Editors’ Introduction

Rebecca Dingo & Clancy Ratliff

Rebecca Dingo is Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Rebecca’s research has addressed transnational rhetorical and composition studies and in doing so she forwards a transnational feminist lens attuned to global political economy. She is the author of Networking Arguments: Rhetoric, Transnational Feminism, and Public Policy Writing, which received the W. Ross Winterowd Award in 2012. She has published widely in both the field of Women’s Studies and Rhetorical Studies. Rebecca has also offered workshops and trainings across the globe on her research, writing pedagogies, and writing development. Her pedagogy seeks to connect theory with practice and all of her classes tend to offer on-the-ground case studies paired with theoretical lenses. Rebecca earned her Ph.D. in English with an emphasis on Rhetoric and Composition from The Ohio State University.

Clancy Ratliff is Friends of the Humanities/Regents Professor in the English department and Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her research and teaching interests are in feminist rhetorics, environmental rhetorics, writing program administration, and copyright and authorship. She has published research in Women’s Studies Quarterly, Kairos, Pedagogy, and other journals and edited collections. She is involved with several community advocacy organizations, including Sierra Club Delta Chapter, Move the Mindset, Citizens Climate Lobby, Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, and Louisiana Association of Sports, Outdoor Adventure, and Recreation (LASOAR).

keywords: in memoriam, post-pandemic

The 2022-2023 academic year has come to an end, and while some may mark this year as “post-pandemic,” most of us are still feeling its consequences. We are mourning lost loved ones, perhaps carrying debt from a period of lost income, and burdened by other forms of debt as well: sleep and rest debt most centrally. We are working with students who have experienced learning loss, including in many cases our own children. The summer may or may not be an opportunity to rest, as we struggle to regroup and make progress on long-stalled research projects, pursue additional summer jobs to supplement income, and just do the work that is needed at home.

In addition to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, residents of many states in the US are dealing with other serious emergencies and attacks. Those of us who are trans, and who have friends and family members who are trans, are contending with state legislatures’ attempts to deny life-saving gender affirming health care, which was already far too burdensome to access. Those of us who work within our communities and institutions to increase diversity, equity, inclusion, decolonization, and belonging are seeing small and hard-won gains being threatened. Those of us with student loan debt are facing the end of the respite from having to make monthly payments...
and are having to make difficult plans and choices about household budgets.

As these events unfold around us, we continue writing, mentoring, and supporting our communities as we are able. We gather together this month, June 2023, for Juneteenth events (in the US) to learn about our history, and for Pride celebrations to show solidarity with the most vulnerable in our communities, insisting on the right to exist, and thrive, in public as queer and trans. This issue of Peitho is among these acts of resilience.

Hyoejin Yoon Memorial

We begin this issue by remembering Hyoejin Yoon, who passed away on December 16, 2022. She was a professor at West Chester University and a leader in the field of composition studies, particularly in the Conference on College Composition and Communication’s Asian/Asian American Caucus. Essays by Eileen Schell, Terese Guinsatao Monberg, and Jennifer Sano-Franchini, Jennifer LeMesurier, and Jen Bacon share memories of their years of knowing Hyoejin. In last summer’s issue of Peitho marking the journal’s tenth anniversary, one of the essays, written by Brooke Boling, Laura R. Micciche, Katie C. Monthie, and Jayne E.O. Stone, engaged feminist grief by going through the archives of Peitho and reading the memorials. We are committed to devoting space in this journal to remembering cherished feminist mentors and reflecting on their legacies, especially those lost far too soon, as Hyoejin Yoon was at only 52 years old.

Schell’s personal account of her friendship with Yoon is a beautiful portrait of a mentoring relationship, and it helps those of us who did not have the good fortune to meet Hyoejin to have a way to know her. Monberg and Sano-Franchini’s essay collects memories from several members of the CCCC Asian/Asian American Caucus who worked with Hyoejin for many years, and they share their experience of working closely with Hyoejin, including on the excellent book Building a Community, Having a Home: The CCCC Asian/Asian American Caucus. Monberg and Sano-Franchini also provide a review of Yoon’s published research and show its contribution to the field. Jennifer LeMesurier’s piece has the immediacy of remarks delivered in an in-person meeting; Hyoejin had been scheduled to serve as the respondent after a panel discussion at the Asian/Asian American Caucus meeting at CCCC in February 2023, and Jennifer is speaking in her place, both engaging the valuable research presented by early-career scholars, as Hyoejin would have done, and paying tribute to her as well. It was a difficult rhetorical task, and LeMesurier does it with the utmost intellect and sensitivity. Finally, Jen Bacon’s remarks, delivered at a memorial at West Chester University, show us the magnitude of the impact that colleagues can have on each other day to day, year to year.

Articles

The essays for this Spring 2023 issue offer scholarship that move from the local class-
room out into the global realm and back again. They demonstrate various acts of resiliency: a teacher patiently leads students towards a feminist consciousness, even when they are reluctant to follow, students question and educate others about the research practices of their land-grant university, and a novel carves out new forms of human rights ideals that are based on feminist solidarities instead of capital accumulation. To begin, Abby Dubisar’s essay “Feminist Ethos and Global Food Systems Rhetorics on Campus” and Weiming Denise Yao Gorman’s essay “From Textual Subjects to Voracious Feminists: Rethink Constitutive Rhetoric,” for example, center students and their rhetorical practices. In Gorman’s case, she explores how students come to her communication studies classroom as reluctant feminists but leave as voracious ones. Gorman chronicles the pedagogies she uses that help students develop feminist thinking and action in her general education classroom, demonstrating how rethinking constitutive rhetoric through feminist rhetorical theory alongside centering students’ experiences and perspectives helps students to develop a feminist politic. Her deep dive into classroom practices offers feminist teachers a series of pedagogical approaches to moving even reluctant students towards becoming voracious feminists.

Dubisar similarly shows how students developed and employed their feminist ethos when challenging their land-grant university’s politics around global food security and GMO research and testing. Students schooled in feminist and transnational feminist thinking attuned to legacies of colonialism and global capital production, challenged their institution’s broader narrative of “feeding the world” by asking who was really benefitting from their institution’s seemingly charitable food system projects. Dubisar’s analysis shows how students’ ethos around food systems and their rhetorical actions had both limits and possibilities—the students were able to employ rhetorical strategies to question and call out their university’s limited understanding of food systems but at times were ignored due to their subject positions. Although Dubisar does not mention it specifically in her essay, the rhetorical actions and knowledge-making strategies that the students engaged in demonstrate the unique lenses that rhetorical scholars can bring to interdisciplinary projects that can help disrupt the Capitalist-economic, colonial, and neo-imperial logics that often frame global food system projects. Such ethos will potentially help policymakers and scientists create better global food systems projects. The students that are showcased in Dubisar’s essay demonstrate the sorts of rhetorical acumen and resilience that Gorman sought to develop in her students and the sort of anti-capitalist human rights approaches Belinda Walzer gestures to in her essay in this issue. As one of the students in Dubisar’s essay argues, the GMO research the university conducted overlooked the local needs and perspectives of populations that the research purported to benefit. This sort of local (on the ground) connection to global issues is echoed in Walzer’s study of how local human rights needs are represented.

Walzer, in her essay “Economies of Rights: Transnational Feminism and the Transnational Structure of Rights,” relatedly seeks to disrupt the Capitalist-economic, colonial, and neo-imperial logics that frame human rights discourses around global sex trafficking. Walzer’s deep transna-
tional feminist analysis demonstrates the ways that economic rhetorics form the basis of the logic of women’s rights in general, making projects of solidarity across difference difficult. To imagine a model of transnational feminist solidarity, Walzer then turns to a Burmese novel that complicates the economic logics of human rights. As Walzer describes, the novel exposes the limits of the trope of passive sex-trafficking victim that tends to frame anti-sex trafficking human rights discourses. Instead, the novel depicts a subject of gendered human rights who, because her sex-work does not fit with the dominant victim narrative, cannot be recognized within the larger rhetoric of global capitalism in human rights. It is through transnational feminist rhetorical solidarity that the novel disrupts the legal marking of gendered human trafficking. As all these essays show, feminist resilience and practices can take many forms and each practice can move us closer to a more just world.

Cluster Conversation on Feminist Internet Research Ethics

This issue also includes a Cluster Conversation, a feature in Peitho that first appeared in Spring 2020 with the Queer Rhetorical Listening Cluster. In this issue, we have a collection of pieces about Feminist Internet Research Ethics, edited by Kristi McDuffie and Melissa Ames. These seven essays offer insights not only about internet research ethics, but also research methods, research design, and feminist pedagogy. Internet research ethics has been a topic of study since at least the early 2000s, and with each new technology, the ethical responsibilities of researchers must be reconsidered in an accretive process. The essays in this cluster show the progression of the conversation about ethics in internet research, which was fairly new when I was in graduate school in the early 2000s. The question we frequently grappled with was: are we studying texts, or are we studying people?

The contributors to this Cluster Conversation unpack the complexities of that early question, taking into account perceived privacy, vulnerability of the people involved, sensitivity of the subject matter in posts, removal of identifiers, whether or not permission was requested and granted, and sharing of the research with participants prior to publication: generally having and maintaining a good, respectful relationship with users in online communities. Cam Cavaliere and Leigh Gruwell explain the importance of self-care and strong mentoring when doing research about aggression and harassment online: a real problem that needs to be studied, but that can be very upsetting to engage with. Wilfrido Flores describes a new approach to coding data: “slow coding,” which requires researchers to slow down and approach data more reflectively and that can result in conclusions that are more nuanced, accurate, and critical. Hannah Taylor shares careful ethical reflection on work that she has done on visual content online, which is more difficult to anonymize. Charles Woods and Devon Fitzgerald Ralston offer a heuristic for reflecting on research ethics specific to podcasting, which reveals the considerable behind-the-scenes labor and time commitment involved in producing podcasts; it is valuable for any scholar who is including podcasting in their tenure and promotion dossiers. Nora Augustine’s examination of the ethics
of doing research about online support groups engages the rapidly shifting norms of privacy and confidentiality that are in effect for support groups that meet on Zoom. Gabriella Wilson’s essay on teaching feminist research ethics and methods is a helpful guide, with student-facing reflection prompts, that can be adapted for any undergraduate or graduate course, including first-year writing. Because so much communication happens online, most of the research we do in our field is internet research, so this cluster would make a valuable addition to any syllabus of a course on methods for a graduate program or for undergraduate research.

**Book Reviews**

With this issue, we are thrilled to introduce our new Associate Editor, Jennifer Nish. Thanks to her work, we have three book reviews in this issue. Maria Ferrato reviews Utopian Genderscapes: Rhetorics of Women’s Work in the Early Industrial Age, by Michelle C. Smith. Lane Riggs reviews Ethics and Representation in Feminist Rhetorical Inquiry, edited by Amy Dayton and Jennie Vaughn. Ellen O’Connell Whittet reviews Body Work: The Radical Power of Personal Narrative, by Melissa Febos. These three books are diverse in subject matter but all equally interesting and relevant.

We hope you enjoy this issue, including its cover art, which was a labor of love: the CCCC Feminist Caucus gave conference attendees the opportunity to create fabric squares to be made into a wall quilt, which Holly Hassel sewed after the conference. The Caucus then auctioned the quilt, with the proceeds going to help fund caregiving grants for the CCCC convention. We thank the Feminist Caucus for allowing us to use a photograph of the quilt as the cover of the Spring 2023 issue. The next issue will be from our guest editors: Angela Clark-Oates, Louis M. Maraj, Aurora Matzke, and Sherry Rankins-Robertson. It’s a summer special issue with the theme Coalition as Commonplace: Centering Feminist Scholarship, Pedagogies, and Leadership Practices, and we’re excited to read it.