

Editors' Introduction: The Critical Place of the Networked Archive

Tarez Samra Graban and Shirley K Rose

The Issue and Our Call to Write Together

This special issue began as a series of e-mails between December 2012 and February 2013, in preparation for the September 2013 Feminisms and Rhetorics conference on "[Rhetorics, Feminisms, and Global Communities](#)," when we issued a call for collaborators to help us critically investigate a digitized subset of Suffrage-related cartoons by American illustrator John Tinney McCutcheon.¹ From the thousands of cartoons that McCutcheon drew for the *Chicago Tribune* between 1903 and 1946, we had selected seven cartoons with themes related to American perceptions of the British women's suffrage movement, curious about how we might conduct a networked feminist scholarly project. The response to our call for FemRhet 2013 was so positive that we knew, even before the conference, we would need to involve more scholars in the work. We envisioned a longer-term project that would not merely lead to richer understandings of McCutcheon's cartoons and their political history, but also support an arc of inquiry that shows the meta-critical possibilities of a networked archive. We were especially interested in how a jointly constructed project could assume, rely on, and explore various digital affordances for networking.

After our conference sessions, and to some extent because of them, in October 2013 we were joined by two new collaborators to help us articulate different critical perspectives on McCutcheon's transnational cartoons—those panels that depicted women's suffrage in Great Britain, as well as the means (and screens) by which views of British Suffrage were circulated in the United States and Canada. Together, we hoped to offer a spectrum of critical approaches—from the analysis of visual media ecologies to the articulation of a relational network—based on the material artifacts themselves, the contexts from which they arose, and the digitized contexts in which they continue to abide. We wanted to design a vital discussion of how suffrage events could be depicted "at home and abroad," and of how new audiences, contexts, ideas, and movements could emerge from such a transnational, multi-methodological conversation.

The Essays and their Arc of Critical Inquiry

The spectrum of approaches reflected here embodies Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E. Kirsch's "enhanced inquiry model" (148). All of our collaborators in this issue approach McCutcheon's cartoons as an intentionally theorized set of relationships, moving between familiar and unfamiliar contexts in their analysis of the McCutcheon archive. Collectively, the seven collaborators

practice a kind of “tacking in” and “tacking out,” alternating between a dialectical engagement with the digitized cartoons and a critical distance of the “conscious awareness of what [they] have come to know” (Royster and Kirsch 76), and ultimately revealing a complex network of archived agents. Such enhanced inquiry places national Suffrage histories alongside facts of global recirculation, and feminist historical methodologies alongside rhetorical ecologies (Edbauer). Our contributions, then, are guided by an ethic of identifying and making accessible various sets of resources to be repurposed and re-circulated by diverse scholars for multiple purposes. By understanding the technologies on which suffrage proponents and opponents—as well as McCutcheon and his readers of the *Chicago Tribune*—depended and which they exploited, we might better understand *the means by which* arguments were networked then, and can be networked now.

The crux of our shared project is a small “archive”—narrowly constrained—that we have strategically constructed and positioned as a node from which we network connections to our individual scholarly projects and to one another’s projects as well. Yet the collective effort it represents sustains and is sustained by multiple other connections that digitization of an archive makes possible. This archive, which we named the “McCutcheon Transatlantic Suffrage Cartoon Collection” (MTSCC), was initially constituted by the seven cartoons that Shirley selected for their trans-national representations, including depictions of the suffrage movement in Great Britain, depictions of Americans’ perceptions of the British suffrage movement, and depictions of relationships between the British suffrage movement and the suffrage movement in the United States and Canada. The resulting networked archive is truly multidimensional: it occurs and exists on different planes of questioning, as our contributors’ varied approaches demonstrate, and it is only in finding the locus where these planes intersect that we that we began to understand the differences digitization makes for this way of approaching a visual archive.

The essays throughout this special issue address the possibilities or constraints afforded by delimiting and then expanding this archive. Kristie S. Fleckenstein opens the special issue by articulating how the meaning of McCutcheon’s cartoons emerges from their participation in a complex system of visual media that are “profoundly political or ethico-aesthetic at all scales” (Fuller 4). [Fleckenstein](#) argues that, when read against the background of an “ambient visual media ecology” (14, this issue), the political cartoon yields up a message that radicalizes McCutcheon’s political positions, either for or against the movement. In an enactment of Fleckenstein’s animate media, [Jaqueline McLeod Rogers](#) examines the depiction of protest spectacle and figures—including the use of costumery and ephemera—in two anti-suffrage cartoons by Canadian editorial cartoonist Newt McConnell, published between 1905-1914 in *The*

Toronto Daily News. By analyzing the relationship between each cartoon's tropes and Canadian cultural attitudes, Rogers makes the case for both McConnell's and McCutcheon's cartoons to be culturally referential and digitally re/situated according to uniquely transnational values. Following Rogers, and inspired by Royster and Kirsch's "strategic contemplation," [Sarah L. Skripsky](#) specifically situates digitized Suffrage cartoons as periodical texts that enact serialized rhetorics for readers of both present and past. Skripsky reconstructs McCutcheon's macroplots (in which his serialized cartoons form narratives centering on stock characters' progress over time) to suggest new ways that the digital recirculation of McCutcheon's cartoons can offer a three-dimensional representation of England's controversial Suffragette.

Departing somewhat from the cartoon/ist as rhetorical subject, [Jason Barrett-Fox](#) traces local and cross-continental feminisms in the archival correspondence and intertextual conversations between McCutcheon and Jane Addams through the lens of Frank D'Angelo's matrix of intertextual rhetoric, locating some of McCutcheon's visual rhetoric in a significant political position of which most extant McCutcheon archives bear little to no trace. Ultimately, Barrett-Fox argues for a feminist convergence of archived evidence that offers a new awareness of consubstantiality between the American and British women's movements, indicating a change in McCutcheon's social perspective and problematizing the notion of McCutcheon's archive as a network. To further illuminate the meta-textual quality of McCutcheon's archive, [Tarez Samra Graban](#) argues for an archival ecology that relies on circulatory notions of metadata to reconstitute what it means to work in archival spaces according to various relationships among users, and relationships between users and other connections. Graban argues for viewing McCutcheon's digital archive as a set of locatable "publics" whose geospatial coordinates reveal complex historiographic relationships between Suffragists and Suffrage histories. Together, the first five essays demonstrate the potential of a shared, strategically constructed digital archive for generating multiple meanings and interpretations that can simultaneously support and challenge one another.

The remaining two essays examine how that is accomplished in this project. Promoting the broadest understandings of "archive" and "network," Oriana Gatta and Shirley K Rose each perform a meta-analysis on different aspects of the project. Bridging computer science, artificial intelligence, and linguistics, [Oriana Gatta](#) argues that the logic of archival research is simultaneously inductive and deductive by performing keyword analysis on the first five essays comprising this issue. By tracing patterns of meaning that emerge from mining the text of these essays, Gatta reveals material, ideological, and disciplinary presumptions that both liberate and constrain our questions, specifically by pointing to the differences between our explicit and implicit attention to

terms as *methodological*. In a final postscript, [Shirley K Rose](#) shows that, just as McCutcheon's work was enabled by a network of relationships developed and maintained by the communication technologies of his day, the critical project represented in this special issue one century later is developed in networks of relationships that have been somehow sustained and provoked by the digital technologies of our time. In addition to reflecting on the fluctuating nature of the archive, Rose presents insights drawn from her interviews with the issue's collaborators about their participation in the project.

To support this critical arc, we encourage readers to open the Gallery prior to reading the first essay; McCutcheon's cartoons will provide a useful visual backdrop to Fleckenstein's discussion of ambient media ecology before being brought forward as a focus of attention from Rogers, Skripsky, and Barrett-Fox.

The Archive In its Historiographic and Technologized Contexts

Rebecca Dingo's explanation of networking arguments—as both an analytical method and a generative or invention heuristic—has been particularly useful for articulating our archival approach. We examine the texts that constitute it and connect subjects within it in “relational terms” (14), “call[ing] into question the situatedness of texts and the traditional rhetorical relationship of text, speaker, and audience and demonstrate[ing] the need to look at how rhetorics circulate and how that circulation relates to (geo)political economies” (15). Dingo explains that “this approach to rhetorical analysis examines not just arguments about women but also the ways these arguments change as they move across contexts” (14). In much the same way, we proposed this special issue at the convergence of two critical and cultural moments for feminist recovery and feminist research: six months after the centennial of the [Washington D.C. Woman Suffrage Parade](#) (in March 2013); and six months prior to the [25th anniversary of the Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition](#) (at CCCC in March 2014). We saw that developments in the digitization of print archives provided us with new opportunities for accessing materials by and about Transatlantic views on Suffrage, as well as noetic lenses for examining newspaper cartoons that shaped an informed public opinion about the international reach of the suffrage movement, even as they reveal interesting gaps.

We also anticipated a readership invested in *Peitho's* new intellectual mission to both actively engage in historical work with a feminist lens *and* actively shift feminist theoretical orientations toward the future. We anticipated readers who would be interested in archival preservation and storytelling, and readers interested in re/defining more methodologically inclusive histories in the making. Moreover, we anticipated readers who are committed to understanding

feminist histories and feminist methodologies as things that are distributed, studied, and *shared*. Rather than simply applying print-based or circulatory methodologies to a digitized archive—or assuming that McCutcheon’s Suffrage *archive* resides only in the organizational and curatorial decisions made during the digitization of material artifacts—the collaborators in this issue invite readers to ask what happens when they rethink their notions of “feminist recovery” and “critical examination” according to the imaginative, ecological, and even immaterial question of what a networked archive specifically equips us to do. How might its trans-linking provide a fuller sense of historians’ involvements in feminist recovery—past, present, and future?

To that end, this issue of *Peitho* involves several special features: a gallery of digital photographs of pages from a multi-volume scrapbook in which McCutcheon’s cartoons have been collected, organized, and stored; embedded external hyperlinks to related archives or collections; and embedded internal hyperlinks between the essays in this issue, as a way of highlighting cross-disciplinary reflections that link key claims between and among them. During our preparations for Feminisms and Rhetorics 2013, and in our collaborations and discussions since then, the McCutcheon Transatlantic Suffrage Cartoon Collection expanded several times, and we include one of its iterations in the following “[Gallery: Transatlantic Suffrage Cartoons Drawn by John T. McCutcheon for the Chicago Tribune](#).” Individual authors in this issue refer to “Gallery Image” when discussing one of the cartoons from this particular collection, and “Figure” when referring to additional illustrations or cartoons, some by McCutcheon and some by other artists, numbered serially within their essays.

It is worthwhile to note that the initial construction and subsequent expansions of the collection were, and continue to be, collaborative ventures. The images in the MTSCC are actually digital scans of pages from the “Scrapbooks of John T. McCutcheon Cartoons, 1903-1946” collection, held at Purdue University Archives and Special Collections, and containing twenty-five volumes in all. With the support of archivist Sammie Morris, Rose selected her initial set of cartoons after examining everything in the scrapbooks that was published in the *Tribune* from 1903 to 1920—the years in which the British and U.S. suffrage movements intersect with McCutcheon’s tenure at the *Tribune*. She then made the archive accessible as a password-protected online slideshow to everyone who responded to the initial call for collaborators, offering more images and expanding the size of the collection in response to collaborators’ queries and needs. Eventually, the MTSCC was supplemented with two additional Transatlantic suffrage cartoons identified by Skripsky in the process of researching her essay. At different stages of preparing for FemRhet 2013 and for this special issue, Rose selected and circulated additional sets of cartoons that—while they did not necessarily reflect McCutcheon’s Transatlantic portrayals of Suffrage—helped contextualize

our questions about the digital recirculation of McCutcheon's other portrayals of suffrage, and his other political portrayals of women more broadly.

Our selection of these images from among several thousand in the twenty-five-volume scrapbook admittedly disrupts the scrapbook's coherence as an original archive that was initially assembled over forty years' time, but we can appreciate the role that scrapbook technologies play.² Scrapbooks were a technology by which suffragists networked their arguments, documenting and (re) circulating newspaper coverage and other media that provided accounts of lectures, demonstrations, and other occasions for articulating suffrage rhetorics. For example, Susan B. Anthony assembled a thirty-three-volume scrapbook record of her political activist work; and Ellen Gruber Garvey reports that a national press bureau opened by suffragists in 1909 paid a clipping bureau to track newspaper reporting on suffrage around the country as well as maintaining its own files of clippings of suffrage-related stories from sixteen New York City area newspapers (245).

As a collection of images separated from the context of the daily papers in which they appeared and placed side by side in the order in which they originally appeared on the blank pages of these volumes, the scrapbooks make a claim for both the coherence and the evolution of his vision and perspective on local, national, and world events over the more than four decades he drew them. Late nineteenth century and early twentieth century newspaper readers were inundated with print materials, and scrapbooks allowed them to manage, collect, evaluate and organize those materials it and make them accessible again when needed—much as “present-day readers manage digital abundance with favorites lists, bookmarks, blogrolls, RSS feeds, and content aggregators, nineteenth-century readers channeled the flood of information with scrapbooks” (Garvey 3-4).

A central question for our larger project is whether and how this emphasis on network analysis can help us understand how to intentionally and strategically carry out the work of creating and sustaining a body of feminist scholarship that begins with a collective focus on a small shared archive of images. That is, how do we create a set of resources that is amenable to being repurposed and recirculated by diverse scholars employing a variety of types of inquiry for multiple purposes? One answer may lie in understanding some of the technologies that contributed to the circulation of the news informing McCutcheon's daily cartoons, technologies that he also exploited for the circulation of his own work and portrayed in the cartoons themselves. But another answer may lie in understanding how rhetorical networking takes account of the roles of *both* early 20th-century technologies *and* early 21st-century technologies, since considering the technologies by which suffrage rhetorics were networked a century ago

prepares us to recognize the role that technologies play in conducting feminist historiographical research with digital archives today.

As such, our understanding of this “rhetorical networking” is necessarily pan-historical, evident in actual responses to circulation as well as historical depictions of those responses. For example, newspaper readers’ reactions to news stories and their reliance on newspapers for information about local, regional, national, and international events are shown in cartoons such as “This Morning’s Paper,” published on February 4, 1914 (Figure 1), in which a woman scans the papers to “see how many women registered [to vote] yesterday,” or the first illustration for McCutcheon’s serialized illustrated narrative in four parts “Bab’s Ballot,” published from January 24 through March 18, 1914 (Figure 2), in which a young woman voter vows to stay informed about public issues. And the effects of speaking tours as technologies by which texts and ideas were circulated in the early 20th Century are shown in McCutcheon’s October 20, 1913 cartoon “Mrs. Pankhurst” (Gallery Image 6), in which McCutcheon acknowledges the role that British suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst’s U.S. speaking tours played in introducing and circulating Suffragette rhetoric. The texts of these speeches were often subsequently published and recirculated in the meeting minutes of the sponsoring women’s clubs and occasionally in local newspapers as well. Likewise, McCutcheon’s cartoon “Hands Across the Sea,” published on January 11, 1918 (Gallery Image 7), depicts women’s suffrage as a Transatlantic move-

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

ment aided by the cable technologies of the day, reflected in a British woman and an American woman reaching across the Atlantic to congratulate one another for their respective victories for the cause of women’s suffrage.

Just as McCutcheon's rhetorical work was enabled by the communication technologies of his day, our project collaboration has been enabled and sustained by numerous communications and archival technologies including email and email listservs, a scholarly conference, telephones, online slide-sharing software, and "cloud"-based dropboxes. Without the digital technologies that made our shared access to these cartoons possible, it is unlikely that more than one or two of us would have had the occasion to examine these cartoons and the project could not have been conducted from our geographically separate locations across the United States and Canada. Many of these technologies are so familiar as to make their role in sustaining scholarly networks taken for granted if not invisible to us, yet it is important that we recognize and acknowledge their role is sustaining our collaborative study of the networked archive.

In establishing this collection, we necessarily have delimited not only the chronological range but also the representational scope of McCutcheon's work. McCutcheon's career as a published illustrator began while he was a student at Purdue University in the late 1880s and continued until his retirement in 1946, and he estimated that during his lifetime he drew more than 10,000 cartoons on the multitude of topics that made front-page news. Yet we have limited the focus of our shared archive to his depictions of the suffrage movement between North America and Great Britain. So as not to oversimplify or underestimate the significance of his work, we articulate here a few perspectives left out of the rest of our discussions. Responses to the question of what were McCutcheon's loyalties are admittedly challenging to discern, and in retrospect they may not matter for the kinds of net-working we do. Still, in his 43-year career at the *Tribune*, McCutcheon's cross-continental themes of suffrage, race, and politics were intermixed. This often resulted in racialized tropes of ordinary citizens as well as national and international leaders, including his well-known illustrations for George Ade's 1897 collection of stories in *Pink Marsh* (viewable on Google Books) and his well-circulated "Injun Summer," the latter falling out of favor of *Tribune* readers because of its perceived racial epithet.³

The re-circulation, nearly a century after their original publication, of two other cartoons demonstrates the complexities of McCutcheon's representations of race. In "The Color Line Has Reached the North" published on July 28, 1919, McCutcheon depicts the Chicago Race Riots of that summer as a gender-neutral but regionally fraught event. In "The Missionary's Sons" first published on September 30 of that same year, McCutcheon depicts the multi-race city riots as little more than tropes reflecting a kind of ideological futility on either side of the United States border by calling attention to the irony of Uncle Sam—the "missionary" armed with "good intentions" and carrying a "mandate for mankind." McCutcheon also targets multi- and international attitudes towards race and racialized politics in the anti-fascist "At Last King Victor Emmanuel Makes the First

Figure 3. Courtesy of Hoover Institution Library & Archives. Stanford University.

Figure 4. Courtesy of Hoover Institution Library & Archives. Stanford University.

Page” dated 12 May 1936 (Figure 3), and in the undated “Meet My Family” depicting the Women’s League’s amalgamation of support roles in World War I (Figure 4), both of which we have seen as archived pen-and-ink drawings, though not in their circulated newsprint forms.

We simply began with what we identified as a critical challenge: McCutcheon’s focus was not solely Suffrage and not explicitly on transnational representations of it. Yet we saw real critical import in constructing a subset of images related to transnational perspectives on suffrage. We also saw potential in modeling this work to enable others to do the same with another archive or with other parts of McCutcheon’s archives that we have chosen to exclude. It is our hope that readers of this special issue will both recognize and imagine what other kinds of connections or inquiries seem possible to them for political cartoons, for Suffrage, and for feminist criticism—not only in tropes they see reflected through examining the cartoon/ist as rhetorical subject, but also in the kinds of delivery or presentation that might help us to problematize the intellectual space of something like a digital archive.

[Tarez Samra Graban](#) and [Shirley K Rose](#), Guest Editors
(click editor name for link to bio)

Notes

- 1 The Editors are grateful for the generous assistance of Sammie L. Morris, University Archivist at Purdue University Special Collections, and for two anonymous reviewers who offered formative feedback on this special issue.

- 2 The multi-volume collection of McCutcheon cartoon scrapbooks held in the Purdue Archives and Special Collections has features of both the newspaper clipping scrapbook provided by clipping services and the personal scrapbook of items of interest to the creator. According to Purdue Archivist Sammie Morris, Shaw McCutcheon, John T. McCutcheon's youngest son and the donor of the scrapbook collection, reported that the scrapbook collection had been kept by a personal friend of the family—evidently one of longstanding, as the scrapbooks cover a period of more than forty years.
- 3 For a discussion of the Tribune's decision to cease reprinting "Injun Summer," see the [September 30, 1907](#) article by reporter Sid Smith.

Works Cited

- "At Last King Victor Emmanuel Makes the First Page" (12 May 1936). John Tinney McCutcheon Cartoons, Box 1, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University.
- D'Angelo, Frank. "The Rhetoric of Intertextuality." *Rhetoric Review* 29.1 (2010): 31-47. Print.
- Dingo, Rebecca. *Networking Arguments: Rhetoric, Transnational Feminism, and Public Policy Making*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2012. Print.
- Edbauer, Jenny. "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35.4 (2005): 5-24. Print.
- Fuller, Matthew. *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT P, 2005. Print.
- Garvey, Ellen Gruber. *Writing with Scissors: American Scrapbooks from the Civil War to the Harlem Renaissance*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.
- Harrison, Patricia Greenwood. *Connecting Links: The British and American Woman Suffrage Movements, 1900-1914*. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 2000. Print.
- "Meet My Family" (n.d.). John Tinney McCutcheon Cartoons, Box 1, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University.
- MSP 14, Scrapbooks of John T. McCutcheon cartoons, Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives & Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University.
- Royster, Jacqueline Jones, and Gesa E. Kirsch. *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2012. Print.