Citation:

Abstract:
A mid-eighteenth-century debate among three Anglican clerics on the nature and end of eloquence indicates that their views of eloquence share a significant similarity: functionalism. I summarize each participant's position; note relevant aspects of their contexts, including purposes, institutional position, and broader cultural conditions; and explore the social and political implications of their views on the nature and ends of eloquence. By doing so, I show that eloquence serves as a site of struggle for power and prestige; and that when people use the term "eloquence" they may have significantly different views of what it means.