

Editor's Introduction

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“Editing from a place of love is grounded in relationships.”

—Marisol Brito, Alexander Fink, Chris Friend, Adam Heidebrink-
Bruno, Rolin Moe, Kris Shaffer, Valerie Robin, and Robin Wharton

In November 2014, members of the editorial board of *Hybrid Pedagogy* published “Love in the Time of Peer Review,” a treatise on academic publishing and editorial practices.¹ Brito and her co-authors debunk the myth that “knowledge comes from distance,” and they call for editorial processes that focus not only on textual artifacts but also on “the relationship between editor and author,” a loving relationship of mutual support in the service of reaching new insights and shared understandings.

Since its inception in 2003, *Young Scholars in Writing* has worked to embody these ideals about editorial work as the creation and maintenance of human connections. The journal was born out of the abiding professional friendship of Laurie Grobman and the late Candace Spigelman. They shared a desire to create a space in which undergraduate researchers could begin connecting with other scholars in the field. Through the ensuing twelve years, *YSW* has fostered an ever-growing network of productive relationships that includes not just editors and authors but also the dedicated faculty mentors who encourage undergraduate researchers to undertake substantive research projects and submit their work to the journal; the many editorial interns who have helped to evaluate initial submissions as they learned to participate in the processes of ethical, engaged peer review; the journal’s copyeditors whose keen eyes and sharp pencils have contributed mightily to providing readers with smooth textual experiences; UMKC graduate students in rhetoric and writing studies who have assisted with proofreading duties; and the journal’s ever patient printer. Love and a commitment to human connection truly guide the many hands and hearts that help to create each issue of *YSW*.

The essays that comprise volume 12 stand as ample evidence of the authors’ passion on the page, and they have been eager to form relationships with the journal’s editorial staff as well as with readers who will take up their ideas and enter their intellectual lives. Matthew Morris’s analysis of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speech, “The Drum Major Instinct,” leads off this volume. Morris’s reading of King’s oratory offers a thorough catalog of the rhetorical techniques deployed by the slain leader of the Freedom Movement and documents how the speech as been re-positioned (and even misquoted) to minimize the potentially revolutionary power of King’s call for “servant-leadership.” Marie Whelan turns readers’ attention to another important, caring leader—Rosalynn Carter. Whelan explores Carter’s advocacy on behalf of people battling mental illness, documenting the rhetorical techniques that allow Carter to craft an “intimate argument” even as she occupied a very public space as a First Lady. Rachel Dixon focuses her attention on a leader whose important work was accomplished within a more circumscribed and local context—William “Bill” Reid, the founder of a Scottish pipe band in Lexington, Kentucky. Through her nuanced reading of oral histories with Reid’s family members, Dixon is able to discern patterns of rhetorical identification at play in processes of acculturation and assimilation.

While Morris, Whelan, and Dixon are passionate about the lessons that can be learned from

their careful rhetorical studies of established leaders and their relationships to others, Esra Padgett, Brynn Kairis, Nathaniel T. Voeller, and Kelsey Butler all assert their own rhetorical leadership and work to make new kinds of relationships possible through their innovative, important projects. Padgett invites readers to join her in a journey through feminist rhetorical scholarship, revising and refining the form of the traditional academic essay along the way. Kairis turns to literacy narratives authored by individuals who are D/deaf and the “multiple methods and modalities” of their writing to highlight the instability of definitions of both literacy and disability. Based on his research on characteristics typically attributed to student texts, Voeller makes an impassioned plea for pedagogies that reconstruct the hierarchy between students and faculty and that value students’ contributions to the field of writing studies. Butler similarly makes an eloquent case for new understandings of the power dynamics in the composition classroom, focusing particularly on working-class students and the need to move beyond the dualistic choices presented by critical pedagogies to new forms of community practice.

Audrey Ackerman, Daniel Pfeiffer, Maggie Collins, and Ashley Cerku all share their intellectual enthusiasm for analyzing particular rhetorical genres. Ackerman turns to film. More particularly, she focuses on Stanley Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) as a rhetorical vehicle for exploring the relationship between truth and ideological manipulation. For Pfeiffer, novels can serve as productive sites for interrogating rhetorical concepts. Pfeiffer positions Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* and a pivotal dinner party scene in the novel as an occasion for interrogating the concept of the Burkean parlor and how new initiates become aware of the rules of discursive engagement. Cerku sketches for readers a history of the epistolary genre and establishes that *ars dictaminis* remain relevant in today’s world despite the prevalence of electronic forms of communication. Collins takes up a newer genre—the Internet meme—and explores how the discursive norms of digital communication can help to concretize sexist language practices.

The final full-length article in this volume of *YSW* demonstrates the relevance for rhetorical research and analysis for critical policy decisions and how we live in relationship to each other as well as the natural environment. Steven Slasten examines the rhetorical work unfolding in debates over the Keystone XL Pipeline. Drawing upon the work of Kenneth Burke and Richard Weaver, Slasten pinpoints “god terms” that have been deployed to create a symbolic exigence that magnifies the pipeline beyond its material consequences for both energy independence and environmental stewardship.

In addition to these twelve outstanding essays by undergraduate researchers, *YSW* is pleased to feature three essays in this year’s Spotlight on First-Year Writing. Shulun Zheng and Jie Cheng raise provocative questions about the practice of ghostwriting, both within and beyond the academy. Annalise Sigona explores “impression management” via social media, and Marvin Gowinatra examines the rhetorical opportunity that the National Day Rally Speech affords to the prime minister of Singapore every year and the particular strategies that Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong deployed in his 2013 speech to amplify aspects of his long-established public identity and consolidate his bureaucratic authority. That such important work is taking place in first-year writing courses suggests that there will be steady stream of new individuals who will be ready and able partners in the ongoing work of understanding how people can use words to build a better world.

Volume 12 of *YSW* concludes with three responses to previously published work in the journal. Jennifer Bilton considers the strengths and limitations of Aubrey Young’s case study methodology in her essay on patriarchal discourse in music education, which appeared in volume 11. Luke D. Christie takes up Ashley K. Allen’s analysis of Al Gore’s eulogy for the victims of the massacre at Columbine High School in 1999, which also appeared in volume 11. While Christie acknowledges the value of Allen’s use of the Kenneth Burke’s dramatistic pentad to analyze Gore’s oratory, he also points out the need to consider other factors that influenced the speech and its reception,

including Gore's own religious commitments as a Southern Baptist. Suzanne Burton also responds to Allen's analysis of the Columbine eulogy. For Burton, the richness of Gore's rhetorical performance can best be understood by more fully situating the speech within the genre of the jeremiad. All three of these thoughtful, incisive responses stand as powerful reminders that essays published in *YSW*, and other academic journals, serve as bridges for building still more relationships between writers and readers and that no roles are fixed or stagnant. At their best, scholarly publications inspire readers to become authors who share their own work in print.

Indeed, the many relationships that *YSW* has helped to build over the years are characterized by development and transformation, just as the three Comment and Response contributors featured in volume 12 have moved from being readers to authors. So many people who have shared in the journal's work have found ways to continually (re)develop their abilities and (re)invest their energies. The editorial board now includes tenure-track faculty members who first published in *YSW* as undergraduate researchers; other authors are pursuing graduate studies and are encouraging students in their first-year writing classes to submit their work to the journal; faculty mentors whose own students have published in the journal serve on the editorial board and mentor undergraduate researchers from institutions quite different than their own; and editorial interns have been inspired to pursue their own research projects in writing studies and rhetoric in hopes of becoming *YSW* authors.

With volume 13, *YSW* will continue the process of changing, growing, and fostering new relationships. Dr. Doug Downs will step into the role of editor, with the support of his colleagues at Montana State University and the *YSW* editorial board. A member of editorial board since its inception in 2008, Doug has been one of *YSW*'s most energetic champions, and his leadership on issues surrounding undergraduate research in writing studies and rhetoric has been of tremendous benefit to us all. We look forward to seeing how *YSW* and everyone connected to it will continue to grow in exciting new ways with Doug at the helm.

A final thank you to all who make working on *YSW* such a rewarding and fun experience, and in the spirit of dynamic relationships that allow for further growth and development, for new roles and new identities, the list here is presented simply in alphabetic order. With much gratitude and much love to Jeff Andelora, Sarah Ashlock, Hope Austin, Paige V. Banaji, Virginia Blanton, Hannah Brown, Melanie Burdick, Doug Downs, Abby M. Dubisar, Karina Dunn, David Elder, Laura Ellis-Lai, TJ Geiger, John Gravener, David Grieff, Laurie Grobman, Patti Hanlon-Baker, Christine R. Hill, Jonathan Hunt, Rina James, Joe Janangelo, Jeff Klausman, Anne H. Muccino, Sherry Neuerburg, Sean Patrick O'Rourke, Brian A. Patrick, Lauren Petrillo, Jennifer Phegley, Sarah Polo, Steve Price, Erin Ryan, Holly Ryan, Rebekah Sims, Megan Stone, Kate Stuart, Wayne Vaught, Annette Vee, Stephanie Vie, and Marie Whelan. Thank you all.

Note

¹ I'm indebted to Nick Carbone for calling attention to "Love in the Time of Peer Review" on the WPA-L list-serv. Carbone has composed his own moving tribute to the editorial practices of *Kairos* and to the visionary leadership of Chuck Christensen and Joan Feinberg at Bedford, <http://ncarbone.blogspot.com/2014/11/editing-love-story-in-four-subheads.html>

Works Cited

Brito, Marisol, Alexander Fink, Chris Friend, Adam Heidebrink-Bruno, Rolin Moe, Kris Shaffer, Valerie Robin, and Robin Wharton. "Love in the Time of Peer Review." *Hybrid Pedagogy* 22 Nov. 2014. Web. 1 Dec. 2014.