

Changing the Landscape: *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies*, Five Years Later

Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition

I. Introduction Lisa Mastrangelo

Five years ago, Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch published *Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies*. Met with much critical acclaim, the book offered historians of rhetoric, composition and literacy studies a way to read, interpret, and analyze historical texts through the lenses of social circulation, critical imagination, strategic contemplation, and globalizing. An immediate success, the text had—and continues to have—a major impact on the historical feminist thinking and work of our field.

Often, when we publish scholarship in our field we send it out into the ether, with little sense for how it might be received or used in the field. Reviews tell us some information; citations of our work in the work of others tell us a bit more. But with Royster and Kirsch, the effect of their text on the frameworks and readings that we create has been swift and powerful. Their framework has offered us a way to read and re-read the texts and histories that we have put aside in the past because we weren't sure how to read them. They have moved us beyond the essentialized notion of adding voices to the history of rhetoric and composition, and have instead compelled us to more radically (re)view our work. They've pushed us to ask harder questions about intersectionality and to be more critical of our micro and macro histories, "good" vs. "bad" narratives, and the ways that our stories get distributed and move about in the world.

Initially, we had hoped to present a variety of pieces about Royster and Kirsch's work at the Cs 2018 annual Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition SIG, followed by robust discussion. Once the Advisory Board voted to cancel the meeting in response to the NAACP travel advisory for Kansas City, however, we worked to try to find alternate

ways to bring you the evening's scholarship. As a result, we have asked the participants to produce short pieces, more akin to conference presentations, to reflect their points. The committee chose these pieces initially because of their diversity of focus—some address classroom practices, some address research methods, and some address both.

These four pieces overlap one another in a variety of ways. David Gold, for example, discusses his students' work revising Wikipedia pages on women's rhetorics or feminist rhetoricians. Students then examined their own work in an attempt to see whether it reflected the feminist principles of critical imagination, strategic contemplation, and/or social circulation. Nicole Khoury also discusses Royster and Kirsch's pedagogical effects, noting the ways that their theories have helped her develop a transnational, experimental, innovative approach to teaching Middle Eastern feminisms. Khoury builds on Royster and Kirsch's call for self-reflexivity to help her students acknowledge and examine their own assumptions and beliefs. Michael Faris discusses the influence of Royster and Kirsch on his scholarship. Building on Royster and Kirsch's notion of "assaying the field," Faris employs what he calls a "distant reading" approach to create aggregate citation maps that track diversity, or the lack thereof, in queer scholarship in rhetoric and composition. Last, Rebecca Dingo, Rebecca Reidner, and Jen Wingard offer us a way to build on Royster and Kirsch by reading the contrasting public receptions of girl-activists Malala Yousafzai and Ahed Tamimi through a transnational feminist lens.

Finally, in an effort to continue the conversation about the ways in which their text has been received, we include a response from Royster and Kirsch themselves. We are fortunate to have scholars with such generosity of spirit as Jackie Royster and Gesa Kirsch, who have carefully crafted and shepherded their groundbreaking work into the field and who are now engaging in response to its reception. Their contributions are a tremendous gift for those of us who have and will use their work to inform and shape our own.

We hope that these pieces are starting points for much future dialogue and discussion. Enjoy!

II. Teaching Feminist Rhetorical Practices: Beyond Recovery in the Undergraduate Classroom

David Gold

Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E. Kirsch's assertion that feminist rhetorical scholarship is moving beyond "rescue, recovery, and (re)inscription" (31) is both descriptive and aspirational. We are not simply doing more than recovering the lost or neglected voices of proto-feminist forebears, we must

do so if we wish to develop a richer understanding of the lives of the women we study, whether we identify with them or not. If this is a challenge for us as professional scholars—consider our slowness, for example, to engage with conservative women’s rhetorics (Hogg, Mattingly)—it must be even more daunting for our undergraduate students.

Students new to feminist historiography sometimes read through a presentist lens, judging rhetors by their conformance to contemporary standards of justice or intersectional awareness. They often seek heroes, and it is hard not to share their delight at discovering a figure with whom they can identify or their frustration with a historical erasure. Despite this welcome engagement, students may have difficulty moving beyond an either/or lens in contextualizing the figures they encounter. “I was so with Margaret Sanger, until I got to the part about eugenics.” “Why did Carrie Chapman Catt have to say that about the ignorant and the illiterate?”

In response to such deeply felt personal reactions, the traditional historiographic dictum of asking students to avoid presentism or adopt a disciplinary stance can only go so far. How do we help them to critically engage not only with the complex ideologies of the rhetors they study but their own personal feelings about them? How do we help them to reconcile the tension scholars often experience between wishing to both “study [a] situation critically” and “honor, memorialize, [and] celebrate” a subject? How do we help them to “resist coming to judgment too quickly” (Royster and Kirsch 141)?

Feminist Rhetorical Practices, of course, details strategies for working through these complex questions of ethical practice; like many of the contributors to this symposium, I have recommended this text to students and found it a valuable touchstone for my own scholarship and teaching. In my undergraduate courses, I have also had success employing Kirsch and Royster’s precursor CCC article, “Feminist Rhetorical Practices: In Search of Excellence,” which introduces three critical concepts later elaborated in their monograph: critical imagination, strategic contemplation, and social circulation.

In this essay, I describe how students took up this critical vocabulary in a recent upper-level writing class, “Women’s Rhetorics from Suffrage to SlutWalks,” which concluded with two major assignments, a 10-15-page research project followed by a Wikipedia editing project. The final project asked students to make use of their new-found disciplinary knowledge by finding a Wikipedia page on a topic relevant to the class “that could use some improving” and then editing it; students had the option of working in groups of up to four for this component.

I introduced Kirsch and Royster two-thirds of the way through the course, as students were completing the first drafts of their research projects, asking them to “pick a critical term or theme” from the text and “describe how you

might take it up in your own research.” For the Wikipedia project, I explicitly wrote Kirsch and Royster into both the formal proposal and final reflection, first asking students to describe how they “might employ the feminist principles” they introduced to improve the entry, then asking for a justification for their most important edits: “What principles of feminist inquiry did you employ in making these changes? What might Kirsch and Royster...say about your interventions?”

The public nature of Wikipedia editing is an ideal vehicle for encouraging students to think not only about how scholarship gets made, but how it gets used. The gendered dynamics of the site (Gruwell), particularly its neutral point of view policy, also encourages engagement with questions central to ethical feminist scholarly practice. Many pages, while factually accurate, may leave readers with little sense of why that information might matter to a given constituency; moreover, editing on the site, though styled as collaborative and egalitarian, often involves the overwriting of other editors’ contributions, and there is a visible hierarchy of editing privileges.¹

I received written consent to use class material from twelve of sixteen students, resulting in eight project narratives available for analysis, six of which I treat below, taking into account space considerations.² Overall, the two most salient themes that emerged for students were critical imagination and social circulation; those articulating the former emphasized the importance of interrogating their biases both in favor of and against their subjects; those articulating the latter emphasized the importance of negotiating interpretive tensions among various stakeholders as well as a desire to seek “connections among past, present, and future” (Kirsch and Royster 660). Fewer students explicitly invoked the principle of strategic contemplation, though it is possible to see it at work as they contemplate how best to evaluate their subjects and present their findings.

The Wikipedia projects were rich and varied. As part of the exercise, one student created a Wikipedia page where none had existed previously for Progressive-era African American educator and activist Adella Hunt Logan.

1 Wikipedia editors are overwhelmingly male (Khanna), and it has been suggested that the site’s “sometimes-fighty” editing culture might discourage some women from participating (Gardner; see also Bear and Collier); scholars have also found differences in the treatment of male and female subjects (Reagle and Rhue; Wagner et al.).

2 The University of Michigan Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (registration number: IRB00000246) has classified this study as exempt from ongoing review.

Without an extant structure to revise, the student “drew upon critical imagination in an attempt to look at Logan in a historical context and produce something meaningful,” organizing the entry by her education, teaching, and activism “because of how significant they were to her.” Likewise, the editor of the Jodi Picoult page reflected on the challenges of maintaining a scholarly stance while acknowledging Picoult’s passionate commitments. “I found it hard to discuss a woman who has done so much for the feminist community without inputting my own point of view and biases.... With more time, I would like to try and give context to her work in the feminist community and contextualize her work more.”

The editors of the Hyde Amendment page considered the dynamics of social circulation along with critical imagination as they sought to interrogate the potential biases of both editors and readers. They found that the page, though “factually correct,” downplayed debates over the legislation, which might lead readers to conclude that it “is not controversial.” To edit the page, they introduced and made explicit both pro- and anti-choice arguments. “We...tried to use Kirsch and Royster’s critical imagination to disengage ourselves from our own beliefs in order to more fully consider the arguments of the anti-abortion side. We were very conscious...that the page for the Hyde Amendment has an anti-choice following, and so made sure to stay balanced.... [But] it was also critical that we added a section that described the negative effects of the amendment. Before we edited, it was unclear why anyone might oppose the legislation.” Through their application of this critical term, these students recognized that even a page with factually accurate information might mask a bias or agenda due to omissions.

For the editor of the Rebecca Walker page, the most salient concept was social circulation, which she saw as fundamental to the structure of Wikipedia itself. “When editing Walker’s page, I asked myself how Walker fits into feminist history and how I could best display that on her page, and how I could add links to other pages that would make it so that Walker is one piece in the giant puzzle of feminism and social activism.” This editor also “tried to use strategic contemplation by considering my own feelings and admiration for Walker.... By being aware of my own perspectives...I was able to change the tone of her page to reflect her importance in feminism without making [it] sound wholly biased or exaggerating of her life.”

The editor of the Black Feminism page also invoked the principles of strategic contemplation and social circulation as she tried shape a page she initially found heavy on detail but light on organizing principles. “While a lot of the information might have been important, historically speaking, I tried to keep in mind that this was a Wikipedia page where people typically go for quick summaries.” She wrote an introductory section fronting intersectionality as a

theme in black feminism and broke up larger sections. "I tried to employ the idea in Kirsch and Royster's piece that the principles of black feminism were not stuck in the past (as the previous page version might have you think), but that it was evolving and influencing future generations of feminists.... I think if someone were to read my edited version, they might...see more clearly the way that black feminism is having an effect on the present as well."

The editor of the Gloria Anzaldúa page likewise found herself balancing her own perspective with that of previous editors. In her case, she found the page "too informal," overemphasizing biographical details while "treating her most acclaimed writings as merely personal narrative." In response, she added a section, "Themes in Writing," through which she tried to honor the interests of previous contributors while also emphasizing Anzaldúa's "critical and theoretical" contributions, attempting "to show that she wrote from personal experience in order to make a political point." In making these changes, she employed strategic contemplation while also considering the social circulation of scholarship: "While it may not be possible to be completely objective, it is possible to be subjective while remaining ethical and accurate." Although it was a "subjective choice" to focus on "her works and ideas rather than her personal life...it was also based on my assumption that those seeking information from the page would be more interested in Anzaldúa's writing than anything else."

Through this exercise, I hoped to encourage the practice of an "ethics of hope and care" (145) that Royster and Kirsch seek to foster through their larger volume. The results suggests to me not only the generative power of these scholars' work, but the potential of our undergraduates to powerfully engage with—and embrace—the feminist rhetorical practices we seek to teach. In writing for Wikipedia's visible and at-times responsive public audience, students directly experienced the stakes of feminist scholarship in a manner that might as yet be abstract for them in even the most engaged of "traditional" research projects.

Students, of course, did not evenly apply Royster and Kirsch's framework, in part, perhaps, because I did not explicitly ask them to. I offered a loose heuristic because I wanted to see how students would take up Royster and Kirsch's critical terms on their own; in a future iteration, I might treat them more systematically, modeling how each might be applied (or how past students have applied them) to particular writing challenges. Of course, no one analytical model can account for the complex gender dynamics of Wikipedia, and in a future class I might spend more time preparing students for the specific challenges they might face as feminist scholars writing for the site. Finally, I might ask students how they might build on Royster and Kirsch. Much of our academic scholarship is written for an audience favorably disposed to feminist

inquiry; how do we engage with audiences that might be indifferent or hostile to our project or that embrace discursive strategies we find problematic? What do critical imagination, strategic contemplation, social circulation, and globalization look like in decidedly non-feminist online public writing spaces? These are questions I will take up with my students—and hope other feminist rhetorical scholars will seek to answer as well.

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III. Self-Reflexive Pedagogy: Reading Against the Western Tradition to Teach Global Feminist Rhetorics

Nicole Khoury

Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch move past the emergence of feminist rhetorics grounded in historiographic approaches focused on rescue, recovery and reinscription of women's voices. They point to the "edges that this work has formed in remaking the landscape" (43). This critical move provides scholars who focus on transnational or global feminist rhetoric with an opening into the scholarly conversation in the field, one I struggled to find before. That my work lies at the edge, or on the fringe, often manifested as concerns expressed about my work's reception or criticism of a lack of grounding in the field for the kind of research I do in feminist rhetoric in the Middle East. The strength of the work at the edge, however, is that it interrogates the foundations of our field and is central to challenging the persistence of our borders, disciplinary or otherwise. Much of our field is grounded in Western traditions, Royster and Kirsch explain, and even though the recovery work of feminist scholars locates women's voices outside these frameworks, "they have still been measured, compared, and held to the standards of evaluation for Western traditions" (127).

Since the publication of *Feminist Rhetorical Practices* in 2012, we have seen more publications and presentations with increasing attention to global feminist rhetorics, tying rhetorical studies, global studies and feminism or gender studies together in new and invigorating ways. The International Society for the History of Rhetoric's 2017 conference included a panel on transnational feminist rhetorics. Presentations included African, Italian, and Chinese women's activism and feminism. The Rhetoric Society of America conferences in 2012, 2014, and 2016 further challenged the acceptance of rhetoric's Western heritage, with a significant number of presentations directly related to women's practices and an emergence of a focus on global feminist rhetoric. Presentations focused on geographical locations (examples include Columbia, Iran, Argentina), but also global perspectives in rhetorical performances, such as Hillary Coenen's "The One Girl (R)Evolution: Malala Yousafzai's Multicultural Girl Power Rhetoric," Danielle Saad's "Online Counter-Narratives of Muslim Women," and Rebecca Dingo's "Networking Arguments: Rhetoric, Transnational Feminism, and Public Policy Writing."

However, it is the Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s) Conference, sponsored by the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition, that has led the emergence of global feminist rhetoric presentations by

including a larger number of presentations that challenge Western rhetorical tradition. The 2015 and 2017 conferences enhanced our understanding of rhetorical action and practice within a larger geopolitical context. Presentations included a wide range of global rhetorical strategies of Egyptian women, Chinese women, Korean women, Cherokee women writers, Nepali female singers, Western Bahá'í women, Syrian refugees, Northern Japanese mothers, Arab immigrants in Brazil, and transnational feminists in digital spaces, among many others (across scope, rhetorical subject, context or condition, issue and methodology).

Special Interest Groups at the Conference on College, Communication, and Composition further indicate a growing community of scholars researching global rhetorical practices. The Non-Western Rhetoric/Global Rhetoric SIG, for example, has a growing number of participants every year that publish on global rhetorical practices. Co-chair Keith Lloyd's recent publication, "The Rhetoric of Performance in India: The Confluence of *Nyaya Vada* (logic) and *Sadharanikaran* (performance) in Past and Present Discourses,"³ and "Early Nyāya Logic: Rhetorical Aspects," explores Indian rhetorical traditions to move beyond Greco-Roman rhetorical traditions. Another chair is a scholar who focuses on rhetorics of Palestinian resistance movements to Israeli occupation. Members also include scholars focused on global feminist rhetorics, including co-chair Tarez Samra Graban, whose publications include "Decolonizing the Transnational Archive: Re/Writing Rhetorical Histories of How African Women (Can) Govern." and "Humoring the Female Pol: Irony, Consciousness-Raising, and 'Third-Culture' Discourse" in *Women and Comedy: History, Theory, Practice*. As a co-chair, my own work on Middle Eastern feminist rhetorics— *Enough Violence: The Importance of Local Action to Transnational Feminist Scholarship and Activism*, and a digital project, *Pioneering Feminisms in Lebanon and the Middle East: A Timeline* recovering women's voices, from a 45-year archive of feminist activism in the Middle East—explores articulations of arguments for gender equality at the intersection of multiple national constituencies and discourses, including public, legal, religious, and private ones.

As researchers of new areas of inquiry, we face the challenge of acquiring new knowledge and measuring and valuing new knowledge. These presentations and publications indicate more than presence, as Royster and Kirsch initially observed, and more than an "add women and stir" approach to researching women (Harding qtd. in Kirsch and Ritchie 9). These publications and communities indicate a field reaching beyond Western borders and heritage and a shifting of our measures of evaluation, a redefining of rhetorical

3 The publisher left out the diacritical marking over *Nyaya* in the title of this article, so in the spirit of appropriate citation, we are doing the same.

practices, and a challenge of the limitations of our field. It is a move from the periphery closer towards the center.

As we reach beyond our borders and rethink the standards by which we measure and evaluate contributions to the field, we also need to address our pedagogical approach to teaching alterity texts. One suggestion in Royster and Kirsch's approach is to use our classrooms as innovative experimental sites: "We look toward the world, but simultaneously we have the opportunity to look at the world in us—within our nation, in our communities, in our classrooms" (127). I'd like to raise some of the concerns I have faced when teaching Arab feminism and Middle Eastern feminist rhetorics, in the hope that these questions and concerns can help us understand the larger implications of teaching and researching global rhetorics in institutions across the United States at this pivotal point in our political history.

My pedagogical approach to teaching Middle Eastern feminisms is one that calls into question our own beliefs and values, one that is a necessary step towards practicing an ethics of care grounded in feminist theory and hopefully one that will bring us towards a more comprehensive understanding of the limits and potentials of our field, our beliefs, and our traditions. I have taught a version of an Arab and Middle Eastern rhetorics course for several years now, at different national and international institutions. I have found two central pedagogical issues to teaching alterity texts within the classroom: how can teachers of writing and language in U.S. universities approach the teaching/reading of "other" texts in a way that is not Eurocentric in its perspective? And, as teachers, how can we structure the classroom to avoid power imbalances as we bear the responsibility for representing these translated cultural texts to students?

Middle Eastern feminist texts and rhetorical production are often misread through a Western lens in many ways. For instance, they are often read through preconceived binaries such as secular versus religious. When such literature is discussed in a Western context, one needs to "challenge the free-floating Orientalist 'knowledge' which predetermines popular perceptions of the Middle East, without subverting the critical analysis of Arab societies which writers undertake" (Majaj 3). One of the course texts I assign is an anthology of translated work titled *Opening the Gates: An Anthology of Arab Feminist Writing*, edited by Margot Bardan and miriam cooke. Some of the pieces in the anthology may not be considered feminist by those working within a Western definition of feminism. One such example is "Lecture on Clitoridectomy to the Midwives of Touil in Mauritania," a lecture given in 1987 by Zainaba, a local nurse. The lecture on female circumcision was part of a training project addressing the health status of women in Mauritania to improve midwives' basic knowledge of hygiene when treating women. The piece contains an extended

introduction by Elizabeth Oram, who served as a Peace Corps volunteer working extensively with the Maure ethnic group in rural areas organizing community health projects in Mauritania, West Africa, from 1985 to 1987. In Oram's introduction, she explains that the lecture is an important example of "the development of an awareness of female circumcision and the power women have over the perpetuation of this practice" (Zainaba 63). In addition to teaching the women about safety and hygiene, Oram observes, Zainaba's lecture "is teaching them about power and responsibility" (65).

The text on clitoridectomy often evokes a reaction from students that the practice is a human rights violation of women's bodies and should be addressed as such. They also respond by questioning the religious and cultural beliefs of the women who upheld FGM practices, often evoking the secular/religious debate that plagues much of the discourse on the Middle East. However, the secular/religious binary is inherently problematic in the historical and postcolonial context of the Middle East. The existence of a history of Western hegemony and colonialism marks global political and social movements, and while we attempt to read postcolonial texts outside of Western tradition, the larger implications and imprints of Western hegemony are difficult to ignore. Furthermore, the Human Rights standard is in and of itself embedded in a long history of Western cultural production of values. Human Rights scholars and activists have observed that the values embedded in transnational discourse include values, such as individualism, autonomy, and equality, that challenge local cultural contexts and often reinforce heteronormativity and gender norms of the nuclear family. Sally Engle Merry calls the paradox of localizing transnational norms the "making of human rights in the vernacular" (qtd. in Dennerlein 11). Human rights must first be revised and redefined with an eye towards the local cultural values to resonate with local contexts. Zainaba's lecture, for example, emphasizes the responsibility of the midwives and the power women have over this practice without invalidating the practice. A more thorough understanding of the history of Mauritania and cultural beliefs reveal a health practice that has been deeply entrenched in Mauritanian tradition. Speaking with credibility as someone who is part of the culture, Zainaba can address health issues and raise awareness without directly challenging the women and their beliefs surrounding the practice.

What methodologies allow us to think through some of the issues we face as academics researching new areas of inquiry? I believe that a self-reflexive approach—one that emphasizes an "ethics of care"—is crucial not only as an inquiry strategy for scholarly work, but also as an inquiry framework for pedagogy grounded in listening, engagement, and reflexivity. Kirsch and Ritchie call for a "rigorously reflexive examination of ourselves as researchers that is as careful as our observation of the object of our inquiry" and acknowledge that

"we can never fully step outside our culture in order to examine our assumptions, values, and goals. No attempt at analyzing our assumptions is neutral or value-free; it is always a culturally and politically charged activity" (9-10). Furthermore, Sharon McKenzie Stevens observes that in branches of critical anthropology "reflexivity is now an assumed writing practice. A necessary means of acknowledging the instability of any attempted conceptual splitting of subject and object. In reflexive practices, the ethnographer-author locates herself textually relative to the culture studied, thereby acknowledging that position affects perspective" (167). It is this notion of reflexivity I employ to design the course on Middle Eastern feminism.

The course gives students the opportunity to learn how to conduct ethical and professional research on a subject that is highly sensitive, so the first couple weeks are spent uncovering our preconceived notions about the subject and learning how to see ourselves as researchers first. We explore the globalization of Western hegemony and the implications of reading Middle Eastern feminist texts from a Western classroom. We begin the course by reading Susan Muaddi Darraj's "Understanding the Other Sister: The Case of Arab Feminism," Nawar Al-Hassan Golley's "Is Feminism Relevant to Arab Women?," Lila Abu-Lughod's "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and its Others," and Chandra Talpade Mohanty's "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." Students are asked to question what they know and how they know it, uncovering underlying assumptions in the knowledge they hold about the Middle East, for example, and situating themselves in the research to identify their positions of value before delving into the material. Once we address the material, students are asked to observe how we read texts, what shapes our approach to such texts, and how we can think about the text in alternative ways.

With such an approach, students become the subjects of their own study, where they are studying themselves in relation to the texts we read. Providing opportunities for students to study their own approach to different cultures and texts, to question their position in the classroom, and to acknowledge that their values and beliefs are grounded in long-standing histories of Western thought that shape their perceptions, readings, and analysis of texts, is a pedagogical approach that provides students more than just content knowledge about global feminist rhetorics. It provides them with the understanding of how global and transnational discourses are implicated in knowledge-making and how power imbalances have historically shaped the production of knowledge and their role in this production.

I do not mean to insinuate that reflexive writing is homogenous or that different approaches to self-reflexive writing do not exist, or, if they do, they all produce the same type of textual authority. As teachers, we should remain

aware that the students in the classroom are not ethnographers in direct contact with the culture they are writing about. However, in diverse classrooms, many students have been to the Middle East, worked with Middle Eastern refugees, have researched or worked with different communities, or are themselves Middle Eastern. Students often experienced difficulties crossing the cultural divide, similar to ethnographers writing about a culture they are not necessarily a part of, but by the end of the class students are able to question their assumptions and the legitimacy of various discourses.

More important than what we know is how we come to know it and how knowledge is created. As knowledge is rhetorically created, we are responsible for our participation in that process. A self-reflexive process and pedagogy can help us locate places we can begin to rethink our approach to researching and teaching about global feminist rhetorics. As teachers, researchers, ethnographers, or interested observers, we need to incorporate self-reflexive practices to open up new spaces for writing and creating knowledge. We should be aware of our own values, the values and measures in which the field is grounded, and how these shape the way we measure and value voices outside of our traditional frameworks. We need to make space for global feminist rhetorics by critically examining our edges, as Royster and Kirsch do, and reorient our focus to allow for an inclusion of a range of voices in our field. The self-reflexive pedagogical approach described above enacts their call to consider transnational feminist rhetoric more fully, where classrooms become sites of exploration for looking to the world and within us, and allows our students opportunities to engage with the practice of self-reflexivity. As we pay close attention to how global feminist rhetorics are employed beyond our borders, it is important to consider how we engage with its presence at home, within our classrooms and ourselves.

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IV. Assaying Queer Rhetoric: Distant Reading the Rhetorical Landscape for Queers and Feminists of Color

Michael J. Faris

Citation is feminist memory. Citation is how we acknowledge our debt to those who came before; those who helped us find our way when the way was obscured because we deviated from the paths we were told to follow. —Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (15-16)

In their article on feminist historiography and the digital humanities, Jessica Enoch and Jean Bessette build on Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa Kirsch's *Feminist Rhetorical Practices* and argue that feminist rhetorical studies should meaningfully engage with digital humanities methods. They suggest that one possibility for such engagement is to draw on distant reading

methods to explore the social circulation of women's writing "and how it has travelled across time and space" (Royster and Kirsch 60; Enoch and Bessette 643). To build on Enoch and Bessette's suggested practice, I provide the early stages of a distant reading project of queer rhetoric, composition, and literacy (RCL) scholarship to "assay" the field for the circulation and presence of queer and feminist scholars and writers of color.

In *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*, Royster and Kirsch provide "a topology for feminist rhetorical practices" (13) by drawing on geological metaphors to "assay" the field, "determining presence, absence, and viability as [they] identify known, unconsidered, and even unnoticed properties, elements, conditions, and structures" (15). Whereas Royster and Kirsch assay RCL studies through metaphors of mining (a metaphor for traditional close reading approaches), a distant reading approach is more akin to using satellite imagery to map the field. Distant reading involves a practice of not reading, of reading texts (in the hundreds, thousands, or even millions) from a distance and in the aggregate. Using computational methods, distant reading methods can help reveal patterns about a corpus of texts, as Derek Mueller shows in his 2012 *College Composition and Communication* analysis of cited scholars in the journal (see also Kirschenbaum).⁴

I came to this project while compiling an annotated bibliography of queer rhetorical scholarship with my co-author Matt Cox (see Cox and Faris). Matt and I read and annotated over 200 articles, books, and book chapters for this project, and I was surprised by how few of these publications seemed to be deeply engaged in intersectional work or the genealogies of queer thinking

4 A note on the politics of citation: The term "distant reading" is most often attributed to Franco Moretti, an Italian literary and digital humanities scholar. In November 2017, Kimberly Latta publicly accused Moretti of rape when she was a graduate student and he was a visiting professor at the University of California–Berkeley in the 1980s (Hsu and Stone). As feminist scholars, what is the ethics of citing those accused of rape, sexual assault, or harassment? To not ask this question is to pretend that our publishing practices are somehow divorced from the material realities of our work environments—where sexual harassment and assault are far too prominent and too often ignored. Do we cite someone accused of sexual assault? Do we ignore their intellectual contribution to the project? Do we acknowledge their contribution but not formally cite them? I have chosen this last tactic here, mostly so I can explicitly call attention to these questions. I am reminded of Sara Ahmed's metaphor: "Citations can be feminist bricks: they are the materials through which, from which, we create our dwellings" (*Living* 16). Do I want to build a house with bricks forged by the master's tools (to echo Audre Lorde)?

found in feminist and queer scholars and activists of color. Further, the “stars” of queer theory seemed to dominate the works cited and references lists in queer RCL scholarship: Judith Butler, Michael Warner, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Michel Foucault, Jack Halberstam, and so forth. While working on this bibliography, I was also becoming acquainted with digital humanities methods and citation network analysis and developed a curiosity about the citation practices of this emerging subfield of rhetoric. Citation network analysis is useful for visualizing and analyzing the networks of scholars who are cited in a corpus of texts.

To conduct this initial analysis, I started by developing a corpus of texts: I collected every journal article and chapter from edited collections listed in Matt’s and my bibliography that was authored by an RCL scholar or appeared in an RCL journal. (I am for the moment ignoring rhetorical scholarship from communication studies, which I hope to add as I expand on this project.) I then chased down citations and looked for RCL scholarship that Matt and I didn’t include in our bibliography. This resulted in a list of 180 journal articles and book chapters that addressed sexuality, queer thinking, or transgender theory published between 1981 and 2014 (publications in this subfield before 1981 didn’t typically include citations, and I excluded full monographs because their long works cited list can be too influential on the network). I then entered the authors they cited into Excel spreadsheets and compiled and visualized this data using the open-source software Gephi.

The resulting citation network included 169 source texts (11 of the texts in the corpus didn’t cite other texts) citing over 2400 authors. This network is visualized in Figure 1, which visualizes source texts (white nodes) and authors cited (red nodes; larger size means more heavily cited). In order to provide a less cluttered visualization, I filtered out authors who were cited fewer than six times and only labeled the 15 most cited authors. Four authors are quite prominent in this network: Butler, cited by 57 texts, Jonathan Alexander (46), Sedgwick (43), and Foucault (43). The next 11 most cited authors are Harriet Malinowitz, Warner, Jacqueline Rhodes, bell hooks, José Esteban Muñoz, David Wallace, Donna Haraway, Michelle Gibson, Halberstam, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Audre Lorde.

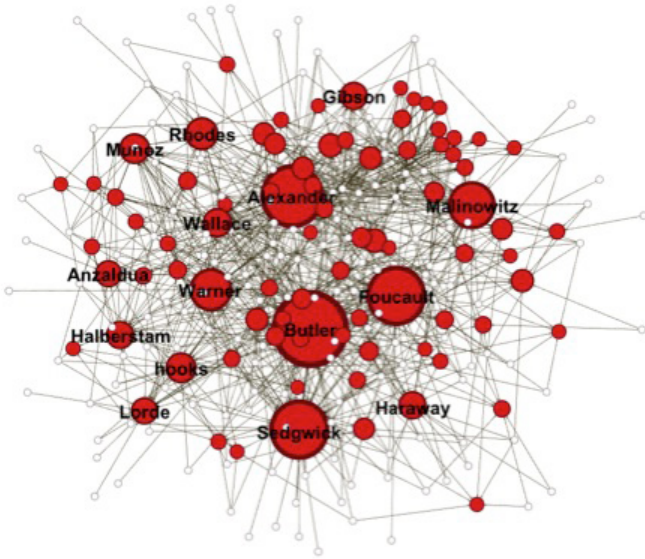


Figure 1. A visualization of the citation network. White nodes are source texts and red nodes are cited authors. The larger the node size, the more citations that author received. The 15 most-cited authors are labeled.

Figure 2 represents a co-citation network of the same dataset. In this visualization, authors are connected in the network if they are cited together in the same text, or co-cited. I've filtered this visualization to show only authors who are cited together at least three times. I've also labeled some of the non-RCL scholars who are most "authoritative" in the network—meaning that, like a website that turns up in Google's search results, they rose to the top because they're connected to others that an algorithm determines are also authoritative. What I find striking about this network visualization is how the most authoritative non-RCL authors in the network are the "stars" of queer theory: Butler, Sedgwick, Foucault, and Warner. The list of most authoritative authors in this network is heavily white and heavily star-studded. Of the 60 most authoritative authors in this network, only four are queer theorists or feminists of color from outside the field: Muñoz, hooks, Anzaldúa, and Lorde.

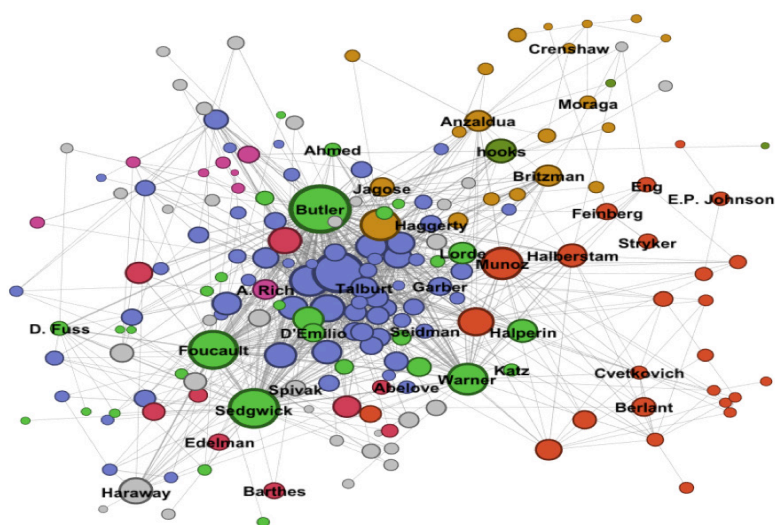


Figure 2. A visualization of the co-citation network. Authors cited together in the same text are connected by edges, and some of the most influential non-RCL scholars in the network are labeled.

I won't make the claim that quantitative data is the best method for studying citation practices related to race, but early in this project, it does seem like queer RCL scholarship relies heavily on a rather narrow body of queer thinking, with Butler, Foucault, Sedgwick, and Warner dominant in this citation network. This seems especially troubling given critiques from queers of color like Cathy Cohen, E. Patrick Johnson, Roderick Ferguson, and Muñoz (to name far too few in such a short space), who have critiqued how queer theories and politics reinforce the norms of whiteness and how genealogies of queerness too often efface the intellectual contributions of queers and feminists of color. Muñoz, for instance, notes that genealogies of queer theory all too often ignore the contributions of feminists of color, especially Cherrie Moraga and Anzaldúa's 1981 *This Bridge Called My Back* (Muñoz 21-22). (Interestingly, while Anzaldúa is quite influential on queer RCL scholarship, Moraga is noticeably less visible, cited by only 7 texts in this network—6 of which were published in the last 7 years, and 3 of which were authored by the same scholar, Eric Darnell Pritchard.)

Feminist scholars have observed the rhetorical and political power of citation practices: Sara Ahmed describes citations "as a rather successful and reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain

bodies" ("Making"). She challenges feminist scholars to consider whom and how they cite, arguing that citations are "screening techniques: how certain bodies take up space by screening out the existence of others," contributing to the invisibility of their work ("Making"). Ange-Marie Hancock also suggests that citation practices around theories of intersectionality—like citing Foucault as the genealogical source of intersectional thinking—can help to reproduce "the politics of knowledge production" that intersectional critique attempts to challenge (10). While critiques of citation practices can devolve into logics of ownership—which Hancock worries can lead to unproductive debates—she suggests instead that we consider our citation practices "in terms of stewardship," which encourages us to consider how we are caring for the intellectual traditions we are working within (22).

How we situate our queer and feminist projects through citation practices matters, shaping the landscape of the field. As I assay queer RCL scholarship for queers and feminists of color, I ask, how are we being stewards of queer thinking over the last four decades? By relying heavily on the "stars" of queer theory, do we reproduce genealogies of white social theory? Citation practices that ignore or downplay the contributions of feminists and queers of color risk us forgetting those contributions, risk the continued erasure of the experiences of people of color—meaning scholars have to continually do the work again of unburying and retelling histories, of critiquing the norms of white culture, of challenging white supremacist logics and ways of thinking. We should ask how our citation practices do or do not contribute to the social circulation of contributions from queers and feminists of color in rhetorical studies. Royster and Kirsch encourage us to see social circulation as a metaphor that helps us explore how women's writing and work travel, network, and circulate over time and space (23, 101). Distant reading through citation network analysis is one method among many that can help us explore the social circulation of queers and feminists of color in RCL scholarship and "see how traditions are carried on, changed, reinvented, and reused when they pass from one generation to the next" (101). As we incorporate or introduce feminist and queer thinking in our scholarship, we need to consider how we are being stewards of those intellectual traditions and how our citation practices create alliances, acknowledge precedence, and position ourselves in relation to axes of power, difference, and oppression.

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V. Toward a Critical Transnational Feminist Rhetorical Methodology

Rebecca Dingo, Rachel Riedner, Jennifer Wingard

“...a rupture from within history that also breaks with history” (Keeling 566)

Feminist Rhetorical Practices lays out the methodologies and strategies of listening, paying attention to gaps, and attending to “lived, embodied experiences” (Royster and Kirsch 22). As a corrective to scholarship in the field of rhetoric that the authors argue is dominated by “white, male, elite, performances in public domains - from the perspective of Western cultural traditions” (67), the book argues for an approach to rhetoric “as an embodied social experience” (131) that draws upon women’s experience, voices, knowledge, and language practices that are retrieved and brought into the present. In the words of Patricia Bizzell, the book is “comprehensive and forward looking” (ix). Indeed, Royster and Kirsch argue for shifting paradigms and frameworks as feminist rhetoricians come in contact with different contexts. Rhetorical frameworks must shift, paradigms must change, and we agree!

Importantly for us, authors Royster and Kirsch specifically note the transnational turn in feminist rhetorical theory as one of the core “tectonic shifts” happening in the field. They call out the need for feminist rhetorical scholars to “analyze the many vectors—economic, political, religious, cultural, educational—that intersect with rhetorical activities and social change” (37). In doing so, they make space for not only the inclusion of women’s voices, experiences, and perspectives but also for drawing attention to the many powerful contexts (local and global) within which rhetorical practices develop.

Thus, in this forward looking spirit, we offer what we see as a next phase of feminist rhetorical scholarship, one that builds upon the solid foundation and frameworks that Royster and Kirsch and other feminist rhetorical theorists have built. For us, scholars who are teaching and producing scholarship about how global transnational economic processes impact not only rhetorical arguments about women and other marginalized folk but also representations of women and other marginalized people, Royster and Kirsch’s invitation to expand the scope of feminist rhetorical scholarship beyond rescue

and recovery is particularly salient and welcomed. We begin this expansion by considering other scholarly conversations and theoretical insights feminist rhetorical scholars can learn from as they take the transnational turn: what methods of listening and gap-minding might expand and enrich the important transnational work already taking place in feminist rhetorical scholarship?

II.

Given our commitment to critical transnational feminist politics, we draw from early theoretical observations about the discursive and social constructions of history (e.g. Foucault, Spivak, and Scott), more recent critical feminist studies in historiography (Lowe, Keeling, Hartman), and feminist scholarship on global political economy (Enloe, Bedford, Chávez, Hong, Puar) to extend the methodological purview of feminist rhetorical theory. Together, these theoretical lenses, which come from the wider field of feminist studies, firmly place rhetorical acts within wider and often shifting political and economic contexts that affect what rhetors say and how audiences hear messages, as well as which messages circulate (see Dingo), and the limitations of the discourses we inherit (Spivak). Crucially, these scholars push us to do exactly what Royster and Kirsch call for feminist rhetorical scholars to do, address shifting paradigms and frameworks as we come into contact with different (transnational) contexts.

To begin, we find, Lisa Lowe's feminist approach to colonial and post-colonial texts and identity particularly useful. Lowe calls for understanding the connections among dominant historical narratives and global political economy while recognizing how such narratives often ally with nation-state power. For example, in her recent work on the production of colonial archives and knowledge systems, Lowe looks at the spoken and written words, experiences, and knowledges that break from normative temporalities or traditional historical narratives, offering a feminist project that reads against the grain of dominant rhetorical frameworks (*The Intimacies of Four Continents*). Lowe also considers the intersections and multiplicity of subject formation by troubling essentialized identities (i.e. the female postcolonial subject, the third-world woman) and instead engages the "heterogeneities of gender, class, sexuality, race, and nation ... [while] maintain[ing] and extend[ing] the forms of unity [i.e. oppression, political positions, like minded desires] that make common struggle possible—a politics whose vision is not the origin [or the figure] but the destination" (*Immigrant Acts* 153). Lowe's scholarship argues for reading archives against their impetus to essentialize identity and against dominant rhetorical and temporal frameworks. In doing so, she advocates for looking for how archived knowledge and narratives often shore up the political and economic objectives of the nation-state and global capital, thereby

mis- or under-representing, or leaving out all together, other perspectives (*The Intimacies of Four Continents*). Her objective is not to simply fill gaps, but to note the limits of archives and narratives, reading for what is left out and for what cannot be retrieved, recuperated, or imagined through its temporal and discursive constructions.

Because we see Lowe's approach as a critical transnational feminist rhetorical approach—she focuses on the grammar of this discursive system asking what it says and does, what (and who) it represents, and how the colonial system discursively constructs figures to stand in for the benevolent colonial episteme or nation-state—we turn to her. This rhetorical approach reads archives and narratives for how history is written, reading against discourses and temporalities that history uses, and offers openness to “gaps, fissures, and elissions” (*Intimacies of Four Continents*). It is an opening to analysis of and response to global, gendered power: a critical transnational feminist rhetorical approach. This scholarship has inspired us to investigate how global and nation-state narratives circulate and construct women and girls as figures who stand in for benevolent neoliberalism (Dingo, Riedner, Wingard) as well as identifying opportunities for feminist intervention in these rhetorical systems.

By paying attention to how the grammars of discursive systems (and their circulation) shore up powerful global political economic systems, Lowe offers a rhetorical method that does not seek to create a new historical object, identify experience, or hear and retrieve voices (although it does inevitably do this) but opens a critical feminist politics that looks to “open an investigation, and to contribute a manner of reading and interpretation,” (*Intimacies* 21) that looks to the past for what it could suggest. Further, for us, Lowe suggests a critical transnational feminist politics that interrogates why some narratives become part of an archive, some do not, and some are not included in archives. In other words, central to Lowe's work are the questions: What does end up in the archive? What is left out? And why aren't certain narratives and objects seen as worth collecting and/or championing?

We take up Lowe's call as we consider why it is that the recent actions of a young Palestinian girl, Ahed Tamimi, have not registered as archivable: these actions are not represented in news coverage of mainstream English-language media. Is it because those actions appear unruly and do not fit with the rhetorical expectations of idealized political work in which other girl figures have engaged? Is it due to her appearance (or media's representation of her appearance) as an untamed child with wild curly light brown hair and blue eyes? Or perhaps there are political and economic reasons that her actions do not circulate widely? We also ask, why is it that another young woman's actions do rise to global, public recognition?

III.

To demonstrate this critical feminist rhetorical approach, we turn to the reception and circulation of stories about two contemporary rhetorical figures: Malala Yousafzai and Ahd Tamimi. The first figure is well known: Malala Yousafzai (from Pakistan, although now living and studying in the UK); and second one is lesser known: Ahd Tamimi (from Nabi Saleh, West Bank in the occupied territory of Palestine). Yousafzai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 at the age of seventeen for her work advocating for girls' education in Pakistan. Tamimi, currently age sixteen, recently made select, more progressive and left-leaning, international headlines for slapping an Israeli officer who entered her yard. She was subsequently arrested and is, at the time of writing this essay, held in detention for her actions. Tamimi and her family have been vocally opposed to the expansion of Jewish settlements and detention of Palestinians and especially vocal about state-sanctioned violence against Palestinians, including violence against children and theft of water and land. As academic journalist Shenila Khoja-Moolji notes in a recent opinion piece on Al Jazeera's news site, despite the fact that both Yousafzai and Tamimi are girls who have a long history of speaking out publicly about injustice, Yousafzai's story and her speeches have been widely circulated and celebrated by feminists and the mainstream media. Yousafzai is invited to speak all over the United States and the world and she has written several books for a variety of ages. Tamimi, on the other hand, was unable to attain a visa to the US for a speaking tour, and the few English-language articles written about her in the mainstream media do not champion her cause or actions. Our point is that the archive about Tamimi is thin, with just a handful of mainstream news stories and little follow up about her. It is difficult to retrieve basic information about her in part because the Israeli state frequently moves her between different sites of incarceration, although this difficulty also exists because news media does not track her footprint as she is moved through the Israeli prison system. Following Lowe, we suggest that the news archive about Tamimi is limited – where she is, what is happening to her, and what she says is difficult to track – because her story does not shore up the political and economic objectives of the nation-state and global capital; it cannot be used to stand for benevolent neoliberalism. It has quickly faded from the mainstream.

The contrast and scope of circulation of these two young women's narratives raise questions for feminist rhetoricians about what these narratives say and do, what (and who) is represented, and how some young women figures stand in for a global system or nation state and others do not. Moreover, the example raises questions about circulation and reception: why do citizens who are tuned into global gender discourses hear and see Yousafzai speeches but not Tamimi's? Why have Yousafzai's speeches and the physical violence

she has confronted and survived become galvanizing for a wide range of social actors, from world leaders to young women, but Tamimi's speech acts and actions (slapping a soldier, putting her body between a child and a soldier, etc.) fail to circulate and fail to create political momentum in the West? If we cannot see or read Tamimi's words, then can she become legible or known? How can we, as feminist rhetorical scholars, account for her rhetorical practices? While we don't have the space to answer these questions fully, we can say that it is important to look at what is not being taken up by the media and critically consider which actions and subjects are being celebrated, which speech acts resonate for rhetorical scholars, and which then circulate widely. Asking these questions draws attention to the normative archival frames that embue feminist rhetorical scholarship. These questions also ask us to not just put a spotlight on neglected areas of archiving but to interrogate the very feminist rhetorical lenses and frameworks we use.

Yousafzai's story included gendered violence—physical violence done directly on her body. She was shot in the face on the way to school by a political faction that does not believe girls should be educated (or at least a political faction that uses violence against girls as a weapon of war). As a brown girl from a poor country, Yousafzai's story is timely because it fits the dominant narrative of “white men saving brown women from brown men” (Spivak 303). Decades-long colonial representations of Pakistani and Muslim women mark such women as demure victims of oppressive regimes, and Yousafzai's image (and the gendered violence done to her) fits this age-old representation. Moreover, Yousafzai's narrative is timely because, since the early 2000s, the US has supported international development agencies such as the UN and World Bank in their efforts to educate girls from poor countries. Both agencies have had popular and widely circulated girls' “empowerment through education” initiatives such as Girl Effect. This education is lauded as a way to bring a nation under control and to make that country more economically viable and safe for Western investment. In fact, as Kalpana Wilson has suggested, recent arguments for education in poor regions of the world demonstrate a reframing of population control in poor regions that aligns with neoliberal narratives of personal responsibility and away from “coercive practices such as forcible sterilization” (439). In other words, Yousafzai's story offers the perfect victim for a classic colonial savior narrative with a neoliberal twist.

We want to be clear that we do see that Yousafzai is a spectacular agent and rhetor. In her writings, she offers thoughtful analyses of the gendered structural violence present throughout Pakistan. Yet, this is not the image or narrative about Yousafzai that circulates: what circulates are stories about how she single-handedly worked for girls' education: her speech at the U.N. in support of girls rights and her Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech where

she explains just how important education is and what she risked to achieve it are just two examples. We are not critiquing Yousafzai's actions, which we support, but questioning why her actions are celebrated while Tamimi's are not. Portrayals of Yousafzai identify her as an extremely thoughtful and important feminist figure but do not focus much on state-sanctioned violence or the very global relationships that aid the continued conflicts in Pakistan; she is presented as an advocate for education as (gendered) peacemaking. In this way, Yousafzai is made to fit normative temporal frames of mainstream feminism.

Tamimi, on the other hand, breaks normative frames of mainstream feminism. She does not act like a good girl speaking well. Instead, she is represented as wild-eyed with unruly hair. She has punched, hit, and bitten Israeli soldiers. Photos of her show her standing up to guards, standing between guards and children with her fists up, and speaking with an angry face at Israeli guards.⁵ Moreover, Tamimi speaks and acts out against state-sanctioned violence. She does not advocate for individuals to fight against this violence but calls for community and global resistance. She does not wear a hijab or headscarf but instead T-shirts and jeans. She is not the "typical" middle eastern woman who needs us to save her. Instead, she is a feisty feminist who acts out against state actors. She is much more an image from The Women's March than she is an oppressed woman who needs saving. She does not dress demurely, nor are her actions demure or modest. These actions and this persona can create dissonance for Western viewers. They are not sure what to make of the angry, physical, young Muslim woman saving herself.

IV.

Briefly examining these contrasting figures points to the value of a critical feminist rhetorical methodology that attends to the limitations of discourses that claim marginalized women and, at the same time, opens up an analysis of power operating in and through those discourses. A critical feminist rhetorical approach asks both what we can retrieve from archives as well as about the limitations of archives: what are the limits of retrieving speech, voice, and experience from historical and contemporary archives as well as the limitations of rhetorical methods and feminist practices. Following Kara Keeling, we advocate for feminist rhetoricians to first critically examine the "operations of history itself" (570), here how mainstream media construct and present events and

5 For examples of images see: <http://samidoun.net/2017/12/free-ahed-tamimi/>, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/02/ahed-tamimi-israel-occupation-palestinian-trauma>, <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2018/Jan-14/433627-jumblatt-tweets-in-support-of-ahed-tamimi.ashx>

people, before we presume that listening and minding gaps can right wrongs of past exclusions and of state, imperial, and/or patriarchal violence.

For example, we examine the constructions of media narratives, looking at which young women are representable and which women are barely visible. We see that there are experiences that are not present in media narratives because they are not valued. And then, when experiences are written and circulate, as Yousafzai's experiences do, we must be mindful of how they might foreclose recognition of other young women, especially those who call out state power and state violence. Or, as Yousafzai herself points out in her book, how media narratives foreclose analysis of gendered economic inequalities. We must be aware that the rhetorics we have inherited might only capture the temporalities and logics of a dominant discourse that, for example, celebrates stories about young women who do not challenge settled political arrangements or entrenched political economic arrangements. Our discourse is immersed in Western rhetorical traditions that Royster and Kirsch (rightly) critique. As feminist rhetoricians who engage in critique and analysis, we can attend to the limitations as well as the possibilities of our feminist interventions.

The wide circulation of Yousafzai's story in the US and the West, and the failure of Tamimi's story to circulate, suggests further research about how narratives and images sustain national and global economic production. Stories and images are circulated by nation-states and global economic institutions such as the World Bank in order to shore up their authority, giving them political power to direct economies and to ensure production of surplus value (Bedford, Riedner). Those who challenge the authority of nation-states and global institutions do not have stories circulated and told about them because their lives do not support political and economic objectives (Hong). They cannot represent the authority and coherence of national or global order. As a result, such figures are not worthy of protection, and are abandoned to state violence. While we don't have time to go into an in-depth analysis of the connections between circulation of stories and images and political economy here, we raise it as a thread for future research.

As the absence of details about Tamimi and the failure of her story to circulate in Western English-language media suggests, there are, as Keeling argues, people, stories, and experiences that "...resist narration and qualitative description" (not to mention quantitative analysis and description) or are deliberately left out by rhetorics imbricated within state and global power (567). Tamimi and Yousafzai show how powers are held up through the circulation of deliberately chosen gendered figures. Yousafzai rises to global recognition: her story circulates widely, she receives invitations to speak in prominent global governmental institutions, and she receives prestigious global awards that recognize how her actions benefit other young women. In this circulation of

her story, Yousafzai stands for a better global civil society. Tamimi, on the other hand, is turned over to state violence (incarceration): her story does not circulate, her speech acts do not create an intervention, and she does not become a symbol of female heroism as a response to state-sponsored gendered violence.

By contrasting media presentations of these two young women (who both stand up to violence) we bring into conversation how gendered and racialized state and imperial power are central to feminist rhetorical methodologies. Yousafzai, because of her opposition to traditional patriarchy of an Islamist group opposed by the United States, is hyper-visible and heroic. Her visibility occurs only a few years before Tamimi, a young woman from a colonized group who opposes a state aligned with imperial power, who (literally) disappears into prisons of a nation-state aligned with US policy. The stories about women/girls/others that do not circulate tell us about gendered and racialized governmental and global precarity where “some lives are protected and others are not” (Lowry 18), especially lives whose citizenship, age, labor, sexuality, ability, and/or ethnicity is not valued. We forward a critical transnational feminist rhetorical method that tracks rhetorics through which some women and girls are turned over to violence or abandonment while others are protected by the circulation of their heroic stories. Much like the call from Royster and Kirsch, we seek to move feminist rhetorics into the era of globalization. This project does not begin with retrieval but with analysis of how power operates rhetorically to value/devalue particular social figures.

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VI. Response

The Work Continues: The Prospects of Feminist Rhetorical Practices Five Years Later

Gesa E. Kirsch and Jacqueline Jones Royster

Introduction

We begin with a note of gratitude and appreciation for the warm reception *Feminist Rhetorical Practices (FRP)* has found since it was published in 2012. We

have been inspired by the vigor, interest, and spirit of generosity with which scholars have taken up our work, engaged with the terms we have proposed, and offered their insights, reflections and challenges.

Gesa Kirsch's Response

I am deeply appreciative of Lisa Mastrangelo's most generous introduction and the thoughtful, generative engagements that scholars offer in this five-year retrospective. The responses featured here are fascinating, inspiring, and provocative and provide us with further opportunities to reflect, grow, and expand our horizons as feminist rhetorical practices continue to grow and evolve in ever more rich, diverse, and dynamic contexts.

David Gold explores fascinating ways of engaging students in feminist rhetorical practices by challenging them to work in deliberately non-feminist spaces, such as editing Wikipedia pages. Specifically, Gold asks, "How do we engage with audiences that might be indifferent or hostile to our project or that embrace discursive strategies we find problematic?" "What do critical imagination, strategic contemplation, social circulation, and globalization look like in decidedly non-feminist online public writing spaces?" We did not anticipate these questions when writing *FRP*, but they seem particularly urgent given the deeply troubling times in which we live.⁶

I am inspired by the demanding work Gold's students undertake in his upper-level writing course and intrigued by the challenge Gold poses: how to help students, and by implication scholars, move beyond an either/or binary, how to avoid reading through a "presentist lens," and how to resist "judging rhetors by their conformance to contemporary standards of justice or intersectional awareness." When working on Wikipedia entries, students learn to translate their research for different audiences, highlighting their findings while holding on to their interests and passion. From these students, we can learn how to showcase historical significance without simply celebrating heroines; how to highlight impact without engaging in advocacy; how to articulate relevance without becoming didactic. Gold invites his students to "resist coming to judgment too quickly," a strategy we recommend in *FRP*, but one that, nonetheless, remains difficult to embrace. Remarkably, Gold's students pursue these challenges with grit and grace.

6 Royster and Kirsch are exploring how to respond to the current challenging times in a forthcoming essay, "Compassion, Empathy, Courage, and Commitment: Addressing the Grand Challenges of Our Time" to be published in *Rewriting Plato's Legacy: Ethics, Rhetoric, and Writing Studies*, editors John Duffy and Lois Agnew.

Like Gold's students, I occasionally find myself startled, puzzled, and perturbed when I unearth archival materials that challenge my feminist perspective, and my cultural assumptions. During such encounters, I try to take time to stop and listen, pause and reflect, reread and listen again, all the while observing—not resolving—the tensions, the contradictions, the questions that emerge. This holding of tension, this “living with the questions” (to invoke Rilke), is not an easy feat, to be sure. Charlotte Hogg's reflections on this topic have been productive for me; she calls for “Including Conservative Women's Rhetorics in an ‘Ethics of Hope and Care,’” in her *Rhetoric Review* article (2015). Drawing on *FRP*, Hogg urges feminist rhetorical scholars to broaden their selection of research topics and historical figures and to engage the rhetorics of women who are conservative in their views and values, supportive of the status quo (and patriarchal powers), and defiant of challenges issued by feminist or other progressive thinkers. Hogg writes,

An ethics of hope and care toward conservative women, then, can impact whom we study, how we engage with participants and audiences in ways that move past reductive binaries and, most importantly, how we wrestle with issues of power, agency, and privilege that benefit some while damaging others. It asks us to settle in with research that dismays as well as inspires. (404)

Likewise, Nicole Khoury invites us to “settle in with discourse that dismays.” She urges us to suspend judgment when encountering texts that may seem strange, conservative, and perhaps antifeminist. Khoury reflects on her process of teaching “Middle Eastern feminist texts and rhetorical production [that] are often misread through a Western lens” and raises two critical questions: “How can teachers of writing and language in U.S. universities approach the teaching/reading of ‘other’ texts in a way that is not Eurocentric in its perspective? And, as teachers, how can we structure the classroom to avoid power imbalances as we bear the responsibility for representing these translated cultural texts to students?” These questions deserve more deliberation than they have received, I contend, particularly as we work to broaden operational practices and expand feminist rhetorical horizons.

Drawing on an “ethics of hope and care,” Khoury calls for a “self-reflexive pedagogy” that allows students [and I would add teachers] to “question what they know and how they know it, uncovering underlying assumptions in the knowledge they hold about the Middle East, for example, and situating themselves in the research to identify their positions of value before delving into the material.” Khoury describes her process of teaching students how to suspend judgment and reflect on their own cultural assumptions and urges us to embrace a “self-reflexive approach” in the classroom and in research, as it

is “crucial not only as an inquiry strategy for scholarly work, but also as an inquiry framework for pedagogy grounded in listening, engagement, and reflexivity.” Like Gold and Hogg, Khoury reminds us of the importance of learning to listen and reflect, ponder and pause, withhold judgment and settle in with discourse that appears troubling, strange, and conservative.

Co-authors Rebecca Dingo, Rachel Riedner, and Jennifer Wingard pose another critical challenge that I continue to ponder, five years after the publication of *FRP*: How do we expand, refine, and engage more deeply with the concept of globalization? How do we deliberately reframe our perspectives to include non-Western horizons? How do we engage with the work of transnational scholars? The work of indigenous scholars? With changing rhetorical landscapes? Dingo, Riedner and Wingard offer us a rich rhetorical analysis of two young women activists, both of whom stand up to “gendered violence,” but have been read and represented very differently by feminist scholars and the international media. Examining the cases of Malala Yousafzai from Pakistan, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for her courageous advocacy for girls’ education, and Ahd Tamimi from the occupied territory of Palestine, who has been jailed for her equally courageous actions of standing up to soldiers and fighting violence against Palestinians, Dingo, Riedner and Wingard leave us to ponder an important question: “What methods of listening and gap-minding might expand and enrich the important transnational work already taking place in feminist rhetorical scholarship?” They urge us to attend to the gaps, silences, and blind spots in our research, attending to the things that we may never fully know, and alert us to the contrasting representation of—and consequences for—two young women engaged in civil disobedience on the world stage.

Michael J. Faris also draws attention to gaps, silences, and blind spots in research as he focuses his critical lens on the citation practices of queer rhetorical scholarship. Faris explores the concept of social circulation by examining a large body of articles and book chapters with the tools of the digital humanities (DH). This research is particularly intriguing because Jackie and I speculate about the potential of DH methods for tracing, mapping, and charting new patterns and insights via DH-enabled distant reading practices in “Social Circulation and Legacies of Mobility” (Gries and Brooke 2018). Employing DH tools and methods, Faris creates visual maps that reveal how limited the citation practices of queer rhetorical scholars have been. Despite calls for increased diversity and queering the canon, we learn, a majority of scholars engaging in this work continue to cite a limited number of well-known white male scholars. Faris advances a strong case for citation practices as “stewardship” of intellectual traditions and brings home the power of employing distant reading practices made possible with DH methods. Equally important, Faris

carefully reports his methodological decisions, a critical step when employing DH tools because they can conceal as much as they can reveal. Specifically, Faris reports on how he selected the 180 articles and book chapters included in the analysis, how he filtered articles and authors (and omitted some to avoid creating skewed maps), and how he charted authors that are cited together. Faris's work is significant, casting new light on patterns that have remained in the shadows, and offering new strategies, opportunities, and challenges for feminist rhetorical inquiry.

Jackie Royster's Response

It is hard to believe that it has been over five years since the publication of *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*. Like Gesa, I too am deeply grateful for the thoughtful and generous-spirited ways with which colleagues in various areas of RCL have engaged so robustly with our ideas. We are particularly grateful to the authors in this issue whose interesting and innovative thinking has brought insight and vigor to research and teaching. What is most affirming, however, is having the opportunity to be reciprocal in sharing in this public way where their thinking is taking us in ours.

First of all, I congratulate Lisa Mastrangelo, the President of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition, on choosing such stellar examples of some of the leading edge work in our field. The scope and range of what they are doing provide anchors for our multi-variant discourses in a distinctive and provocative way and serve as leverage for the ever-evolving ways to identify and interrogate worthy interests and issues. This work helps our students to gain deeper understandings of rhetorical enterprises, and helps all of us to be respectful, empathetic, and compassionate as we engage and collaborate with our various constituencies and audiences. I find this moment of reflection and reflexivity to be an amazing indication that our field is unquestionably in the vanguard of 21st century academic work. My sense of things is that we are better prepared today than we have ever been to function well in adding nuance and value in facing complex local and global issues. I have felt encouraged by these scholars to think again, to be re-excited about ideas and opportunities, to be inspired to figure out the potential of connections between us, to figure out my own next steps, not simply in terms of what I see as exciting but more what I see as incite-able about this work. How so?

In *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*, we called for more work in global contexts and more analyses that connect global experiences, perspectives, and insights to what we have come to understand about these frameworks in Western and westernized communities. Clearly, Dingo, Riedner, and Wingard are rising to this challenging occasion in their movement toward a critical transnational

feminist analytical framework. They recognize continuities of oppression, continuities of resistance, but also distinctions in conditions. The exemplary cases that they cite and the questions that they raise push me to ask with regard to women's agency and activism whether the socio-political hierarchies of our times—still—insist on the proverbial notion that there can be only one voice from the margins and that this one needs to be a model of decorum. For example, noting the ongoing existence of such a model permits us to recognize continuities between the cases that these scholars present and the case of a worthy, though constrained, symbol of the Modern Civil Rights Movement, Rosa Parks. Parks gained visibility as the African American woman who regally sat where she was not supposed to sit and remained there quite heroically, but we do not see other women exhibiting similar acts of resistance. We do not see Parks in her fullness as a leader in the Montgomery NAACP—only as the one person engaged in such acts who properly fitted into the institutionalized frame of “hero.”

Dingo, Riedner, and Wingard astutely analyze with Pakistani women how public circulation is compromised and controlled, and I would say that comparatively they help us to see that the defaulted frames of public circulation push un-suitable heroes to the social sphere, where acknowledgement may be opaque. The consequence is likely to be invisibility and inaudibility in knowledge-making enterprises, requiring researchers to engage in what we now recognize as deep excavation. As Dingo, Riedner, and Wingard suggest, the symbols, rhetors, actors, and heroes from non-Western contexts who do not circulate publicly “fail to create political momentum” in the West. Comparatively, they help us see that heroes from marginalized communities within Western contexts who do not publicly circulate experience similar constraints. These voices and experiences, this activism and leadership, become illegible, invisible, and inaudible within normal interpretive frames. In other words, by practice some rhetors are not available to public narratives, and in RCL we have to learn, as Toni Morrison declared in *Playing in the Dark* (1982), that we are required to look for the bowl that holds the fish, to understand more fully that the bowl, as transparent as it may be, is actually there, and to understand how it functions. The challenge is to debunk the myths of credibility, respectability, and institutionally sanctioned heroism. These three scholars have moved us far more instrumentally in rhetorical studies toward deeper analyses by helping us see such questions in global context.

Likewise, Michael J. Faris's essay also enhances our analytical strength. He focuses on the use of “distant reading practices,” practices that in *Feminist Rhetorical Studies* we linked to Clifford Geertz's analytical frameworks in anthropology studies (1973). Faris is tacking out in order to “assay” the field for the presence of queer and feminist scholars and writers of color.” His

project demonstrates well, as we proclaimed recently in “Social Circulation and Legacies of Mobility for Nineteenth-Century Women: Implications for Using Digital Resources in Socio-Rhetorical Projects,” (Gries and Brooke, 2018) that mapping is a very accommodating digital tool for rhetorical analyses. While the maps can certainly be visually stunning in their capacity to connect data to insight at a glance, even more stunning is the capacity of mapping tools to enhance the depth and quality of the insights themselves. We can literally see the point. Faris’s point is noteworthy in its support of our commitments in the field to develop more fully rendered narratives and analyses of issues of inclusion, gender, race, power, representation, credibility, and citation as, quite literally, we physicalize the intersections between quantitative and qualitative data through the digital humanities. Faris raises intriguing questions about our obligations in RCL to “steward” the data about how we are caring for a broader range of intellectual and cultural traditions, how our work helps communities of various kinds to resist erasure, as we consider quite deliberately “the axis of power, difference, and oppression.”

Nicole Khoury and David Gold both take us into classroom environments. Khoury helps us to flip a much used script in RCL classrooms. Essentially, we have excellent practices in composition classrooms that help students to think, analyze and write from the outside in to find their own identity, agency, voice, and imperatives for action. Khoury raises to view the need to help all of us think more robustly from the inside out about helping students to exercise the imperative to open scholarly dialogues to others like and unlike ourselves. In other words, after we find our own edges, she pushes us to see that we need to figure out what to do with them. Khoury suggests that the critical advantages of connecting beyond ourselves in global context with an eye toward learning to notice care, respect, and engage others. She raises the challenge of finding ways to see a “local” that is not our own “local”: to resist a defaulted norming of others toward us; to operationalize what an “ethics of care” actually looks like in full operation. She reminds us that the goal is not to continue to “globalize Western hegemony” but for students “to question why they know, how they know it, how and why they do what they do as researchers and rhetors in the company of others; what the impacts and consequences of our actions are.” Khoury is moving us toward a self-reflexive pedagogical approach and the dualities of its responsibilities and its accountabilities.

Gold takes us in yet a different direction in thinking about the impact of feminist habits and expectations for students at the beginning of operational awareness as researchers and scholars. What immediately comes to mind for me as he describes his classroom projects is how necessary it is to help students strike critical balances in their research and analyses. After all, the goal is not to focus them exclusively, or even primarily, on finding and celebrating

heroes. I venture to say that, more often than not, we have the imperative instead of using evidence-based mechanisms for seeing and understanding rhetorical actions and events and for actually understanding and becoming articulate about what it means to be heroic or to perform heroically or to be human and heroic simultaneously.

By this means, in terms of his work with Wikipedia, Gold raises for me the question of how our curations of evidence direct and dictate our interpretations of any of these questions, leaving us with the ever present obligation to be reflective and reflexive, not simply about the focal points of our curiosities but also about ourselves as the shapers of our interrogations. As I pointed out in responding to Dingo, Riedner, and Wingard, we have the ongoing challenge of looking for the bowl, knowing without doubt that it is there, and knowing that its being there has cultural logics and rationalities.

Conclusion

The authors included in this issue are part of a new vanguard, colleagues who are demonstrating daily that they are ready and able to face new horizons. They are raising important questions that have not been raised before, have not been addressed in these ways before, and have not been connected to these contexts or agents or audiences before. This work pushes all of us to notice the gaps in our knowledge and understanding, and to embrace the need for resourcefulness in our ways of working. When we look forward, the vista is inspiring. Our work is imaginative in scope, grounded in the ongoing diversification of our experiences, and deliberately attuned to impacts, consequences, and implications. We understand that feminist rhetorical scholarship and teaching are both incredibly promising and amazingly daunting, a doubled-edged operational space that strikes us, still, as audacious, adventurous, and awesome. We spoke in *Feminist Rhetorical Practices*. They listened and rose to strategic occasions for action. Now, recursively, we respond. By such processes, the work continues.

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