

## special announcement

We are proud to announce that Winifred Bryan Horner, one of the most important women in the 20th-century revival of rhetoric, has won the 2003 CCCC Exemplar Award. Win is Distinguished Professor Emerita of English at Texas Christian University, where she held the first Radford Chair of Rhetoric and Composition for nearly ten years. She has been a leader in archival studies of rhetoric's history and a major supporter of the Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition since its inception. Win's ground-breaking scholarship and tireless mentoring of scores of writer-rhetors, along with her biting wit and irrepressible humor, have made a real difference in the lives of many women and men in our field. For these reasons, and many more, we celebrate Win Horner as the 2003 CCCC Exemplar Award Winner.

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## essay

### **Ida M. Tarbell and Citizens' Education: A Short Step from Republican Motherhood to Muckraking**

by Sharan L. Daniel, Stanford University

Ida M. Tarbell achieved fame in her time—and is best remembered—for her 1902-1904 exposé, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*. She is frequently cited as one of the Progressive movement's most popular, professional, and influential writers (see for example Fitzpatrick vii-viii; Weinberg and Weinberg xvi-xxii; Miraldi, *Muckrakers* xiv). However, while articulating the need for change in business and government, Tarbell differed with a significant contingent of reformers in her time—those agitating for women's suffrage. Although she claims in her autobiography not to have “[fought] against” woman's suffrage, she publicly dissociated herself from the movement, and her name appeared among executive committee members listed in 1909 on the letterhead of the New York State Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (Tarbell, *Day's Work* 327; Camhi 160-63). Her stance shocked and disappointed such feminists as Dr. Anna Howard Shaw and Carrie Chapman Catt, Tarbell's erstwhile colleagues on Progressive causes (Camhi 145-78; Tomkins 26; Treckel; Tarbell, *Day's Work* 320-22, 326-28).

To provide insight into the contrasts between Tarbell's conservative and progressive views, I offer a reading of her work as epideictic rhetoric that consistently encourages public-mindedness, serving a citizen-education function. Tarbell invokes publics by inviting audience members to see themselves as potential members of a public with reason and agency to act collectively. She also invokes citizens by inviting audience members to adopt a quality or a character which implies individual action with social consequences but not

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necessarily conjoint action. In these ways, Tarbell used rhetoric to create and sustain the shared life of publics. While Tarbell did not refrain from policy claims characteristic of deliberative rhetoric, neither did she routinely agitate for specific public measures as much as she advocated values and ideals aimed at the epideictic end of inclining people toward participation in public life and public actions.<sup>1</sup>

In *The Business of Being a Woman*, discussed here, Tarbell presents a rhetoric of woman's citizenship that illuminates her view of American democracy as well as her role in it as a woman and a journalist. Though a career woman who remained single and had no children, Tarbell could be fairly viewed as fulfilling the role she advocated for women, that of an industrial-age Republican Mother. She used her public career to fulfill what she saw as woman's primary social responsibility, the moral guidance and education of citizens.

#### **An epideictic of women's citizenship**

Like most writers of her era, Tarbell routinely used male pronouns in non-gender-specific cases—even in writing specifically about women. Such ambiguities of usage make it difficult to say with certainty that Tarbell considered women as “citizens.” For example, “The Woman and Democracy,” chapter six of *The Business of Being a Woman*, begins with this statement: “The one notion that democracy has succeeded in planting firmly in the mind of the average American citizen is his right and duty to rise in the world. Tested by this conception the American woman is an ideal democrat” (142). The masculine pronoun gives pause: Was Tarbell advocating an ideal of citizenship for men only or women, too? Here and elsewhere in her writings, Tarbell applies a test of citizenship to woman but refrains from calling her “citizen.” (In this case she chooses “democrat” instead.) However, she designates women as constituents of the US public, and she proposes a political role for women with consequences that transcend even the

nation's boundaries. I contend her writings advance a standard of women's citizenship, albeit a deferential model that does not entail the direct authority of voting or serving as elected officials in government.<sup>2</sup> She effectively advocates an extension of the late eighteenth-century ideal Linda K. Kerber calls the “Republican Mother.”

Kerber characterizes the Republican Mother model of citizenship as an original American contribution to liberal theory, an effort to fill a “gap” in Enlightenment political thought. American theorists writing in the 1780s and 1790s described a political function that accrued from woman's traditional position within the home (Kerber 58). Dissatisfied that women should be encouraged to a “dependence” contrary to American ideals, they proposed a woman citizen who was to be self-reliant (within limits), literate, untempted by the frivolities of fashion. She had a responsibility to the political scene, though not to act on it [. . .] Her political task was accomplished within the confines of her family. The model republican woman was a mother (Kerber 58).

The Republican Mother was a “deferential citizen [. . .] who expect[ed] to influence the political system, but only to a limited extent” (Kerber 59). She “did not vote, but took pride in [her] ability to mold citizens who would” (Kerber 60). Significantly, deference was not a uniquely feminine political posture. As Kerber explains, it was “an approach to full participation in the civic culture” that recognized representative authority. In *The Good Citizen*, Michael Schudson characterizes 1690 to 1787 as a period of deference in which unpropertied white male citizens looked to “men of high social standing” for leadership (30). Deferential citizenship did not depend upon suffrage, which was often exclusive to property-holders.

It is important to note that the deferential citizenship of Republican Motherhood is not synonymous with True Womanhood, an ideal so named by its adherents writing in women's

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magazines mid-nineteenth century (Welter). True Womanhood was "somewhat similar" to Republican Motherhood, in that its proponents saw woman's social role as centered in the home, as P. Joy Rouse comments (114). However, True Womanhood was a cultural ideal with potential political ramifications, whereas Republican Motherhood was an explicitly political ideal. The focus of True Womanhood was on virtuous characteristics identified with femininity: "piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity" (Welter 21). Barbara Welter's illustrations suggest these characteristics were designed as much to keep women from interfering in men's work as to further any particular social goals of women's own. In contrast, Republican Motherhood, as presented by Kerber, emphasized women's political roles, positioning women as a force in promoting the new nation's material and spiritual prosperity. Tarbell, too, imbues her model of womanhood with political significance, imparting economic significance to each characteristic emphasized by Kerber—self-reliance, literacy, disregard for frivolous fashion, and fulfillment of a political function centered on citizen's education.

Writing about what she calls "woman's business," Tarbell elucidates her concept of separate but interrelated spheres of action for women and men. She uses "business" to refer to all types of life-supporting action, in which life is understood as requiring material and spiritual sustenance, and action may be wage-earning or not, individual or collective. Business for Tarbell thus denotes a realm of human activity, like *praxis* in ancient Greek usage. She divides women's *praxis* and men's *praxis* roughly along lines of the ancient *oikos* and *polis*, respectively, but these domains are complicated by the context of modern democracy, in which public participation is not reserved for the leisured class. Neither are the private and public spheres of women and men strictly separated in the modern democracy that Tarbell addresses (if indeed they ever

were).<sup>3</sup> Tarbell conjures a social sphere like that described by Hannah Arendt, in which public and private concerns intermix (38-78). Unlike Arendt, who criticizes this modern situation as one in which "society has conquered the public realm" (41), Tarbell embraces the intersections of private and public concerns within the social sphere, celebrating the very public aspects of women's private-sphere business. In a way, she anticipates the liberal feminist mantra of the 1960s and 70s—"the personal is political"—though with the aim of preserving rather than subverting the separate-spheres social system.

Tarbell assigns to men the "business of producer and protector" (241); to women, "the making of [ . . . ] a home—which means a mate, children, friends, with all the radiating obligations, joys, burdens, these relations imply" (5). The word "radiating" is evocative of the sense conveyed throughout the book that woman's sociopolitical power expands outward from the home. Woman's responsibility as homemaker derives from her natural function as a mother: "Nature's reason for [woman]—is the child" (54), and the "child demands" a home (167). Woman's place in society and politics then emanates from the imperatives of child-rearing and homemaking. The "most vital part in the Woman's Business [is] that of education," Tarbell writes (70); woman's "great task is to prepare the citizen" (81). Tarbell seems to assume a male citizen, for she goes on to mention "practical politics," a man's field: "The citizen is not prepared by a training in practical politics. Something more fundamental is required [ : t]he meaning of honor and of the sanctity of one's word, the understanding of the principles of democracy and of the society in which we live, the love of humanity [ . . . ]" (81).

She elaborates on the traditional citizen-preparation role, though, to address the need for women to attend to training their own successors in the art of "scientific household management" (70). This function extends to the broadly conceived "socialization" for democratic life.

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Tarbell explains in chapter four, "The Socialization of the Home," that the home has a distinct "relation to the public" (88). As the place of citizens' socialization, "homes are the *logic of democracy*," Tarbell asserts (88); all the social processes entailed in democratic life are cultivated, to good or ill effect, within the home. Additionally woman as homemaker assumes significant functions as the nation's chief consumer of household goods (138-40), as well as employer and employee in a "field" of domestic labor replete with its own "labor problem[s]" (158-63). For Tarbell homemaking entails responsibilities with far-reaching socioeconomic impacts.

Despite Tarbell's reactionary agenda in relation to the feminism of her time, her invocation of women citizens significantly extends the vision of Republican Motherhood. Her arguments assign to women intellectual, moral, and economic, though not legal, authority—and power—over vast areas of politics. Her description of women's business includes education of children and youth, social relations and ethical matters broadly construed, some aspects of housing, economic issues touching upon the household, and women's labor issues in and out of the home. She does not confine women to the home or even the immediate community; rather, she approves of their engagement in these areas of expertise on national and international levels. Nor does she restrict women to passive roles. Within the realm of expertise she envisions for women, Tarbell applauds collective action, even though, in keeping with her liberal emphasis, she presents individual action as the primary means of effecting change (see especially *Business of Woman*, ch. 6).

**Tarbell's "progressive conservative" politics**  
Despite the wide range of avenues by which she may participate in democratic processes, Tarbell's woman citizen remains deferential, restricted from exercising the direct political authority of voting and elective office-holding. This conservative ideal is not as incongruous with Tarbell's position as a

Progressive muckraker as it may seem. In fact, Progressivism and the muckraking journalism that served it proved congenial to Tarbell's gradualist vision of reform and to the deferential citizenship she prescribed for women, including herself. Tarbell's "progressive conservative" opinions on business reflect an optimistic faith in fair competition characteristic of Progressive reform efforts (Tomkins 143). As Louis Filler observes, the Progressive movement "reaffirm[ed] the nation's willingness to take its chances on competition in business, so long as it could be reassured that no one and no business could become so powerful as to render the ordinary citizen, the 'little man,' powerless" (280). This sentiment appears throughout Tarbell's writings as the *topos* of democratic fairness considered within the context of business dealings. She describes her efforts on the *American Magazine* to reveal to the "public" the "steady, though slow, progress" she and her colleagues found occurring in industrial reforms (*Day's Work* 260). The *American*, she writes, "had little genuine muckraking spirit. It did have a large and fighting interest in fair play" (281). This optimistic belief in the democratic possibilities of free-market capitalism distinguished Progressives from their more radical socialist contemporaries (Reaves). Journalism professor Robert Miraldi goes so far as to call the Progressive muckrakers "a rather conservative bunch" (*Muckraking and Objectivity* 8).

Tarbell's position as a prominent journalist and public speaker is also surprisingly consistent with her views on women's *praxis*. Her model of the deferential woman citizen contains no strictures against public speaking, writing, or action, within the considerably wide realm of woman's expertise as homemaker and mother. The topics of her two major muckraking pieces, monopoly and tariffs, are related only tangentially to woman's business as homemaker, and in this respect Tarbell's writing on them may appear to defy the role she prescribed.

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However, viewed as citizens'-education projects, they fall within woman's sphere as she presented it.

Finally Tarbell's deferential model of women's citizenship also converged with developing norms of objectivity in journalism. Miraldi shows that later "muckrakers," investigative reporters of the 1960s and 70s, were prevented by the conventions of objectivity from arguing overtly for specific changes. In effect, objectivity demanded that reporters defer to the authority of those whom they quoted as sources. Writing her autobiography long after the era of her own muckraking—and after the post-World War I changes in journalism that established objectivity norms—Tarbell endorses the new standards. She explains that she and her *American* colleagues "sought to present things as they were, not as somebody thought they ought to be. We were journalists, not propagandists" (281). Clearly Tarbell played loose with this ideal. She wrote, after all, of "woman's business" as she thought it ought to be. Yet the signs of what Miraldi identifies as "fledgling objectivity"—a fastidious concern with facts, reliance on government documents, and avoidance of narrator presence in the writing—permeate her work, including the opinionated *Business of Woman*. She waited to write the book until she felt she had amassed adequate evidence of what she sensed was going awry in women's struggle for equality. She presents the work as the "result" of her empirical research—"a long, if somewhat desultory, observation of the professional, political, and domestic activities of women in this country and in France" (*Business of Woman* vii).

### Conclusion

Tarbell's rhetoric demonstrates the intervention of *techne* and the public-forming potential of epideictic, as it encourages liberal democratic principles as the basis of citizen action. While she did not advocate radical reform—never embracing socialism as her colleague Lincoln Steffens did, for example—she strove to change what had become,

or was becoming, the status quo. In her writing on women, she sought to stem the tide of change in woman's role. In this case she acted to intervene in public affairs and to invent—or reinvent—possibilities that seemed to elude women in their struggle for equality.<sup>4</sup> As a rhetor, Tarbell participated actively in public life, though within the limits she prescribed in her model of the woman citizen. This deferential citizenship effectively describes the role journalists of Tarbell's era were creating for themselves in public life, as objective commentators who claimed no direct public authority to act in the affairs on which they advised other citizens.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> This characterization of Tarbell's rhetoric, explained in more detail elsewhere (Daniel 258-75), draws upon Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford's idea of the "audience invoked" as well as Edwin Black's "second persona." I imagine the dynamic involved in the invocations of citizens and publics, to the extent that they succeed, as that of Kenneth Burke's "identification" (19-21; 55-56), except that in addition to identifying with the rhetor, audience members might also identify with other potential members of publics. Frederick J. Antczak describes a similar process of rhetorical "reconstitution" that affects rhetor and audience.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to Kerber and Schudson cited below, Susan Zaeske lends plausibility to such a view. Zaeske argues that by signing antislavery petitions, women not only contributed to the abolitionist movement but also re-negotiated the terms of their own citizenship. Lending their signatures to the antislavery movement, they "bypassed the requirement of suffrage to participate publicly in the political debate" (148).

<sup>3</sup> Feminist inquiries into ancient Greek democracy call into question the commonly assumed exclusion of women from activities in the *polis*. See for example, Reeder; Lunsford, *Reclaiming Rhetorica*; Jarratt; and Glenn.

<sup>4</sup> This description makes use of Janet M. Atwill's definition of the *techne* tradition of rhetoric as an art of intervention and invention (1, 6-7).

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## book review

### *Feminism Beyond Modernism*

Elizabeth Flynn. Southern Illinois UP, 2002.

Review by M. Karen Powers-Stubbs,  
Georgia Southern University

*Siting (sighting) boundaries is a risky practice.*  
—Donna Haraway

Elizabeth Flynn takes risks in *Feminism Beyond Modernism*. From the title page to the last paragraph, she calls into question conventional historical, theoretical, disciplinary, epistemological, and ideological boundaries by rejecting binary definitions of modernism/postmodernism that prevail both within and beyond the academy. She juxtaposes these two intellectual, sociopolitical movements with a third she invokes and identifies as “antimodernism” to argue: “it, rather than postmodernism, is relativist and subjectivist and directly opposed to modernism” (3). Flynn reclaims postmodernism precisely because, as she persuasively argues, it does not stand in direct opposition to modernism; rather, her reconfigured version “moves beyond modernism without repudiating it entirely” (43). This rhetorical maneuver enables Flynn to resurrect postmodern feminism as a critique of modernism, an ambitious and praiseworthy endeavor that promises to make possible “new historical accounts of and perspectives on the activities of reading, writing, and teaching” (16).

Flynn’s introduction maps influences on the feminist movement; surveys “misreadings” of postmodern feminism; and provisionally defines modernism, antimodernism, and postmodernism. “Reconfigurations” is the name Flynn gives to the daunting task she accomplishes in chapters 1 and 2. In the first, Flynn offers “rewritings” to establish a broad sociopolitical and historical context within which she distinguishes between aesthetic modernism and Enlightenment modernism. Considering modern writers from Descartes to Kant to Saussure and modern feminist writers from

Wollstonecraft to Gilman to Beauvoir, among others, Flynn concedes their differences but highlights their shared assumptions. As modernists, they believe that “reason, empiricism, or democracy can solve intellectual, social, or political problems” (20). Flynn examines later twentieth-century feminist texts to investigate liberal feminism’s modernist ties and cites modernism’s association with “disciplinarity, universalism, political repression, sexism, imperialism, racism, and colonialism” (27).

Flynn stresses antimodernism’s contrasting characteristics, noticing an inclination to be “relativist and subjectivist and to directly oppose modernist values and procedures” (28). Flynn explores this claim via Wordsworth and Coleridge and points out their resistance to Enlightenment rationalism and empiricism, as well as their critiques of “the mechanistic nature of scientific approaches to reality” (28). She interrogates contemporary writers, as well. The later work of Stanley Fish, in particular, is deemed “intersubjectivist” (in effect, antimodernist) because he “exhibits relativist tendencies in directly challenging and inverting modernist assumptions about language and knowledge” (30). Antimodernism also inflects the radical feminism of Mary Daly and Dale Spender. In Flynn’s view, both are “antimodern in that they tend to reject traditional intellectual and social traditions and institutions” (32). Cultural feminists alike “privilege subjective experience over objective analysis” (32-33). Calling on the work of Sara Ruddick, Carol Gilligan, Belenky et al., and Nel Noddings, as well as articles in rhetoric and composition including her own “Composing as a Woman,” Flynn concludes, “Cultural feminism is antimodern in that it opposes androcentric traditions and replaces them with gynocentric ones” (34).

Flynn’s careful and convincing realignment of modernism and antimodernism reiterates her overarching claim that “postmodernism is not modernism’s binary opposite and is neither relativist nor subjectivist” (34). Evidence to support

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her primary contention hinges on her brief but cogent readings of Bakhtin, Derrida, Lyotard, Foucault, Kristeva, Haraway, and Butler, all of whom exhibit a variety of postmodern characteristics. To bolster and extend her broad definition of postmodernism, Flynn turns to new historicism, neo-Marxism, "postfeminism," and social epistemic rhetoric. The writers she selects critique but do not dismiss modernism by seeking alternatives; admit ambivalence by questioning objectivity and impartiality; reject foundational approaches to language; and, a point Flynn elaborates in the next chapter, resist white, liberal humanism because it fails to recognize that "[f]eminisms are historically and geographically situated and hence context specific" (44). With her thorough, wide-ranging, and historically grounded discussion, Flynn complicates and reshapes some of my unexamined assumptions about the traditional binary structure of modernism/postmodernism—most significantly at their respective points of intersection with feminism.

In the much shorter second chapter, Flynn shifts the focus of her reconfigurations. She summarizes: "Examining the struggle to achieve feminist goals in non-Western contexts makes evident the pertinence of as well as some of the limitations of the perspectives I have developed here beyond the context of European and Anglo-American feminisms." (45). She invokes a *New York Times* story of rape in Islamic Morocco and a *Signs* article, "The Politics of Feminism in Islam," to explicate modern feminist and antimodern feminist perspectives respectively. Two *Signs* articles, one about equal opportunity employment law in Japan and the other about "A Story of Resisting Women" in India, lead her to conclude that "local and global intersect to create new feminist forms, hybrids that are postmodern rather than modern or antimodern" (53).

As a member of the dominant Western culture who teaches and writes about social justice issues, I'm intrigued and encouraged by Flynn's analyses. Her reconfigurations have much to offer feminist

scholars who recognize "a current problem within feminist studies—the difficulties of enacting feminist goals in non-Western contexts" (53). Yet perhaps because I see this problem as the most vexing of all, chapter 2 leaves me somewhat uneasy. I wonder about statements such as: "[M]odern feminism needs to be integrated into the context of traditional culture and transformed in the process" (53). I wonder who should/will attempt this integration. I wonder how "traditional culture" is/will be defined and whose culture(s) she has in mind—even in light of her commendable agenda to "refigure [modernist goals] in new situations" (53). I confess that—given the intractable and disheartening politics/policies of the current U.S. administration in response to the September 11 attacks—I am wondering about the very viability of a Western theoretical framework when the feminisms under scrutiny are non-Western. Lugones and Spelman's twenty-year-old critique remains pertinent: "[F]eminist theory has not for the most part arisen out of a medley of women's voices" (575). Granted, this context is different. And, to be sure, Flynn is careful to integrate the perspectives and voices of non-Western women in her "attempt to disrupt the binary way in which Western and non-Western feminisms are often discussed (13), but I am unable to decide to what degree this attempt is successful. Perhaps I'm expecting too much, but I remain puzzled by my sense that while the reconfigurations Flynn establishes in the first chapter explicitly inform her interpretations of the disparate rhetorical sites/texts she visits in subsequent chapters, those reconfigurations that emerge from her consideration of global feminisms virtually disappear.

Chapters 3 and 4 might be considered a case in point, since influences of global feminisms appear negligible to me. Flynn returns to her strategy of evaluating writers as they meet the reconfigured criteria of modern feminist, antimodern feminist, and postmodern feminist. Flynn focuses on nonfiction texts produced by canonical writers



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Virginia Woolf, Adrienne Rich, and Alice Walker to model possible postmodern feminist approaches to reading. On one hand, Woolf "was a radical and cultural feminist and hence antimodern in her insistence that reading is associated with androcentric traditions and in her focus on the reading of common readers who read for their personal ends" (75). On the other hand, she "was modern in her purposefulness, in her emphasis on the importance of reading with accuracy, and in her appreciation for the literary canon and for professional critics" (75). Chapter 4 plays out similarly. Flynn studies Rich and Walker in terms of their radical and/or cultural feminist perspectives on writing and mothering. She argues that "both had strong antimodern-feminist tendencies, though Rich's perspective is primarily radical feminist, Walker's primarily what she calls a womanist perspective, a form of cultural feminism" (77). She goes on to explain, "Both, however, move in the direction of postmodern perspectives as they attempt to deal with the complexities of the approaches they embrace" (77-78). Flynn does not demonstrate clearly enough for me possible influences of global feminisms in terms of Western-postmodern-feminist scholars' readings of canonical Western writers.

In the third and final section, "Critiquing Modernisms," chapter 5 takes up Louise Rosenblatt's work on literacy theories. Flynn again demonstrates the efficacy of her reconfigurations as she considers Rosenblatt's landmark work in transactional reading. According to Flynn, Rosenblatt is clearly modernist "in her uncritical acceptance of the sciences and the social sciences" (100). Flynn goes on to demonstrate her point: "Despite Rosenblatt's strong modern orientation, her transactional approach to reading in some ways anticipates a postmodern one" (104). Similarly, Flynn's understanding of postmodernism as a critique of modernism allows her to argue that Rosenblatt's "conception of aesthetic reading would nevertheless no doubt be of use in the development

of radical- and cultural-feminist perspectives on reading" (112). Like Woolf, Rich, and Walker, Rosenblatt resists easy labeling. Flynn's readings make clear the necessity of challenging blanket denigrations of postmodernism.

In chapter 6, Flynn suggests ways transactional theories of reading and writing such as Rosenblatt's have worked to ameliorate rhetoric and composition's commitment to modernist science. She attributes that disadvantageous allegiance to her understanding that "feminist and other approaches that provide richly contextualized and politicized representations of language have been ignored until quite recently" (124). In Flynn's view, postmodern feminist critiques are nudging rhetoric and composition toward "alternatives to positivistic research models by attending to the political and cultural dimensions of reading, writing, and teaching" (117). Two examples support her assertion: one, "the ethical turn" is prompting explorations of fair and responsible research (132); and, two, "the autobiographical turn involves including personal narrative in otherwise impersonal discourse" (133). Flynn's analysis of the field's history and attendant problems coincides with my experience. We differ, though, in terms of what I intuit (maybe incorrectly) as her sense that the field can/should reconcile with its "perennial adversary, literary studies" (117). She notes, "Institutional partitioning has artificially separated fields that have much in common" (120). Perhaps because of my recent defection to an independent department of writing, I'm inclined to think that those commonalities are the most compelling reasons for separation. Flynn concludes: "Rhetoric and composition is beginning to find postmodern alternatives to unhealthy identification with fields more powerful than itself and is less reliant on association with other fields to confer authority on its work" (133). Might literary studies be one of those "unhealthy identifications"?

The final chapter shows Flynn contributing to

"the autobiographical turn" (133). Presenting readers with a critical reflection on her own teaching, she relies on Butler, Morrison, hooks, and Anzaldúa to argue that "postmodern-feminist pedagogical approaches are useful in developing ways of dealing with student resistance in both the literature and the composition classroom" (133). Her thoughtful narratives about students "resisting homosexuality," "resisting race," and "resisting gender" are familiar, as well as particularly timely. Just last week, a student in my writing class for pre-practice teachers—apparently voicing his resistance to Eleanor Kutz and Hephzibah Roskelly's *An Unquiet Pedagogy* and (no doubt) to my feminist pedagogy and focus on social justice issues—referred to NCTE as a "bastion of capitalist-hating, narrow-minded, Marxist intelligentsia." Fortunately for him, I agree with Flynn who says, "Students need to be provided opportunities to put forth controversial, outrageous, and provocative ideas with impunity" (152). Flynn prompts me to (re)theorize this student's overt resistance, which, in turn, encourages me to continue inviting him and my other students to develop "an awareness of the limitations of their perspectives and the situatedness of their ideological leanings" (as well as my own) (152).

Since the early 1990s when my reading of Flynn's article, "Composing as a Woman," launched my master's thesis, her work has influenced my reading, writing, and teaching. *Feminism Beyond Modernism* is no exception. Exemplary in terms of its interdisciplinarity, the book makes important contributions to feminist/women's studies, composition, rhetoric, and literary studies. This book is exemplary in another way, as well. Flynn announces in her introduction: "I take the risk of using the terms modernism and postmodernism to describe feminist traditions, but I do so by describing postmodernism as a critique of modernism rather than a complete rejection of it" (3). That willingness to engage in the "risky practice" of "[re]siting ([re]sighting) boundaries" is, in my view, a most important contribution.

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## peitho revisited



The logo inaugurated in this issue was inspired by an image of Peitho fleeing the seduction of Leda appearing on the Apulian red figure vase, c. 350-340 BCE (J. Paul Getty Museum). Peitho, Greek goddess of persuasion, merges her verbal power with the threat of seduction. In classical literatures, Peitho is connected with Aphrodite Pandemos and with Athena, goddess of the *polis*. Thus Peitho crosses from a feminized world of seduction into the public life of communities. We prize her ability to move across categories not easily violated in Western thought: religious and secular, male and female, seduction and reason, order and disorder, *public* in its several senses. A digital version is available at [www.Theoi.com](http://www.Theoi.com). Used with permission.

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## announcements

The revised deadline for proposals to the **Fourth Biennial Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s) Conference** is March 31, 2003. The conference takes place October 23–25 at The Ohio State University. More information is available at <http://english.ohio-state.edu/femrhnet>.

Heather Bruce's *Literacies, Lies and Silences: Girls Writing Lives in the Classroom*, is now available from [www.peterlang.com](http://www.peterlang.com). Heather re-examines the work of Janet Emig and describes a three-year ethnographic study of girls writing in a high school women's studies class.

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Please contact us with questions, suggestions, calls for papers, conference announcements, or any other news of possible interest to Coalition members.

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[www.unm.edu/~cwshrc](http://www.unm.edu/~cwshrc)

## membership application

Officially founded in 1993, The Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition is a learned society devoted to supporting women scholars committed to research in the history of rhetoric and composition.

Additionally, we work to build and sustain a network of scholars interested in the role of women in rhetoric and composition. The network serves both as a forum for discussion of related issues and as a vehicle for mentoring newcomers to the field.

If you would like join us, please fill out the following application. All Coalition members receive *Peitho* regularly and stay abreast our work via email.

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institutional affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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After completing the application above, please forward it, along with a check in the amount of your membership fee (\$10 for faculty; \$5 for students), to the following address:

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Petitho

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