

**The Articulate Advocate**

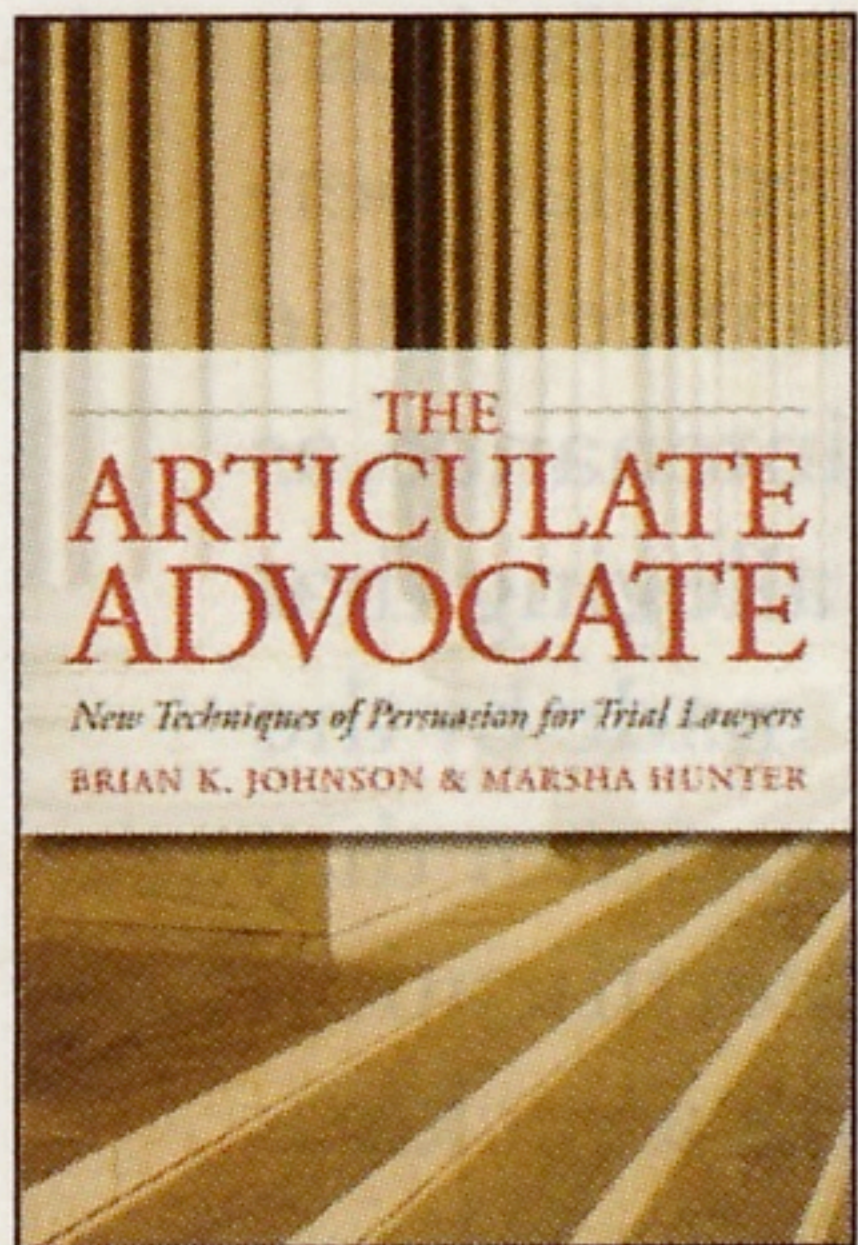
Brian K. Johnson and  
Marsha Hunter

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Reviewed by RUSS HERMAN



Delivery, delivery, delivery. The ancient Roman philosopher and orator Cicero emphasized that delivery is the key to rhetorical skill.

That message is at the heart of *The Articulate Advocate*, written by Brian Johnson and

Marsha Hunter, who teach trial skills to lawyers.

Although the book's subtitle is *New Techniques of Persuasion for Trial Lawyers*, it would be more properly described as "rediscovered and annotated principles of oral presentation and advocacy." The book provides several basic techniques of presentation in a format that the reader can easily absorb and adapt to his or her own personal style.

The text presents a valuable addition to the trial lawyer's library because it is a comprehensive treatment of public speaking, from posture and gesture to mind-set and voice. Beginning with how to stand and what to do with your hands, *The Articulate Advocate* goes on to describe the basics of breathing and how to use your voice to best advantage.

In 95 AD, the Roman orator Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory* covered some of the same subjects. Quintilian was the first paid professor of rhetoric, and his studies were based in part on accounts of Cicero's techniques. Of Quintilian's *Five Elements of Rhetoric*, two are explored in *The Articulate Advocate*: expression and delivery.

Around 97 AD, Tacitus, considered the greatest historian of the Roman

Empire, also addressed rhetoric in *Dialogus de Oratoribus*. As Cicero, Quintilian, and Tacitus explored delivery as an essential arrow in a persuader's quiver, so do the authors of this book focus on aspects of delivery rather than on other psychological and rhetorical techniques.

*The Articulate Advocate's* text and appendices—which give checklists for controlling your body, brain, and voice—offer the student of rhetoric and persuasion a guidebook to improved presentation, whether in court or other public forums. Some of the suggestions I found especially helpful are listed below.

On controlling your body:

"Make panoramic eye contact with all your jurors before you start talking. Systematically look at those seated at the four corners of the jury perimeter."

"Gestures that are larger in size and longer in duration will make you feel and appear more natural."

On controlling your brain:

"Pauses are good; silence is golden. Short pauses give you time to think ahead and jurors time to absorb."

"Be patient and don't hit the panic button when you need to mentally search for your next word or idea."

On controlling your voice:

"Breathe deeply and vigorously! The power of your speaking voice is proportional to your breath support."

"To control the pace, speak in phrases, not whole sentences. Use the rhythm of the Pledge of Allegiance."

*The Articulate Advocate's* narration is simple and direct. The book's advice should be invaluable to senior law students engaged in trial advocacy courses and moot court, as well as lawyers at any stage in their careers, from aspirational novices to seasoned courtroom advocates. ■

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