Militem qui ad se venerat cum exorare non posset, conluctantem et vim inferentem occidit. Accusata et absoluta et remissa ad suos est. Petit sacerdotium. ("A virgin was captured by pirates and sold; she was bought by a pimp and made a prostitute. When men came to her, she asked them alms. When she failed to get from a soldier who came to her, he struggled with her and tried to use force; she killed him. She was accused, acquitted and sent back to her family. She seeks a priesthood," trans. Winterbottom 1974).

<sup>138</sup> This aversion to *obscena* is programmatic as shown by *Contr.* 1.2.23: "Longe recedendum est ab omni *obscenitate* et verborum et sensuum: quaedam satius est causae detrimento tacere quam verecundiae dicere" ("One should keep well away from every obscenity of word or thought; some things are better left unspoken, even if it cost you your case, rather than spoken at the cost of your shame"). Obscenity manifests primarily in the directness of the statement; for instance, when Murredius says, "fortasse dum repellit libidinem, manibus excepit" ("perhaps while she repelled his lust, she took it in her hands," *Contr.* 1.2.23), it is obscene, but when Scaurus transforms another of Murredius' *sententiae* into an elaborate joke about anal sex that depends on knowledge of Ovid's Priapic poetry, he is most witty (*venustissimus*) and eloquent (*disertissimus*) (*Contr.* 1.2.22).

<sup>139</sup> Mixed reactions to Albucius' use of vulgarity also occur at *Contr.* 1.7.18. Julius Bassus found people to admire vulgarity above all else, *Contr.* 10.1.13.

How, however, does Gallio do this? As Seneca does not provide his audience with explicit instruction on the correct application of vulgar words, we are left to infer their correct usage from comparing those instances in which our author praises and censures his speakers to the recommendations of other authors on rhetoric. There are three (arguably four) instances of praise: Vibius Rufus (*Contr.* 1.2.23 and 9.2.25); Romanus Hispo (*Contr.* 2.3.21); and, less certainly, Brutedius Brutus (*Contr.* 7.5.9), who uses one *significanter* but is not censured. Whether we should consider the final instance as praise is questionable, but I believe it is significant that Brutus is not rebuked, as Seneca is seldom shy about noting those sayings which he finds lacking. The example from *Contr.* 9.2.25 is particularly useful, as we are presented immediately afterwards with a less successful use of vulgarism.<sup>140</sup> In both cases, the use of low language adds punch to the *sententiae* and highlights the subversion of proper law by the praetor through the use of decidedly informal language. As Quintilian tells us (*Inst.* 8.3.21-2), this is one of the best uses of vulgarism: to add force to the speech. Quintilian also notes (*Inst.* 10.1.9) that context (ie. the elegance of the surrounding speech) may determine whether everyday word is acceptable and words that seem *sordida* in more elegant portions of the speech may be appropriate in the right circumstances. This may account for the mixed success of Vibius Rufus' *sententiae*; although, we cannot be certain without possessing the broader context.

One category of prohibited words requires further comment: *verba antiqua*. The old manner of speech employed by men such as Vibius Rufus (*Contr.* 9.2.25) is comparable to the

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<sup>140</sup> The successful use of vulgarism, “praetor ad occidendum hominem soleas poposcit” (“The praetor demanded his slippers to kill a man”). The unsuccessful, “at nunc a praetore lege actum est ad lucernam” (“but now the praetor has acted according to law by lamp-light”). Interestingly, the reception of the second *sententia* was not entirely negative as we are told that Asinius Pollio did not disapprove of it (*Contr.* 9.2.25).

invective of Cicero.<sup>141</sup> That this aversion was rooted in the schools is made apparent in the case of Haterius (*Contr.* 4.pr.9), as “Ille in hoc scholasticis morem gerebat, ne verbis calcatis et obsoletis uteretur; sed quaedam antiqua et a Cicerone dicta, a ceteris deinde deserta dicebat...” (“in this he displayed the custom of the scholastici, so that he did not use trite and outdated words; but he used to speak certain old words that had been spoken by Cicero, which had then been abandoned by others,” *Contr.* 4.pr.9).<sup>142</sup> The prohibition on antiquated vocabulary did not, however, mean that new linguistic developments were encouraged (*Contr.* 7.6.21). These dual prohibitions, enforced to varying degrees, suggest an accepted and standardized scholastic lexicon employed within the *scholae*. Adherence to this vocabulary, then, becomes the mark of a *scholasticus* and, given Seneca’s hostility towards that group, it seems reasonable that our author would not adopt their prescriptions wholesale but rather agitate for speech that reflected the (fictional) circumstances of its delivery.

The second quality that Seneca identifies is *genus dicendi*, one’s fundamental manner or approach to rhetorical speech. Both Cicero (*Orat.* 20; 69) and Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.10.58) identify three *genera dicendi*: the plain; the grandiloquent; and the middle course that draws on aspects of each.<sup>143</sup> While Seneca does not explicitly associate Severus’ speech with one of these archetypes, his description of it as “ardens et concitatum” (*Contr.* 3.pr.7) suggests that he is advocating for a

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<sup>141</sup> Fairweather 1981, 192, notes that it is the use of *soleas* that renders Vibius Rufus’ *sententia* antiquated and compares it to Cicero’s comments at *Verr.* 2.5.86. The association between an older style of speech and vulgarity is made explicit at *Contr.* 9.2.25: “Rufus Vibius erat qui antiquo genere diceret; belle cessit illi sententia sordidioris notae...” (“Vibius Rufus was a man who spoke in the old way; he fared well with a *sententiae* of the more vulgar sort...”).

<sup>142</sup> Similarly, Albucius employed vulgarisms because “timebat ne scholasticus videretur” (“he was afraid lest he be thought a schoolman,” *Contr.* 7.pr.4). The same idea is expressed in Suet. *Gram. et rhet.* 30.3.

<sup>143</sup> See also, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* 4.11-16

vehement approach.<sup>144</sup> This vigorous style of speech is associated with Seneca's generation of speakers. Labienus, who straddles the line between this generation and Cicero's, is described as having, "color orationis antiquae, vigor novae, cultus inter nostrum ac prius saeculum medius, ut illum posset utraque pars sibi vindicare" ("the tone of old oratory, the vigour of the new, his ornament the middle point between our age and the preceding one, so that both sides were able to claim him for themselves," *Contr.* 10.pr.5). The popularity of the *ardens et concitatum* style is attested by its continued use as a positive descriptor by Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.90) and Longinus (12).<sup>145</sup>

As we have already seen with diction, Seneca (although generally encouraging a spirited or emotional style) appears to favour a manner of speech in agreement with the circumstances of performance and the character of the speaker; Fabianus is better suited to *suasoriae* as he has been rendered tranquil by philosophy (*Contr.* 2.pr.2-3).<sup>146</sup> While Seneca seems to have preferred the more spirited style (possibly due to the association of languidness with the decay of

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<sup>144</sup> It is this category (the grandiloquent) that Cicero identifies as the best for persuasion (*Orat.* 69). Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.10.58) states that it is ideal for appealing to emotions; see Seneca's claim that Severus was in control of his audience's emotions (*Contr.* 3.pr.2). Both of these descriptions could easily be applied to declamation.

<sup>145</sup> Indeed, in constructing a dichotomy with the calm of philosophical speech, Longinus attaches fiery speech to both Cicero and Demosthenes, although he is sure to specify how their fires differed.

<sup>146</sup> The flow of speech attributed to Fabianus seems to suggest this was not the 'plain' mode of speech. If, moreover, one is able to argue from outcomes and interprets Seneca the Elder as adhering to the Ciceronian model, this seems to be the middle path, which Cicero argues was for pleasure (*Orat.* 69) and Quintilian states was ideal for pleasing or consolation (*Inst.* 12.10.58). For philosophy as inappropriate in declamation, see Gunderson 2003, 137; as well as Albucius philosophizing (*Contr.* 1.7.17; 7.6.18), which is criticized by Cestius (*Contr.* 1.3.8) and Seneca the Elder himself (*Contr.* 7.pr.1).

eloquence),<sup>147</sup> it was possible to carry it too far and cross from playing with and examining the boundaries of acceptable behaviour into being unacceptable oneself.<sup>148</sup>

The third quality which Seneca identifies is the fullness of Cassius Severus' *explicationes* (developments). Seneca's usage of this terms suggests that, for our author, it was equivalent to *descriptio*.<sup>149</sup> These "descriptions" were naturally at home in the *suasoriae* and presented an opportunity for the speaker to wander from the subject of the exercise in order to showcase his rhetorical talent; while they could represent intrusions, they were still a conventional part of declamatory speech—indeed, they could be sufficiently rote to function as commonplaces.<sup>150</sup> The use of *explicationes*, states Votienus Montanus, is one of the features which separates declamation from proper oratory, where the emphasis is on the argument (*Contr.* 9.pr.1).

*Explicationes* appear most frequently in association with Fuscus, although Seneca's judgement of his developments is not always positive and, even when they are praised, they are characterized as effeminate.<sup>151</sup> In his judgement of Fuscus' *explicationes*, Seneca is initially quite positive

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<sup>147</sup> "Torpent ecce ingenia desidiosae iuventutis nec in unius honestae rei labore vigilatur; somnus languorque ac somno et languore turpior malarum rerum industria invasit animos." ("Behold, the abilities of our lazy youths are asleep and there is no one awake to labour in a single honest pursuit; sleep and weariness and diligence of worse things than sleep and weariness have entered their minds," *Contr.* 1.pr.8.)

<sup>148</sup> Gunderson (2003, 126-9) demonstrates the moral component of this evaluation through an examination of *Contr.* 2.6, in which the Greek declaimers demonstrate their moral failings and make themselves equivalent to the current inarticulate generation of speakers when they exceed the boundaries of sense and actually embody the madness they are performing.

<sup>149</sup> Fairweather (1981, 211-2), although she couches somewhat, notes that all passages presenting *explicationes* also contain description.

<sup>150</sup> For *descriptio* as conventional part of declamation, see Bonner 1969, 58f; Sussman 1978, 116-7. For use of *descriptio* as comparable to *in narratione* and *in argumentis*, see *Contr.* 1.4.8-9; Bonner 1969, 58. For *suasoriae* as natural home of *descriptions*, see Sussman 1978, 11. For positional relevance as suggestion of equivalence to *colores* in *controversiae*, see Sussman 1978, 62. For *descriptions* being explicitly introduced and breaking the follow of speech, see *Contr.* 2.1.26; 2.5.6; Bonner 1969, 59. For descriptions as commonplaces, see Sussman 1978, 116-7.

<sup>151</sup> *Explicatio* (and its variants) appears eight times in the text of Seneca the Elder: once as a preoccupation of declamation which distinguishes it from oratory, according to Votienus Montanus (*Contr.* 9.pr.1); once, positively, in relation to Severus (*Contr.* 3.pr.7); once, negative, in relation to Cestius (*Contr.* 7.1.27); and five times in relation to Fuscus (*Contr.* 2.pr.1; twice at *Suas.* 2.10; 2.23; 4.5).

(“explicatio...splendida,” “splendid developments,” *Contr.* 2.pr.1), although by *Suasoria* 2.10 he leaves it to his sons to decide whether his developments are worthy of eloquence.<sup>152</sup>

The final quality of a good declaimer noted by Seneca is *diligentia*, which, as he states (*Contr.* 3.pr.7), can conceal the faults of even a moderate declaimer. As Sussman has observed, that does not mean that all speech had to be elaborately prepared; indeed, Seneca valued the ability to speak extemporaneously.<sup>153</sup> When one did have time to prepare, moreover, Seneca favours those speeches that conceal the labour.<sup>154</sup> This labour, nevertheless, was essential to achieving proper eloquence and, again, reflects the moral program of the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*.<sup>155</sup>

## 2.7 The generational model of criticism (decline of eloquence)

Seneca’s evaluation of individual speakers operates under a broader model of general decay. The height of eloquence was Cicero and “in deterius deinde cotidie data res est” (“since, the thing has gotten worse by the day,” *Contr.* 1.pr.7). Seneca, himself uncertain of the cause of this decline, provides three possible causes: “sive luxu temporum...sive, cum pretium pulcherrimae rei cecidisset, translatum est omne certamen ad turpia multo honore quaestue vigentia, sive fato” (“whether the luxury of the age...or, since the worth of the most beautiful art had fallen, the whole contest was carried over to sordid affairs flourishing with great prestige and

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<sup>152</sup> “vestri arbitrii erit utrum explicationes eius luxuriosas putetis an vegetas” (“It will be for your judgement whether you think his developments are immoderate or vigorous,” *Suas.* 2.10). However, he returns to positivity at *Suas.* 4.5.

<sup>153</sup> Sussman 1978, 134. For praise of extemporary speech see *Contr.* 2.5.20; 3.pr.6; 4.pr.7; 7.pr.2. Also, we learn Cestius spoke extempore.

<sup>154</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.21; 1.5.9; 7.pr.3 (“Nihil est autem tam inimicum quam manifesta praeparatio...” “But nothing is so hostile [to talent] as visible preparation”); 10.pr.14.

<sup>155</sup> For laziness as one of the causes of the decline of eloquence, see *Contr.* 1.pr.8. For the relationship between rhetorical *diligentia* and broader success, see *Contr.* 10.pr.16.

profit, or fate,” *Contr.* 1.pr.7). Whatever the cause, the results of this decline are evident not only in the absence of eloquence but also in the frayed morals of the youth—his sons’ contemporaries. The correlation between these two features is made explicit through the oracle of Cato (*Contr.* 1.pr.9-10); eloquent speech manifests only in those who demonstrate their worth through adherence to proper morals, while poor speech was simultaneously indicative of some moral failing. As in his criticism of individuals, Seneca employs gendered language to express this dichotomy: proper speech is equated to masculinity, while improper speech demonstrates failed masculinity. In the case of the youths additional negative qualities are also added—notably, idleness (*somnus, languor, desidia*) and sexual license (“expugnatores alienae pudicitiae, neglentes suae,” “taking the chastity of others by storm, neglecting their own,” *Contr.* 1.pr.9)—and become effeminate through association.

The assertion of a decline of eloquence is by no means unique to our author. Tacitus’ *Dialogus*, although written sixty years later,<sup>156</sup> engages explicitly with the narrative of rhetorical decline as Tacitus recreates an exchange he had heard in his youth, in hopes of answering L. Fabius Iustus’ oft repeated question: why are there no more orators? (*Tac. Dial.* 1.1). The appeal to memory is reminiscent of Seneca’s earlier text and grounds the work in the authority of the preceding generation, as does the addressing of the work to a younger man—although in this case, simply a younger colleague, rather than a son.<sup>157</sup> The *Dialogus* presents two competing models for the decline of eloquence. The first is familiar: declamation does not suitably equip young men to engage in eloquent speech later in life.<sup>158</sup> The second asserts that civil conflict

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<sup>156</sup> Accepting Syme’s (1957) dating of 101/2 CE. Dramatic date 74/5 CE (established by 17.3).

<sup>157</sup> Syme (1957) for information on Fabius.

<sup>158</sup> Messala’s second speech (*Tac. Dial.* 33-5). Compare Votienus Montanus’ remarks in the preface to the ninth book of *Controversiae*.

allowed the previous generation of orators to flourish (Tac. *Dial.* 36-42). This second cause also appears as a justification for the decline of eloquence in Longinus (44.1-5), although it is put into the mouth of a philosopher, whom the author quickly rebuts with his own theory. Longinus' own explanation is reminiscent of Seneca's. He cites the a love of wealth (44.6-7), which leads to “ἀλαζόνειάν τε...καὶ τῦφον καὶ τρυφήν” (“boastfulness and delusion and effeminacy,” 44.7) and “ὕβριν καὶ παρανομίαν καὶ ἀναισχυντίαν” (“pride and disorder and shamelessness,” 44.8). All of these qualities lead one to abandon care for future fame (44.8)—a central complaint of Seneca against the youths.<sup>159</sup>

Seneca, Tacitus and Longinus all draw a line between contemporary speech and the oratory of an earlier time.<sup>160</sup> In the latter two, this division is presented as a binary: present speech is inferior to its antecedent. This same binary has been recognized in Seneca's text as the distinction between *dictio* and *declamatio* made explicit in his brief history of the genre: “[Calvus] declamationem a dictione distinguit; ait enim declamare iam se non mediocriter, dicere bene” (“Calvus distinguishes declamation from proper speech (*dictio*), for he says that he now declaimed tolerably but spoke well,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). The increased value of *dictio* depends not only on its content, but also the performative context; *dictio*, unlike *declamatio*, is “verae actionis” (“true [public] action,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). The superiority of the genre is demonstrated, as men who engage in real speech (such as Asinius Pollio) are able to pass authoritative judgement on the speech of declaimers, while themselves escaping criticism both from the men recorded

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<sup>159</sup> “Quis est qui memoriae studeat?” (“Who is there who strives to be remembered?” *Contr.* 1.pr.10).

<sup>160</sup> Although the boundaries of this distinction are one of the central arguments of Aper's second speech (Tac. *Dial.* 16-23).

within the text and within Seneca's frequent asides.<sup>161</sup> This lack of criticism distinguishes them from even the best declaimers. For instance, Latro, who is elsewhere idealized within the text, does not escape rebuke (and the label of *scholasticus*) by Pollio (*Contr.* 2.3.13).

The definition of terms is essential to Seneca's model of rhetorical decline. Speech does not simply degrade, but transitions from *dictio* to *declamatio*. Similarly, Cicero spoke neither *controversiae* nor *theses*, which came before him, but *causae* (*Contr.* 1.pr.12). The importance of labelling to denote qualitatively different activities suggests a third stage in Seneca's degradation of eloquence, the transition from *controversiae* (or, indeed, *declamatio* more broadly) to *scholastica*.

The negative qualities of this new form of speech are suggested both by its newness and its association with Greek.<sup>162</sup> Throughout his work, Seneca negatively characterizes Greek declaimers as excessively involved in the fictional cases that they are performing. This excessive involvement invalidates their participation in declamation as they cease to impose rationality on the irrational situations of declamation and instead get caught up in the madness themselves.<sup>163</sup> The novelty of the genre, on the other hand, is negative because it associates it with the present, defective generation.

The dichotomy between the current and preceding generations is embodied in the comparison of the qualities of Latro with those of Seneca's sons' contemporaries in the first preface. This comparison depends on (and helps to reinforce) Latro's privileged position within

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<sup>161</sup> Lobur 2008, 136-7. An example of positive judgement, in which Seneca then echoes the praise himself (*Contr.* 7.pr.2-3).

<sup>162</sup> "Hoc vero alterum nomen Graecum quidem, sed in Latinum ita translatum ut pro Latino sit, scholastica, controversia multo recentius est..." ("Truly this other name, *scholastica*, a Greek word but brought over into Latin to be a Latin one, is much more recent than *controversiae*," *Contr.* 1.pr.12).

<sup>163</sup> "Graeci declamatores, qui in hac controversia tamquam rixati sunt" ("The Greek declaimers, who brawled like rival lovers in this *controversia*," *Contr.* 2.6.12).

the text. An indication of the prominence of Latro may be seen in his placement in the first preface: he becomes emblematic of the prior generation of speakers and the programmatic model for the work. This function (as model) is reflected in Seneca's dependence on Latro for the *divisiones* of many of the themes within the text.<sup>164</sup> In addition, Seneca explicitly ranks Latro among the best declaimers (*Contr.* 10.pr.13) and often attributes to him views that echo our author's own advice. It should be noted, however, that despite the heroic stature of Latro within the text, he does not go uncriticized. The harshest of these criticisms, however, are put in the mouths of others, which allows our author to distance himself from them.<sup>165</sup> As a figure who is emblematic of the best of the prior generation of speakers (one who is worthy of being remembered), Latro provides an excellent counterpoint to the morally and ethically corrupt speakers of the current generation.

Seneca's first preface functions to create binary expressions of the qualities that define speakers, while at the same time establishing the relationship between eloquence and rectitude. This correlation (good men produce good speech) informs Seneca's larger critical model throughout the work. This model has traditionally been viewed as flexible or even individualistic, allowing each man to express eloquence in accordance with his own character.<sup>166</sup> This makes the binaries of the first preface particularly striking as they suggest relatively stable axes along which eloquence (and morality) could be tested. The morality inherent in these descriptions (and the assertion that there is, indeed, a correct choice or behaviour set) is evident

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<sup>164</sup> Bennett 2007, 7.

<sup>165</sup> For instance, it is Asinius Pollio who labels Latro a *scholasticus* (*Contr.* 2.3.13). This instance of criticism is especially of interest as Pollio is connected to *dictio*, while Latro is (one of) the foremost in *declamatio*. Despite this claim, however, Seneca prioritizes the more antiquated (and, indeed, public) form of speech. For this view of prioritizing *dictio*, see Lobur 2008, 136.

<sup>166</sup> Sussman 1978, 96-100.

in Seneca's description of each side's relationship to eloquence. Of the youths, our author tells us: "In hos ne dii tantum mali ut cadat eloquentia: quam non mirarer nisi animos in quos se conferret eligeret," ("gods do not let eloquence, which I would not admire if it could not choose the minds on which it bestowed itself, fall upon these wicked men," *Contr.* 1.pr.9). Latro, on the other hand, is "uniquely worthy of being eloquent."<sup>167</sup> These statements moralize eloquence, while at the same time casting it as the prize for that morality. It is worth examining the specific categories of discussion employed by Seneca.

Inactivity (and activity): Seneca's initial criticism of his sons' contemporaries revolves around their inactivity: "torpent ecce ingenia desidiosae iuventutis...somnus languorque ac somno et languore turpior malarum rerum industria invasit animos" ("behold, the abilities of our lazy youths are asleep...sleep and weariness and diligence of worse things than sleep and weariness have entered their minds," *Contr.* 1.pr.8). They are (as the end of the line reveals), however, not merely inactive but spurred towards harmful action, when they can even be bothered to act. These harmful actions, it would seem, are enthusiasm for song and dance, the braiding of hair, beautifying the body, and refining the voice; activities that are made explicitly feminine through the label of *effeminatus* (*Contr.* 1.pr.8). Latro is similarly charged with sloth (*desidia*); yet his leisure (*otium*) is only used of Latro and not the current generation is decidedly productive as he engages, and, indeed, excels, in rural pursuits (*Contr.* 1.pr.14).<sup>168</sup> Additionally, the reader is told, these absences only enhanced Latro's ability once he began again to speak (*Contr.* 1.pr.15). The relationship between inactivity and eloquence does not merely rely on the

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<sup>167</sup> "Nihil illo viro gravius, nihil suavius, nihil eloquentia [sua] dignius," ("No one weightier than that man, no one more charming, no one more worthy of eloquence," *Contr.* 1.pr.13.)

<sup>168</sup> It is also telling that, while the youths are rapidly labelled as *effeminatus* (*Contr.* 1.pr.8), Latro is immediately called "*vehementi viro*" in Seneca's description (*Contr.* 1.pr.13).

its moral reflection upon the speaker, but on the effect that leisure (and activity) could have on the physique and voice of the speaker.

The moral validity of each group's physique and voice is inversely proportional to the amount of effort expended in their shaping. In accordance with his rustic character (*Contr.* 1.pr. 16), Latro's body and voice (both naturally sturdy) are hardened through frequent use.<sup>169</sup> We are told, moreover, that he expended no effort to refine his voice (*Contr.* 1.pr.16); indeed, every action Latro took seems to have been to the detriment of his voice and (the appearance of) his body (*Contr.* 1.pr.17).<sup>170</sup> This degradation, however, is purely aesthetic; it does not remove the functional strength of either. In contrast, the typical youth expends excessive effort refining both his voice until it is as "ad muliebras blanditias" ("caressing as a woman's," *Contr.* 1.pr.8) and body (until it is "vulsis atque expolitus," "plucked and polished," *Contr.* 1.pr.10); aesthetic changes that did little to benefit eloquence.<sup>171</sup> This returns us to the harmful actions of the youths. They expend energy on aesthetics that could be better put towards refining the contents of their speech—as Latro does when he repeatedly writes out *sententiae* and *schemata* independent of context so that they could be more easily employed later (*Contr.* 1.pr.23). The relegation of certain aesthetics as non-essential is striking in a genre that depends fundamentally on audience reception and suggests that for Seneca true eloquence was not equivalent to beautiful speech. This notion is reinforced as our author tells us that Latro, before delivering his

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<sup>169</sup> "Corpus...multa exercitatione duratum" ("a body...made hard by much exercise," *Contr.* 1.pr.16) may suggest that Latro did, indeed, expend energy in shaping his body towards some ideal. This exercise, however, is qualitatively different than the effort expended by the youths.

<sup>170</sup> "itaque et oculorum aciem contuderat et colorem mutaverat" ("and thus he has ruined the vision of his eyes and his complexion," *Contr.* 1.pr.17).

<sup>171</sup> Persius (1.13-21) describes elaborate beatification before public recitation and the arousal it creates in the audience. This physical beautification is accompanied "carmina molli...numero fluere" ("poetry [that] flows with effeminate rhythm," Pers. 1.63-4). The interlocutor advocates for this approach as it is pleasing both to the public (Pers. 1.63) and those in power (Pers. 1.107-10). The poet, however, rejects the soft style with an explicit appeal to masculinity as he wishes the current generation still had "testiculi paterni" ("the balls of their fathers," Pers. 1.103).

speech, laid out his unadorned arguments to demonstrate their validity (*Contr.* 1.pr.21). Seneca applies the principles that he has laid out for men to the speech of Latro in order to demonstrate its correctness.

Memory is the (faulty) vehicle through which Seneca constructs his work. His memory creates the community of declaimers he presents to his sons in order that their eloquence may be correctly preserved (*Contr.* 1.pr.11).<sup>172</sup> Seneca's memory, however, is not the only one discussed in the first preface: the relationship of Latro and his sons' contemporaries to memory follows the familiar program of the work. Latro, himself remembered as a young man, possesses a memory akin to Seneca's own, although undamaged by the progression of time.<sup>173</sup> This memory, moreover, is exercised and employed productively to generate novel eloquence (*Contr.* 1.pr.18). Finally, Latro is himself an object of memory—a speaker worthy of being remembered. Against this portrayal stand the young men, who do not themselves lack memory but employ it to improper ends. They remember *sententiae* of more eloquent men and redeploy them as their own (*Contr.* 1.pr.10), thus robbing memory of its productive power. They are, moreover, unconcerned with the memorializing qualities of memory.<sup>174</sup> Without care for future fame, they pillage the past for immediate reward and, in so doing, invalidate the basic assumption of Seneca's text: eloquence is worthy of being remembered.

The lack of temporal awareness demonstrated by the current generation of youths is central to their condemnation in Seneca's work. They are fixated on the present and every failing ascribed to them reflects this: their bodies and voices are made beautiful in the moment, but at

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<sup>172</sup> For more on the community of declamation in Seneca see Chapter 3.2 ("A Single Community of Speech").

<sup>173</sup> For the power of Seneca's memory in his youth and its degradation with age, see *Contr.* 1.pr.2-5. For the power of Latro's memory, see *Contr.* 1.pr.17-8.

<sup>174</sup> "Quis est qui memoriae studeat?" ("Who cares for future renown," *Contr.* 1.pr.10).

the expense of developing lasting eloquence; instead of generating new speech, they steal liberally from the past unconcerned with how this will effect their own legacy; even the sexual licence attributed to them (which sees no opposing point in Seneca's description of *Latro*) reflects this, as they are unconcerned with the memorial imparted by legitimate children.<sup>175</sup> They exist merely in and for the now and this transforms what could be the follies of youth into lasting afflictions.<sup>176</sup> Worse, this disregard does not only affect the speakers but all participants in declamation and the audience, who should be the judges and keepers of eloquent speech, are reduced to "tanta hominum desidia" ("men of such great apathy," *Contr.* 1.pr.10), taken in by present beauty, rather than aspiring to lasting eloquence.

As the case of *Latro* demonstrates, the boundary for the transition from *controversiae* to *scholastica* depends more on approaches to performance than its context. This creates an uncertain divide between the two types of speech. For Seneca, *scholastica* is the embodiment of youthful folly. Thus at *Suasoriae* 2.23, he asserts "Quarum nimius cultus et fracta composito poterit vos offendere cum ad meam aetatem veneritis; interim non dubito quin nunc vos ipsa quae offensura sunt vitia delectent" ("the excessive ornamentation and effeminate rhythm of [his developments] may offend you when you come to my age; meanwhile, I do not doubt that you delight in the same faults that will later displease you"). While this is generally applied to the present generation, it is also possible for individuals to stunt their own rhetorical growth and remained perpetually trapped in youthful folly. This is the case with *Albucius*, the subject of the seventh preface, "quem proxime dicentem commode audierat imitari volebat" ("who wished to

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<sup>175</sup> For criticisms of the youth's sexual licence, see *Contr.* 1.pr.9-10.

<sup>176</sup> Seneca himself suggests "nimius cultus et fracta composito" ("extreme ornamentation and effeminate rhythm," *Suas.* 2.23) can be a pleasure to the young, but offensive to those who have reach old age.

imitate the last man he had heard speaking well,” *Contr.* 7.pr.4). In so doing, he abandons his own style (*Contr.* 7.pr.5) and thus was unable to realize his path to eloquence and become an adult man.

The third stage of degradation represents a mobile boundary. While it is associated with the transition of Seneca’s generation to that of his sons, it also occurs for individuals within that timeframe. An individual’s location within the timeline depends not only on his actual age, but also his approach to declamation more broadly.

### Chapter 3: *Declamatio*, A Multi-Participant Activity

In the previous chapter, we explored declamation as more than simply rhetorical education for aristocratic youths as well as how Seneca leveraged the social self-reflection inherent to declamation in order to present it as a viable means of aristocratic competition. This examination, however, was oriented around the individual: the speaker in its most limited sense as the one currently declaiming. While such examination is valuable for our understanding of declamation, it does not reflect the circumstances of performance for either the real world or the idealized declamation of Seneca's text.

Declamation was a communal activity. Outside of performance, the shared language and references created a community of shared speech, in which those trained in declamation were able to distinguish themselves as a distinct corporate body. Incorporation into this community did not necessitate active involvement in declamation; rather the training that was a staple of elite education would have equipped an individual sufficiently for inclusion. This community is reflected in the text of the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. As with declamation itself, however, Seneca presents a refined version of the community through the amalgamation of several generations of speakers.

For those actively involved in declamation, the opportunity for interaction was more direct. As Huelsenbeck observes, declamation was a “multi-participant activity, an interactional game, where what is said by one participant is largely driven by what has been said, recently, by other performers.”<sup>1</sup> The acknowledgement of this interaction changes the dynamic of competition in declamation. It is no longer merely a matter of producing objectively eloquent

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<sup>1</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015, 37.

speech, but rather producing speech that appears eloquent by comparison. The nexus of competition were the *sententiae*. Speakers did not merely reference arguments and approaches of their fellows, but drew on the specific language that had preceded their own speech.

Interaction in declamation was not limited to the speech-exchange that occurred in different instances of performance. The audience too would seize on *sententiae* as opportunities for praise or censure. While the mechanics of this process are the subject of the third chapter, this chapter will begin to chart the composition of this body and the effect that this had on various types of performance.

### 3.1 Defining a community of shared speech

Declamation allowed for the demarcation of a unified and distinct class of participants—a community of shared speech. What, however, is a community of shared speech? How does it function? Rhetorical communities, according to the model put forward by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, possess three unifying qualities, which are necessary for effective argumentation: common language, rules governing its use (both the initiation and maintenance of conversations), and agreed-upon social norms and values.<sup>2</sup> Declamation possesses all three of these elements. Most simply, the common language of declamation is Latin or Greek;<sup>3</sup> this language is specialized, however, through the relatively stable body of exempla and stereotypes that consistently manifest in declamatory cases. Declamations (particularly *controversiae*),

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<sup>2</sup> Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 14-5.

<sup>3</sup> The “or” is emphatic; whether or not we view Seneca the Elder as having a preference for Latin declamation, it is reasonable to argue that he did not think the two languages should be mixed (*Contr.* 9.3.13-4). For stock characters, see Simonds 1896; Bloomer 1997b; Imber 2008, 164; and Bernstein 2013. For Valerius Maximus as producing stock exempla, see Bloomer 1992. For the rhetorical use of historical exempla, see Sussman 1978, 114. For the standardization of language in this period, see Wallace-Hadrill 1997; Sinclair 1995. For Seneca’s employment of Silver Age style, see Sussman 1978, 126.

moreover, derive their central narrative structure from forensic oratory; therefore, as Bernstein states, “the opposed speakers share both a narrative framework and a common set of inventional strategies.”<sup>4</sup> These general rules for speech are coupled with specific instructions found in the themes of each case.<sup>5</sup> The speaker is forced to confront these themes, modelling his speech to fit their structure; the consistency of the themes, moreover, suggests formulaic composition.<sup>6</sup> The consistent social norms and values of declamation are slightly trickier to model as declamation is fundamentally concerned with the adaptation of ethical structures in response to irresolvable conflicts of obligation.<sup>7</sup> This does not mean, however, that there are no fixed ethical structures within declamation. Legal resolution (in the context of declamation) offers the aggrieved party either immediate satisfaction or a lasting solution to the problem created by the crime.<sup>8</sup> There is, moreover, a primacy given to paternal authority, the application of which forms the core of many declamatory cases.<sup>9</sup> Declamation, then, may be argued to hold to the standard of a rhetorical community as defined by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca; but who made up this community?

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<sup>4</sup> Bernstein 2013, 9. The opposed speakers manifest in two ways; the constructed opponent internal to the declamation and the other declaimers who are not necessarily speaking the opposing side. For declamation as perversion of Republican legal process, see Connolly 2007.

<sup>5</sup> For common themes in a Greek context, see Russell 1983, 22-39. For common themes in a Roman context, see Simonds 1896 (esp. 69-70). Expanded treatment of specific themes, see (rich man-poor man) Gunderson 2003, 233; Corbeill 2007, 80; (father-son) Sussman 1995; Vesley 2003; Breij 2006b; 2011; Imber 2008; (rape) Packman 1999; Kaster 2001.

<sup>6</sup> For the formulaic nature of declamatory themes as evidence of oral composition see Imber 2001, 202-5. For Seneca as transcription of oral culture, see also Bloomer 1992, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Beard 1993; Imber 2008, 163; Connolly 2009, 338. For declamation as a means of inculcating approved values in the next generation, see Kaster 2001, 325; Bloomer 1992, 4; as situational ethics, see Bernstein 2013, 6-7; Breij 2011. Against declamation as space for intellectual exploration, see Kennedy 1972 (esp. 335-7).

<sup>8</sup> Kaster (2001) is speaking specifically in the context of rape (such as at *Contr.* 1.5), wherein the immediate satisfaction is death and the last solution is marriage without a dowry. A similar model may also be seen for cases of blinding (although such cases are not directly represented in the *Controversiae*; blindness does appear tangentially in *Contr.* 3.1; 4.2; and 7.4), where the victim is able to either blind their attacker or receive life long support from them.

<sup>9</sup> For more info see Chapter 2.3 (“Becoming a *pater*”). Breij (2011, 338) observes that 190 of 291 surviving *controversiae* deal with the father-son relationship, although he is looking at the whole corpus and not just Seneca. For father-son relationships in declamation, see *supra* n.5. For substitute fatherhood in declamation as representative of proper aristocratic exchange, see Bernstein 2009.

The community of shared speech for declamation consisted primarily (although not exclusively) of the Roman aristocracy.<sup>10</sup> Induction into this community was a critical component of rhetorical education, during which a young man would learn the stable body of conflicts, rhetorical exempla, and stereotypes that consistently manifested in declamatory cases.<sup>11</sup> Rhetorical education (especially declamation), therefore, provided a mechanism for the incorporation of the provincial elite not only through reducing anxiety about correctness of language use through repetitive speech, but also by inculcating a shared ethics and fixed points of reference into its participants.<sup>12</sup>

Active participation in the community of shared speech depended on the ability of both the speaker and the audience to access these figures. At its most basic, this was an understanding of the common tropes and archetypes that existed across declamatory themes—knowing, for instance, that a *noverca* (stepmother) was not only wicked but would likely enact her schemes, undoubtedly to secure an inheritance for herself or her children, through poisons.<sup>13</sup> At a more advanced level, participation required a broad knowledge of contemporary intellectual culture, employing or recognizing *exempla* (anecdotes),<sup>14</sup> poetic allusions, and other touchstones of the

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<sup>10</sup> I am here (and throughout) using aristocracy, in the same way as Roller (2001), to mean minimally the equestrians and senators without the necessary exclusion of men not of those ranks. Men, who did not labour and earned their livelihood from the labour of others could qualify as aristocracy, rather than restricting the term to particular social qualifications. For education as a means of social distinction see Corbeill 2007, 70-1. For declamation as an activity of those of less than aristocratic status (compared to *recitatio*), see Bloomer 1997a, 199.

<sup>11</sup> Bloomer 1997a, 199, 213-4; see also Bloomer 2011, 188; 1997b; 2007; Kaster 2001; Imber 2008.

<sup>12</sup> For declamation as recruitment tool for the elite, see Sinclair 1995a; Bloomer 1997a, 199. For declamation as training beyond voice (posture, gesture, dress, facial cast, vocal range), see Connolly 1998, 133-4. For declamation reducing anxiety surrounding language, see Sinclair 1995a.

<sup>13</sup> For a more thorough treatment of stepmothers in declamation see Watson 1995, 92-102.

<sup>14</sup> Bloomer (1992, esp. 1-11) argues that preserving and categorizing these *exempla* for use by declaimers was the primary purpose of Valerius Maximus' *Factorum ac Dictorum Memorabilium*. Seneca is more cautious of their incorporation stating "gravis scholasticos morbus invasit; exempla cum didicerunt, volunt illa ad aliquod controversiae thema redigere. hoc quomodo aliquando faciendum est, cum res patitur, ita ineptissimum est luctari cum materia et longe arcessere" ("A serious disease has seized the *scholastici*. When they have learned anecdotes, they wish to drive them into the theme of some *controversia*. It is occasionally permissible, when the subject allows it, but it is very tasteless to wrestle with your material and fetch it from far away," *Contr.* 7.5.12-3).

educated elite. An example of an unsuccessful attempt at such engagement occurs when Cestius attempts to imitate Virgil (*Contr.* 7.1.27). Cestius draws on *Aeneid* 8.26-7 to enhance the description of night in his narration, but cannot adequately reproduce it due to his limited Latin (“Cestium Latinorum verborum inopia...laborasse,” “Cestium suffered from a lack of Latin words,” *Contr.* 7.1.27). His failure, moreover, is made concrete when Julius Montanus recognizes the attempt and produces the correct lines himself, thus usurping any acclaim Cestius would have received for their inclusion.

Active participation, however, was not necessary for inclusion in the broader community of shared speech. Even those men who ceased declaiming as soon as their studies were concluded had received an education designed to familiarize them with the material necessary for engagement. The persistent importance of this material and the impact it had on literary activities outside of the halls of declamation indicates the formative effects of such an education.<sup>15</sup> Membership in the community of shared speech, then, was defined by the ability to engage, not the reality of this engagement. Nevertheless, as with other imperial institutions, the existence of this community was most evident at the moment of expression.<sup>16</sup>

The association of declamation with rhetorical education is responsible for the incorporation of problematic elements into its community of shared speech. Declamation is defined by non-inclusion; specifically, declamation is designed to exclude any speech not of the gender or status of its participants.<sup>17</sup> How then do we account for the teachers of lower status

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<sup>15</sup> For the use of declamatory themes and style to condemn declamation see Chapter 2.2 (“An Activity for Children?”). For the importance of rhetorical understanding to self-presentation see Gleason 1995, xxiv.

<sup>16</sup> While the community formed by declamation is broader than the equestrian order (*supra* n.10), this body may serve as excellent point of comparison as it too did not have a formal means of expression. For the definition of the equestrian order through participation in events/ceremonies (especially the theatre), see Rowe 2002, 67-84.

<sup>17</sup> Bloomer 2011, 188. Bloomer is speaking specifically in the context of education, but I believe that his remarks may also be applied to the adult declamation preserved by Seneca.

who instructed young men in this art? Or, even, the wrong sort of aristocrats? These questions may help to explain Messala Corvinus' dismissal of Latro, of whom he says, "sua lingua disertus est" ("he is eloquent, in his own tongue," *Contr.* 2.4.8). While Griffin views this only as noting minor impurities, I contend that Corvinus is attacking Latro's ability to properly engage in declamation, as he has certain qualities that mark him out as a distinctly Spanish speaker rather than employing the speaking standards engendered by declamation.<sup>18</sup> Anxiety about this incorporation may also give rise to the boundaries drawn around the community of speech by Seneca.<sup>19</sup> While I do not wish to overreach, it seems safe to argue that the exclusionary speech of declamation indicates the intent to restrict the community of speech to its aristocratic participants. That this does not necessarily reflect the reality of who actually engaged in declamation is not overly problematic; the community of declamation is a construction and exists primarily in the minds of its members.<sup>20</sup> This, critically, does not reduce the reality of that community.

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<sup>18</sup> A comparison may be made to received pronunciation. Griffin (1972, 13) argues that the passage should not be read as overly critical as Seneca also emphasizes Corvinus' pedantry in the same section. On the other hand, this attribution may only be a defensive mechanism employed by Seneca as he seeks to preserve his friend's place in the community. The interpretation that Corvinus is alluding to a Spanish accent or expressions is supported by Leeman 1963, 222 and Bornecque 1902, 191. One other possible interpretation is that Corvinus is attacking declamation more broadly—dismissing it as another (inferior) language. This is consistent with the criticisms of third and ninth preface of the *Controversiae*. For Seneca's possible bias in favour of Spanish declaimers see Chapter 3.2 ("A Single Community of Speech").

<sup>19</sup> The boundaries of the community are most clearly expressed in the first preface of the *Controversiae*, as Seneca characterizes the preceding generation as "vir bonus dicendi peritus" ("good men skilful in speaking," *Contr.* 1.pr. 10) and asserts their qualifications by contrasting their behaviour with the current generation (*Contr.* 1.pr.6-11). The very choice of inclusion in the text, as Gunderson (2003, 43) has observed, is an act of community formation. For boundaries of declamation regarding boorishness or foolishness (and the tendency of Greeks to cross the line), see Gunderson 2003, 128. For an opposing view on treatment of Greeks in Seneca, see Fairweather 1981, 24-6, 33. For philosophy as a disruptive force to the declamatory community, see Gunderson 2003, 137. It may be beneficial to contrast Seneca's portrayal of declamation with that found in Petron. *Sat.* 1 and 48.4, wherein men of less than aristocratic status engage in (and mock) declamation. It is worth noting that in Petron. *Sat.* 48.4, Trimalchio (a freedman) seems inherently unable to grasp the fundamentals of declamation and thus is excluded from the social group of participants.

<sup>20</sup> Gunderson 2003, 49-55.

Unlike Corvinus' dismissal of *Latro*, the boundaries that Seneca establishes for participation are porous, the "aristocratic" status of its participants primarily the result of self-presentation through speech. This strategy allows Seneca to represent declamation as it existed, while simultaneously elevating it toward respectability through placing emphasis on its highest status members. The men who engaged in actual speech (*dictio*), barristers and politicians, are able to pass authoritative judgement on declaimers and thus set the boundaries of proper participation.<sup>21</sup> Albucius, a declaimer of sufficient reputation as to be the subject of the seventh preface and included in Seneca's first quartet (*Contr.* 10.pr.13), demonstrates this principal. Messala, in addition to his remarks about *Latro*, states that Albucius "non habet... fiduciam" ("did not have confidence in himself," *Contr.* 2.4.8). This assessment is reflected in the image of Albucius that Seneca himself lays out in his seventh preface, as he states, "nulla erat fiducia ingenii sui" ("he [Albucius] had no confidence in his own abilities," *Contr.* 7.pr.5). This repetition of the opinions of authoritative speakers is seen again within the seventh preface as Seneca explains the praise that Asinius Pollio conferred on Albucius' *sententiae* in calling them "alba" ("white," *Contr.* 7.pr.2) and in so doing incorporates them into his own assessment.

What of Messala's comments concerning *Latro*? These are not treated in the same manner by Seneca as those addressed to Albucius.<sup>22</sup> This is the result of two metrics of assessment operating simultaneously: the actual status of participants and their ability to embody status in the context of declamation. Success in the latter, at least in the case of *Latro*, allows him to assert an equal right to authority within Seneca's declamatory community. Seneca has equated the valorized roles embodied within the fiction of declamation with authentic claims to status in

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<sup>21</sup> Lobur 2008, 136.

<sup>22</sup> Indeed, *Latro* is actually allowed to respond to power by reciting Messala's own work back at him (*Contr.* 2.4.8).

order to make the aristocratic incorporation offered by declamation into a simultaneous marker of aristocratic success.

### 3.2 Participants in the community of shared speech

As the ability to embody the valorized roles of Roman aristocrat and/or Roman father are essential for recognition within Seneca's community of speech, it is worth examining cases in which individuals who are neither successfully (or unsuccessfully) present themselves as such. These men may be split into two groups: junior speakers, young men (*iuvenes*) or boys (*pueri*); and outsiders, non-Romans (broadly, Greeks, despite their varied origins) and men of such low status (ie. freedmen) that their distance from Roman aristocracy places them at a disadvantage. Critically, for the former, Seneca does not regard Spanish declaimers as non-Romans.

Part of the function of declamation was to teach young men how to operate inside of the community of shared speech it created.<sup>23</sup> This function is obscured in Seneca's work, however, as he emphasizes adult participants. This means that the young men who are included are exceptional in some way. This is certainly the case with Alfius Flavius, of whom Seneca admits, "audiendum me fama perduxerat; qui cum praetextatus esset, tantae opinionis fuit ut populo Romano puer eloquentia notus esset" ("his reputation induced me to hear him; who, when he wore the toga praetexta, was so famous that a child was known to the Roman people for his eloquence," *Contr.* 1.1.22). This talented child had little trouble speaking as a *pater* (father) and his rebuke of his 'son' was met with *clamor* (shouts of praise, *Contr.* 1.1.23). A more typical

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<sup>23</sup> Beard 1993; Bloomer 1997b; Connolly 1998; Gunderson 2003; and Corbeill 2007.

experience for young man might be that of Quinctilius Varus, also labelled *praetextatus*, who, declaiming before Cestius, has his *sententiae* brutalized by his instructor (*Contr.* 1.3.10).

Outsiders are as a rule disadvantaged within Seneca's community of declamation. Greek *sententiae* tend to come at the end of the *colores* section of each case and Seneca has a dim view of their abilities.<sup>24</sup> There is one instance, however, in which a Greek speaker is able to successfully embody Roman fatherhood:

Agroitas Massiliensis longe vividiozem sententiam dixit quam ceteri Graeci declamatores, qui in hac controversia tamquam rivalet rixati sunt. Dicebat autem Agroitas arte inculta, ut scires illum inter Graecos non fuisse, sententiis fortibus, ut scires illum inter Romanos fuisse. Sententia quae laudabantur haec fuit:...

Agroitas of Marseilles spoke a much more vigorous *sententia* by far than the other Greek declaimers, who brawled like rival lovers in this *controversia*. Moreover, Agroitas spoke with an unpolished technique, so you know that he was not among the Greeks, and vigorous *sententiae*, so you know that he was among the Romans. This was the *sententia* which received praise:... (*Contr.* 2.6.12)

In this passage, we see the possibility of overturning outsider status. Agroitas is placed among the Romans. Seneca, moreover, uses this as an opportunity to reinforce the outsider status of Greek speakers. They cannot separate themselves from the debauchery of the case—*Controversia* 2.6 concerns a father and son who are both debauchees—and maintain their dignity while speaking.<sup>25</sup>

The above example indicates how a speaker who is not Roman may be incorporated through successful speech, but what of those Romans who were not aristocratic? Capito may be such a man; his life is uncertain beyond the inference that he may be from the same generation as

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<sup>24</sup> Bornecque 1902; Edward 1928, xxix; Bonner 1969, 147; Sussman 1978, 26. For an argument against this interpretation, see Fairweather 1981, 23-5.

<sup>25</sup> Gunderson (2003, 126-9) discusses the importance of maintaining distance from sensational material being discussed.

Latro, as one of his declamations was attributed to him (*Contr.* 10.pr.12). Nevertheless, Seneca records him speaking declamations against Cicero's killer (*Contr.* 7.2.5-7) and against a praetor who has violated the majesty of his office (*Contr.* 9.2.9-10). Although these are not substantial excerpts, Seneca thought highly enough of Capito to name him as just below his first quartet (*Contr.* 10.pr.12).

The one instance where Seneca explicitly acknowledges a speaker's lower social station negatively reinforces the aristocratic boundaries of declamation. The *rhetor* Musa was a freedman (*Contr.* 10.pr.10) and friend to Seneca's sons (*Contr.* 7.5.10). As with the fictional Trimalchio (Petron. *Sat.* 48.4), however, he is unable to grasp the fundamentals of declamation—in this case the proper use of *exempla* (*Contr.* 7.5.13)—and Seneca labels him “ex illis qui res ineptas dixerant primus...ante omnis” (“first before all from those who said foolish things,” *Contr.* 7.5.10). In applying this label to the only identified person of lower status in the work, Seneca reinforces declamation as reserved for those of sufficient status for participation.

It was not only those of lower social station who could fail to adequately perform as declamatory speakers. Despite becoming praetor in 22 CE (Tac. *Ann.* 3.66) and publishing four books of *colores* (*Contr.* 1.3.11; 2.1.33), two things which should position him to be an excellent declaimer, Junius Otho is not exclusively praised by Seneca. While his ability to navigate difficult *controversia* is acknowledged (*Contr.* 2.1.33; 37-9), he is equally like to produce “colorem stultum” (“a foolish *color*,” *Contr.* 1.3.11) or “ineptam sententiam” (“a senseless *sententia*,” *Contr.* 7.3.10). His success and failures each derived from a “vitium ab antiquis... duxerat” (“a fault he learnt from the ancients,” *Contr.* 2.1.33), which was to ensure his *colores*

were always irrefutable and this led to a reliance on citing dreams as justifications for his argument (*Contr.* 7.7.15).

Junius Otho, who acquired a detrimental affectation from the ancients, contrasts nicely with Vibius Rufus, a man who spoke “antiquo genere” (“in the old way,” *Contr.* 9.2.25). This old way of speaking involved liberal use of vulgarism, which Vibius Rufus did with relative success.<sup>26</sup> One such successful *sententia* was, “praetor ad occidendum hominem soleas poposcit” (“The praetor demanded his slippers to kill a man,” *Contr.* 9.2.25).<sup>27</sup> These vulgarisms were highly disagreeable to the *scholastici*, who felt they had no place in declamation (*Contr.* 4.pr.9). This group consisted of those men who prioritized aesthetics at the expense of true eloquence, and to be revealed as a *scholasticus* was to be relegated to the margins of Seneca’s declamatory community.<sup>28</sup> Fittingly, one of the best representations of a *scholasticus* in Seneca’s text is not at all associated with declamation. When Votienus Montanus was standing trial, he so admired his opponent’s speech that “diceret: ‘delectavit me Vinici actio;’ et sententias eius referebat” (“he said, ‘I was charmed by Vinicius’ speech’ and retold several of its *sententiae*,” *Contr.* 7.5.12). These disparate individuals and the broad groups they represent all contribute to the community of speech, which Seneca is fashioning from declamation.

The inward looking nature of the declamatory community can render it difficult to identify as a corporate body. I contend, however, that there is sufficient evidence to do so. In addition to the communal body of citations, declamation occurred within designated spaces that

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<sup>26</sup> Of the three instances in which Vibius Rufus employs vulgarisms, he is successful twice (*Contr.* 1.2.23; 9.2.25) but checked once by Seneca for employing words unsuitable to the case at hand (*Contr.* 1.2.21).

<sup>27</sup> The vulgar word in this case is *soleas*. *Soleas* (see supra Ch.2 n.138) appears in Cicero’s *Verrines* (2.5.86) and thus may have been considered an antiquated word. The association between antiquated and vulgar speech depends on “Rufus Vibius erat qui antiquo genere diceret; belle cessit illi sententia sordidioris notae...” (“Vibius Rufus was a man who spoke in the old way; he fared well with a *sententiae* of the more vulgar sort...” *Contr.* 9.2.25).

<sup>28</sup> For a fuller treatment of the *scholastici* in Seneca see Chapter 4.7 (*Scholastici*).

served to divide the members of that community from others.<sup>29</sup> It possessed its own ethics and the discussion of those ethical systems, which was a key purpose of declamation, allowed for the building of consensus within the community. These ethical systems, moreover, were the bridge between declamation and the wider world as they reflected contemporary discourses of power and allowed their adherents to more easily navigate those discourses.

### 3.3 A single community of speech

The *Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae, divisiones, colores* of Seneca collects the *sententiae* and commentary of the around 110 declaimers, whom our author had heard across roughly sixty years.<sup>30</sup> This disparate body (which, as made explicit at *Contr.* 10.pr.13-16, was not even united by their presence in Rome) is compressed into a single community of shared speech in order that it might provide models for his sons.<sup>31</sup> How much, then, are we able to trust the picture that Seneca draws of declamation? Bloomer pessimistically argues that one must not read Seneca's text as an objective snapshot of contemporary declamation, but rather a vehicle through which he sought both to promote his family and a select group of Spanish *amici* and to present declamation as a legitimate successor to Republican oratory.<sup>32</sup> This interpretation depends on the definition of declaimers as exclusively those teachers (*rhetores*) who instructed young men

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<sup>29</sup> For the privileged location of declamation, see Beard 1993, 57-8.

<sup>30</sup> For a complete list of the declaimers found within the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, see Bornecque 1902, 143-201 and Appendix 1. Kaster 1972, 319, identifies c.110 declaimers from the Augustan period.

<sup>31</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.6: stresses the importance in having a large pool of models for imitation; while it does not explicitly acknowledge a community of shared speech, there is an emphasis on the speakers as a unified body as they are contrasted with inferior contemporary speakers.

<sup>32</sup> Bloomer 1997a, 199-215.

during the final stage of their education.<sup>33</sup> As Huelsenbeck has observed, however, “to receive a ‘higher education’ in this period was to be a declaimer at some point.”<sup>34</sup> Adult declamation, moreover, became common during this period; indeed, the majority of men preserved by Seneca were well past their school days at the captured moment of participation.<sup>35</sup> A broader definition is, therefore, in order: one who participated in declamation, whether “publicly” at the schools or privately at home, was a declaimer and can be counted as part of the community of shared speech, which this activity delineated. This more forgiving definition aligns with Seneca’s broad use of the term and resolves many of the complaints found in Bloomer;<sup>36</sup> however, his assertion that one should not simply accept Seneca’s account remains valid. The *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* are constructed texts, not perfect replications of speech. As such, it is worth considering how they construct the social and rhetorical dynamics of the speech they present.<sup>37</sup>

The constructed nature of Seneca’s text is most evident in the prefaces. These sections not only contain dedications to his sons (whose edification is ostensibly the purpose of the work) but also provide thematic links to the following books, introducing the man (or men) who would feature prominently therein.<sup>38</sup> The first preface, moreover, is programmatic; introducing the

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<sup>33</sup> Bloomer, 1997a: 206, illustrates the restrictive nature of his definition as he discusses omitting Latro as he does not offer criticism, but only performs. Seneca himself acknowledged this, but the question revolves around whether or not Latro is a (*ludi*) *magister*; there is no question of whether or not he is a declaimer (“declamabat ipse tantum et aiebat se non esse magistrum sed exemplum,” “he merely declaimed himself, and said that he was not schoolmaster, but a model,” *Contr.* 9.2.23).

<sup>34</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015, 46 n.23.

<sup>35</sup> Bloomer 1969, 39-43.

<sup>36</sup> Specifically, contesting the notion that Seneca’s work was devoid of the very class of men it reported to preserve.

<sup>37</sup> One of the difficulties in making assertions about Seneca’s text is its fragmentary nature. For a discussion of the problems with our text, see Winterbottom 1974a, 20-42. See also Appendix 3.

<sup>38</sup> Sussman (1971: 286-288) argues that these links manifested in two ways: direct transitions, as seen in the seventh preface, which ends with a discussion of Albucius’ poor speech during a *controversia* on a man who set his parricide brother free and Seneca’s promise to relate it (*Contr.* 7.pr.9)—a promise held as it is the first *controversia* of the seventh book; and indirect transition, as in the second preface wherein Fabianus is the featured declaimer and appears almost exclusively within that book. Exceptions, noted by Sussman, occur at *Contr.* 7.pr.4; *Suas.* 1.4, 9-10.

unifying and, as shall be argued, interconnecting motifs of the work: memory, imitation, and the decline of eloquence.<sup>39</sup> These three motifs sketch the boundaries of the community of shared speech presented by Seneca and govern proper behaviour within that community.

Memory is essential to the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*, for it is the medium through which the declaimers fondly recalled by Seneca are preserved.<sup>40</sup> However, the reality of Seneca's claims concerning his prodigious memory are less important than its function as a theme within the text.<sup>41</sup> The failure of memory due to old age, of which Seneca complains in the first preface (*Contr.* 1.pr.2-5), provides a justification not only for the omission of certain declaimers but also for the elision of multiple instances of performance.<sup>42</sup> This elision allows for the creation of a community of speech despite any temporal or spatial distance between the speakers. Memory, moreover, is also a creative force. In invoking his memory, Seneca constructs a community of good men through the citation of that same community, which would not exist without the initial provisional act of citation. As Gunderson states, "there is no golden age, no moment before the crime, and no thing itself to which we may return."<sup>43</sup> Memory in Seneca, therefore, is akin to a declamatory speech; and as declaimers seek to convince the audience that deeds of one or the

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<sup>39</sup> The featured declaimer of the first preface, moreover, is Porcius Latro. While this conforms at a basic level to the direct transition noted by Sussman (1971), it may also be possible to see broader implications for the structure of the *Controversiae* due to Latro's privileged position within the work. Gunderson (2003, 50) describes Latro as Seneca's *âme*.

<sup>40</sup> Indeed, it is the only medium where such preservation is possible as "fere enim aut nulli commentarii maximorum declamatorum extant aut, quod peius est, falsi" ("for there are no extant writings of the greatest declaimers, or what is worse, there are forged ones," *Contr.* 1.pr.11). Gunderson 2003, 29.

<sup>41</sup> The question of whether or not Seneca relied on memory alone is given an excellent treatment in Fairweather (1981: 37-42). For a more skeptical view, see Sussman, 1978: 76 n.135.

<sup>42</sup> See especially *Contr.* 1.pr.4: "Illud necesse est inpetrem, ne me quasi certum aliquem ordinem velit sequi in contrahendis quae mihi occurrent; necesse est enim per omnia studia mea erram et passim quidquid obvenerit adprehendam" ("I must ask this, that you do not wish me to follow a particular order in the pulling together of the things which occur to me; for I must wander through all of my studies and will grab indiscriminately at whatever comes to me").

<sup>43</sup> Gunderson 2003, 55.

other party violate communal values in a case, so too does Seneca hope to record and place the communal values of rhetoric.<sup>44</sup>

This does not mean that the instances recorded in Seneca are fictional; rather, if we accept Gunderson's account of the function of memory, the inclusion of actual instances of declamation becomes essential. As with Cicero, the reality of these occurrences (however distorted) solidifies them as believable exempla.<sup>45</sup> The heroic nature of Cicero, as a man who died for eloquence, is transmitted (in a somewhat diminished form) to the broader community; these men are not Cicero, but they may serve as models of attainable eloquence. That some of this community participated in *dictio* adds authority to Seneca's citations, but the authority that he is asserting has little to do with actual instances of effective speech.<sup>46</sup>

The theme of memory is linked to the other major themes of the first preface. It is difficult not to see a parallel between Seneca's own decaying memory and the broader deterioration of eloquence; as both decay from disuse once the need for their application has diminished.<sup>47</sup> Seneca, moreover, makes memory a quality inherent to the preceding generation—another metric by which to understand the decline that has occurred.<sup>48</sup> This generation of exemplary speakers exists primarily as an object of nostalgia that is given shape exclusively

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<sup>44</sup> Gunderson 2003, 30, 40-41, 50-58.

<sup>45</sup> For the special place of Cicero within declamation, see Roller, 1997; Kaster, 1998; and Lobur 2008, 128-169. The distortion of the events of Cicero's death are acknowledged by Seneca himself as he observes that Popillius as the killer of Cicero was likely an invention of the declaimers (*Contr.* 7.2.8).

<sup>46</sup> For the role of *dictio* in Seneca's text see Lobur 2008, 136-140.

<sup>47</sup> Sussman 1971, 289-91. The decline of memory through age and idleness (*Contr.* 1.pr.3); contrast, the second possible reason for the decline of eloquence in which the relocation of competition has caused it to become less prized (*Contr.* 1.pr.7).

<sup>48</sup> This is made most explicit at *Contr.* 1.pr.19. The amazement he projects onto his sons indicates that their generation does not possess the same powers of memory as Latro (or any of the other men he lists as exempla).

through the citations preserved by our author.<sup>49</sup> This process of citation also links memory to the other major theme of the work: imitation.

Imitation, especially when it crosses into plagiarism, is one of the metrics by which Seneca distinguishes the preceding generation of declaimers from his sons' contemporaries.<sup>50</sup> This manifests both positively (the declaimers of the preceding generation are worthy of emulation) and negatively (but they need to be protected from the wholesale theft that is currently occurring).<sup>51</sup> This protection was necessary as there were no authentic written versions of their performances (*Contr.* 1.pr.11). In an environment devoid of fixed qualifications (such as modern degrees), the proper attribution of *sententiae* became essential as a method for tracking rhetorical success.<sup>52</sup> The defective imitation (plagiarism) of the current generation, therefore, undermines the very system in which they participate by removing its ability to distinguish skilled speakers. As with memory and eloquence, proper imitation is located in the preceding generation.<sup>53</sup> The rules that govern this positive imitation are not entirely clear, but it seems to have been distinguished from plagiarism primarily by whether the author intended for their reference to be noticed.<sup>54</sup> The difficulty of determining intent lead to the false accusations that

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<sup>49</sup> Gunderson 2003, 55.

<sup>50</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.10-11 highlights plagiarism as problematic and connects it to the more general decline of eloquence outlined at *Contr.* 1.pr.6-9. For Seneca's theory of imitation, see *Contr.* 1.pr.6; compare Quint. *Inst.* 10.2 (esp. 11, 24-6). This theory (and how it was developed by Seneca the Younger) is well treated in Trinacty 2009, 260-77.

<sup>51</sup> McGill 2010, 114-5.

<sup>52</sup> Sinclair, 1995, 119-32. For a fuller account of authorship and its relation to ownership, see Randall 2001. Gleason 1994, xxiv argues for a continual need to reassert qualifications through performance. While this need should be recognized, the attribution of *sententiae* may be seen as one sign of more permanent attributions of success.

<sup>53</sup> McGill (2012, 146-77) discusses Seneca's defence of his subjects from charges of plagiarism and how these may actually serve to augment their literary merit. Such defences occur at *Contr.* 9.1.13; 10.4.20-21; *Suas.* 2.19-20; and 3.7. There is one exception, where Seneca compounds Severus' complaints about plagiarism (*Contr.* 10.5.20-21).

<sup>54</sup> Trinacty 2009, 272; McGill 2010, 119-20. An anecdote from Gallio (*Suas.* 3.7) seems to support this interpretation, at least in the realm of poetry: "...itaque fecisse illum quod in multis aliis versibus Vergilii fecerat, non subripiendi causa, sed palam mutuandi, hoc animo ut vellet agnosci..." ("...and thus [Ovid] did this, which he had done with many other lines of Virgil, not for the sake of plagiarism, but changing openly, as in this spirit he wished it to be recognized").

Seneca refutes in his text. These false accusations, however, are not entirely negative. They demonstrate an engagement on the part of the *auditores* that distinguishes them from their inattentive counterparts from the first preface.<sup>55</sup>

The community of shared speech portrayed by Seneca is created at the intersections of these motifs. Its members are located in the past and, therefore, only accessible through memory—a trait that is sorely lacking in the young men of today (*Contr.* 1.pr.19). Similarly, they are worthy of imitation but instead their words are plagiarized by effeminate before an inattentive audience (*Contr.* 1.pr.6-10).<sup>56</sup> This failure on the part of the audience, to notice the theft that is occurring before them, may also be attributed to faulty memory as they are unable to recall the original men, who should serve as models for their own speech, and correctly attribute their *sententiae*. It is through the correct application of these two qualities (memory and imitation), however, that Seneca hopes to counteract the decline in eloquence that is occurring.<sup>57</sup> How real, then, is this community that Seneca promotes? How much is it the product of nostalgia—held together by the faulty cornerstone of memory?

Let us return to Bloomer, as his complaint that Seneca wrote in order to promote both his sons and a small group of Spanish *amici* calls these two groups into focus.<sup>58</sup> His sons, as the addressees and not part of the constructed community, are less essential for the moment. It

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<sup>55</sup> McGill (2010, 128-9) observes that even as he labels them *maligni* (*Suas.* 2.19), Seneca remains generally positive about the *auditores*.

<sup>56</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.10: “Sententias a disertissimis viris iactas facile in tanta hominum desidia pro suis dicunt, et sic sacerrimam eloquentiam, quam praestare non possunt, violare non desinunt” (“They easily speak *sententiae*, which have been uttered by truly eloquent men, as their own among men of such great apathy, and thus they do not cease violating most eloquence, which they are not able to exhibit”). For the link between masculinity and eloquence in Seneca see Chapter 2.6 (“Seneca’s model of individual criticism”) and 2.7 (“The generational model of criticism”).

<sup>57</sup> As Gunderson (2003, 31) states, “Seneca the father imitates all rather than one: he tries to imitate endlessly in order to recapture one lost vital object: the good man experienced at speaking.”

<sup>58</sup> Bloomer 1997a.

should merely be recognized that the trope of dedicating works to one's sons was widespread and, thus, should not be seen as a unique feature of Seneca's work.<sup>59</sup> It is, moreover, an especially fitting dedication given declamation's preoccupation with father-son relationships.<sup>60</sup> The Spaniards are present because they were the men that Seneca knew. As Griffin has observed, "Seneca, in fact, indicates origin only for men of his own town, or for those whose activity was mostly or partially confined to Spain."<sup>61</sup> A study of the 'lengthy citations' (those extending through two or more sections) in Seneca, as was conducted by Bennett, indicates that while Spaniards are excerpted more often, these excerpts occur primarily for Latro and Gallio, whom Seneca has placed in his first quartet.<sup>62</sup> If, moreover, one compares the total number of citations to the other declaimers in Seneca's first quartet, the numbers are as follows: Junius Gallio, 54; Albucius Silus, 58; Arellius Fuscus, 68; Porcius Latro, 121.<sup>63</sup> Latro is clearly the outlier, but this is unsurprising given his prominence within the work.<sup>64</sup> Seneca, then, may be seen to favour Spanish declaimers (especially Latro); but I contend, in agreement with Griffin, that this was more the result of familiarity and his time spent in that province than any sort of provincial bias.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Cicero, for instance, wrote *De Officiis* in the form of a letter to his son. Sussman 1978, 54-55 argues that while Seneca's work may have been intended for broader distribution, there is no reason to disbelieve that it was originally written for the benefit of his sons.

<sup>60</sup> Breij (2011, 338) states that 190 of the 291 preserved declamations involve father-son relationships.

<sup>61</sup> Griffin 1972, 16.

<sup>62</sup> Bennett's (2007, 8) list: five lengthy citation for both Gallio and Latro; two for Fuscus, Silus, and Sparsus; and one for Cestius Pius, Capito, Fabianus and Turrinus. This results in eleven total lengthy citation for Spanish declaimers and nine for other provincials. Bennett sees this as evidence for some Spanish bias, but also concedes that it is probable that Seneca merely remembers his close friends more readily (13).

<sup>63</sup> Bennett 2007, 7.

<sup>64</sup> He is also the first declaimer cited 14 times and is commonly the declaimer cited for the *divisio* (Bennett, 2007: 7). See Gunderson (2003: 50) for Latro as reliable double for the narrator.

<sup>65</sup> Indeed, Griffin (1972: 16-17) notes that Seneca does not explicitly indicate that Junius Gallio came from the province and argues that Seneca seems almost distant from Spain due to his lack of acknowledgement compared to Martial.

As argued in chapter 2, the world of declamation depicted by Seneca is not static—the transition between eloquence and excess does not occur suddenly. He speaks only of “declamatoribus...qui in aetatem meam” (“the declaimers who have been [his] contemporaries,” *Contr.* 1.pr.1) and “prioris” (“the preceding generation,” *Contr.* 1.pr.6), which are set in opposition to “exemplis saeculi vestri” (“the models from your generation,” *Contr.* 1.pr.6) and “iuventutis” (“our young men,” *Contr.* 1.pr.8). The progress of time is made explicit as we learn of the development from *dictio* to *declamatio* to *scholastica*.<sup>66</sup> The negative connotations of this final phase are clear when one considers the pejorative use of *scholastici* to describe that body of men who engaged obsessively and incorrectly with declamation.<sup>67</sup> Seneca, then, may be seen to be assembling broad communities, which exist in opposition to each other but with no stark dividing line; indeed, the possibility of moving (metaphorically) between the two is a very real threat for the men found in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*.<sup>68</sup>

### 3.4 Declaimers in dialogue

The constructed community presented by Seneca does not depend solely on the possibility of shared discourse; rather, our author brings together distinct instances of performance into a single meta-declimation. The excerpted speakers respond to one another through the redeployment of *sententiae* and *colores*, which function as points of interaction

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<sup>66</sup> *Contr.* 1.pr.12: “Hoc vero alterum nomen Graecum quidem, sed in Latinum ita translatum ut pro Latino sit, *scholastica*, *controversiae* multo recentius est, sicut ipsa ‘*declamatio*’ apud nullum antiquum auctorem ante Ciceronem et Calvum inveniri potest” (“Truly this other name, *scholastica*, a Greek word but brought over into Latin to be a Latin one, is much more recent than *controversiae*: just as *declamatio* itself can be found in the works of no ancient author before Cicero and Calvus”). For the importance of some speakers’ connection to *dictio*, see Lobur 2008, 136-40.

<sup>67</sup> For more on the treatment and function of *scholastici* in Seneca, see Chapter 4.7 (“*Scholastici*”).

<sup>68</sup> The fear at being thought a *scholastici* may be seen at *Contr.* 7.pr.4.

within declamatory performance.<sup>69</sup> It is difficult to know the degree to which this represents reality. Seneca's community certainly includes men who could not have been present for the other performances recorded, such as those who he himself tells us never left Spain (*Cont.* 10.pr. 13-6). Despite this, if we accept Seneca's memory to be at all accurate, the shared loci within each case indicate that a great many of those cited were likely present at the performances of the others.<sup>70</sup> While this does not necessarily indicate that the quotations all arose during a single declamatory session, it does suggest that there was a community of speech which was sufficiently self-aware as to recall and cite other occurrences on a similar theme. This interpretation suggests that Seneca is not so much creating a community of speech through memory as consolidating an already existing one in a process which emphasized direct communal discourse and competition.

At the core of this discourse were *sententiae*, connected by the use of shared argument, theme, topic, or verbal formulation.<sup>71</sup> While it is tempting to see these shared *sententiae* as commonplaces or the product of the scenarios set out in each case, Seneca clearly conveys the development that occurs between speakers. In *Controversia* 1.4, for instance, we are treated to a series of *sententiae* that all deal with the moment when the adulterers are caught and then released. The first quoted is Latro, who states, "adulteros meos tantum excitavi" ("I only woke my deceivers," *Contr.* 1.4.10). This is followed by three *sententiae* in rapid succession, each of

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<sup>69</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015.

<sup>70</sup> This is certainly the conclusion of Huelsenbeck 2015, 41.

<sup>71</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015, 40 notes these categories as forming the loci for interaction. While I agree with the general assertion, I also believe it to be too broad. These categories only become points of contact when deployed as part of *sententiae*.

which builds on Latro's initial *sententia*.<sup>72</sup> The debt owed to Latro's initial *sententia* is clear as introducing the first in the series Seneca states, "Fuscus Arellius illius sententiae frigidius dixit contrariam illi sententiam" ("Arellius Fuscus spoke a *sententia* less pointedly, which inverted [Latro's]," *Contr.* 1.4.10). The use of *frigidius*, moreover, suggests that these redeployed *sententia* acted as loci of competition allowing direct comparison of speakers as they sought to deploy competing articulations of similar ideas. The reproduction of *sententiae* was not always accompanied by development. In *Controversia* 2.4, Romanus Hispo "dixit nobilem illam sententiam quam Fabius Maximus circumferebat" ("spoke a well-known *sententia*, which Fabius Maximus had circulated," *Contr.* 2.4.9). Such reproductions raise the question of the boundary between engagement and plagiarism.

The speech-exchange inherent in declamation may explain the anxiety Seneca displays around accusations of plagiarism. The use of familiar language allowed speakers to engage with those who had already performed; at the same time, however, Seneca understands there to be a clear distinction between borrowing (*mutuatos*) and outright imitation (*imitatos*).<sup>73</sup> The point at which one becomes the other, however, is not entirely clear and seems to depend on the perceived intention of the speaker.<sup>74</sup> For instance, immediately after accusing Buteo, Moschus and Fuscus of plagiarizing Adaeus (*Contr.* 10.4.20), Seneca presents one of Latro's *sententia* that

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<sup>72</sup> Arellius Fuscus, "adulteros interventu meo ne excitavi quidem" ("I did not even wake the adulterers when I came in"); Vibius Rufus, "adulteri marito non adsurrexerunt" ("The adulterers did not get up for the husband"); Pompeius, "adulescens, denique adulteros excita; postquam tu venisti, securius iacent" ("youth, wake up the adulterers at last, after you came, they have reclined freer from care," *Contr.* 1.4.10). In this same series, there is a fourth *sententia* also attributed to Latro. It, however, lacks the resonance found in the others.

<sup>73</sup> This is made explicit in reference to the translation of Greek *sententiae* into Latin. After relating Adaeus' *sententia*, Seneca tells us, "hunc sensum quidam Latini dixerunt, sed sic ut putem illos non mutuatos esse arti hanc sententiam sed imitatos" ("some of the Latin declaimers spoke this sentence, but in such a way that I suppose that these men had not borrowed the *sententia* with skill but imitated it," *Contr.* 10.4.20). He then provides three examples of such imitation: Blandus, Moschus, and Arellius Fuscus.

<sup>74</sup> McGill 2010, 119-20.

strongly resembles something said by Artemon. Latro, however, “non potest de furto suspectus esse; Graecos enim et contemnebat et ignorabat” (“cannot be suspected of plagiarism, because he held the Greek in contempt and was ignorant of them,” *Contr.* 10.4.21). He is thus freed from the accusation on account of his ignorance.

A more concrete definition of plagiarism is provided by Cassius Severus, with whom Seneca seems to agree.<sup>75</sup> For Severus, it is the degree of innovation that is important as “multi sunt qui detracto verbo aut mutato aut adiecto putent se alienas sententias lucri fecisse” (“there are many who think they have stolen for themselves other people’s *sententiae* by taking out, changing or adding a word,” *Contr.* 10.5.20). While it provides slightly more concrete criteria, the amount of variation needed for success is still abstract. It was, then, the role of the audience to assess whether or not a speaker had been sufficiently innovative.<sup>76</sup>

This view of plagiarism was not universal. Arellius Fuscus, when caught imitating another *sententia* of Adaeus, seems to agree in principle as his defence begins, “non commendationis id se aut furti, sed exercitationis causa facere” (“I did not do this for my own commendations or as a theft, but for the sake of practice,” *Contr.* 9.1.13). He then, however, argues that such exercises do represent a legitimate form of engagement and offers as evidence Sallust’s victory over Thucydides in the pursuit of brevity. As with the legitimate engagement found in *Controversia* 1.4, this engagement is connected to *sententiae*: “do...operam ut cum

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<sup>75</sup> The comments of Severus are preceded by an acknowledgement from Seneca that Triarius was actually filching the words of others. “Triarius hoc ex aliqua parte, cum subriperet, inflexit” (“Triarius gave it a slightly different twist, when he stole it,” *Contr.* 10.5.20).

<sup>76</sup> This role is evident as the audience of old, defined by its diligence, does not allow Abronius Silo to deploy one of Latro’s ideas in a poem (*Suas.* 2.19). This represents a harsher rule than Seneca himself employs as he is typically fine with borrowing across genres. Fuscus is praised for reciting a line of Virgil (*Suas.* 4.4); Ovid receives no similar censure for borrowing from Latro (*Contr.* 2.2.8); nor does Cestius, in the other direction, receive censure for attempting to imitate Virgil (*Contr.* 7.1.27).

optimis sententiis certem, nec illas corrumpere conor sed vincere” (“I make an effort so that when I contend with the best *sententiae*, I do not try to spoil them but beat them,” *Contr.* 9.1.13). *Sententiae*, then, provide the axis of competition, whether or not that competition was legitimate.

This function may account for Seneca’s desire to preserve the best *sententiae* of the preceding generation. Not only were they the most exciting part of speech, they also represented interactions between the community when it spoke in the declamatory mode. The continued reiteration of *sententiae* allowed declamation to function as a multi-participant activity as speakers iteratively explored the values contained within cases across performances. This association with performance differentiates the dialogue offered by *sententiae* from other discussions within the community, such as the debate between Buteo, Latro and Blandus on the relevance of particular *quaestiones* (*Contr.* 2.5.15-6), as it allowed theoretical access to the whole of the community. This broad access, whether as speakers or audience members, afforded the community the opportunity to engage with the values being expressed as they were performed and thus generate a meaningful consensus. This theoretical consensus depended on access to performances, which (especially early on) was not always guaranteed. It is, therefore, worth exploring how Seneca positions declamation as a public form of private speech.

### **3.5 Public v. private declamation**

The distinction between public and private speech is a critical feature of the prefaces and underlays the complaints about declamation. This separation is not only social, but spatial. Votienus Montanus, for instance, contrasts the shady walls and closed ceiling of the school with the bright and open air of the forum (*Contr.* 9.pr.3-5). The space in which each kind of speech

occurs is reflective of its validity—it is impossible to engage in effective speech when that speech is conducted outside of the public sphere. Further, the enclosed space of declamation allows (or even encourages) limitation of the audience; whether actively on part of the speaker (as is the case with Cestius, who refuses to speak so long as Cassius Severus remains in the space; *Contr.* 3.pr.16) or reflexively as they self-select for entrance (and, thus, participation).

The limited nature of the audience, complains Montanus, leads to undue and excessive support of the speaker (*Contr.* 9.pr.2-3). The forum allows for (or, uncharitably, for the fiction of) an unbiased audience, open to anyone. It is this feature, more than any other, that undermines declamation as an effective form of speech.

The contrast between public and private speech does not merely distinguish forum oratory from declamation, but also acts to create categories of speech within the latter. These categories are explicitly acknowledged in the seventh preface as we are told that Seneca had few opportunities to hear Albucius, “cum per totum annum quinquies sexiensve populo diceret et ad secretas exercitationes non multi inrumperent” (“since in a whole year he would speak five or six times in public and not many intruded on his private exercises,” *Contr.* 7.pr.1).<sup>77</sup> While it is possible that, as elsewhere,<sup>78</sup> Seneca is using Albucius’ forum oratory to support his inclusion among the best declaimers, I contend that this is not the case; rather, our author is discussing two distinct types of declamation.<sup>79</sup> These types are marked—at least in the seventh preface—by the size of their audiences; indeed, Albucius claims that “plures me domi audiant quam quemquam

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<sup>77</sup> See also the contrast between Asinius Pollio and Haterius in the fourth preface.

<sup>78</sup> *Contr.* 9.5.14-16 for instance.

<sup>79</sup> The language surrounding this public-private contrast supports this interpretation. As Albucius’ different habits in each context are laid out, Seneca specifically references *controversiae* in connection to Albucius’ public speech. Our author’s primary complaint, moreover, is that Albucius would speak for far too long, which would be difficult to do in court due to restrictions on the length of speeches (cf. Tac. *Dial.* 19.5).

in foro” (“many more hear me at home than anyone in the forum,” *Contr.* 7.pr.8). This is most likely hyperbole. Nevertheless, it not only demonstrates the popularity of declamation but also suggests that it can be seen as a semi-public event. This interpretation supports a spectrum of speech: on one end, private declamation, which occurs indoors before a small group of close friends or associates and (most likely) deals with scenarios removed from public life by their fantastic qualities;<sup>80</sup> then, public declamation, which occurs in similar (or the same?) venues as private declamation and deals with the same material, but allows for a much larger crowd and may, indeed, have been a recreational activity for aristocratic men;<sup>81</sup> finally, court or forum oratory, which occurred in a public place and dealt with (real) public business. While there was likely overlap between these categories (particularly public and private declamation), these three points provide markers on a spectrum of public-private speech.

Public declamation occupies the liminal space between public and private speech. The superfluous nature of the material precludes its consideration as public speech. It also occurred outside of the traditional venues for public speech—notably, for many of the men excerpted, the forum. These spatial and topical deviations allow public declamation to be dismissed as a mode of effective speech; yet, it is difficult to justify its consideration as a purely private discourse. The admission of the public (explicitly *populus*) transforms declamation into a speech act—an assertion of the validity of a particular interpretation of a broadly shared set of stereotypes, beliefs and ethical values. This assertion would (and is often claimed to be) worthless without the

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<sup>80</sup> I am hedging somewhat with the inclusion of “most likely” as our best early examples of private declamation are the private speeches of Cicero, which were decidedly political.

<sup>81</sup> This audience was certainly composed of a more mixed group than that of private declamation. The lack of control that the speaker exerted over the composition of his audience is demonstrated when Cassius Severus interjects himself into Cestius’ speech (*Contr.* 3.pr.16). There is also support (*Contr.* 3.pr.16) that these public declamations occurred in public spaces—in the aforementioned case, in the baths—or in spaces that could be made public, like Albus’ home.

presence of the audience, who establish consensus with the interpretation and thus validate the speaker. There are parallels to the theatre that support declamation as more public than its critics admit. First, lines of declamation could be considered commentary on the current political situation or the behaviour of the princeps—particularly, when he was in attendance.<sup>82</sup> The audience acting as unified body is also not without precedent, although in this case they are a community of shared speech as opposed to one made coherent through seating. Unlike theatre seating, however, we do not have a declamatory hall suddenly conferring honours on the princeps (or his family)—or taking other large public actions for that matter. If we wish to view declamation as a form of public speech, does it necessarily need to be effective to be functional? Is the construction of consensus enough?

This is the difficulty with public declamation. Its separation from traditional modes of public speech is a virtue in that it allowed the genre to serve as a testing ground for aristocratic systems of ethics, while employing a sufficiently stable body of references that new members could be incorporated into (and thus help to shape) the community. At the same time, however, the community created by declamation does not have an external voice—not even an informal one—that allows it to participate in the broader community. In the theatre, the *equester ordo* was made cohesive by the XIV rows, which set the boundaries of participation, but was only given voice by being able to ‘speak’ outward beyond those rows. Declamation, in contrast, speaks inwards—a soliloquy on aristocratic ethics.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Latro’s speech about improper adoption is seen as criticism of Augustus’ adoption of Agrippa (*Contr.* 2.4.12-13).

<sup>83</sup> Perhaps Severus’ comparison of declamation to shadow-boxing is apt (*Contr.* 3.pr.13).

### 3.6 Specific composition of the audience

Declamation, as we have seen, allowed for the formation of a broad community of shared speech through the inculcation of a stable body of references and ethics in its participants. The influence that this community had on its members extended well beyond the halls where declamations were delivered: the study and invocation of *exempla* encouraged reproduction of speech, movement, and even thought.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, it was in this space (free, at least nominally, from the pressures of public speech and action) that men engaged with their communal ethics, transforming them through subtle shifts in consensus. In other words, the freedom afforded by the private setting and unreal material of declamation created space in which aristocratic men could safely define the ethical and behavioural boundaries of their public lives. The restrictive nature of declamatory performance (that is to say, not every member of the community of shared speech could be present at every instance of performance) necessitated that the audience act substantively for the broader community, enforcing the ethical standards to which that community conformed and affirming or rejecting modifications to those same standards.<sup>85</sup> Two questions present themselves: (1) what was the typical composition of a declamatory audience (did it draw in a particular class of individual)? (2) to what extent was any particular audience reflective of the broader community of shared speech? In this section, these two questions will be explored in the context of declamation as it appears in Seneca's text. The emphasis, accordingly, will be placed on gatherings which, if not comprised entirely of adults, conform to what has been described as adult declamation, as these are the most common

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<sup>84</sup> See Chapter 2.3 ("Becoming a *pater*").

<sup>85</sup> See Chapter 4 ("The Audience and Declamation").

instances of declamatory performance preserved by our author, and, moreover, it was at these gatherings that the educated audience was most able to assert itself.

There are several factors in the works of Seneca that complicate our understanding of the declamatory audience. One of the challenges that emerges when attempting to concretely identify the men who viewed the declamations preserved by Seneca is our author's tendency to treat the declamatory audience as a single entity, which interacts collectively with speakers. These collective interactions, moreover, take fairly standardized forms: praise (when the audience supports the speaker) and laughter (when they do not).<sup>86</sup> These standardized responses call into question the qualifications of the audience as informed observers. This is the argument employed by Votienus Montanus as he derides the unjustified praise given to declaimers (*Contr.* 9.pr.2).<sup>87</sup> In order to demonstrate nuanced understanding of the performances they are witnessing, the audience must sacrifice its collective function and allow individuals to distinguish themselves by offering specific comment. These speaker-spectators (in the context of Seneca's work) are generally men whose own declamations are recorded elsewhere in the text. While this does not mean that they are necessarily atypical audience members, it does suggest that caution should be applied—these were men with something to say, speakers themselves who wished to comment on others. It should not be assumed that this was the case for all members of the audience. Consider Seneca himself, for example, who was present for all of the recorded performances but

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<sup>86</sup> There are difficulties with laughter as a means of assessing disapproval. Like applause, laughter is active (it requires an object). Laughter is only negative when it has been turned back against the speaker. For this view, see Quint. 6.3.8 (citing Cicero *de Orat.* 2.236), "Habet enim, ut Cicero dicit, sedem in deformitate aliqua et turpitudine, quae cum in aliis demonstrantur, urbanitas, cum in ipsos dicentes recidunt, stultitia vocatur." ("For, as Cicero says, [laughter] has its seat in the some deformity or ugliness, which are called wit when we show them in others, but folly when they are turned against the speaker himself")

<sup>87</sup> It should be noted that Votienus Montanus is addressing declamation in an educational context. For a similar condemnation of indiscriminate applause, see Quint. *Inst.* 2.2.9-13.

whose own speech is not recorded. If, moreover, one acknowledges the importance of the audience for declamation, these omissions do not even preclude broader individual speech by its members. The goal of Seneca's work is to present the foremost declaimers of the previous generation so that his sons could judge them (*Contr.* 1.pr.1); if we accept that contributions from the audience were essential to the function of declamation, then it follows that only those contributions from the best speakers would be preserved.

The other major complication is that Seneca tends to discuss the nature of the audience only when they have deviated from the acceptable norm. In other words, the declamatory audience was a body that did not need elaboration—except for when it did. There are two primary disruptive bodies addressed by Seneca: (1) powerful non-speakers, whose very presence disrupts the environment of declamation; and, (2) *scholastici*, who disrupt the normal function of the audience through their negligence. While these bodies represent (for Seneca) a distortion of the usual boundaries of the audience, they are nevertheless useful both because they can be used to negatively infer those boundaries and because (ultimately) they did contribute to the overall composition of the audience. Having just laid out the problems inherent in attempting to define the specific composition of the audience, let us now turn to those things that these (admitted problematic) aspects reveal about it.

The collective expressions of the audience and the emphasis on divergent bodies suggest that, for Seneca at least, there was an equivalence among its members. This equivalence

depended on their relationship to declamation, rather than geographic or social markers.<sup>88</sup>

Despite their standardized responses to speakers, there are indications that these were men who were deeply invested in declamation. This manifests in their astuteness at detecting plagiarism.<sup>89</sup>

The readiness with which plagiarism was identified and rebuked (whether by the audience as a collective or through the mouths of representatives) suggests that as a body they were not themselves ignorant of the wider corpus of literary material, both the speeches of other declaimers and the works or cultural touchstones that informed those works. This knowledge, then, distinguishes the declamatory audience from an uninformed mob. These were men who possessed the specialized knowledge necessary for full participation as well as the will to actively employ that knowledge.

The engagement of the declamatory audience extends beyond the recognition of appropriated *sententiae*. Although Seneca emphasizes the role of individual speakers, it is clear that there were broad trends of discussion and disagreement among the community. An example of such disagreement may be seen at *Contr.* 2.1.24, in which he states, “there was more discussion about the *color*” (sc. than the division). This suggests general (unattributed) discussion of the treatment of a particular aspect of rhetorical speech and, therefore, a broad awareness of the rhetorical implications of performers’ speech. As with much of Seneca’s

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<sup>88</sup> That is not to say that class played no part in participation. In order to participate, one would need to be familiar with the tropes of the genre (as well as the language used to interact with those same tropes). This would likely necessitate a rhetorical education, which limits the pool of participation. One would need, moreover, suitable leisure time in order to attend ‘public’ declamation and connections to be permitted at private performance—again, each of these would reduce the pool of individuals who can reasonably be supposed to have been present. By social markers, I mean distinctions within an already restrictive body.

<sup>89</sup> “Tam diligentes tunc auditores erant, ne dicam tam maligni, ut unum verbum surripi non posset; at nunc cuilibet orationes in Verrem tuto licet pro suis dicere” (“So attentive, I will not say so malicious, were audiences in those days that not even a single word could be plagiarized. But now anyone can recite the entirety of speeches against Verres as his own,” *Suas.* 2.19). For an expanded treatment of this passage and how it relates to Seneca’s broader views on plagiarism, see McGill 2010. For the use of the *Verrines* as a programmatic long work to indicated the audiences negligence not their ignorance, see McGill 2005.

commentary it is possible to interpret this discussion as limited to the small number of authoritative experts he cites directly. It is, therefore, valuable to chart (even in a limited capacity) the provenance of these men as—even if we do not believe them truly representative of the larger body of the audience—they are our best attested source for the men who were present at these performances.

Geographically, the men from whom Seneca constructs his community of shared speech are a disparate lot. While the majority are from Rome (or failing that Italy), a rather high proportion were born in other parts of the empire.<sup>90</sup> As with many of the questions concerning their origins and stations, there is a fair proportion for whom we simply do not know, as they are only attested in the work of Seneca and he does not elaborate. It seems reasonable to assert, however, that regardless of their origins the majority lived at least part of their lives in Rome and it was there that they participated in the community of declamation. Evidence for these relocations exists only negatively; the men who did not travel to Rome are marked as such.<sup>91</sup> Seneca, moreover, viewed this absence as being a limiting factor in their declamatory success.<sup>92</sup> The necessity of travelling to a centralized location for successful engagement adds a spatial component to the community of speech presented by Seneca. While it is possible to engage elsewhere, Rome was the heart of the community.

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<sup>90</sup> Bornecque 1902, 137-8, provides a list of their various origins: Votienus Montanus (Narbo; Gaul); Latro, Marullus, Gallio, Statorius Victor (Corduba; Spain); Gavius Silo (Tarragona; Spain); Clodius Turrinus and Catius Crispus (unspecified; Spain); Cestius (Smyrna), Volcacius Moschus (Pergamum), Arellius Fuscus and Argentarius (unspecified; Asia); Diocles (Euboea), Nicocrates (Lacedaemonia), Glaucippus (Cappadocia), Hermagoras (Tennos), Lesbocles and Potamon (Mitylene); Dionysius Atticus (Pergamum), Damas Scombrus (Tralles) and Hybreas (Mylasa).

<sup>91</sup> Clodius Turrinus and Gavius Silo are both presented as being unfamiliar to his sons because they never left Spain (*Contr.* 10.pr.13-6); and Catius Crispus is labelled a “municipalis rhetor” (“a small-town rhetor”) which suggests he never came to Rome (*Suas.* 2.16).

<sup>92</sup> “...quibus quo minus ad famam pervenirent non ingenium defuit sed locus” (“ones who lacked the locale rather than the talent to arrive at fame,” *Contr.* 10.pr.13).

In addition to geographical divisions, there are at least three generations accounted for among the men preserved in Seneca's text. This does not, moreover, correspond to successive generations of pupils and masters. While Seneca does indicate such transitions,<sup>93</sup> the majority of individuals preserved in the text are preserved as adult speakers removed from any temporal context. Indeed, rather than waves of *rheto*rs and students, the primary temporal distinction in the text (as discussed in chapter 1) is the division between the speakers of Seneca's day and his sons' contemporaries. These broad groups accommodate the inclusion of multiple generations of speakers through their imprecision. One may draw two broad conclusions. First, declamation as an activity was not isolated to a single generation; at the very least, men would have participated at some point in their youths. Second, if we wish to see a temporal boundary around Seneca's community of speech, this boundary must be flexible. It is as much about differentiating morally positive speech, which is located in the past, from the negative, in the present, as it is about any correspondence to actual age.

The final notable quality of the participants recorded by Seneca is their social station. While the majority of men in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* represent a collection of aristocratic and sub-aristocratic individuals, Seneca includes men whose station elevates the genre to respectability. This is particularly true of the prefaces, in which the reader is presented with a series of men who hold some status. The exceptions are Latro, whom Seneca otherwise elevates throughout the text and who did not actually offer direct instruction, and Albucius Silo, who was a professional educator. The legitimization that occurs in the prefaces, however, is balanced by the inclusion of other men in the body of the work. While Seneca may, as Bloomer

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<sup>93</sup> Such as at *Contr.* 1.7.18, "Gargonius fuit Buteonis auditor, postea scholae quoque successor" ("Gargonius was a pupil of Buteo, and later successor to his school").

has argued, seek to elevate the genre, he is not completely disingenuous. The community he presents incorporates those men most likely to participate in declamation—he simply makes prominent those who would represent the genre well.

## Chapter 4: The Audience and Declamation

### 4.1 A vocal audience

Cestius eandem dicturus sic exposuit controversiam: quidam fratrem domi a patre damnatum noverca accusante, cum accepisset ad supplicium, imposuit in culleum ligneum. Ingens risus omnium secutus est...

Cestius, about to speak the same *controversia*, set it out thus: a man, when he received his brother for punishment after he had been condemned at home by his father on charges brought by his stepmother, put him into a wooden sack. The immense laughter of the whole [crowd] followed...

(*Contr.* 7.pr.9)

This is declamatory competition at work. In eliciting mocking laughter, Cestius has advantaged himself at the expense of Albucius and turned one of his own *sententiae* against him by utilizing his own poorly chosen metaphor (describing a boat as a “culleum ligneum” “wooden sack”) to set the theme for his own speech.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for Cestius, however, the setting of the theme is the highlight of his performance and Seneca states that, on the whole, “paucas enim res bonas dixit” (“he said few good things,” *Contr.* 7.pr.9). This is not merely an editorial note from our author; rather, it reflects the feeling in the room—a feeling that Cestius certainly perceived as he took the *scholastici* to task for their lack of praise (*non laudaretur*).

Cestius’ awareness of audience response illustrates its importance to declamatory performance. This body not only determined whether the speaker had adequately performed in relation to the shared ideology of the community, but also where each man stood in relation to

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<sup>1</sup> It is notable that immediately prior Seneca relates Albucius’ treatment of the same theme, in which he said, “inposuit fratrem in culleum ligneum” (“He put his brother in a wooden sack,” *Contr.* 7.pr.9). The *sententia* depends on the usual punishment for parricides, the *poenas cullei* (punishment of the sack), which involved being sewn into a sack with a variety of animals and tossed into water. Albucius is suggesting that the boat was an equivalent punishment.

the others.<sup>2</sup> For a man to be successful in declamation, he not only needed to surpass his fellows but also to convince his audience of his own qualifications. This persuasion, moreover, would need to occur each time a man spoke, as there were no fixed qualifications (such as modern degrees) in declamation and even a well-regarded speaker such as Cestius could suffer, if he was not seen to actively reassert his eloquence.<sup>3</sup> The audience acted as a barometer of successful speech. They praised those who succeeded and mocked or chastised those who failed. The reason behind Cestius' anger at not receiving praise is thus explained: the lack of praise from his audience indicates collective lack of interest in his performance.

The vignette of Cestius' unsuccessful speech preserved in the seventh preface of the *Controversiae* stands in stark contrast to the image of the declamatory audience presented by Votienus Montanus and illustrates the impact that they had on the environment of declamation. The audiences filled the declamatory space with noise and movement. This was especially true of public declamation, for which the crowds could be quite substantial.<sup>4</sup> Not all of these men, moreover, aligned with the familiar and supportive audience described by Montanus (*Contr.* 9.pr. 2-3): some challenged the speaker directly, as Cassius Severus does Cestius (*Contr.* 3.pr.16); others did not know the speaker, but were drawn by his reputation (as Seneca is at *Contr.* 1.2.22); and still other were of sufficient clout so as to distort the entire body of the audience around

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<sup>2</sup> Gleason 1994, xxiii, is explicitly discussing masculinity and the Second Sophistic but her observation on the function of the audience has broader implications for declamation. For the suggestion of an agreed-upon ranking for declaimers see *Contr.* 3.pr.14 or, indeed, Seneca the Elder's own ranking at *Contr.* 10.pr.13.

<sup>3</sup> The importance of relative eloquence between speakers as well as the abilities of each individual may explain Cestius' hesitation to speak after Alfius Flavius, his star pupil who, as a child, was already attracting men to come and see him declaim (*Contr.* 1.1.22).

<sup>4</sup> Albius' statement that, "plures me domi audiant quam quemquam in foro" ("more listen to me at home than anyone in the forum," *Contr.* 7.pr.8), is likely exaggeration. Seneca, however, allows this remark to pass unchallenged, which suggests that large crowds were probably not uncommon. Similarly, Petronius states that an "ingens scholasticorum turba" ("a huge crowd of *scholastici*," Petron. *Sat.* 6) emerges into the portico where Encolpius and Agamemnon are arguing.

themselves. All of these men contributed to the collective voice of the audience, which formed the backdrop of declamation. Speakers, like Cestius, reacted to this voice and it helped shape the communal discourse of declamation.

In this chapter, the effect of the audience on the landscape of declamation will be explored: first, through their vocal expressions of praise in support of speakers as well as those instances where individual members challenged them, each of which represent the normal function of the audience; then, those instances where powerful figures distort the audience and co-opt its ability to determine eloquent speech. Finally, the centrality of the audience to Seneca's moral model will be examined, how their role as arbiters of eloquent speech allowed them to determine whether each speaker was worthy of being called a '*vir bonus*' and what happens when the audience, in Seneca's eyes, fails to perform this function. In this context, the *scholastici* receive special attention as these men function as byword for improper engagement with declamation in our text.

## 4.2 Shouts of praise

A declaimer did not want for praise. Indeed, the excessive praise conferred by their audiences is one of the primary complaints about declamation.<sup>5</sup> The anxiety about misplaced praise, moreover, was not confined to declamation's critics and even established participants such as Latro might find this fault in an audience (*Contr.* 7.4.10). Even if one believes that the negative portrayals of declamation exaggerate the volume of praise delivered by the audience, the consistency of these criticisms indicates an environment where such expressions were

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<sup>5</sup> Votienus Montanus asserts that declaimers are "laudationibus crebris sustinentur" ("sustained by repeated praise," *Contr.* 9.pr.2). Quintilian, although exclusively discussing education, cautions against allowing children to engage in excessively enthusiastic praise (*Inst.* 2.2.9f.).

common. Therefore, the method by which audiences expressed their approval for speakers has a dramatic effect on the way in which we perceive the declamatory environment. In most translations, their praise is rendered as “applause.” This translation, however, is misleading.<sup>6</sup> In Seneca, the two most common terms for the praise conferred by the audience on the speaker are *laudare* and *clamor*; both of which are decidedly verbal exclamations.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, *plausus*, the applause that accompanied theatrical display, appears only once and as part of Montanus’ sustained attack against the genre (*Contr.* 9.pr.2).<sup>8</sup> The orality of the audience’s praise suggests that they were part of the declamatory performance, active participants in an ongoing conversation. This is especially true in adult declamation, where the audience were (at least nominally) the social equals of the speaker.

The form of these verbal expressions is difficult to determine from Seneca’s work alone, as he only notes those instances where praise occurs, rather than defining its form. Indeed, the best evidence for what was said in praise of speakers comes not from declamation, but other comparable types of performance—namely, recitations of prose or poetry and court oratory. Like declamation, the former offered the speaker the opportunity to display their rhetorical mastery of language and assert their qualifications in fields not dominated by the princeps.<sup>9</sup> *Recitationes* (recitations) were also similar to declamation in that audience itself was the target of speech, rather than a third party (such as the judges in court oratory). While they could also feature mock orations, however, *recitatio* can be distinguished from *declamatio* in both the variety of material

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<sup>6</sup> Bablitz (2007, 134-5) observed a similar problem in the context of court oratory.

<sup>7</sup> *Laudare* appears at *Contr.* 1.7.13; 2.6.12; 7.1.26; 7.4.10. *Clamor* appears at *Contr.* 1.1.23; 2.1.36; 7.2.9; *Suas.* 4.4. *Fragor* is also be used once to indicate thunderous shouts of praise (*Contr.* 2.3.19).

<sup>8</sup> For *plausus* as particularly attached to theatrical displays see Bablitz 2007, 134; 136.

<sup>9</sup> Dupont 1997.

delivered and the degree to which the speaker enhanced the *conposito* of his text through performance.<sup>10</sup>

A *sententia* of Martial offers specific phrases used in the support of the speaker: “effecte! graviter! cito! nequiter! euge! beate! hoc velui!” (“Effective!” “A weighty hit!” “A quick one!” “Wretched!” “Bravo!” “Lovely!” “That’s what I want!” Mart. 2.27). These phrases are all captured under the heading of *laudantem* and reinforce the verbal nature of audience praise. The context for this praise is also important. In his quest for a free meal, Silius will praise the reader whether he acts as advocate (*patronus agas*) or delivers a recitation (*legas*). While Martial does not mention declamation explicitly, the inclusion of recitation links this sort of praise to other small performative gatherings. Similarly, Juvenal states that a patron knows how to position the *magna vox* of his claque for best effect during a recitation of poetry (7.43-44). Here too, vocal expressions of praise are connected to recitation. Indeed, their importance is stressed as they presented alongside the other services (such as a venue) provided by a literary patron.

The courts also offer evidence of verbal praise. A *sportula vocalis* (vocal handout), for instance, praises (*laudat*) Faesidius as he pleads (Juv. 13.32-3). The routine nature of such praise is suggested by Quintilian as he asserts that the majority of speakers are so familiar with the praise (*clamor*) of the crowd that they become unnerved by attentive silence (*Inst.* 4.2.37). Murnus too, bemoaning the contemporary court in comparison to that of Cicero’s time, states that “Oratori autem clamore plausuque opus est, et velut quodam theatro” (“An orator needs

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<sup>10</sup> The similarity in purpose of these two types of speech performance is striking. Bloomer 1997a, 199, adds to their differences that declamation was generally performed by men of lower status than those who practices *recitatio*, but see both activities as serving a similar function for their respective groups. For more on declamation and *recitatio* see Chapter 2.5 (“Declamation as a mode of aristocratic competition”)

cheers and applause, as if in the theatre,” Tac. *Dial.* 39.4).<sup>11</sup> The form of this praise, as suggested in Martial’s *sententia* (Mart. 2.27), was the same whether it was delivered in response to courtroom speeches or recitations.

While forensic oratory and *recitatio* are not declamation, there is no reason to suggest that the praise delivered by its audiences varied dramatically in form. Even for the most sceptical reader, who rightly objects that lack of direct evidence means that the content of praise was uncertain, the association of *laudare* and *clamor* with vocalized praise in these two adjacent genres should inform our understanding of their use in Seneca. Although declamation was the most maligned, all three were forms of epideictic status enhancing speech and the consistency between audience behaviour in oratory and recitation is telling. If one examines the sources for the content of audience praise, moreover, a possible solution presents itself. The instances which preserved the vocabulary of praise revolve around the claque and declamation—as a lower status activity—was not worthy of such attention.<sup>12</sup>

The form of audience praise is important; the timing of such praise is equally important. In Seneca, audience praise is recorded in close association with especially striking or witty *sententiae* from the speaker. *Controversiae* 1.1.23 demonstrates the typical construction:

“[Alfius] hanc summis clamoribus dixit sententiam” (“[Alfius] spoke this *sententia* amid great

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<sup>11</sup> Bablitz (2007, 136) has argued that the inclusion of *plausus* here supports its differentiation from the verbal *clamor* and that its presence is tied to Maturus’ invocation of the theatre, rather than because it was an actual feature of oratorical praise.

<sup>12</sup> Juv. 7.43-44, 13.32-3; Mart. 2.27, 3.46; and Plin. *Ep.* 2.14, all suggest that the audience expects some sort of reward for their presence. Indeed, Pliny goes so far as to label them, “Inde iam non inurbane Σοφοκλεῖς vocantur ἀπὸ τοῦ σοφῶς καὶ καλεῖσθαι, isdem Latinum nomen impositum est Laudiceni” (“The Greek name for them means “bravo-callers” and the Latin “dinner-clappers” 2.14.5; trans. Radice 1969). Contrast works like Quintilian (or Seneca) which mention praise as an essential component of speech without outlining the nature of such praise.

acclamations”) followed by the *sententia* which had earned praise.<sup>13</sup> This close association of praise to specific *sententiae* recalls a complaint of Quintilian, who states that contemporary speakers are so desperate for accolades that they attempt to transform every sentence into a *sententia* (*Inst.* 8.5.13-4). There are three cases of direct audience praise that deviate from this model. Two are similar: Silo receives more general praise for his assertion that the father of a tyrant should not be supported (*Contr.* 1.7.13); and Artemo is praised for his description of a storm (*Contr.* 7.1.26). In each case, the thing being praised extends beyond a single *sententia*. Seneca, however, attempts to anchor each to specific *sententiae*, which normalizes them with other instances of praise. The other example does conform to the model of praise centred on *sententiae*, but deviates in that this praise is not awarded as part of a declamatory speech. Rather, it occurs as part of the extended activity of *declamatio*. Syriacus defends his speech against critics and in so doing produces replies worthy of acclamation (*Contr.* 2.1.36).

The giving of praise beyond the formal boundaries of a particular speech hints at the broader performative context of declamation. Participants are not only competing indirectly, in delivering *controversiae* or *suasoriae* on shared themes, but directly through critique and defence of those same speeches. While this competition is the focus of the next section, it is worth mentioning here, as the case of Syriacus demonstrates, how these challenges operated within the boundaries of normal declamatory competition.

The centrality of audience acclamation to declamation is illustrated through Votienus Montanus’ opening assertion: a disclaimer, he says, “scribit non ut vincat sed ut placeat... cupit

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<sup>13</sup> Similar constructions, with allowances for the substitution of *clamor* or *fragor*, occur at *Contr.* 2.3.19; 2.6.12; 7.2.9; and *Suas.* 4.4; although in the case of *Suas.* 4.4, the applause is in response to the incorporation of a line of Virgil.

enim se approbare, non causam” (“writes not to win, but to please...indeed, he desires to prove himself, not the case” *Contr.* 9.pr.1). Declamation, then, is distinguished from oratory, as praise for the performer, rather than some external end, was the object of performance. Praise provided the collective audience with a mechanism to validate the speaker’s speech and thus the man himself. It was an indication of consensus, one which would have been familiar to participants from other more serious contexts beyond the walls of the declamatory halls.<sup>14</sup> Put another way, praise was the aim as well as the product of successful declamation.

The speakers themselves were well aware of the importance of audience praise. Cestius chastises his audience when they do not deliver the praise that he feels he is due (*Contr.* 7.pr.9). Latro also rebukes them, but for giving praise too easily (*Contr.* 7.4.10). The speaker was also a listener, one who was keenly aware of what their audience was saying. This awareness creates a dialogue between the speaker and audience as the former adapts his own speech in response to the speech of the latter. This conversation, moreover, extended beyond single speeches and impacted the overall structure of the *declamatio*. Cestius refuses to speak after Alfius Flavus because the youth was so popular (*Contr.* 1.1.22). He feared receiving less praise than his pupil and his reputation suffering as a result. Blandus, having heard Silo’s declamation the day prior, twists those ideas which received praise, redeploying them for his own benefit (*Contr.* 1.7.13). In both cases, we see speakers allowing their own speech (or, in the case of Cestius, non-speech) to be informed by the praise conferred on others.

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<sup>14</sup> As Rowe (2002, 79-83) observes, expressions of consensus in the theatre allowed the equestrian order to not only express itself to the princeps and/or the imperial household but also to define its own boundaries through participation. Aldrete (1999, 114-7) discusses call response in speeches from the powerful, focusing primarily on a speech of Germanicus. Lobur (2008, 157) for consensus in declamation.

Declamation, like other forms of performative speech, was interactive.<sup>15</sup> The audience engaged in a “call-response” relationship with the speaker—punctuating successful speech with expressions of praise. In this context, *sententiae* acted as loci around which praise could be delivered. This function rationalizes the enthusiasm displayed by the declaimers. An increased number of *sententiae* provided more opportunities to receive praise and this was the metric by which they were measured.

### 4.3 Criticism (and competition) from the crowd

The vocal expressions of the audience were not always positive. For the careless speaker, the validation offered by cheers could just as readily be denied as their efforts were met with mocking laughter or criticism shouted by rivals. These attacks reinforce the competitive nature of declamation by introducing the possibility of failure. This is perhaps why critics of the genre are so quick to deny the presence of criticism in the declamatory context.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, in presenting his memory of declamation, Seneca chooses to include these moments. Laughter serves as a warning against ineffective speech, in attempting to formulate novel constructions the speaker has overstepped the boundaries of good sense and produced *stultitia*. Criticism, on the other hand, gestures towards the larger performative context of *declamatio*, in which the relative measure of speakers ensured success. Declamation was a zero sum game and the audience was the arbiter of successful performance. Thus, it benefited the critic to call into questions the

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<sup>15</sup> Aldrete 1999 notes this “call-response” relationship in public political speech. Bablitz 2007 does the same for court oratory.

<sup>16</sup> Votienus Montanus states that “nemo ridet, nemo ex industria obloquitur” (“no one laughs, no one intentionally interrupts,” *Contr.* 9.pr.3) as he states the schools failings in preparation for the courts. A similar dichotomy is put forward by Messala in the *Dialogus* (Tac. *Dial.* 34-5). This may also account for the characterization of the declamatory audience as *pueri* and *iuvenes* (Juv. 7.150-243; Petr. *Sat.* 4-6; etc.) as these groups lack the authority to render judgement on the speech set before them.

qualifications of his rivals. These two varieties of negative vocalization were not unrelated. Often the intent of criticism was to reveal some folly in others' speech and turn the audience's voice against them. These negative voices, as much as praise, defined the landscape of *declamatio*.

Mocking laughter, the collective disapproval of the audience, is relatively rare in Seneca. In only one case is this laughter unprovoked.<sup>17</sup> Both of our other two cases of audience laughter are the direct result of speech by participants: (1) Cassius Severus interrupts Cestius' self-aggrandizement by imitating his rhetorical construction to compare him to the *Cloaca Maxima* (*Contr.* 3.pr.16); (2) Cestius cites an earlier *sententia* of Albucius, in which a boat is dubbed a "wooden sack" (*culleum ligneum*), in setting the theme of his own *controversia* in order to highlight the ridiculousness of this metaphor (*Contr.* 7.pr.9).<sup>18</sup> In each case, the abuser adapts an aspect of the original speaker's *sententia* to make it (and, by extension, the man who spoke it) seem foolish (*stultus*), at which point his defect becomes the object of derision by the audience. This was directly beneficial for the abuser as his own wit was cemented at the expense of his rival.<sup>19</sup> The importance of this competitive interaction may help explain Seneca's own unprecedented use of *stultus* (and its variations) as part of his critical vocabulary. Our author is employing an evaluative mechanism that was already part of declamatory competition.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Corvus has the dubious distinction of earning the "testimonium stuporis" ("the award for stupidity"). When one of his *sententia* drew laughter (*ridebatur*) unprovoked from his audience (*Suas.* 2.21).

<sup>18</sup> The language used in each case is the same. At *Contr.* 3.pr.16, "risus omnium ingens" ("the immense laughter of the whole [crowd]"); at *Contr.* 7.pr.9, "ingens risus omnium" ("the immense laughter of the whole [crowd]").

<sup>19</sup> Cicero himself states that one of the best ways to illicit laughter is to identify *stultitiae* spoken by others (*De or.* 2.289). See also, Quint. *Inst.* 6.3.8 (=Cic. *De or.* 2.236). This seems to be consistent with Seneca's usage: Scaurus was "non tantum disertissimus homo sed venustissimus, qui nullius umquam inpunitam stultitiam transire passus est" ("not only a most eloquent man but also very witty, who allowed no foolishness to pass unpunished," *Contr.* 1.2.22); similarly, Vinicius was "exactissimi vir ingeni, qui nec dicere res ineptas nec ferre poterat" ("a man of very precise nature, who could neither speak nor endure foolish things," *Contr.* 7.5.11) and accordingly mocks a *sententia* of Saenianus'.

<sup>20</sup> For the critical model employed in Seneca see Chapter 2.6 ("Seneca's model of individual criticism").

These two instances of laughter reinforce the view of declamation as a multi-participant activity and demonstrate that *declamatio* as event extended beyond individual speeches. Participants not only interact indirectly, Cestius referencing Albucius' earlier *sententiae*, as Huelsenbeck has already demonstrated,<sup>21</sup> but also directly, Severus inserting himself into Cestius' speech. As with praise, this criticism and the broader audience response are centred on *sententiae*. Unlike praise, however, in which the relationship between speaker and audience fits comfortably into the model of "call-response," laughter depends on a three stage process: (1) a *sententia* is spoken; (2) a *sententia*, which builds on or modifies the original *sententia* in order to demonstrate its folly, is offered in response by an individual audience member; (3) the collective body of the audience responds to both *sententiae* with the latter modifying their interpretation of the former.

The relative scarcity of overt laughter recorded by Seneca does not correspond to a broader lack of challenges by individual audience members in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. While unaccompanied by a verdict from the wider audience, clashes between declaimers are commonly preserved in the *colores* section of the work. These criticisms may be broken into three broad groups: (1) criticism of students by their instructors; (2) criticism of mature speakers by their peers; (3) criticism of the audience for supporting improper speech, although this is by far the least attested category of interaction.

Instructors correcting their students is likely the variety of criticism most strongly associated with declamation. According to Quintilian, these verbal checks were one of two complementary forms of instruction available to the *rhetor*—the other being guidance on how to

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<sup>21</sup> Huelsenbeck 2015.

divide the argument, which could range from brief sketches to the delivery of full speeches to act as models for emulation (Quint. *Inst.* 2.6.1-7).<sup>22</sup> The former, in Seneca's work, is most commonly associated with Cestius. Unlike many of the speakers preserved in Seneca, Cestius was actually a *rhetor* and this association, therefore, is unsurprising. It is remarkable, however, that these instances of criticism (with one exception) are not distinguished from the criticisms of mature men that appear alongside them. The exception occurs when Cestius attacks an *sententia* of Quinctilius Varus, who is described as *praetextatus* although not for certain Cestius' own student (*Contr.* 1.3.10). The abuse is severe, but universal disapproval (*omnes improbavimus*) does not manifest until Cestius states, "ista neglegentia pater tuus exercitum perdidit" ("by such negligence, your father lost his army," *Contr.* 1.3.10). The objection, as Seneca tells us, is that Cestius "filium obiurgabat, patri male dixit" ("was chastising the child, and spoke ill of the father," *Contr.* 1.3.10).

This instance of criticism by an instructor reveals several features of the declamatory environment. First, criticism is not unusual, although this may be explained away by the educational context. Second, adults (such as our author) could be present at *declamationes*, in which at least some of the participants were young men engaging in education.<sup>23</sup> Finally, there were boundaries beyond which the criticism became unacceptable. These boundaries align with the performative elements of declamatory speech. In other words, a speaker should only be criticized based on what he has said and how, rather than external factors. This aligns with the model of declamation as aristocratic competition divorced from traditional systems of authority.

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<sup>22</sup> Or, as in the case of the *lesser Declamations*, a combination of the two, in which the initial *sermo* is followed by a speech showcasing the proper application of the *rhetor*'s guidance.

<sup>23</sup> Bonner (1969, 39f.) on declamation as mixed activity.

In citing his father's failure, Cestius has incorporated elements from beyond the closed system of declamation and injected an unwelcome reality.

Cestius is not our only model of declamatory instruction. Latro also took students (indeed, we hear of several "auditorem Latronis"),<sup>24</sup> but seems to have preferred the other model suggested by Quintilian. He prided himself on not hearing his students declaim, asserting that he was "non...magistrum sed exemplum" ("not a teacher but a model" *Contr.* 9.2.23). This approach did not stop Latro from commenting; rather, the targets of his rebukes are not students but other mature declaimers. Declamatory criticism, then, did not simply occur between instructors and their students but was also an essential part of peer to peer competition.

Accepting, for the moment, that peer to peer competition was a part of declamatory performance, when did this competition occur? Members of the audience did certainly intervene directly during the speech itself in order to mock the speaker as is the case with the interjections of Severus (*Contr.* 3.pr.16) and Scaurus (*Contr.* 1.2.22). In each of these cases, however, the interruption is marked by an inability to continue speaking on the part of the current speaker, which is a feature absent from the majority of criticism preserved in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. A more typical interaction occurs when Latro challenges Buteo's *colores* (*Contr.* 1.1.20). As with praise and direct intervention, this interaction is centred on one of Buteo's *sententiae* but seems to have occurred later, once the speech was finished, in a manner similar to that suggested by Quintilian (*Inst.* 2.6.2) and practiced by Cestius with his students.<sup>25</sup> The educational tools of declamation have been redeployed as a mechanism of competition.

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<sup>24</sup> The "pupils of Latro" are Florus (*Contr.* 9.2.23) and Abronius Silo (*Suas.* 2.19)

<sup>25</sup> Quintilian notes that this criticism would be delivered after the current speech (*post declamationes*) and could be polished (*excolebant*) as though part of a speech. It is, therefore, not insignificant that Latro delivers his criticism in the form of a *sententia*.

While not part of the speech itself, this criticism is an integral part of the broader activity of *declamatio* and reinforces the validity of the genre, even when undermining the speaker. The critic continues to operate within the same social model employed by the speaker and merely checks perceived violations of that model or presents alternative resolutions. The authoritative speech of the collective likewise remains stable as the confrontation is internal to the empowered group. The criticism is generated by potential speakers—men who would, in the context of declamation at least, have an authoritative voice—and in the language of those same fictive legal contests. The communal interaction and expression goes beyond the shared *sententiae* of the speech observed by Huelsenbeck or even the consensus of applause; rather, it manifests explicitly in the discussions of educated and invested individuals that occurred alongside the speeches as part of *declamatio*. Yet, this form of interaction is often obscured by the emphasis that our sources (and, indeed, our own scholarship) places on the speakers.

An example of this type of direct competition may be seen in the *divisio* of *Controversiae* 2.5. While initially it appears, as is the case in many of the *divisiones*, that Seneca is simply presenting alternative approaches to the case (Blandus and Latro's conflicting approaches, *Contr.* 2.5.13-4), it quickly becomes apparent that there is an immediacy to the views that are being expressed. Buteo, although not uncritical, supports Blandus against Latro and presents his own division of the case at hand (*Contr.* 2.5.15-6). Passienus then piles in to support Latro's interpretation (*Contr.* 2.5.17). These are not merely different approaches occurring within a broader sphere of declamatory discourse, but direct interactions between participants in which the merits of alternative approaches are advocated. While these interactions did not occur during

speeches, they nevertheless represent the voice of the audience and helped to shape the declamatory environment.

#### 4.4 Ideal and real audience interaction

The audience's praise and censure helped to shape the declamatory environment. The speakers reacted to their expressions (and, occasionally, challenged them) as they sought to deliver speech that would find favour with the crowd. In the idealized world presented by Seneca, this favour was the result of the speaker's eloquent articulation of shared culture and mores as he untangled the complex network of obligations that constituted a declamatory case. Critically, this eloquence had substance. This distinguishes it from even the finest speech produced by his sons' generation, which like its speakers had sacrificed substance in the pursuit of (false) beauty.<sup>26</sup> The substantive quality of this eloquence—that the speaker was judged on content as well as the pleasing quality of their delivery—answers one of the primary criticisms of declamation: its lack of substance.<sup>27</sup> Yet, even within the work of Seneca, reality intrudes; the audiences of declamation, our author laments (*Contr.* 7.4.10), could be misled by the fine-soundings (*belle sonantis*) of empty *sententiae*. These intrusions demonstrate those instances in which Seneca's ideal model ceases to function and one may see the reality of audience interaction.

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<sup>26</sup> The essential ethical model at the core of Seneca's first preface is that speech is a reflection of its speaker. This is reflected in gnomic wisdom quoted from Cato (*Contr.* 1.pr.9-10). Seneca's attack on the excessive care that his sons' contemporaries lavish on their physical appearance, then, can also be viewed as an attack on their rhetoric. It is over-refined and hollow, lacking the substance that elevated the speech of the prior generation to true eloquence. For more on the ethical model see Chapter 2.6 ("Seneca's model of individual criticism") and 2.7 ("The generational model of criticism").

<sup>27</sup> For further discussion of such criticism see Chapter 2.2 ("An Activity for Children?")

The anxiety surrounding the content of declamatory speeches grows out of their status as performative events. This status is reinforced in the language used to describe declamation: Seneca calls himself a “munerarius” (“gladiator-producer,” *Contr.* 4.pr.1) and compares his first preface to the “pompa Circensibus” (“procession at the Circus,” *Contr.* 1.pr.24), both of which position declaimers as the intended spectacle and add a ludic quality to their performance. The emphasis on performance for its own sake invites comparison to other ludic activities: notably, theatre and gladiatorial games but, more respectably, *recitatio*.<sup>28</sup> These activities form a spectrum of acceptable performance: *recitatio*, in which the speaker remained seated and allowed his audience to judge the *compositio* of his text without being swayed by the impact of performance, on one end, and theatre, in which delivery is stressed, on the other. Declamation, originally a verbal exercise (*Rhet. Her.* 3.20), struggles to remain in the middle of this spectrum. This uncertain position underlays Seneca’s anxiety about correct audience interactions—especially praise.

In Seneca, as we have seen, audience praise is associated with especially forceful or witty *sententiae*. Ideally, these *sententiae* allowed the speaker to demonstrate his familiarity with Roman culture and mores as he employed them to untangle the fictional (and often contradictory) network of obligations that constituted a declamatory case. The performative nature of declamation, however, often meant that *sententiae* that were merely fine-sounding (*belle sonantis*) received praise, despite their dearth of content (*Contr.* 7.4.10). Indeed, at least some speakers were willing to sacrifice the substance of their argument to produce such speech. Cestius, for instance, mocks (*deridebat*) Murrelius for portraying a child as so ignorant as to

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<sup>28</sup> See Gunderson (2016) for comparison to gladiatorial games and theatre; Bloomer (1997a) for comparison to *recitatio*.

question, “what is a defendant,” while cheerfully acknowledging his own similar *sententia* as foolish (*ineptam sententiam*). He, nevertheless, defends himself, stating, “multa autem dico non quia mihi placent sed quia audientibus placitura sunt” (“there are many things, however, that I say not because they please me, but because they please my audience,” *Contr.* 9.6.12). Cestius has adapted his own speech and self-presentation to better suit his audience and increase his chances of receiving praise, despite knowing that this speech was foolish.<sup>29</sup>

The reality of praise, then, did not conform to the Senecan ideal. This does not mean, however, that the declamation of mature men had become totally divorced from that of the schools, in which young men learned through imitation how to present themselves as Roman. Even if one accepts Hömke’s assertion that “presentation declamation” (her term for adult declamation, in which entertainment was more important than education) should be regarded as distinct from educational declamation, there was considerable overlap in the themes that it addressed.<sup>30</sup> These themes provided the ideological core of declamation and, as such, even the most shameless declaimer or negligent audience member was forced to confront and comment upon that ideology. Aesthetic considerations, however unintentionally, become expressions of social values as the speaker demonstrates his rhetorical prowess. Similarly, the audience ratified these values as the backdrop against which the speaker was operating.

The elision of these sub-genres of declamation is a striking feature of Seneca’s work. Through his excerpts and anecdotes, he presents a mixed declamatory space in which men and

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<sup>29</sup> Compare complaints of Quintilian concerning altered speech designed to promote applause (Quint. *Inst.* 8.5.13-14).

<sup>30</sup> Hömke 2007., 103-27.

boys both spoke and listened.<sup>31</sup> Contrast the space presented by Pliny (*Epistle* 2.3): he hosts Isaeus, a Greek rhetorician, explicitly so that he can entertain his other (adult) guests with declamation. The audience participates—they shout subjects for him and direct him on which side to take—but they do not declaim themselves. This represents a clear example of “presentation declamation.” Yet, even in this context, Isaeus seeks not only to entertain, but also to demonstrate how widely he has read (Plin. *Ep.* 2.3.3). In other words, Isaeus is still asserting cultural participation despite the emphasis on entertaining Pliny’s guests.

Seneca’s ideal of audience censure follows a similar model to his ideal of praise. For the censure to have validity, it must reflect engagement with more than the superficial. Contemporary audiences, however, are more concerned with vocabulary, rebuking words that sound base (*sordis*), than with the overall substance of the speakers’ arguments (*Contr.* 4.pr.9-10; 7.pr.3-4).<sup>32</sup> The use of vulgarisms, moreover, is explicitly connected to an older model of speech: “Rufus Vibius erat qui antiquo genere diceret; belle cessit illi sententia sordidioris notae...” (“Vibius Rufus was a man who spoke in the old way; he fared well with a *sententiae* of the more vulgar sort...” *Contr.* 9.2.25). This type of speech, then, as well as its acceptance by the audience are placed in the idealized past.

The variance between real and ideal censure is admittedly less apparent in the work of Seneca than in the case of praise. This is likely the result of the contrasting temporal bodies established by Seneca—the present generation is defined by its lack of awareness and critique

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<sup>31</sup> Seneca also reaches beyond declamation. He variously includes examples that must be drawn from court oratory, such as Syriacus’ witticisms at *Contr.* 2.1.36. He also attributes the practice of *recitatio* to Asinius Pollio (*Contr.* 4.pr.2) and, while Seneca does not acknowledge them as such, Bloomer (1997a, 205 n.17) argues that all the excerpts attributed to him are drawn from such performances.

<sup>32</sup> Compare Quintilian’s complaints about declamations avoidance of everyday words (*cotidiano*, 2.10.9; 8.3.23).

(*Contr.* 1.pr.10).<sup>33</sup> As a result, our sole access to the critical boundaries of contemporary speech is Seneca's complaints about the restrictive vocabulary that they encourage (*Contr.* 4.pr.9-10; 7.pr.3-4). It is reasonable, however, to infer that criticism functioned similarly to praise: aesthetic considerations contributing significantly to its delivery without fully eclipsing the underlying engagement.

In sum, then, the Senecan ideal of audience participation is distinguished from reality by function not form. In both, the audience demonstrates consensus through their acclamations. In the ideal, this consensus represents an explicit ratification of Roman mores as interpreted by the speakers; in reality, on the other hand, an audience was equally likely to be swayed by charming or novel language. Similarly in criticism, the division between real and ideal audience rests with the former's aesthetic prioritization. This preference for form over substances calls into question the moral paradigm established by Seneca in his first preface and devalues declamation as a legitimate form of performative engagement, pushing it towards low prestige activities like theatre. As a means of compensation, Seneca isolates these disruptions in the flawed present and constructs a model of decline in order to preserve an idyllic image of declamation in a constructed past, even, as we have seen, going so far as to reinforce the separation through distinct vocabulary. That the audience and their behaviour is central to this division demonstrates their importance within the declamatory space.

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<sup>33</sup> By contrast, the previous generation is defined by their keen attention to the speaker, which manifests most clearly in their ability (perhaps, overzealous) to detect plagiarism (*Suas.* 2.19). For this, see McGill 2010; 2012, 146-77.

#### 4.5 Voices of authority

Our examination of the audience's effect on the declamatory space has so far, in keeping with Seneca's own idealized model, assumed that the audience and the speaker were relative equals, distinction solely the result of skillful speech. What, however, occurs when a figure of authority enters this space? The involvement of the princeps in declamation alters the space as his very presence makes the speech that occurs political. This could, as with Craton and Timagenes (Contr. 10.5.21-2), be valuable to the declaimers as it presented an avenue for social advancement; at the same time, however, it also charges the space and causes comments that would normally be considered innocuous to becoming politically charged—especially when the audience is seeking allusive meaning within the speech.<sup>34</sup> The audience as a body is eclipsed by the individual, who becomes the new arbiter of successful speech—one with the power to dramatically impact the broader lives of the speakers. This displays the tenuous status of declamation as an apolitical discourse.

As with other non-professionals, the princeps' involvement with declamation was a matter of personal taste rather than obligation and, as such, one observes differing levels of engagement. Augustus and Tiberius, who both appear in Seneca's work, illustrate this point. The latter appears infrequently and only once in connection to declamation (*Suas.* 3.7), although, admittedly, his familiarity with Nicetes does indicate at least an awareness of the broader declamatory environment. Augustus, on the other hand, appears to be more deeply involved with declamation. Suetonius even states that he took time to practice declamation during the siege of

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<sup>34</sup> Bartsch 1994, 66-97 (esp. 78-81) argues that the speaker need not even intend for the speech to possess an allusive meaning; the audience itself creates and ratifies that meaning often against the intentions of the original author or speaker.

Mutina (Suet. *Aug.* 84).<sup>35</sup> While Seneca does not present the princeps as speaker, the Augustus of his text is keen observer of declamation and offers informed critiques of several declaimers.<sup>36</sup> His presence, moreover, does not seem to be solely motivated by a desire to witness his own descendants perform but rather a more general interest in the genre. Indeed, Seneca never connects his presence to education although this may simply be a matter of emphasis.<sup>37</sup>

The disruptive effect of the princeps on the declamatory space is demonstrated in a striking scene preserved by Seneca (*Contr.* 2.4.12-3). Latro, addressing the case at hand which concerns the adoption of an illegitimate son by his grandfather, adheres to the usual conventions of declamation and puts forward the following *sententia* on behalf of the youth, “iam iste ex imo per adoptionem nobilitati inseritur” (“now, from the lowest [station], that man is grafted to the nobility through adoption,” *Contr.* 2.4.13). While this would not typically be a problematic construction, in this case Augustus and Agrippa are in attendance; moreover, as Seneca tells us, the princeps was at that very time considering adopting Agrippa’s sons. As a result, regardless of Latro’s intentions, this statement becomes active commentary on the affairs of state. This situation is only exacerbated by Maecenas, who draws attention to it as he signs for Latro to conclude his speech.

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<sup>35</sup> While he would have been twenty at this point, this does not exceed the loose boundaries of age that traditionally govern involvement in declamation (he was still a *iuvenes*). Augustus’ engagement in declamation may have lent the activity legitimacy and contributed to its popularity. Kennedy (1972, 336) argues that the involvement of Augustus and other men of significant social position contributed to the spread of declamation during this period.

<sup>36</sup> He comments on the delivery of Haterius (*Contr.* 4.pr.7), the skill of Lucius Vinicius (*Contr.* 2.5.20), and the paternal eloquence of Gavius Silo (*Contr.* 10.pr.14), as well as rewarding Craton (*Contr.* 10.5.21) with a talent and a recommendation to Passienus of Timagenes (*Contr.* 10.5.22), a former captive who gained the *amicitiam Caesaris* but was later barred from Augustus’ house (see also, Sen. *Ir.* 2.23.5f.).

<sup>37</sup> Strikingly, it is in the presence of Augustus that we see the only instance of performance declamation in line with both Hömke’s theory and the later example provided by Pliny the Younger (*Ep.* 2.3). The short description of Craton and Timagenes has them “saepe solebat apud Caesarem... confligere” (“He was frequently accustomed to clashing before the princeps” *Contr.* 10.5.22). In the rest of the work, *apud* is used to indicate the location of the event (see “apud Cestium” at *Contr.* 1.1.22; 1.3.11; 7.7.19; *Suas.* 7.12). Here, it merely indicates that the declamation took place in his presence.

The declamatory space has changed. The illusion of free speech, unmediated by the pressures of public performance, as a means of accessing a supposedly purer Republican precedent has been dispelled. It has collapsed in the presence of a political figure, suggesting that some (if not all) of the liberty afforded by declamation is the result of its own insignificance.

The exchange between speaker and audience has also changed as it is now mediated through a third central party. According to the usual rules of the Senecan ideal, the speaker presents his audience with an idea (ideally encompassed within a pithy *sententia*) and they then either ratify it with their praise or reject it. In the case of rejection, an alternative view may be offered (again, commonly in the form of a *sententia*) by individual members of the audience. When the princeps is present, however, both bodies (speakers and their audiences) mediate their speech through him; even when he is not explicitly the addressee.<sup>38</sup> The dialogue between speaker and audience can no longer be explicit, rather the speaker must rely on allusion to transmit his meaning and risks obscurity if those allusions are not recognized and significant consequence if they are misunderstood.<sup>39</sup> This disfunction extends even to the new audience, the princeps, who observes the performance between speaker and audience but cannot himself adequately fulfill the latter's role as to speak himself would dispel any remaining illusion of free speech.

This creates a double silence as both the speaker and his audience are unable to continue the dialogical process. Augustus, to return to our previous example (*Contr.* 2.4.12-3), cannot comment on Latro's speech without acknowledging the perceived slight and thus force actual

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<sup>38</sup> Consider Maecenas' gestures directed at Latro, which Seneca suggests were primarily a performance aimed at the princeps (*Contr.* 2.4.13).

<sup>39</sup> Bartsch 1994, 65: "For allusive language to have any effect on public opinion, for it to undermine successfully the authority of those it makes it target, it must be recognized for what it is..."

consequence into the situation. Similarly, Latro is unable to address it as “magis sis offensurus si satis feceris” (“you give more offence, if you make amends,” *Contr.* 2.4.13) and thus his own speech is stunted. This is highly problematic for the Senecan model, which employs speech as the essential metric of competition.

The princeps is not the only voice of authority to intrude upon the text. As Bloomer has demonstrated, the constructed community of declamation presented by Seneca features a disproportionately large number of men who had achieved success in areas beyond declamation, areas which granted access to true social authority.<sup>40</sup> These speaker, as Lobur has argued, are characterized by their use of *dictio* rather *declamatio*, which Seneca consistently prioritizes throughout his text.<sup>41</sup> The disruptive power of these voices is demonstrated by the intrusion of Cassius Severus on Cestius’ *in Milonem* (*Contr.* 3.pr.16-7). While he initially engages in a declamatory manner, shouting insults from the crowd to disrupt his performance; Severus, then, alters the arena of competition by bringing Cestius several times before the praetor on false charges. As with the princeps, reality intrudes (although in this case, the speaker has been extracted from the declamatory context rather than having that context transformed around him) and as a result declamation is unable to function.

#### 4.6 Defective audiences in Seneca

As active participants and the arbiters of proper engagement, the audience was essential to Seneca’s portrayal of declamation as a viable means of aristocratic competition. As we have seen, however, this ideal representation was extremely vulnerable to both internal (the moral

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<sup>40</sup> Bloomer 1997a, 206-7.

<sup>41</sup> Lobur 2008, 136-7.

failings of the audience resulting in a failure to perform their duties) and external (the presence of powerful figures, who politicized the space) disruptions. Despite these vulnerabilities, in acknowledging their significance, one is able to confront a troubling aspect of Seneca's text; namely, that the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* do not exclusively present declamation as positive. Notably, while the third and ninth prefaces are perhaps the most often cited examples, Seneca does not merely rely on excerpts but also attacks the validity of declamation in his own voice.<sup>42</sup> While these attacks may suggest a negative impression of declamation (akin to the position put forward by Messala in Tacitus' *Dialogus* 35), I contend that our author aimed primarily to condemn the audiences that allowed declamation to fail rather than the genre itself. Indeed, this reattribution of blame supports the validity of declamation by inverting a familiar trope. It is the participants that render declamation unsuitable, rather than the opposite.

The complaints against declamation made by Votienus Montanus are frequently treated as typical objections to the ineffectiveness of the genre.<sup>43</sup> His attacks, however, may be better interpreted as an indictment of its audience and their failure to act as effective arbiters of performance. It is the permissive nature of the audience that underlies this failure: they allow the speaker too many liberties with his speech and are too quick to praise him (*Contr.* 9.pr.2) and they do not interrupt or insult the speaker (*Contr.* 9.pr.3-5). In other words, they fail to perform

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<sup>42</sup> The description of declamation at the beginning of the tenth preface is particularly relevant (*Contr.* 10.pr.1), consider, "hoc habent scholasticorum studia: leviter tacta delectant, contrectata et propius admota fastidio sunt" ("the studies are like this: they please when lightly touched, but they are distasteful when handled and brought nearer").

<sup>43</sup> Found in the ninth preface of the *Controversiae*. While I do not wish to address it here, it is worth observing that the speech in the ninth preface presents a very different characterization of Votienus Montanus than elsewhere in the work. For instance, we are told that he never declaimed (*Contr.* 9.pr.1), yet elsewhere he is characterized as "toto animo scholasticus" ("utterly a *scholasticus*," *Contr.* 7.5.12). The problem of Votienus Montanus' relationship to declamation has been addressed by other scholars—notably Fairweather (1981, 47-9), who posits an unlikely misattribution to one or the other sections—and, while it is certainly a problem to be explored, for now I wish to simply accept that one man was capable to having a complex relationship to declamation and to take him at his word (or accept the characterization of him) in each instance.

as a legitimate audience (the behaviours of which Montanus relates in relation to the audiences of court oratory) and thus undermine declamation as a legitimate form of speech.

Cassius Severus, the work's other major detractor of declamation, makes explicit the connection between unsuitable audiences and the tenuous status of declamation. His attack on declamation, in which he labels the entire genre as superfluous (*supervacua*, *Contr.* 3.pr.12), culminates in the question, "utrum ergo putas hoc dicentium vitium esse an audientium?" ("whether you think that this is the fault of those speaking or hearing?" *Contr.* 3.pr.15), to which he supplies his own answer, "non illi peius dicunt, sed hi corruptius iudicant" ("they do not speak more poorly, but they judge more incorrectly in this," *Contr.* 3.pr.15). While he does proceed to cite the audience's youth as their primary failing, one also observes a disconnect between the values of the audience and those of the critic, which precludes the former from acting as effective judges of speech in the eyes of the latter. Declamation's disconnect from actual speech, one of its primary flaws according to Severus, is therefore not an inherent fault of the genre but a failure on the part of the audience to demand that speakers equal those who came before.

These complaints about the audience are also reflected in Seneca's own account of the decline of oratory in the first preface, which arguably provides the programmatic model for the work.<sup>44</sup> As we have already seen, our author establishes an idealized past in which speakers, given validity by their status as good and eloquent men, were able to engage in declamation as a legitimate form of aristocratic competition. This period is set against the decadent present, in which speakers are only "in libidine viris" ("men in their lusts," *Contr.* 1.pr.10) and therefore unable to access declamation as a vehicle for legitimate speech. Although less explicit than

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<sup>44</sup> Sussman 1971.

Cassius Severus, Seneca too connects the poor quality of contemporary speakers to their audience. It is the negligence of the audience that allows contemporary speakers to plunder the eloquence of others and violate the traditional rules that govern elite competition (*Contr.* 1.pr. 10). A defective audience supports defective speech. This is doubly true for declamation as the genre depends on the audience alone (due to its separation from public/institutionalized activities) to ensure its validity.<sup>45</sup>

The connection between speakers and audience is made explicit in the first preface. Seneca, expanding on the causes for the decline of eloquence, offers an unflattering image of contemporary *iuvenes*. First among his complaints is that “torpent ecce ingenia desidiosae iuventutis nec in unius honestae rei labore vigilatur” (“Behold, the abilities of our lazy youths are asleep and there is no one awake to labour in a single honest pursuit,” *Contr.* 1.pr.8). *Desidia* appears again in his complaints of overly permissive audiences (*Contr.* 1.pr.10). This inattentiveness is one of the primary distinctions between the current failed generation of declaimers and their idealized antecedents, who are described as “tam diligentes...ne dicam tam maligni” (“So attentive, I will not say so malicious,” *Suas.* 2.19). The prior generation produced better speakers (and thus, by Seneca’s account, better men) because it was willing to hold them to account. Defective speech was not allowed to pass unnoticed.

These three sections, especially those of Montanus and Severus, represent the three strongest critiques of declamation in the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. While each addresses multiple complaints towards declamation, the root cause of these problems is the audience.

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<sup>45</sup> Although Seneca the Elder’s attack on contemporary audiences may extend beyond declamation as he criticizes the Roman people for being over indulgent of Scaurus in a section that appears to deal with forum oratory (*Contr.* 10.pr.2).

While it may be argued that defective audiences are merely a product of a genre designed to encourage frivolity, Seneca counters this argument through the presentation of an idealized audience, who lend validity to the exercise. This audience is not only attentive but participatory; a strong theoretical counterpoint to the (equally theoretical) audiences described by Montanus and Severus. That Seneca also not only proposes a theoretical defective audience but makes this audience the current observers of declamation, the “*tanta hominum desidia*” (“so apathetic a body of men,” *Contr.* 1.pr.10), indicates an anxiety on the part of our author about his claims to the validity of the genre. Unlike Montanus and Severus, moreover, Seneca does not end at theory. The defective audience manifests beyond the boundaries of the prefaces in the form of the *scholastici*: men who were antithetical to what Seneca perceived as the proper audience for declamation and, as such, are the target of his derision throughout the work. It is to these men we now turn.

#### **4.7 *Scholastici***

The hypothetical defective audiences presented in the prefaces are given concrete form in the *scholastici*, who populate the main body of the work. The very name of this group prejudices the reader against them as it is cognate with *scholastica*, the third and most recent form of speech outlined in the first preface (*Contr.* 1.pr.12). Along with its association with Greek (“*nomen Graecum quidem*,” “a Greek name indeed”), the novelty of *scholastica* (“*controversia multo recentius est*,” “much more recent than *controversia*”) indicates its distance from *dictio* and, thus,

inferiority according to Seneca's model of rhetorical decline.<sup>46</sup> Who were these men, then, who for Seneca embodied the latest and most defective generation of speakers?

The *scholastici*, often translated as "schoolmen," were a symptom of the popularity of declamation. As declamation grew beyond the classroom, it attracted amateur (that is to say, men who were neither *rhetoires* nor their students) competitors and spectators. While some (including the majority of speakers preserved by Seneca) treated declamation as a legitimate opportunity for rhetorical expression, the *scholastici* viewed it as entertainment.<sup>47</sup> This had several effects on their participation as both speakers and members of the audience: they display a lack of concern for the ethical elements of eloquence, favouring ridiculous expressions with a pleasing rhythm; they are obsessed with novelty; they express approval much too readily; and they over-prioritize declamation at the expense of public life. Put more simply, they embody the criticisms more typically attached to declamation as a whole. Seneca, thus, employs the *scholastici* as scapegoats, surrogates to whom all the negative qualities of declamation may be attached as he strives to legitimize the genre.

The condescension of tone with which Seneca employs *scholasticus* is reminiscent of earlier, particularly Ciceronian, uses of *declamator*.<sup>48</sup> The paradigm, however, has shifted along the same temporal lines laid out by Seneca in his account of the development of declamation (*Contr.* 1.pr.12). The older model, in which declamation and declaimers are unsuitable instructors in *oratio* (Cic. *De or.* 1.73; 3.138), persists, as is evident in Severus and Montanus'

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<sup>46</sup> For the prioritization of *dictio*, see Lobur 2008.

<sup>47</sup> Kennedy 1978.

<sup>48</sup> Although the term is relatively rare in Cicero, it is used in contrast to the ideal orator. It is at least as unappealing as "rabulam de foro" ("a ranter in the forum," Cic. *Orat.* 47), the connection to which may be that each simply generated noise largely devoid of substance. Consider, "At hunc non declamator aliquis ad clepsydrum latrare docuerat..." ("But some declaimer did not teach this man to bark at the clock," Cic. *De or.* 3.138).

attacks on the genre. Yet, even in these instances *scholastica* becomes the vocabulary of choice. Severus asks what is not superfluous in *scholastica* (*Contr.* 3.pr.12).<sup>49</sup> Similarly Montanus, while he does criticize *declamatio* and *declamatores*, specifies that this is “*scholasticae declamationes*” (“scholastic declamations,” *Contr.* 9.pr.5). His use, moreover, of “*scholasticae exercitationes*” (“scholastic exercises,” *Contr.* 9.pr.4), to describe the same activity early in the preface indicate the importance of this descriptive modifier.

With one exception (*Contr.* 3.pr.16), Severus and Montanus refer not to the *scholastici* but to *scholastica*: the rhetorical exercise in which *scholastici* engaged. Both employ it as an alternative to *declamatio*, a practice recognized by Seneca (“alterum nomen...controversia,” “another name, *controversia*,” *Contr.* 1.pr.12). Our author too engages in such substitution, but rarely and always when declamation is being presented in opposition to court oratory.<sup>50</sup> This use is consistent with Montanus and Severus, who each seek to demonstrate the genre’s unsuitability as preparation for court oratory. It would seem, then, that *scholastica* was favoured when the speaker wished to make a comparison to court oratory, perhaps as it created a linguistic connection to the alternative venue of performance (the *schola*). This use suggests the negative connotations of *scholastica*, which as we shall see are born out more fully in Seneca’s treatment of the *scholastici*, but also its equivalence in form to *declamatio*. The substantive nature of this difference was a cause of anxiety for both Seneca and the speakers he records.

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<sup>49</sup> It must be acknowledged that *declamatio* does appear in the third preface. In general, however, this usage tends to be descriptive—especially when employed by Seneca himself. The remaining instances, in which Severus speaks dismissively of *declamatio* or *declamatores* (such as *Contr.* 3.pr.12, 13, and 18), may be attributed to Severus’ status as an older model of speaker, one who engages primarily in *dictio*.

<sup>50</sup> There are only four such substitutions: *Contr.* 2.3.13; 7.pr.8; 9.5.15; and 10.5.12.

Let us now turn from *scholastica* to the its participants, the men whom Seneca labels the *scholastici*. As with *scholastica* and *declamatio*, *scholastici* were a subset of *declamatores*. As with the *vir boni* whom Seneca wished to preserve, being a *scholasticus* was performative; that is to say, that the evaluation of what constituted a *scholasticus* relied on the observation of particular behaviours and attitudes, rather than being limited to a particular social group.<sup>51</sup> This performative quality is consistent with the system of morality presented in Seneca's text and allows the *scholastici* to function as an opposing pole to the *vir boni*. It, moreover, means that misidentification (or, perhaps, malicious identification) was possible and that men sought to avoid such identification.<sup>52</sup> Consistent with the broader moral program of the work, however, it seems that a *scholasticus*' internal nature would always betray him for what he was.

Three qualities define the *scholastici* within Seneca's work. (1) Like *declamatores* more generally, they do not engage in *dictio* and are not orators. (2) They are, moreover, a clearly defined group and one which must be differentiated from the whole body of declaimers. This differentiation is possible on the grounds of observable behaviours. (3) Being a *scholasticus* is undesirable. The first of these qualities requires the least comment. It is only of interest because, as with *scholastica*, the term appears when declaimers are being negatively contrasted to orators.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> This is somewhat at odds with Seneca's own account of the corrupt morals of the current generation of contemporary youth (*Contr.* 1.pr.). Note, however, that it is not the youth of these men that causes them to engage in defective speech, but rather their effeminacy, their inattentiveness, and their unwillingness to engage in genuine speech (all of which are, of course, interrelated).

<sup>52</sup> Consider Albucius, whom Seneca tells us, "non quomodo non esset scholasticus quaerebat, sed quomodo non videretur" ("He was not seeking to avoid being a *scholasticus*, merely being thought one," *Contr.* 7.pr.4).

<sup>53</sup> For instance, "Nihil est indecentius quam ubi scholasticus forum quod non novit imitatur" ("nothing is more improper than when a *scholasticus* imitates the practices of the forum, which he does not know," *Contr.* 10.pr.12). Asinius Pollio also applies the label to Latro contrasting *forensem* (*Contr.* 2.2.8). Interestingly, Seneca also uses the term to distinguish writers of declamation from those of history (*Suas.* 6.16, 27).

The distinction between *scholastici* and the larger body of declaimers is a repeated theme in Seneca's work. For instance, "Gallio illud quod omnes scholastici transierunt dixit..." ("Gallio said this, which all the *scholastici* passed over," *Contr.* 1.6.10). Here, Seneca presents an individual engaged in declamation, who clearly does not belong to the named group; indeed, he is set in opposition to them as a body. The restrictive use of *scholastici*, as a distinct subset of declamatory speakers, appears again when we learn that Albucius feared being thought a *scholasticus* (*Contr.* 7.pr.4). Albucius, although he rarely spoke in public (*Contr.* 7.pr.1), is an established declaimer. While Seneca does ultimately suggest that he is indeed a *scholasticus* (*Contr.* 7.pr.4), this is the result of Albucius' character and speech rather than a mere fact of participation. How, then, did one identify a *scholasticus*?

*Scholastici* are primarily defined by their fixation on the aesthetic qualities of speech. Thus, Seneca tells us that, "Ille [Haterius] in hoc scholasticis morem gerebat, ne verbis calcatis et obsoletis uteretur" ("in this Haterius displayed the custom of the *scholastici*, so that he did not use trite and outdated words," *Contr.* 4.pr.9). Similarly, it is the *scholastici* whom Latro rebukes for being drawn in by pleasing but nonsensical *sententiae* (*Contr.* 7.4.10). The negative impact that such aesthetic prioritization could have on a speaker are demonstrated through Albucius, "quem proxime dicentem commode audierat imitari volebat" ("he wanted to imitate the last attractive speaker he had heard," *Contr.* 7.pr.4). As a result of this desire for imitation, Seneca tells us, "ingenio suo inludit et longe deterius senex dixit quam iuvenis dixerat; nihil enim ad profectum aetas ei proderat, cum semper studium eius esset novum" ("he made a mockery of his own abilities, and spoke far worse as an old man than he had as a youth; truly, age brought nothing to his advantage, since his enthusiasm was always new," *Contr.* 7.pr.5). Albucius was

unable to grow as a speaker because he (like all *scholastici*) emphasized novelty and aesthetics, rather than the cultivation of his own personal style of speech. Seneca's mention of his age reinforces the temporal division established in the first preface; Albucius is unable to mature and thus pass from effeminate and intemperate youth to restrained and moral adulthood, in which he would have the opportunity to be a *vir bonus*.

The same characteristics that damaged Albucius' declamatory speech—and thus, his moral standing within the model established by Seneca—could also have more pronounced consequences when carried beyond the halls of declamation. For instance, Votienus Montanus, after being accused by Vinicius on behalf of Narbo, states how much he enjoyed Vinicius' speech and recites several of the *sententiae* that had been used against him (*Contr.* 7.5.12). As a motivation for this unintuitive and self-defeating behaviour Seneca states only that Montanus was “toto animo scholasticus” (“utterly a *scholasticus*,” *Contr.* 7.5.12). The implication being that Montanus is so preoccupied with declamation that he fails to see that reality functions differently.<sup>54</sup> As with the youths of the first preface, he redeploys the *sententiae* of a more qualified man (in this case his accuser) in a way which is of no benefit to himself.

These two examples, Albucius and Montanus, demonstrate how being a *scholasticus* is presented as undesirable within the work of Seneca. This is further reinforced through their association with insanity (“hominem inter scholasticos sanum, inter sanos scholasticum” “a sane man among the *scholastici*, a *scholasticus* among the sane,” *Contr.* 1.7.15) and disease (“gravis scholasticos morbus invasit” “a serious disease has seized upon the *scholastici*,” *Contr.* 7.5.12), both of which align more broadly with Seneca's typical criticisms of defective speakers. The

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<sup>54</sup> An implication made explicit by Surdinus' witty question, “numquid putas illum alteram partem declamasse?” (“do you think that he was declaiming the other side?” *Contr.* 7.5.12).

relative novelty of this term of abuse may be suggested by its exclusive use by Seneca and not the men whom he quotes. While these men do employ *scholastica* as an alternative (one which I contend is negatively tinged) for declamation, as a rule they do not employ *scholastici* to describe the participants. The one exception is Severus, who states that “*scholastici intueri me, quis essem qui tam crassas cervices haberem*” (“The *scholastici* looked at me to see who I was who had so dull a neck,” *Contr.* 3.pr.16) after he had invaded Cestius’ *schola*. This use does not necessarily bear the same negative connotations employed by Seneca throughout the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* and may simply be a descriptive usage. Seneca, then, may represent an early instance of the negative connotation of *scholastici* in rhetorical texts.

In sum, then, for Seneca the *scholastici* are an identifiable group who subvert the positive functions of declamation as they prioritize pleasing rhythms over eloquent expressions of collective identity. Eloquence, for Seneca at least, depends on a concrete foundation of ‘good morals’—the pleasing expression of these is secondary. For the *scholastici*, any moral benefit is secondary. The attribution of this label to a certain part of the declamatory body allows our author to excise those individuals who do not conform to his model of ideal participants, both speakers and audience. It provides a direct rebuttal to criticisms of declamation. It is not that the genre itself does not function, merely that its participants are not engaging correctly.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Among later authors the best comparative use of *scholasticus* is found in the work of Petronius, a close contemporary. It is ambiguous on two occasions (6.1 and 10.6), but the negative association may be seen in the pairing with *arietilli* (39.5). Moreover, the context of the Dinner with Trimalchio suggests it is being used to refer to mature men rather than students (61.4). Quintilian, as well as the author of the *minor Declamations* attributed to him, employ *scholastica* almost exclusively and use it to denote educational exercise: *Decl. Min.* 325.5; 338.4; 338.5; *Quint. Inst.* 4.2.30; 4.2.92, 97; 7.1.14; 11.1.82. *Quint. Inst.* 12.11.16, employs *scholastici* as a substantive for people but lacks the negative qualities employed by Seneca. Interestingly, the pairing *controversiae scholasticae* occurs on several occasions, which may suggest a need for specificity deriving from differing context of performance. Tacitus uses *scholastica* in the same way as Quintilian (*Dial.* 14.4); however, we also have *scholastici* employed three times for groups of individuals: *Tac. Dial.* 15.3; 26.8; 42.2. It is unlikely in all cases that this does not refer to students.

## Conclusion

When we think about declamation, we tend to do so exclusively through the lens of speaker-to-audience interaction. We ask how it prepared a young man for future speaking roles, whether in court oratory or public life more generally; how it allowed the declaimer to explore and engage with behaviours and conceptions of self within Roman society; and other similar questions, in which the speaker is central. This emphasis can at times make declamation seem a solitary activity—one participant, left on his own to navigate the irresolvable situation that has been put to him.

In this thesis, I have argued for an alternative method of examining declamation, one which incorporates an entire community of participants who work collaboratively to shape the discourse of declamation. This community is visible as speakers cite one another as they address their audiences, building on shared loci to hold conversations that transcend single instances of speech—as well as when those same audiences are themselves no quiet backdrop but vocal participants in the ongoing discussion, who moderate ideas through praise or censure.<sup>1</sup>

These alternative forms of participant interaction are made visible in the text of Seneca's *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* and, therefore, we must always consider our author's own impact on the discourse. As Bloomer has argued, in his work Seneca establishes himself as the arch-declamer, asserting his own qualification for being a *vir bonus* as he occupies the role of declamatory father chastising an entire generation of faulty sons.<sup>2</sup> In Chapter 2, I explored the form of declamation and discussed how Seneca awarded the title of *vir bonus* to the men he preserves in his work and his use of sexualized language to distinguish between good and bad

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<sup>1</sup> For speaker-to-speaker interaction see Huelsenbeck 2015, 41.

<sup>2</sup> Bloomer 1997a, 214.

speakers, whom he then attaches to generations (his own and his sons') and speech types (*controversiae* and *scholastica*). This pair of binaries legitimizes declamation by placing those Seneca find unworthy outside of the genre.

Speaker-to-audience interactions are not the only way that Seneca mirrors the interactions found in declamation. Speaker-to-speaker interaction is recalled as Seneca as author presents numerous citations of others as he seeks to outline an ideal community of shared speech, the shared loci in this instance being the cases themselves, which form the organizational core of the work. In Chapter 3, I examined the mechanisms through which Seneca refined his community and argued that, while he did not omit men of lower station, he brings forward those who represent the genre well so as to legitimize it.

Seneca also articulates audience-to-speaker interaction (although he is an audience of one). This is expressed most obviously in the praise and criticism that he imparts in the *colores* section of each case. It also manifests, however, through his choice of who is actually included in the work and the extent of their inclusion. Like the audience, Seneca is able to curate the discourse of declamation. In Chapter 4, I observed that this curation was the result of vocal participation on the part of the audience, who did not simply “applaud” successful declaimers but shouted their support. I also examined those instances in which, according to Seneca, the audience gave this support to the wrong speakers—those who used “*belle sonantis*” (“fine-sounding,” *Contr.* 7.4.10) but empty *sententiae*. The audience members most guilty of such errors were the *scholastici* and Seneca uses this name to exclude those he finds most objectionable.

When we divest ourselves of the notion that declamation was a single-participant activity, new avenues of exploration emerge. Currently, one of the most pervasive models of examining declamation is concerned with how declamation socialized young Roman elites so that they could learn the relationships, problem solving skills and speech patterns that would be useful in their adult lives.<sup>3</sup> These examinations, however, concern themselves primarily with the material of the declamatory cases rather than the context in which that material was treated. Declamation forced together groups of men into a competitive social situation, in which they needed to articulate their arguments in such a way as to be persuasive. It was the situation as much as the material that turned boys into Roman men.

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<sup>3</sup> As typified by Beard 1993; Gunderson 2003; and Corbeill 2007.

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### Appendix 1: Declaimers in Seneca's texts<sup>1</sup>

This table contains brief accounts of all the declaimers found in Seneca's text. Following Bornecque (1902), the names of men who declaimed in Greek are written in italics. This table is drawn from Seneca's works and as such is primarily concerned with its subjects as speakers; therefore other information, while it is included, is limited.

Name	Description
<b>Abronius Silo</b>	Never actually excerpted, Seneca tells us merely that he was a poet and "auditorem Latronis" ("a student of Latro," <i>Suas.</i> 2.19) who redeployed some of Latro's ideas in his verse.
<i>Adaeus</i>	"rhetor ex Asianis non proiecti nominis" ("a <i>rhetor</i> of no little repute from Asia," <i>Contr.</i> 9.1.12), whose <i>sententia</i> Fuscus translated into Latin ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.1.12-3). Imitation of Adaeus seems to have been common among the Latin declaimers ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.4.19-20). Generally treated favourably in comparison to other Greeks: "hoc idem elegantius dixit Adaeus" ("Adaeus said the same more eloquently," <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.29). While he himself pinched something from Glycon, he did so "sanis quam Glycon" ("more soundly than Glycon," <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.21).
<i>Aemilianus</i>	Only cited a single time ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.25), he is simply "quidam Graecus rhetor, quod genus stultorum amabilissimum est, ex arido fatuus" ("a certain Greek <i>rhetor</i> , one of the most agreeable types of fools, those who pass from dryness to silliness"). <i>Stultus</i> is used to describe both the man and his speech, which is labelled "non minus stulte" ("no less foolishly") at the beginning of the same passage.
<b>M. Aemilius Lepidus</b>	<p>Consul in 11 CE, died 33 CE. <i>Praeceptor</i> of Germanicus' son, Nero (<i>Contr.</i> 2.3.23). Hosted other speakers as we hear that Scarus declaimed before him (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.3). His style is difficult to determine from the single surviving <i>color</i>, but Seneca tells us that he presents an idea <i>commodius</i> (more suitably) than Glycon (<i>Contr.</i> 2.3.23).</p> <p>He was also an orator. In 20 CE, he was one of the few to defend Piso (<i>Tac. Ann.</i> 3.11); in the same year, he also defended his sister against charges brought by her former husband, Publius Sulpicius Quirinius (<i>Tac. Ann.</i> 3.22); and, in 21 CE, Clutorius Priscus, who had been charged with <i>maiestas</i> (<i>Tac. Ann.</i> 3.50).</p>

<sup>1</sup> Any list of declaimers bears a debt to Bornecque 1902, which presents a list of all the declaimers preserved in Seneca.

Name	Description
<b>Mamercus Aemilius Scaurus</b>	<p>Suffect consul 21 CE, died 33 CE. The last of the Scauri, his family came to an end after he was convict on a charge of <i>maiestas</i> brought by Tuscus (<i>Suas.</i> 2.22; cf. <i>Tac. Ann.</i> 6.29; <i>Suet. Tib.</i> 61).</p> <p>Seneca asserts that he was “non tantum disertissimus homo sed venustissimus, qui nullus umquam inpunitam stultitiam transire passus est” (“not only a most eloquent man but also very witty, who allowed no foolishness to pass unpunished,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.22). His criticism is generally praised (<i>Contr.</i> 2.1.39) and he is credited with coining mocking critical phrases, such as labelling excessively picked over <i>sententiae</i> “Montaniana” (<i>Contr.</i> 9.5.17).</p> <p>Actual excerpts of his speeches are rare and only appear in the tenth volume of the <i>Controversiae</i> (<i>Contr.</i> 10.1.9; 10.2.19). This fits with Seneca’s broader model of more prominently featuring men in the books in whose prefaces they appear (Sussman 1971). The paucity of citations may be the results of Seneca’s sons having themselves heard him declaim (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2) or the uneven quality of that same declamation (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2-3).</p>
<b>Aeschines</b>	<p>“non ille orator...sed hic ex declamatoribus novis” (“not the orator...but the one from the recent declaimer,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.8.16). The novelty of Aeschines is stressed as both time he is described as <i>novis declamatoribus</i> (one of the new declaimers, <i>Contr.</i> 1.8.11; 16). Seneca is not particularly favourable towards him as his only critical comment is “non servasse dignitatem patris” (“he did not maintain the dignity of the father,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.8.11).</p> <p>He may be the son of the Aeschines, whom Seneca calls “the orator” (<i>Contr.</i> 1.8.16), who is mentioned in Cicero’s <i>Brutus</i> (325).</p>
<b>Agroitas</b>	<p>Declaimer from Marseille (<i>Contr.</i> 2.6.12). Despite only being cited once, Seneca favours his “arte inculta” (“unpolished technique”) that produces “sententiis fortibus” (“vigorous epigrams”) and asserts that these make him more comparable to Romans than Greeks—despite his language of delivery (<i>Contr.</i> 2.6.12).</p>
<b>Aietius Pastor</b>	<p>Declaimed while already a senator and was rebuked by Cestius for his poor attempt (<i>Contr.</i> 1.3.11).</p>

Name	Description
<b>C. Albucius Silus</b>	<p>The subject of the seventh preface, Albucius is one of the declaimers cited most frequently in Seneca's text having been quoted fifty eight times (Bennett 2007, 7). The frequency of citation may be explained by his place among Seneca's first quartet (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13).</p> <p>The best account of his life occurs in Suetonius' <i>De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus</i> 30, in which we are given the following account of his life:</p> <p>He held an aedileship in his hometown. After an incident occurred during a case he was presiding over, he journeyed to Rome and took up with the orator Plancus whom he bested in declamation. Using this success as a springboard, he opened his own school. While he did also attempt to engage in court oratory, an early failed attempt deterred him (<i>Contr.</i> 7.pr.7 preserves the same incident). In his old age and illness, he returned to Novara where he took his own life.</p> <p>Despite including Albucius in his first quartet, Seneca's opinion of the man seems to be mixed. The primary image that one draws from the pen portrait in the seventh preface is of a deeply uncertain man, who doubts his own talents to such a degree that he must copy the last eloquent speaker he has heard (see esp. <i>Contr.</i> 7.pr.4-5). Seneca's less than rosy image of Albucius is not shared by Quintilian, who calls him "a non obscurus professor atque auctor" ("a distinguished professor [of rhetoric] and author," 2.15.36). Quintilian, however, does object to some of his rhetorical theories (2.15.36; 3.3.4; 3.6.62).</p>

Name	Description
<b>Alfius Flavus</b>	<p>One of the few declaimers explicitly marked as a youth by Seneca: “qui cum <i>praetextatus</i> esset, tantae opinionis fuit ut populo Romano <i>puer</i> eloquentia notus esset” (“who, when he wore the toga praetexta, was so famous that a child was known to the Roman people for his eloquence,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.22). He was a pupil of Cestius (“auditorum suum,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.6.8; also, while not definitive, he is presented as performing “apud Cestium,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.22). Naturally talented and possessing a forceful voice that, “post multos annos, iam desidia obruta et carminibus enervata, vigorem tamen suum tenuit” (“after many years, now overwhelmed by idleness and weakened by poetry, nevertheless it held its vigour,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.22); although Seneca remarks that his eloquence is more pronounced because it always has something to set it off—whether youth or neglect.</p> <p>His interest in poetry and the influence that Ovid exerted on his style is preserved in the excerpt of <i>Controversiae</i> 3.7, in which Cestius chastises him for this perceived weakness.</p>
<b>Antonius Atticus</b>	<p>Only cited a single time (<i>Suas.</i> 2.16), Seneca states that “inter has pueriles sententias videtur palmam meruisse” (“he seemed worthy of the prize among these childish <i>sententiae</i>”). Despite the backhanded nature of the remark, it is one of only two times that <i>palma</i> is used to refer to victory in declamation. The other instance refers to Gallio should a contest occur between Seneca’s first quartet (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr. 13).</p>
<b>Apaturius</b>	<p>Rarely cited (<i>Contr.</i> 10.5.28; <i>Suas.</i> 1.11; 2.21). On his style, Seneca only tells us that he may be included “inter illos qui...corrupte aliquid dixerunt” (“among those who said something in poor taste,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.28).</p>
<b>Apollonius</b>	<p>Only cited a single time (<i>Contr.</i> 7.4.5). Seneca presents a more favourable account of him than many Greeks stating that, “in epilogis vehemens fuit” (“he was vigorous in his epilogues”).</p>

Name	Description
<b>Arellius Fuscus</b> (sometimes, “pater”)	Another of Seneca’s first quartet ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13), Fuscus’ primary strength lay in his “ <i>explicatio...splendida...sed operosa et implicata, cultus nimis adquisitus, conpositio verborum mollior quam ut illum tam sanctis fortibusque praeceptis praeparans se animus pati posset</i> ” (“his developments were brilliant, but laborious and involved, his ornament excessively amassed, in his rhythm more effeminate than a mind preparing itself for such virtuous and courageous heights could endure,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.pr.1). This is the tension present in Seneca’s portrayal of Fuscus. While a youth, Seneca and his peers repeated the <i>explicationes</i> of Fuscus with glee ( <i>Suas.</i> 2.10); he warns his sons, however, “ <i>quarum nimis cultus et fracta conpositio poterit vos offendere cum ad meam aetatem veneritis</i> ” (“the excessive ornamentation and effeminate rhythm of [his developments] may offend you when you come to my age; meanwhile, I do not doubt that you delight in the same faults that will later displease you” <i>Suas.</i> 2.23). This effeminate rhythm may be the result of his habit of speaking more frequently in Greek than in Latin ( <i>Suas.</i> 4.5).
<b>Argentarius</b>	Cestius’ pupil (“ <i>Cesti auditor,</i> ” <i>Contr.</i> 9.3.12), who frequently enough redeployed his <i>sententiae</i> that Cestius labelled him his ape ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.3.12-3). As his student, his speech often abuts Cestius’ ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.6-7; 1.2.19; 1.4.9; 1.5.1; 7.2.2-3; 7.3.1; 7.6.1-2; 9.4.15; 9.5.12; 10.5.3-4; <i>Suas.</i> 5.3). His instructors contribution to his approach to declamation is demonstrated when Seneca tells us that, like Cestius, he did not declaim in Greek, despite being Greek himself ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.3.13).
<b>Artemo(n)</b>	A Greek declaimer often relegated to the end of sections along with his contemporaries. Seneca seems favourable towards him; especially his description of a storm, which “ <i>laudatus est</i> ” (“is praised,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.1.26).

Name	Description
<b>Asilius Sabinus</b>	<p>Although he only appears twice, Seneca labels him “venustissimus inter rhetoras scurra” (“the most eloquent joker among the <i>rhetors</i>,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.12). Despite being a good speaker (“bene declamari” <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.17), Seneca believes that his speech is damaged by his constant need to jest (“illud non probavi, quod multa in re severa temptavit salse dicere,” “I do not approve of this, namely that he frequently tried to speak wittily on serious subjects,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.17). This joking was not only a feature of his declamation, but also defined his character and, ultimately, landed him in trouble as one of his frequent jests resulted in a charge being laid against him (<i>Contr.</i> 9.4.20).</p> <p>The relationship between speech and character is made explicit in the final section of the pen portrait: “Hoc rettuli ut et ipsum hominem ex aliqua parte nossetis et illud sciretis, quam difficile esset naturam suam effugere” (<i>Contr.</i> 9.4.21).</p>
<b>C. Asinius Pollio</b>	<p>Consul in 40 BCE, died in 4 CE. He celebrated a triumph in 39 BCE for a victory over the Parthini of Illyria. Pollio’s public career is extensive, but not the primary focus in Seneca’s work (for a better picture see <i>PIR</i><sup>2</sup> A 1241). Seneca, instead, shows us an old man teaching his grandson to declaim (<i>Contr.</i> 4.pr.3).</p> <p>Pollio’s public success may be reflected in the authority he is granted to criticize the other declaimers found in the work (<i>Contr.</i> 2.3.13; 7.pr.2; 9.2.25) or offering advice (<i>Contr.</i> 2.5.10; 7.4.3). He is also distinguished from “declamatores” as a generic (<i>Contr.</i> 7.6.24). He is instead presented as an orator (<i>Contr.</i> 2.5.13; 7.4.7; <i>Suas.</i> 6.14-5, 27) and historian (<i>Suas.</i> 6.24-5).</p>
<b>Attalus</b>	<p>A stoic banished by the machinations of Sejanus receives quite favourable treatment from Seneca: “magnae vir eloquentiae, ex his philosophis quos vestra aetas vidit longe et subtilissimus et facundissimus, cum tam magna et nobili sententia certavit et mihi dixisse videtur animosius quam prior...” (“a man of great eloquence, by far the most subtle and the most fluent of the philosophers of your generation. He vied with so great and noble a <i>sententia</i> and, it seems to me, his spirit surpassed his predecessor,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.12). Unfortunately the much anticipated <i>sententia</i> is lost.</p>

Name	Description
<b>Barbarus</b>	A Greek declaimer, who “dixit vulgarem sensum satis vulgariter” (“spoke a common idea commonly enough,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.6.13).
<b>Broccus</b>	“non malo rhetori” (“a tolerable rhetor,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.23)
<b>Bruttedius Brutus</b>	Very little information is included on this speaker. Although Seneca cites him twice ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.9; 9.1.11), no significant comment is made on his style beyond that he “cotidiano verbo significanter usus est” (“plainly used an everyday word,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.9).
<b>Bruttedius Niger</b>	Aedile in 22 CE, whose ambitions were ultimately his own undoing ( <i>Tac. Ann.</i> 3.66). No excerpts from Bruttedius Niger are preserved in Seneca's work. Instead, we see him as an advocate, out maneuvered by Vallius Syriacus ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.35-6). The legal nature of this exchange, however, is obfuscated in Seneca's text. We also see him as historian, as Seneca preserves a lengthy excerpt from his account of Cicero's death ( <i>Suas.</i> 6.20-1).
<b>Buteo</b>	Not simply a declaimer, but a true <i>rhetor</i> who owned his own school and was later succeeded by his pupil Gargonius ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.7.18). He was “aridus... declamator, sed prudens divisor controversiarum” (“a dry declaimer, but a judicial divider of <i>controversiae</i> ,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.15). His status as a professional <i>rhetor</i> may explain his frequent clashes with Latro ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.20; 1.6.9; 2.5.15-7). In these clashes, Seneca unsurprisingly favours Latro; as is apparent when he describes a <i>color</i> as <i>arcessito</i> , which Latro later dismisses ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.6.9).
<b>Capito</b>	While Seneca only includes two excerpts of his speech, each of these is significant in length ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.2.5-7; 9.2.9-10). Despite labelling Capito a <i>scholasticus</i> , Seneca expresses approval for him as a speaker: “amabam itaque Capitonem, cuius declamatio est de Popillio, quae misero Latroni subicitur: bona fide scholasticus erat, in his declamationibus quae bene illi cesserunt nulli non post primum tetradeum praeferendus” (“on that account I loved Capito, of whom there is a declamation on Popillius, which is attributed to pitiable Latro; he was a <i>scholasticus</i> in good faith, in his declamations that turned out well no one after the first quartet is preferred,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.12). This is the only unambiguously positive use of the label <i>scholasticus</i> .

Name	Description
<b>Cassius Severus</b>	<p>According to Tacitus he was “sordidae originis, maleficae vitae, sed orandi validus, per immodicas inimicitias ut iudicio iurati senatus Cretam amoveretur effecera” (“[a man] of sordid origins and wicked life, but a vigorous orator, he had made enemies on such a scale that by a verdict of the senate under oath he was relegated to Crete,” Tac. <i>Ann.</i> 4.21). His exile did not deter him, however, and in 24 CE his property was confiscated and he was sent to the rock of Seriphos (Tac. <i>Ann.</i> 4.21). Tacitus' unfavourable opinion of him may be reflected his being made the negative turning point for Roman oratory (<i>Dial.</i> 19).</p> <p>Seneca, on the other hand, seem quite favourable towards Cassius Severus. He is the subject of the third preface, in which his skilled speech is emphasized (esp. <i>Contr.</i> 3.pr.7).</p>
<b>Catius Crispus</b>	<p>Cited only twice. Seneca merely tells us that the was “anticum rhetorem” (“a declaimer of the old days,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.4.9) and not an especially good one (<i>Suas.</i> 2.16).</p>
<b>L. Cestius Pius</b>	<p>Greek declaimer and <i>rhetor</i>, although he only declaimed in Latin (<i>Contr.</i> 9.3.13). His popularity is recorded in Cassius Severus' complaint: “hi non tantum disertissimis viris, quos paulo ante rettuli, Cestium suum praeferunt sed etiam Ciceroni praeferrent, nisi lapides timerent” (“to these most eloquent men, whom I related shortly before, they prefer their Cestius; they would prefer him even to Cicero, if they did not fear a stoning,” <i>Contr.</i> 3.pr.15). Cestius took this “rivalry” with Cicero to the extreme and was flogged by his son, while the latter was proconsul of Asia (<i>Suas.</i> 7.13-4).</p> <p>Seneca cites him very frequently; indeed, he is omitted from only two of the surviving cases (<i>Contr.</i> 9.2; <i>Suas.</i> 2).</p>
<b>M. Claudius Marcellus Aeserninus</b>	<p>Educated by his grandfather Pollio, who held him as heir-apparent to his own eloquence (<i>Contr.</i> 4.pr.3-4). While Seneca does not comment directly on his style, he is compared favourably to Cestius (<i>Suas.</i> 6.10). Later in life, as an orator, he is held in high regards as one of those who “ad summa provectos incorrupta vita et facundia” (“had advanced to the heights with a life unmarred and eloquent,” Tac. <i>Ann.</i> 11.6).</p>
<b>Clodius Sabinus</b>	<p>Declaimer in both Latin and Greek. Poorly paid and roundly mocked for his efforts (<i>Contr.</i> 9.3.13-4).</p>

Name	Description
<b>Clodius Turrinus (pater)</b>	<p>One of those men, of whom Seneca states, “minus ad famam pervenirent non ingenium defuit sed locus” (“who lacked the locale rather than the talent to arrive at fame,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13). Despite weakening his delivery by following Apollodorus, Seneca describes his <i>sententiae</i> as “excitatas, insidosas, aliquid petentis” (“vigorous, wily and pointed,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.15). His lineage too is marked as good: “natus quidem erat patre splendidissimo, avo divi Iuli hospite” (“His father was highly distinguished, his grandfather had entertained the divine Julius,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.16). Indeed, “si quid illi defuerit, scias locum defuisse” (“if he lacked anything, you should know it was the right locale,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.16).</p> <p>His locational disadvantage may explain his restriction to the tenth book of <i>Controversiae</i>, although he is heavily cited therein.</p>
<b>Cornelius Hispanus</b>	<p>Despite being cited with relative frequency, Seneca rarely comments on Hispanus’ speech. We hear only that he spoke one <i>color venustius</i> (“more prettily,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.20) and that in another instance “displicebat color hic prudentibus” (“this <i>color</i> displeased men of discernment,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.1.24).</p>
<b>Corvus</b>	<p>A <i>rhetor</i>, only cited once, of whom Seneca says, “testimonium stuporis reddendum est...in hac controversia sententia eius haec ridebatur” (“the award for stupidity should go to [Corvus]...in this <i>controversia</i> one of his <i>sententia</i> drew mocking laughter,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.21).</p>
<b>Craton</b>	<p>A favourite of Augustus, who rewarded him with a talent (<i>Contr.</i> 10.5.21). Seneca calls him, “venustissimus homo et professus Asianus, qui bellum cum omnibus Atticis gerebat” (“a very witty man and professed Asianist, who waged war on everything Attic,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.21). Competed with Timagenes before the Augustus (<i>Contr.</i> 10.5.22).</p>
<b>Damas (Scombrus)</b>	<p>A Greek declaimer, about whom Seneca does not offer much comment. His rare comments are mixed: he accuses him of speaking in worse taste than Glycon, while pinching his ideas (<i>Contr.</i> 10.5.21); but also remarks that he was the only Greek who spoke a <i>sententia</i> worthy of mention (<i>Suas.</i> 2.14).</p>

Name	Description
<b><i>Diocles (of Carystos)</i></b>	A Greek declaimer. Seneca offers little comment on his style beyond that “elegantem sensum in prooemio posuit” (“placed an neat idea in his proem,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.1.26). His most impressive feat—compressing the idea of a fuller <i>sententia</i> into two words—is unfortunately lost ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.25).
<b><i>Dionysius</i></b>	The son of the Dionysius who taught Cicero’s son, who was “elegans magis declamator quam vehemens” (“a more elegant than forceful declaimer,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.4.11). He is only cited once in Seneca’s extant text and the <i>sententia</i> itself is lost.
<b><i>Dionysius Atticus</i></b>	“Apollodori discipulo” (“a disciple of Apollodorus,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.11). He is presented as agreeing with Pollio that one must never lead their defence against charges of ingratitude by claiming that they have received no benefit, but adds that it is beneficial to dispute the degree to which one received that benefit ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.10-1). This is one of the more explicitly educational moments in Seneca’s text with the actual technical education put in the mouths of the experts.
<b><i>Domitius</i></b>	Perhaps Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, consul 32 BCE. No actual speech preserved; included only as part of a series of anecdotes which highlight the wit of Asilius Sabinus. Nevertheless, we are told explicitly that he “rhetores circumire et declamare” (“went around to the <i>rhetors</i> and declaimed,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.18), while already an adult.
<b><i>Dorion</i></b>	A Greek declaimer, who capitalized on the medium of declamation to engage in speech too exaggerated ( <i>elatiorem</i> ) for forensic oratory ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.8.16). This excess could yield “disertissima... sententia” (“a most eloquent <i>sententia</i> ,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.11), but more often exceeded the mark (“furiose dixit,” “he spoke madly,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.23). This excess resulted in Dorion speaking, “corruptissimam rem omnium quae umquam dictae sunt ex quo homines diserti insanire coeperunt” (“the most decadent thing said since the eloquent began to go mad,” <i>Suas.</i> 1.12).
<b><i>Euctemon</i></b>	“Levis declamator sed dulcis” (“a lightweight but sweet declaimer,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.25). He was “homo venustissimi ingeni” (“a man of most appealing talent,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.4.8), which is on display as he mocks Festus’ height.

Name	Description
<b>Paullus Fabius Maximus</b>	<p>Consul of 11 BCE. Along with Paternus and Moderatus, one of those “nec clari...nec ignoti” (“neither famous nor unknown,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13). He was “nobilissimus vir fuit, qui primo foro Romano hunc novicium morbum quo nunc laborat intulit” (“a most well-born man, who first introduced this new evil which now afflicts it to the Roman forum,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.4.11). The new evil is the <i>maiestas</i> (treason) trials that Seneca states may be the cause of the decline of eloquence (“sive, cum pretium pulcherrimae rei cecidisset, translatum est omne certamen ad turpia multo honore quaestusque vigentia,” “or since the worth of the most beautiful art had fallen, the whole contest was carried over to sordid affairs flourishing with great prestige and profit,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.pr.7).</p> <p>His style was excessively legal and the only <i>color</i> he is presented speaking is explicitly given as an example of something to avoid (<i>Contr.</i> 2.4.12). One more of his <i>sententia</i> appears in the work, quoted by Romanus Hispo as he aimed for severity (<i>Contr.</i> 2.4.9).</p>
<b>Festus</b>	<p>A <i>rhetor</i>, mocked for his height by Euctemon, who favoured laborious puns which he was very willing to explain to his audience if they did not receive the expected reaction (<i>Contr.</i> 7.4.8-9).</p>
<b>Florus</b>	<p>A pupil of Latro, who had a <i>sententia</i> attributed to his instructor (<i>Contr.</i> 9.2.23). Seneca takes great umbrage with this as he thought the “mollem compositionem” (“effeminate rhythm”) and inappropriately ridiculous figures were not worth of his friend (<i>Contr.</i> 9.2.24).</p>
<b>Fulvius Sparsus</b>	<p>A <i>rhetor</i> and <i>scholasticus</i>. He was a harsh speaker and uninspired in his ideas, stealing the only acceptable ones from Latro (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr. 11-2). Sparsus’ intersectional position is emphasized by Seneca as he says, “inter scholasticos sanum, inter sanos scholasticum” (“among the scholastici he ranked as sane, though among the sane he ranked as a scholastici,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.7.15). Many of his <i>sententiae</i> are described as in bad taste (<i>Contr.</i> 10.4.23; 10.5.23).</p> <p>Despite a generally negative portrayal, many of his <i>sententiae</i> are included and appear in almost every extant <i>Controversiae</i> (<i>Contr.</i> 1.2.2; 1.3.3, 7; 1.4.3; 2.5.10; 7.2.3; 7.4.1-2; 7.6.3; 9.1.7; 9.2.5; 9.3.4; 9.4.3; 9.5.4; 9.6.1; 10.1.5; 10.2.4; 10.3.3; 10.4.8-10; 10.5.8-10).</p>

Name	Description
<b>Furius Saturninus</b>	An orator, who got Volesus convicted, he had “maius nomen in foro quam in declamationibus” (“a greater reputation in the courts than in declamation”), which Seneca attributes to lack of familiarity rather than skill ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.22).
<b>Gargonius</b>	A pupil of Buteo, who later took over his school ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.7.18). He was a man "vocis obtusae sed pugnacissimae" ("of dim but most combative voice," <i>Contr.</i> 1.7.18), who thought himself clever but more often presented “foedo genere cacozeliae” (“an obscene type of bad taste,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.1.15). His foolishness is consistent across Seneca’s work ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.25; <i>Suas.</i> 2.16), but is wonderfully expressed at <i>Suas.</i> 7.14: “Gargonius, fatuorum amabilissimus, in hac suasoriae dixit duas res quibus stultiores ne ipse quidem umquam dixerat” (“Gargonius, most amiable of fools, said two things on this theme unsurpassed in stupidity even by himself”).
<b>Gavius Sabinus</b>	Although not infrequently cited, Seneca offers few remarks on his speech beyond noting that he spoke a <i>sententia</i> , “quae valde excepta est” (“which was highly acclaimed,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.19). He also bowed to the <i>scholastici</i> and avoided outdated words by paraphrasing them ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.21).
<b>Gavius Silo</b>	A Spanish declaimer highly praised by Seneca. He was a good speaker, who hid his eloquence behind the appearance of being a family man and was even praised by Augustus for doing so ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.14).
<b>Glaucippus</b>	A Cappadocian. Only cited on a single occasion ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.29).
<b>Glycon Spyridion</b>	A Greek declaimer, who is frequently quoted by Seneca. Despite this frequent inclusion, for Glycon “non minus multa magnifice dixit quam corrupte” (“the decadent passages were as frequent as the sublime,” <i>Suas.</i> 1.16). This assessment is reflected in Seneca comment which are both positive ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.7.18; 2.1.39; <i>Suas.</i> 2.14) and negative ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.6.12; 9.5.17; 10.4.22).
<b>Gorgias</b>	Only appearing in a single <i>controversia</i> , his epigrams are lost but Seneca describes them as “inepto colore, but dulci” (“an absurd color, but sweet”) and “egregie” (“excellent,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.4.7).
<b>Grandaus</b>	A declaimer of the Asian school ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.23). Cited only once.

Name	Description
<b>Q. Haterius</b>	<p>One of the subjects of the fourth preface, Haterius was the suffect consul of 5 BCE as well as an orator (<i>Contr.</i> 9.6.13) and declaimer. He was a very competent speaker (“solus omnium Romanorum, quos modo ipse cognovi, in Latinam linguam transtulit Graecam facultatem,” “alone of all the Romans I myself have known he brought the skills of the Greeks into the Latin language,” <i>Contr.</i> 4.pr. 7). He had trouble, however, controlling his flow of speech and this more than anything was his defining characteristic (<i>Contr.</i> 1.6.12; 4.pr.6-11).</p> <p>Haterius’ excessive pace is mirrored by excessive emotion. Long after the death of his sons, he breaks down in tears while delivering a case that calls the tragedy to mind (<i>Contr.</i> 4.pr.6). This is contrasted with Pollio, the other subject of the fourth preface.</p>
<b><i>Hermagoras</i></b>	<p>An excellent declaimer and one of the men who Albius tried to imitate (<i>Contr.</i> 7.pr.5). Seneca describes his technical skill: noting a strong transition from proem to narration (<i>Contr.</i> 1.1.25) and the impression made by his scarce <i>sententiae</i> on the careful listener (<i>Contr.</i> 2.6.13). The only possible criticism is that he occasionally doted on his figures (<i>schemata</i>, <i>Contr.</i> 2.3.22).</p>
<b><i>Hybreas the Elder</i></b>	<p>A Greek declaimer, who Seneca describes as “disertissimi viri” (“a most eloquent man,” <i>Suas.</i> 7.14). Although many of his <i>sententiae</i> are lost, his portrayal is consistently positive (<i>Contr.</i> 1.4.11).</p>
<b><i>Hybreas</i></b>	<p>Son of the above, who is mocked by Marcus Cicero for quoting his father (Cicero) to the letter (<i>Suas.</i> 7.14).</p>
<b>Julius Bassus</b>	<p>The rival of Sparsus, to whom his speech bears some resemblance. Bassus was eloquent (<i>homo disertus</i>), but his speech was hampered both by an affected bitterness and a desire to imitate the delivery of an orator (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.12). This may explain his excessive use of vulgarity (<i>Contr.</i> 1.2.21; 10.1.13-4), which Seneca connects to an older style of oratory (<i>Contr.</i> 9.2.25).</p> <p>He appears a surprising amount given Seneca’s stated prohibition against including men, whom his sons have heard (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2; for his sons having heard Bassus, <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.12).</p>

Name	Description
<b>L. Junius Gallio</b>	<p>One of Seneca's first quarter (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13), their close friendship is attested by Gallio's adoption of Seneca's eldest son. Although friendly enough with Tiberius (<i>Suas.</i> 3.7), he was nevertheless ejected from the senate and exiled for suggesting that the Praetorians be allowed to sit in the fourteen rows after the completion of their service (<i>Tac. Ann.</i> 6.3).</p> <p>His speech is broadly praised. Notably, he is one of the few to use vulgarisms correctly (<i>Contr.</i> 7.pr.5-6).</p>
<b>Junius Otho (pater)</b>	<p>Despite publishing a book of <i>colores</i>, Seneca remembers that he spoke "colorem stultum" ("a stupid <i>color</i>," <i>Contr.</i> 1.3.11; see also <i>Contr.</i> 7.3.10). This was a result of his desire to supply irrefutable <i>colores</i>, which often led to him relying on dreams as evidence; nevertheless, his ability with uncertain material made him excellent at declaiming <i>controversiae</i> that required allusive speech (<i>Contr.</i> 2.1.33-5, 37-9; his reliance on dreams is mentioned again at <i>Contr.</i> 7.7.15).</p> <p>Dislike for his <i>colores</i> was not restricted to Seneca. He is mocked both by Gallio (<i>Contr.</i> 2.1.33) and more broadly (<i>Contr.</i> 10.5.25).</p>
<b>T. Labienus</b>	<p>An excellent declaimer and one of the earlier generation, who did not perform in public (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.4); although he also chastised Pollio for not doing so (<i>Contr.</i> 4.pr.2). "Color orationis antiquae, vigor novae, cultus inter nostrum ac prius saeculum medius, ut illum posset utraque pars sibi vindicare" ("the tone of old oratory, the vigour of the new, his ornament the middle point between our age and the preceding one, so that both sides were able to claim him for themselves," <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.5).</p> <p>As well as a declaimer, he was also a provocative historian with Pompeian sympathies, whose works were burned (<i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.5-8). This hostility against the current age also appeared in his declamation (<i>Contr.</i> 10.4.17-8).</p>
<b>Lesbocles</b>	<p>A <i>rhetor</i>, "magni nominis et nomini respondentis ingenii" ("who had a high reputation and talents to match it"), he shut down his school after the death of his son (<i>Suas.</i> 2.15). Contrasted with Polemon.</p> <p>Only excerpted once. Plancus thought that he put an idea too tenderly (<i>Contr.</i> 1.8.15).</p>

Name	Description
<b>Licinius Nepos</b>	A declaimer, of whom Seneca strongly disapproves. His speech is frequently included in lists of defective <i>sententiae</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.24; 9.2.28; 10.4.22; 10.5.24; <i>Suas.</i> 2.16).
<b>L. Magius</b>	The son-in-law of Titus Livius (the historian Livy), who Seneca says was popular for a time but only on account of his father-in-law ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2).
<b>Mamilius Nepos</b>	Only cited once. His speech is used to dispel the notion that all the declaimers remained in their right minds while treating <i>Controversia</i> 7.6 ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.24).
<b>Marcus Marcellus</b>	A friend of Votienus Montanus, his character is always related by others rather than Seneca himself suggesting he may not have met him ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.15; 9.5.14; 9.6.18). Nevertheless, he is described as eloquent man ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.6.18).
<b>Marullus</b>	The <i>rhetor</i> who instructed both Seneca and Latro in their youths; he was a dry speaker and quickly surpassed by Latro ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.pr.22, 24; 2.2.7; 7.2.11). Nevertheless, he does seem to have been a reasonable enough speaker and Seneca attributes positive qualities to his speech on several occasions ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.17; 2.2.7; 2.4.7).
<b>Menestratus</b>	“declamatoris non abiecti suis temporibus” (“a declaimer of some repute in his own day”), he is only cited once and his “corruptiorem sententiam” (decadent epigram,” <i>Suas.</i> 1.13) is lost.
<b>Mento</b>	Despite the frequent inclusion of his <i>sententiae</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.4; 1.5.1; 1.7.6; 1.8.3, 14; 2.6.3; 7.2.3; 9.1.5; 9.2.1; 9.3.6; 9.4.5, 22; 9.5.5; 9.6.6; 10.2.17; 10.3.6; 10.4.7), Seneca offers no comment on his speech beyond remarking that one his “sententia laudata est” (“epigrams was praised,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.22).
<b>Metrodore</b>	Cited only once. On the painter who tortured a captive for his art ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.5), “nihil est quod minus ferri possit quam quod a Metrodoro dictum est” (“nothing was harder to bear than what was said by Metrodoro,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.24).
<b>Miltiades</b>	A <i>rhetor</i> , to whom Livy attributes an elegant saying against orators who use obscure words for their own sake ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.26).
<b>Moderatus</b>	Along with Paternus and Fabius, one of those “nec clari...nec ignoti” (“neither famous nor unknown,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13).

Name	Description
<b>Murredius</b>	A foolish declaimer ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.2.14; 7.3.8), so much so that Seneca is able to simply say that he “non degeneravit” (“remained himself,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.22) before describing the foolishness of one of his epigrams. Seneca even makes a joke of his poor speech ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.28). Although the vocabulary changes, the majority of his <i>sententiae</i> have a negative descriptor attached ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.21 (obscene), 23 (obscene); 1.4.12 (stultissimam sententiam); 7.5.10, 15 (fatuam); 9.2.27 (tumidissime); 9.6.12 (mocked by Cestius for imitating one of his own epigrams that he acknowledges as foolish); 10.1.12 (ineptissime); <i>Suas.</i> 2.16 (insanierunt); <i>exceptions, Contr.</i> 7.5.10; 10.4.22).
<b>Musa</b>	A <i>rhetor</i> , former slave ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.10), and friend to Seneca’s sons ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.10). He had “multum...ingeni, nihil cordis: omnia usque ad ultimum tumorem producta, ut non extra sanitatem sed extra naturam essent” (“much talent, but no sense: everything was taken to the extreme of bombast, so as to be not only beyond reason but beyond nature,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.9).  He is not only a fool ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.10), but does not seem to understand the proper formulation of <i>sententiae</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.13).
<b>Nicetes</b>	A Greek declaimer broadly praised by Seneca ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.4.12; 9.6.18; <i>Suas.</i> 2.14). As <i>Latro</i> among the Romans, he was the only person among the Greeks who could find students willing to listen to him declaim without demanding he listen to and correct them ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.23).  While he was popular with Seneca, not everyone approved of his approach. Indeed, Tiberius himself was offended by his manner ( <i>Suas.</i> 3.7).
<b>Nicocrates</b>	A Spartan, who was an “aridus et exucus declamator” (“a dry and sapless declaimer,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.15). Offered comment on an epigram of Dorion, which is lost ( <i>Suas.</i> 2.22).
<b>L. Nonius Asprenas</b>	One of those declaimers, of whom Seneca says, “transeo istos, quorum fama cum ipsis extincta est” (“I pass over these men, whose fame died with them,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2)
<b>P. Nonius Asprenas</b>	Although cited with reasonable frequency, Seneca offers little comment on his speech beyond stating that he repeated an epigram but with stronger word choice ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.4.19).

Name	Description
<b>P. Ovidius Naso (Ovid)</b>	The poet Ovid. Descriptions of his declamation are centred around his youth, when he was a pupil of the <i>rhetor</i> Aurelius Fuscus (2.2.8). His future poetry influences Seneca's treatment of his speech as “ <i>oratio eius iam tum nihil aliud poterat videri quam solutum carmen</i> ” (even in those days his speech could be regarded as simply poetry put into prose,” <i>Contr.</i> 2.2.8).
<b>Pacatus</b>	A <i>rhetor</i> , who “ <i>ab eloquentia multum aberat; natus ad contumelias omnium ingeniis inurendas</i> ” (“was far from eloquent; born to brand insults on the talents of all,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.10). No example of speech preserved, but Seneca does record some of his insults ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr. 10-11).
<b>Pammenes</b>	“ <i>ex novis declamatoribus</i> ” (“from the new declaimers,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.4.7), he only appears once and his <i>sententiae</i> have not survived.
<b>Papirius Fabianus</b>	Subject of the second preface. He eventually gave up declamation for philosophy ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.pr.5). A description of his philosophical style is given by Seneca the Younger ( <i>Ep.</i> 100).
<b>Passienus</b>	The leading orator of his day ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.17; 3.pr.14), yet still frequently recorded as participating in and commenting on declamation. When his opinion is presented, he is recorded as disapproving of various <i>colores</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.17; 7.1.20; 7.2.12). While his speech seems to be beyond reproach (except by Cassius Severus, <i>Contr.</i> 3.pr.10), he does not escape the wit of his fellows ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.11).
<b>Paternus</b>	Along with Fabius and Moderatus, one of those “ <i>nec clari...nec ignoti</i> ” (“neither famous nor unknown,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13).
<b>Pausanias</b>	A Greek declaimer. He only appears once and Seneca does not comment on his epigram ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.5.25).
<b>Plution</b>	A Greek declaimer. He only appears once as one of those who wished to imitate Glycon’s epigram ( <i>Suas.</i> 1.11).
<b>Pompeius Silo</b>	A frequently cited declaimer, of whom Cassius Severus states, “ <i>haberetur disertus si praelocutione dimitteret</i> ” (“he would be held as eloquent, if he dismissed [his audience] after the preamble,” <i>Contr.</i> 3.pr.11).

Name	Description
<b>M. Porcius Latro</b>	A friend of Seneca's and fellow Spaniard, who studied with him under Marullus ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.pr.24). He is ranked among Seneca's first quartet ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.13) and is by far the most extensively quoted declaimer across all the books. He was unusual among <i>rhetoires</i> as he would not instruct his students directly, but instead delivered model speeches ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.3). He committed suicide in 4 CE.
<b>Postumius Accaus</b>	While no comment is offered, Seneca preserves a substantial <i>color</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.20).
<b>Potamon</b>	A <i>rhetoire</i> from Mytilene, who declaimed immediately after the death of his son ( <i>Suas.</i> 2.15). Contrasted with Lesbocles.
<b>Quin(c)tilius Varus</b>	The son-in-law of Germanicus, who, while young ( <i>praetextatus</i> ), declaimed before Cestius and was severely rebuked ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.3.10).
<b>Quintilianus</b>	One of those declaimers, of whom Seneca says, “transeo istos, quorum fama cum ipsis extincta est” (“I pass over these men, whose fame died with them,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.2). Despite this, one citation is preserved ( <i>Contr.</i> 10.4.19).
<b>Romanus Hispo</b>	A notorious <i>delator</i> . His style reflected this ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.16; 2.5.20; 9.3.11). He deviated from the prescriptive style of the school—sometimes successfully ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.3.21) and sometimes not ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.6.21).
<b>Rubellius Blandus</b>	The first eques to teach rhetoric in Rome ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.pr.5). His abilities as a declaimer as displayed when his division is judged superior to that of Latro by Buteo ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.15).
<b>Sabidienus Paulus</b>	Mentioned once, as senselessly ( <i>inepte</i> ) having Cicero reading his defence of the man sent to kill him ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.2.14).
<b>Saenianus</b>	A declaimer, whose remarks are described as either foolish (“ex illa stultorum nota,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.10) or insane (“insaniam,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.28). This quality leads to mockery by P. Vinicius ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.11).
<b>Seneca “Grandio”</b>	A contemporary from Seneca's youth. He was a man “ingenii confusi ac turbulenti” (“of disordered and wild character,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.17), who loved big things - hence, his nickname.
<b>Sepullius Bassus</b>	A declaimer, who only appears in book seven of the the <i>Controversiae</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.1.16, 23; 7.2.1; 7.5.3, 9; 7.6.12; 7.7.17). Seneca offers no overt comment on his speech.

Name	Description
<b>Statorius Victor</b>	A fellow townsman of Seneca. Although primarily a playwright, he did dabble in declamation and produced a “stultam sententiam” (“foolish epigram,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.18).
<b>Sertinius Maximus</b>	An old friend of Syriacus and victim of his wit after they had a falling out ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.36).
<b>Surdinus</b>	A student of Cestius Pius. While talented, his <i>sententiae</i> were often “praedulces et infractas” (“over-sweet and effeminate,” <i>Suas.</i> 7.12). Wittily mocked Montanus after he revealed himself to be a <i>scholasticus</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.12).
<b>Triarius</b>	A declaimer, who was very popular among the <i>scholastici</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.3.19; 7.4.10). Seneca, however, generally disapproves of his epigrams ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.6.11; 9.2.20-1; 9.6.11). He was also guilty of stealing <i>sententiae</i> from the Greek declaimers ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.1.25; 10.5.20).
<b>Tuscus</b>	“homo quam improbi animi tam infelicis ingenii” (“a man of wicked character and unhappy talent,” <i>Suas.</i> 2.22), who successfully accused Mamercus Aemilius Scaurus of <i>maiestas</i> and ended his family line.
<b>Vallius Syriacus</b>	A orator ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.4.18) and follower of Theodorus ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.36), notable for bringing harsh ideas smoothly into his narrative ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.1.21). A clever speaker, Seneca praises his wit and preserves several exchanges between Syriacus and his rivals ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.34-6).
<b>Varius Geminus</b>	<p>Predominantly appearing in the seventh book of <i>Controversiae</i>, he is a good declaimer at least one of whose <i>sententiae</i> was widely circulated (<i>Contr.</i> 7.6.15). He presents unconventional <i>divisiones</i> (<i>Contr.</i> 7.1.18-9; <i>Suas.</i> 6.11), but Seneca does not disapprove of these.</p> <p>Most strikingly, in <i>Suas.</i> 6, he is one of the few to declaim the side encouraging Cicero to beg Antony’s pardon (<i>Suas.</i> 6.12-4).</p>
<b>Vibius Gallus</b>	An eloquent declaimer, but one gripped by madness. This madness, however, was intentional—a conscious decision to enhance his eloquence ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.25).

Name	Description
<b>C. Vibius Rufus</b>	Perhaps the suffect consul of 16 CE, a declaimer who spoke “antiquo genere” (“in the old way,” <i>Contr.</i> 9.2.25). He employed vulgarisms with mixed success (inappropriate, <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.21; well received, <i>Contr.</i> 1.2.23). Despite his violation of laws imposed by the <i>scholastici</i> , he still made some popular remarks ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.28).
<b>L. Vinicius</b>	Perhaps the suffect consul of 5 CE, he was an excellent extemporary speaker, who even received praise for his skills from Augustus ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.19-20).
<b>P. Vinicius</b>	Perhaps the consul of 2 CE, a declaimer, “exactissimi vir ingeni” (“a man of extreme precision of mind,” <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.11), who could speak well but usually “sumpsit ab omnibus bene dicta” (“he stole everyone else’s witty sayings,” <i>Contr.</i> 1.4.11). The most substantial anecdote connected to P. Vinicius relates to his inability to tolerate foolishness ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.11-12). [While this anecdote begins like many others as a charming bit of wit (compare Syriacus’ wit, <i>Contr.</i> 2.1.34-6), it ends by relating Votienus’ accusation of Votienus Montanus on behalf of Narbo.]  “summus amator Ovidi” (“a great admirer of Ovid,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.4.25), he advocated for incorporating the poet’s treatment of various themes into declamatory <i>sententiae</i> .
<b>Volcacius Moschus</b>	An Apollodorean, who taught in Marseille after being convicted for poisoning ( <i>Contr.</i> 2.5.13; <i>Tac. Ann.</i> 4.43). While a reasonable declaimer, Seneca tells us, “nam dum nihil non schemate dicere cupit, oratio eius non figurata erat sed prava” (“he burned to say everything by means of a figure, with the result that his oratory was not figured by warped,” <i>Contr.</i> 10.pr.10).
<b>Votienus Montanus</b>	An orator from Narbo ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.12), exiled in 25 CE ( <i>Tac. Ann.</i> 4.42). His character is slightly confused in Seneca's work. He is recorded as delivering a long attack against declamation ( <i>Contr.</i> 9.pr), but is also called a <i>scholasticus</i> ( <i>Contr.</i> 7.5.12; 9.5.14-7).

## Appendix 2: Rhetorical works and their dates

The following table provides a brief overview of some of the major rhetorical treatises and their dates.

Work	Date of Composition	Notes
<b><i>De Inventione</i> (Cicero)</b>	91-88 BCE (Kennedy 1972, 107)	Composed while Cicero was a young man from the notebooks he kept during his own rhetorical education (Kennedy 1972, 106-7). A handbook relying on lists of techniques and terms over examples of actual speech.
<b><i>Rhetorica ad Herennium</i></b>	80s BCE	Dating based on reference to Marius' seventh consulship in 86 BCE (4.68) and to the death of Sulpicius (4.31). In form and content, it is quite similar to <i>de Inventione</i> above.
<b><i>De Oratore</i> (Cicero)</b>	completed by Nov. 55 ( <i>Ad Att.</i> 4.13.2)	Although written as a dialogue (represented as taking place in 91 BCE), Cicero explicitly connects this work to rhetorical development ( <i>Ad fam.</i> 1.9.23). As Kennedy (1972, 209-10) has observed, <i>de Oratore</i> does not rely as heavily on definition as the earlier works and this reduces the volume of technical terms found in the work.
<b><i>Partitiones oratorie</i> (Cicero)</b>	54-52 BCE (Gilleland 1961, 29-32)	For his son, this work laid out technical system of rhetoric in detail. As the opening of the work makes clear (1), it is an attempt to articulate Greek rhetorical concepts in Latin.
<b><i>Brutus</i> (Cicero)</b>	46 BCE	An account of the history of Roman oratory in the form of a dialogue (Kennedy 1972, 246-53).
<b><i>Orator</i> (Cicero)</b>	46 BCE	Addressed to Brutus, this work presents a defence of Cicero's style of oratory against the rising popularity of the Neo-Attacists (Kennedy 1972, 254).
<b><i>Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium</i> (Valerius Maximus)</b>	30-31 CE	Bloomer (1992, 2) has argued convincingly that this work was intended to provide declaimers with illustrations of model <i>exempla</i> . The compendium model is notable as Seneca takes similar course in laying out the declaimers, who had been his contemporaries.
<b><i>Controversiae and Suasoriae</i> (Seneca the Elder)</b>	c. 39 CE	See Chapter 1 ("Life and Work of Seneca in Context")

<b>Work</b>	<b>Date of Composition</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b><i>Institutio Oratoria</i> (Quintilian)</b>	c. 95 CE	A substantial treatise, which Kennedy (1972, 496) calls, “the finest statement of ancient rhetorical theory.” The work brings together much of the theory that preceded it and, from it, assembles a coherent program.
<b><i>Dialogus de Oratoribus</i> (Tacitus)</b>	102 CE (?) (Kennedy 1972, 516-7)	A dialogue reminiscent of Cicero’s earlier works. Van der Berg (2014, 46) has argued that this work demonstrates how the character types found in declamation might actually function in the public world.
<b><i>Declamationes Minores</i></b>	1st-2nd centuries CE	A collection of abbreviated <i>controversiae</i> , in which most are accompanied by <i>sermones</i> that lay out the approach the student should take to the case.
<b>Declamations attributed to Calpurnius Flaccus</b>	late 1st-2nd centuries CE	Dating informed by Sussman (1994, 6-9). A highly fragmentary collection of declamations laid out in a manner similar to the <i>major Declamations</i> .
<b><i>Declamationes Maiores</i></b>	2-4th centuries CE	A collection of complete <i>controversiae</i> . Gunderson (2003, 3) asserts that these were likely polished speeches from a professional performer.

**Appendix 3: The surviving content of the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae***

	<b>Tradition 1</b>	<b>Tradition 2</b>
<i>Controversiae 1</i>	full text (sans preface)	preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 2</i>	full text (sans preface)	preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 3</i>		preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 4</i>		preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 5</i>		<i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 6</i>		<i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 7</i>	full text (including preface)	preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 8</i>		<i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 9</i>	full text (including preface)	<i>excerpta</i>
<i>Controversiae 10</i>	full text (including preface)	preface and <i>excerpta</i>
<i>Suasoriae</i>	text (sans preface)	

The primary MSS of tradition 1 are the Codex Antverpiensis (A), the Codex Bruxellensis (B), and the Codex Vaticanus (V). All are from the ninth or tenth century and likely derive from shared archetype (C), which is now lost.<sup>1</sup>

The suggested existence of a second book of *suasoriae* depends on a notes that appears after *Suas. 7* in B, V, and the Codex Bruxellensis (D), which states that here ends the first book of *Suasoriae*, and that the second one will now begin. Sussman also observes that Seneca makes reference to a quotation from *Latro* that would have been included under a *suasoria* that does not survive, which suggests that at least some portion of that work is lost.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Müller (1887, vii-xxxxi) provides a more thorough overview of the manuscript tradition from which our current form of the text is constructed.

<sup>2</sup> Sussman 1971 and 1978.

#### Appendix 4: The form of a typical *controversia*

Below is the standard formulation for a *controversia*. For this model, I have chosen *Controversia* 1.1 as an example. The right hand column indicates those areas where a *suasoria* would deviate.

Typical presentation in Seneca's work	Example	Purpose/Notes	Variance if <i>suasoria</i>
Title	Patruus Abdicans  (The Man Who Disinherited his Nephew)	These titles are only found in the excerpted manuscript tradition (Winterbottom 1974, xix).	
Law	Liberi parentes alant aut vinciantur.  (Children must support their parents, or be imprisoned.)	The law that is at issue.	As deliberative cases, the law is absent.
Theme	Duo fratres inter se dissidebant; alteri filius erat. Patruus in egestatem incidit; patre vetante adulescens illum aluit; ob hoc abdicatus tacuit. Adoptatus a patruo est. Patruus accepta hereditate locuples factus est. Egere coepit pater: vetante patruo alit illum. Abdicatur.  (Two brothers were at loggerheads. One had a son. The uncle fell into need; though his father forbid it, the youth supported him: as a result he was disinherited, without protest. He was adopted by his uncle. The uncle received a bequest and became rich. The father has fallen into need, and the youth is supporting him against his uncle's wishes. Now he is being disinherited.)	The theme of a case added additional details, which often emphasized ethical rather than legal details (Sussman 1978, 58). It also served to introduce the characters that were in conflict.	As these were deliberative cases, the theme section serves to outline the entire problem that the speaker must help resolve; for instance, "deliberat Cicero an Antonium deprecetur" ("Cicero deliberates whether to beg Antony's pardon," <i>Suas.</i> 6). While there is no question of legal guilt or innocence, the questions are still formulated so that the speaker must argue for one of two courses of action.

Typical presentation in Seneca's work	Example	Purpose/Notes	Variance if <i>suasoria</i>
<i>Sententiae</i> (epigrams)	Seneca presents excerpts from speakers on both sides of the case. These are grouped so that the reader receives all the speech on behalf of the son and then those on behalf of the father. The transition is marked "Pars altera" ("the other side") in the text.	<p><i>Sententiae</i> are the meat of declamation; short, pity expressions designed to display originality and grab the attention of the audience. Many of the excerpts in this section are more substantial than single <i>sententia</i> but still omit the more repetitive aspects of the speech, which allows Seneca to achieve a balance between coherence and excitement (Sussman 1978, 44).</p> <p>As well as their general popularity, these were also the aspect of declamation demanded by Seneca's sons (<i>Contr.</i> 1.pr.22; 1.8.1; 7.1.26; etc.).</p>	
<i>Divisio</i> (division)	In this section, Seneca records the various approaches that speakers took to the case. The <i>divisiones</i> he presents are often credited to Latro.	The most educationally valuable part of a case (Sussman 1978, 39). Seneca, however, often deemphasizes this aspect of declamation as he fears his sons will find it boring ( <i>Contr.</i> 1.pr.22).	While <i>divisiones</i> in <i>controversiae</i> balance <i>ius</i> (law) and <i>aequitas</i> (equity), <i>suasoriae</i> rested solely on the correctness of action.
<i>Colores</i> (rhetorical spin)	A grab all section that contains singular <i>sententiae</i> and <i>colores</i> from a variety of speakers. Outside of the prefaces, this is where Seneca offers the most overt critique of the speakers he preserves.	<i>Colores</i> were not meant to refute the law of the case, but rather to encourage the fictional jury towards gentleness or harshness depending on the side being spoken. They answered the why of the case, rather than the what.	As <i>colores</i> were strongly associated with legal rhetoric, the term is not used of <i>suasoriae</i> . The answer to "what must be done" is intimately bound to "why" in the deliberative context.
Greek <i>sententiae</i>	<i>Sententiae</i> from the Greek declaimers appear overwhelmingly at the end of each case.	<p>This has been used as evidence of Seneca's prejudice against the Greeks (Sussman 1978, 26; Bonner 1949, 147; Edward 1928, xxix). For the opposing view, see Fairweather (1981, 23-5).</p> <p>It certainly has resulted in more fragmentary or lost <i>sententiae</i> among the Greeks.</p>	This does not seem to be the case in the <i>Suasoriae</i> .