**Chapter Eight Part Two Video Transcript**

By the time you're finished reading Chapter 8, I hope you're left with a few insights that are particularly relevant for students of rhetorical theory. First, the enlightenment was marked by a new desire to use logic, reason, and rationality to improve daily life. Much of that focus was on social institutions like the church and the monarchy, that were understood by many ordinary people as stodgy and oppressive. But of course, power concedes nothing without a fight. So as you read on, notice how the institution's defenders used rhetoric to maintain their grip on power and prestige. And of course, see if you can detect similar arguments in public conversations today. Likewise, the birth of science during the Enlightenment inspired influential thinkers to question grand narratives. These early efforts will continue in physics, chemistry, and astronomy in the 19th century, and biology and social sciences in the 20th. As you read on, pay attention to how theory changes in relation to scientific advancements. Be ready to adapt those lessons to how we make sense of new scientific discoveries today, like AI-generated art, 3D printed weapons, and just the craziest nanobots injected right into our capillaries.

Politically, the Enlightenment raised complicated questions about the relationship between skepticism and trust, and doubt and cooperation. Representative democracies are not organized by reason and rationality alone. We know that. And as trust in social institutions starts to ebb and fade in a lot of Western democracies, a renewed basis for trust and cooperation in our courts, law enforcement, Congress, and elected officials is needed. So as you read on, notice how rhetorical theory and practice can develop to meet that need. Finally, the Enlightenment's focus on the natural sciences and the pursuit of mathematical certainty left little room for ethics. But we've learned since then that the natural world in some ways can be less ethically fraught than the behavior of humans. The further scientific advancement since the Enlightenment, including the combustible engine, nuclear weapons, and artificial intelligence, has sparked complicated ethical questions that are just crying out for prudent and wise answers. Not just more information and knowledge. We have enough of that. We have all of the world's information and knowledge on these supercomputers that we carry around with us all the time. We don't need necessarily more of that, at least in terms of public argument. Here's where rhetoric can intervene. If symbolic influence is not divorced from argument. That's an important caveat. Going forward, notice how as the enthusiasm for absolute certainty starts to fade a little bit, rhetorical theory will recover its ethical focus, lighting the path for more productive public conversations about the implications of scientific advancements and the natural world. At least, of course, when rhetoric is at its best.