

From the Editors: Marking a Year

A year ago, we introduced the spring issue with reference to our “feelings of uncertainty, trauma, and fear” and examples of how “parts of our individual and collective well-being are challenged, compromised, and threatened” by the pandemic. A year on, those sentiments—and the inequitable dispersal of those harms—still accurately describe for many the day-to-day lived experience and general sense of the past year. The cover to this issue, composed by one of Kara’s students, captures this reality from the perspective of a student: discarded masks; coffee cup stains; days, weeks, months marked off the calendar; seasons, in the window, passing by. A computer screen filled with what students have disparagingly dubbed “Zoom University.”

And yet, it would seem that hope springs eternal. Amidst the difficulty, we here at *CS* found enough space for empathy and compassion: for our students, colleagues, reviewers, authors, prospective authors, and for ourselves. And we certainly received even more fellow-feeling in kind: our reviewers, whom you can find listed in the front matter, were immensely generous with their attention and effort at a time when both were surely overtaxed. *CS* authors and prospective authors were patient with feedback, decisions, and page proofs. And *CS* advisory board members were supportive, responsive, and dedicated. To those advisory board members who stayed on an extra mini-term to keep the journal afloat: we thank you. (And to those of you who, because of other commitments and difficulties, could not be the reviewers and authors you wanted to be this past year: we understand, we appreciate you, and we hope to be able to support you and work together soon.)

In addition, and as we announced last time, we’re hopeful because the *CS* team has grown. This issue includes the collective efforts of Anna Aldrich, Mike Haen, Callie Kostelich, Emma Kostopoulos, Alex McAdams, and Clare Sully-Stendahl, all of whom—under the phenomenal guidance of our managing editor, Megan Busch—worked this issue into being. In addition, Nitya Pandey and Annmarie Steffes remain our fantastic social media editors. And Lauren Fusilier and Megan Von Bergen deserve special recognition: over the course of the last year, they’ve planned, designed, and launched *FEN Blog*, which is available at compstudiesjournal.com/blog/. There you can already find thoughtful and thought-provoking posts by Sheila Carter-Tod (centering African American rhetorics as a way to think about rhetorical knowledge in the writing classroom) and by Adam Hubrig (arguing that access isn’t an achievement, but a series of “ongoing conversations and actions that address the systematic inequalities and institutional barriers that exclude disabled and other marginalized bodies”). And more are forthcoming!

We also find hope in the future of the journal. In summer 2021, we will release our second special issue, this one titled “Diversity is not Equity: BIPOC Scholars Speak to Systemic Racism in the Academy and Field.” The guest editors, Ersula Ore, Kimberly Wieser, and Christina Cedillo, have been hard at work gearing up for this issue. It will be released fully online and open-access on our website this summer. We are now seeking collaborative editorial teams for a digital special issue in summer 2022, so if you have a possible topic, please submit a proposal to compstudiesjournal@gmail.com.

This Issue

No doubt, this issue kicks off with the cover: designed by Catalina Sepulveda, it is our first cover that features student artwork. (Somewhat famously for CS folks, Laura R. Micciche’s son designed several of the colorful covers during her editorship, and we’re glad to continue such a tradition in our own way.) Of the cover, Cat says:

Studying during the pandemic has been very hard, especially online. For the most part, trying to stay engaged and motivated is more challenging than the course itself. For this piece, I wanted to portray it as realistic as possible. As opposed to an abstract form that represents the emotions of studying online, I wanted to show the mundane daily feeling of learning online. The focus of the piece is simple: a student sleeping during their Zoom lecture. However, it’s the details that make the message. Marks on the wall, crosses on the calendar, cobwebs on the backpack, a broken clock, all four seasons just passing by... all represent that feeling of losing track of time, of days just merging together into an ongoing cycle of repetition. I wanted the room to be as full and cluttered as possible to resemble the year and its intensity.

At A Glance: Connections and Collaborations

This issue’s At A Glance, by Howard Tinberg, Sharon Mitchler, and Sonja Andrus, draws on their work on the Teaching for Transfer (TFT) curriculum in community college settings. “Into The Wild: Teaching for Transfer in the Two-Year College” is guided by an ecological metaphor for thinking through how the TFT curriculum functions at different institutions, through different adaptations, and for different student populations. Their supplementary web text is an enormously helpful resource for exploring teacher and student experience, curricular efficacy, two-year college adaptation, implementation, and research, as well as reading within the TFT curriculum. A pdf

and a video of the webtext is available here: <https://compstudiesjournal.com/current-issue--spring-2021-49-1>.

The Articles

The articles in this issue span a range of methods, disciplinary concerns, and time periods. The issue begins with an article by Laurie A. Pinkert and Lauren Marshall Bowen which, building on their empirical, collective work elsewhere, offers the metaphor of a “disciplinary lifecycle” as a way of understanding academic work as a process of becoming (through activities, phases, and cycles) rather than the living-out of a trajectory. Second, and very timely, is Zachary Beare’s analysis of the WPA-L listserv as an affective disciplinary space. Seeing the listserv as a knowledge-making space, Beare argues that we might come to understand and value WPA-L as much for the democratic possibilities of its platform as for the tensions, disagreements, and emotional processes it can embody. Next, Jennifer Sheppard examines the results of a “hyperlocal programmatic survey” of faculty needs during adjustments to emergency online teaching in 2020. Situated within the context of scholarship on OWI, Sheppard’s findings should be useful to WPAs and teachers alike: by focusing on pedagogy, connection, and logistics—in that order—programs can support instructors planning to teach online for the first time. Finally, Danielle Koupf argues for critical-creative tinkering, a practice of “reuse that infuses writing with the hands-on, experimental ethos of the makerspace,” in the composition classroom. Through Koupf’s analysis, tinkering becomes not only a process through which composition occurs, but also a layered opening up of invention and amplification with historical roots, among other places, in writing textbooks of the 19th Century.

The Course Designs

This issue contains one course design, and it’s a substantial one: Maria Novotny, Claire Edwards, Gitte Frandsen, Danielle Koepke, Joni Marcum, Chloe Smith, Angelyn Sommers, and Madison Williams combine forces to outline and collectively reflect on a cultural rhetorics approach to a graduate seminar in rhetoric and composition. This course, focused on professional and community-engaged work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, harmonizes course design, content, and reflection with four pillars of cultural rhetorical pedagogy: story, decolonization, relations, and constellation. The resulting multivocal, reflective narrative outlines how to practice cultural rhetorics in the classroom and in a variety of communities beyond it.

Their course materials are available at <https://compstudiesjournal.com/current-issue--spring-2021-49-1/>.

The Where We Are Section

We are thrilled by this issue's Where We Are, which focuses on Intergenerational Exchange. We have a fabulous group of scholars in the early, mid, late, and emeritus stages of their academic lifecycles. Each contribution offers a particular way of knowing in our current moment, and, taken together, the section offers a more complex understanding of who we are as a field and how we might move productively forward together. We have organized these pieces alphabetically, but we see interesting resonances across and among the pieces: we urge you to explore and enjoy those connections.

The Book Reviews

The book reviews for this issue include two review essays: first, Chloe J. Robertson's "Dismantling Anti-Blackness and Uplifting African American Rhetoric" is a timely review focused on anti-blackness in the discipline that, when read with and against Sheila Carter Tod's post at *FEN Blog* and Mikayla Beaudrie's review on African-American rhetoric (in this issue), pays significant dividends. Second, in "Graduate Student Writing is Graduate Student Work," Turnip Van Dyke reviews three books focused on the development of graduate students. And, fittingly, Van Dyke is both a graduate student and a first-time composition teacher. The essay ends with a call for graduate students to find and support each other: we join Van Dyke in hoping you'll answer that call.

Rounding out the issue, the individual reviews take up major strands of development in the field: protest and public rhetoric, critical race theory and methodology, labor-based grading contracts, African-American rhetorics, and online writing instruction. Taken together, they are as solid a short introduction to current concerns in rhetoric and composition as you could find anywhere.

Thank you, again, to our reviewers, authors, advisory board, and editorial team. Thanks, most of all, to the *CS* subscribers, who allow our work to continue. We look forward to a brighter, more equitable, and more just future with all of you in it.

MD and Kt
Boston and Denver
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