Spring 2024

Coalitional Response(ability) in Rhetoric and Composition

Zoe Nicole McDonald
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

COALITIONAL RESPONSE(ABILITY) IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

by

Zoe McDonald

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the

Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major: English

(Composition and Rhetoric; Women's and Gender Studies)

Under the Supervision of Professor Stacey Waite

Lincoln, Nebraska

May, 2024

COALITIONAL RESPONSE(ABILITY) IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

Zoe McDonald, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska, 2024

Advisor: Stacey Waite

This dissertation considers the literacy practices of progressive coalitions as a provocative way to examine central responsibilities of rhetorical scholars, college writing instructors, and Writing Program Administrators. Through attention to case studies, this dissertation suggests opportunities to consider social differences as crucial assets for political advocacy, scholarly knowledge production, and teaching strategies.

In memory of Gary Benson, Stuart Hackley, and Betty Ann Stanfield. Thank you for each of your lives of service through education.

Acknowledgements

The community within, and surrounding, the University of Nebraska-English Department has made this project possible. I thank fellow graduate students, and lecturers: Caroliena Cabada, Andrew Del Mastro, Jess Poli, Zainab Omaki, Tryphena Yeboah, Ashlyn Stewart, Paul Grosskopf, Jaclyn Swiderski, Jamaica Baldwin, Kristi Carter, and Katie Marya. My peer writing group-- Arden Eli Hill, Ava Winter, Erika Luckert, Tim Meadows, Anne Nagel, and Mark Houston—has been a crucial source of accountability, along with Kimia Akhavein and Jamy Rentschler. Within Rhetoric and Composition, I thank Nicole Green, Alexandra DeLuise, Melissa Tayles, Ada Hubrig, Charlotte Kupsh, and Jason McCormick. Serenity Dougherty and Kathleen Dillon have been invaluable for countless conversations, flexible Writing Center appointments, last-minute pep talks, and shared laughter.

I have been deeply grateful for support in the shape of coffee-facilitated conversations, source recommendations, and teaching opportunities. Katja Duerig was gracious to share her advanced beginning adult English Language class through Lincoln Literacy. Deanne Sparks and Lisa Rohde in the Office of Graduate Studies provided much needed coaching on my job market materials. Becky Freeman and Joshua Renner in the UNL Institutional Review Board Office worked with through my revisions to ensure I could cite former students' work. Janel Simons and Liz Lorang in the UNL Libraries met with me during multiple research consultations. The members of the Steering Committee of Unionize UNL provided me with crucial experiences working in a coalition. The Nebraska Writers' Collective has deeply impacted how I understand the liberatory potential of creative writing. I especially thank the Co-Executive directors,

Gina Tranisi and Zedeka Poindexter, and the Writer's Block Pathfinder crew, Jordan Charlton, Tina Le, Ian Maxton, and Carmela Rigatuso. The Counseling and Psychological Services' graduate women's support group has provided crucial support and accountability. The Rhetoric Society of American summer workshops in 2019 lead by Lisa S. Villadsen and Christian Koch, and in 2021 by Johnathan Alexander and Katherine Mack were crucial spaces for this project along with the 2023 Feminist Caucus Workshop at the Conference on College Composition and Communication. Catherine Palczewski and Kelly Jensen provided much needed clarity during the 2024 Midwest Winter Rhetoric Workshop. I also thank my copy editor, Chelsi Selmer, and the editors and reviewers at the *Writing Spaces: Assignments and Activities Archive,* the *WPA Journal,* and *Peitho: The Journal of the Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric.*

I have many mentors who may never know the depth of their influence. Catherine Fraser-Riehle has been an unforgettable mentor and source of key encouragement. Natalie Wiebelhaus has been an invaluable friend and spiritual mentor. Kelbie Schnieder introduced me to long-distance running. I cannot thank Marco Abel enough for the work he does with Humanities on the Edge and for the English Department. Rachael Shah has been a crucial influence on how I understand teaching outside of university settings. Rachel Azima deserves so much credit for overseeing a fantastic Writing Center community. Cindy Tekobbe, my mentor through the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric, has been crucial as I consider ways to make a long-term commitment to an academic life. I also thank Nicole Bondurant at Laramie High School for taking on the crucial work of being a dynamic poet, community member, activist, and high school English Teacher. Additional mentors include: Robert Brooke, Bonnie Zare, Danielle

Pafunda, Brad Watson, Harvey Hix, Jean Bessette, Paul Deslandes, Libby Miles, Helen Scott, and Hyon Joo Yoo.

For their significant patience, generosity, and grace, I thank my former students Arianna Mercer, Nicholas Kinzer, and Trinity Thompson. Thank you all for trusting me as your teacher. Thank you Frankie Condon, and "Ivy," for sharing your connections among Rhetoric and Composition and coalitions; and especially Nancy Welch for sharing ways the discipline may still be revolutionary. Kristen Hoerl led an inspiring rhetoric of social movements seminar, and shared the key advice that we all make small claims. Lauren Gatti provided a crucial sense of community as a teacher and writer. Shari Stenberg has helped me find my arguments. Debbie Minter took a significant risk through sharing her composing practice with me and guiding me through the peer-review process. One day I may enact half as many coalitional responsibilities as Stacey Waite, someone who lives in the interplay of art and argument and coaching so many to do the same.

This project would be impossible without my family: Trent, Mary, Aidan, and Mia McDonald, and the expansive McDonald-Benson clan. Thank you all.

Table of Contents

Coalitional Response(ability) in Rhetoric and Composition

During my second year of college, a student on my campus shared a rape threat someone allegedly posted on her Facebook wall. I was the opinion editor for the student newspaper, a job I never mentioned in my classes although my byline was printed five days a week. The day of the threat, I received several emails from students I had never met in person. One email came from a woman who wrote she was sexually assaulted on campus but didn't file a police report. She had friends who had similar experiences. So did I. The email writer continued she may not be able to get justice for herself, but justice for someone else would be justice for all who ever felt threatened on campus. Rather than letting this moment pass by, I thought perhaps there could be an investigation and an altered view of the devastating impacts of sexual violence among college students.

The afternoon after I received the email, I walked from the newspaper office through campus. There was a protest—two dozen people, neon signs, chants, raised fists. This was an act of solidarity motivated by a current event, but demanding attention to issues of safety beyond the latest incident. The protesters were a more diverse group of students than I had seen at any other place on campus. There were white women wearing sorority letters, women of color, nonbinary people, and some men. This was an unmistakably alive moment of collective response as resistance, something I needed to join.

There is much more to this experience, including the op-eds I wrote, the protests and speak outs, the results of a police report, and the discussions in a women's studies class I was taking at the time. I share this anecdote because before I knew about

consciousness raising groups, or the language of ethical theories, this experience altered how I saw myself as a writer. I could alter the environment I was part of on a daily basis in ways that could help myself and others. It also taught me such moments—especially when they disproportionately impact women and other minoritized people—are often overlooked, and require collective engagement. I doubt I would have acted if I hadn't received emails from other students. I'm not sure if at 20 I saw myself as being responsible for calling for accountability and safety for my peers. I am sure this moment shaped how I developed as a writer and teacher. This is one moment that shaped my knowledge of the ways taking the attention of an event public can be changed and gathering a wide range of allies to address preservative patterns of violence and injustice, one that can provide motivation to consider how different social movements relate to each other and compel individuals to take on risks to join action-oriented alliances.

It is challenging to think of justice and powerful alliances without thinking of the Civil Rights movement and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Johnathan Eig's recent biography is a recent example of a writer compelled to humanize a well-known social movement leader and rhetorician. In *King: A Life,* Eig narrates the life of King to motivate readers to engage the rhetoric of the familiar Civil Rights hero. Eig describes MLK's life as part of an intergenerational movement relies on previously unpublished materials from the FBI, family members, and close associates to illustrate the life of a man whose rhetoric has become synonymous with racial justice movements. Eig sets out to complicate popular perceptions of King, and his rhetoric, often limited to sound bites from his "I Have a Dream Speech." Eig writes, "Young people hear his [MLK's] dream of brotherhood and his wish for children to be judged by the content of their character,

but not his call for fundamental change in the nation's character, not his cry to end the triple evils of materialism, militarism, and racism" (556). Eig further explains his biography's purpose to "recover the real man from the gray mist of hagiography" in ways that "may trouble some people" (4). Previous biographers have noted human moments in the hero's life through King's mental health struggles and the FBI wiretaps that reveal King's frequent nonmonogamy. Eig's book also reveals the ways King was part of multiple movements for racial justice that relied on many leaders, especially Coretta Scott King. Eig writes his attempts to promote reader's engagement with MLK's words, "might help us make our way through these troubled times, but only if we actually read them: only if we embrace the complicated King, the flawed King, the human King, the radical King" (557).

The warm reception of Eig's biography from media outlets complicates the assumption that the American public is uninterested in descriptions of community empowerment that situate individuals outside of cultural narratives of individual exceptionalism. For decades, scholars and activists have urged a wide-spread acknowledgment of "the recognition that all lives are not imperiled in the same ways" (Warnock 237) to intervene in the ways cultural norms of individual exceptionalism can work alongside trends to move public resources into private markets that has resulted in "private opulence and public squalor" (Galbraith 191; Desmond 106; MacLean). This trend away from a public good has resulted in alarming assumptions among everyday citizens that engaging across boundaries of political and social affiliation is not worth the effort (see Hawkins et al.; Kock and Villadsen). Convincing citizens of the benefits of participating in shared cultural and political life takes on heightened urgency in the years

following important reckonings with institutional racism as prompted by Black Lives Matter activists that has been met by political rhetoric alleging limited benefits of so-called woke humanities programs. Eig's biography of MLK is one recent example of the ways directing readers to the communities that shaped a person who became a legend extends beyond the present moment.

In the 1989 "Composing Ourselves" keynote for the Conference on College Composition and Communication Andrea Lunsford urges scholars and educators to direct attention to those who taught the canonized heroes of Western rhetoric, writing "Who taught Heloise? Who Milton? Who Martin Luther King? Who for that matter, taught us" ("Composing Ourselves: Politics, Commitment, and the Teaching of Writing" 188). Lunsford turns attention to shared struggles for individuals to challenge how others represent them in compelling situations surrounding racism and college student writing abilities. Lunsford urges her audience to embrace a teaching-focus to work with scholars in literary studies and other academic disciplines. Lunsford also intimates the ways a focus on struggles for collective political change "would set up not consensus, but coalitions" (191)[1]. Lunsford's provocative suggestion to compare Rhetoric and Composition to a coalition is one I further pursue to examine the value of a humanities-orientation to the study of coalitions and their rhetoric.

I work with the closely related terms coalition and coalitional literacies. Within social scientific disciplines, coalitions are short-term alliances among two or more different organizations working in shared pursuit of political or social change. This can look like a prime minister uniting members of parliament to pass a domestic budget, or

[1] Lunsford credits Chaterine R. Stimpson's *Where the Meanings Are* for helping her see a connection among composition studies and coalitions as political alliances.

more locally-oriented projects such as a faculty member, volunteers, and a nonprofit program manager collaborating on a grant proposal. Within this understanding of coalitions, I want to direct attention to the ways those of us in the humanities have a great deal to offer and to gain from the study of coalitions and their rhetoric. Literacy practices are one crucial point of connection. The community literacy scholars Gerald Campano et al define "coalitional literacies" as "critical social practices whereby community members enact language and literacy across cultural boundaries in order to learn from others, be reflective with respect to social location, foster empathy, cultivate affective bonds, and promote inclusion in service of progressive change" (315). Coalitional literacies emphasize mutual learning, crossing boundaries in social location and cultural difference, establishing constitutive connections, and pursuing change from within. This focus on literacy practices that respect differences differs from other closely related terms due to the ways immutable differences can be assets for rhetoric studies and composition pedagogy. I keep these definitions of coalition and coalitional literacies in view as I analyze brief shifts in Hillary Rodham Clinton's ethos in her memoir *What Happened,* examine a stance scholars and educators can adopt, and as I reflect on ways to encourage composition students to revise their essays through using their social differences as generative assets.

Coalitional literacies can offer alternatives to single identity-focused ways of seeing. Some of the most profound shifts in public life in the 20th century have to do with the status of women and people of color through legislative advancements in college access, voting rights, workplace discrimination harassment protections, and marriage rights. These advancements have also connected with rights for immigrants, people with

disabilities, LGBTQ people, and Indigenous nations. While it can be tempting to write of such groups in terms of a shared status or identity, doing so can gloss over the complexities of movements, pluralistic identities, and the circumstances of individual lives. A renewed focus on ethics within Rhetoric and Composition connects to Jim Corder's provocative suggestion to compare rhetoric less to war and more to love, a symbolic (re)engagement Rosane Carlo describes as "rhetoric needs its heart" in ways that deemphasize competition in favor of collaboration as people move language and language moves people to address urgent issues of rights, fairness, and justice (11). To embrace the opportunities opened up in Rhetoric and Composition's latest ethical turn, I suggest turning to coalitions as expansive practices is worth taking seriously as a lens through which to see the empowerment work our field tries to do in scholarship, in classrooms, and in administrative practices.

Throughout this project, I have chosen to write as what cultural anthropologist Ruth Behar calls the "vulnerable observer," someone who implicates herself in her research. Since my first women's studies class over a decade ago, I have been continually reminded to listen to women of color, those who include my sister Mia McDonald, my favorite writer Alice Walker, the National Poet Lauret Ada Limón, and the still radical rhetorics and poetry of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. I cannot imagine a world where I don't have Stacey Waite as a mentor, Jamaica Baldwin's poetry, the music of Beyoncé, an education en Español, and mentors supportive of a graduate student labor union. Since I was five years old, I've been involved in public education. In high school, I stayed up late reading bills for the mock senate meetings during the American Legion's Girls State camp like my mom and grandma did decades before me. When I was 16, my grandma

recruited me to volunteer as a county election judge to register voters and count ballots for the 2008 Presidential Election. Between my MA and Ph.D. degrees, I served as an AmeriCorps VISTA, a federally funded program started through the War on Poverty. As I've honed my focus on coalitional literacies, I've engaged conversations with activists who live out the practical decision-making processes to alter prevailing political business as usual, such as one of my friends, the program manager for a local nonprofit, who wonders aloud about the Senator's motivations for speaking at a genocide memorial, or if the other nonprofit on the grant's inability to complete a report on time will harm the abilities to continue to fund programs for survivors of sexual violence. Connecting textual and interpersonal conversations has been central to my involvement with the Nebraska Writers Collective, which educates youth and people in the criminal justice system, and Nebraska Appleseed, an organization focused on promoting the rights of immigrants and workers. I hold on to a stubborn kind of faith that enacting the service responsibilities required of a democratic government remain worth working for through remembering the Black Lives Matter co-founder Alicia Garza's words, "we have to reach beyond the choir" (216).

Often the study of coalitions in political science and sociology focuses on what brought the alliance together, the group's impacts, and how it dissolved. Studying coalitions has raised additional questions of how groups share power among participants, define goals, and if or how they meaningfully include participants with ideological, professional, and social differences. The sociologists Jill M. Bystydzienski and Steven P. Schacht emphasize in the introduction to their edited collection on progressive coalitions, "those from the majority will have to relinquish privilege and accept as valid the

perspectives of those in the minority, while those in the minority will need to let go of the categorical suspicion and lack of trust associated with people of goodwill from a group they consider oppressive" (10). Enacting this challenge to productively work with and across differences in social location and power, has resulted in coalitions that are short term or exist primarily in professional documents. I find these challenges should not indicate examining coalitions is without theoretical or pragmatic value. The political scientists Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt find when progressives work with businesses they tend to achieve their goals (218–19). The educational researcher Linnea Beckett provides a detailed description of a group of education faculty, parents, and community members working to fulfill their ten-year-long commitment to improve their local school in a predominately Latinx district. Moving past familiar forms of expertise or professional comfort zones has been captured in studies of recent case studies.

I focus on coalitional literacies to direct attention to alternative ways to see writing scholars' and educators' central responsibilities. Turning attention to coalitions and coalitional literacies raises questions of language, symbolism, and opportunities to humanize complex sociopolitical issues. Rhetorical scholars have examined case studies of the rhetoric of coalitions as seen in Havian Hoang's *Writing Against Racial Injury* and Adele Licona's *Zines in Third Space*. Recently, scholars describe coalition-like avenues in writing studies that bring people together in digital spaces—the NextGEN Listserv (Baniya et al.) and the Anti-Ableist Composition Collective (see also Hubrig et al.)—and shared professional places—the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication's Feminist Caucus workshop and cross-caucus work sessions (Dingo and Ratliff; *Doing Hope in Desperate Times*). From these works, there is a need to better

understand how coalitional literacies bring into view responsibilities that can shape the future of Rhetoric and Composition. To build off recent interest in coalitional literacies, I meditate on questions of the value of human and humanizing communication in ways that may inspire a critically informed hope.[2]

I examine how coalitional literacies can bring into view scholarly approaches, communication capable of hailing the recognition of multiply marginalized communities, and contextual insights into ways to promote a dialogue that should not be assumed to already take place among college writing teachers and students. My purpose has been to adopt elements of Krista Ratcliffe's rhetorical listening process to stand under the implications coalitional literacies to consider the implications for rhetoric scholars and college writing instructors. Ratcliffe's purpose is to engage different cultural logics surrounding race to raise the shared consciousness of white people. I am more interested in decentering whiteness, to consider material outcomes that include expansive participation in political advocacy or students' willingness to embrace significant revisions. My central methodology is a "narrative inquiry" to bridge critical theories informing coalitional literacies with the practices that shape the central responsibilities of rhetorical scholars and college composition instructors (Creswell and Guetterman; see also the "Author's Note" in the Appendix).

If we in Rhetoric and Composition see from the vantage point of those with knowledge and experience pursuing coalitions that may have yet to materialize, we may recognize opportunities for agency that can enable expansive interventions to ameliorate

[2] I adopt this term from Cheryl Glenn's *Rhetorical Feminism and This Thing Called Hope,* Frankie Condon's 2023 Conference on College Composition and Communication theme of "doing hope in desperate times," and Richard E. Miller's chapter "Dark Night of the Soul" in *Writing at the End of the World.*

anti-democratic backsliding, public skepticism about the value of the humanities, and provide writing scholars and educators encouragement to engage in local contexts where ethical questions of how to use writing in all its expository, expressive, and ecclesiastical purposes are lived out. A coalitional literacy lens may make use of modernist focuses on shared progress and postmodern identity awareness through composition's origins in classes to facilitate college students' entrance into avenues of shared life and culture previously denied to them due to their class, gender, race, ethnicity, and other differences. A coalition lens can work *with,* rather than against as is often assumed in anti-critical race theory or woke rhetorics, a commitment to strengthen democratic institutions, and promote participation in them through humanizing those often represented as unworthy of collective attention, and whose lives are often shaped by contradictions between popular rhetorics and shared embodied experiences, those whose knowledge can be a powerful asset. Coalitional literacies enable seeing central responsibilities of rhetorical scholars and college writing instructors in ways that can contribute to efforts to ensure democracy—complete with responsibilities and compromises—retains its love language of dissent , the not always polite language of human expression, that educates, persuades, surprises, memorializes, and inspires. I hope to encourage further connections from multiple academic disciplines and ways of knowing about how the long-term, perhaps never complete, process of composing the self is vital to engage living coalitions.

Literature Review

The Madres of the Plaza de Mayo are a resistance effort more heroic than the simplistic superhero movies that dominate the box office. This resistance effort is one of the powerless turning into international diplomats who endured the disappearance of their

leaders, a supporter turned traitor, the expectation of tear gas to the point where members arrived at the Plaza with handkerchiefs and bail money at the ready in confrontation of one of the worst human rights abuses of the late 20th century. According to Marguerite Guzman Bouvard's *Revolutionizing Motherhood,* the Mothers learned the tactics of political organizing to pursue what happened to their children under Argentina's junta military government after turning to each other as they recognized familiar faces waiting to talk with government ministers, organizing a fundraising drive when no major national newspaper covered the disappearances, and traveling abroad to any nation that would receive them, even though none of them spoke a foreign language. To read their testimonies is to read of paradoxes of the human condition of deep unimaginable losses, lives transformed, and impossible joy through a community constituted by devastating circumstances. Rather than authoritarianism, violence, fear, and denial, the Madres' collective actions relied on an alternative set of values that remade political theories through pluralism, accountability, solidarity, and caregiving. I suggest, the collective rhetorical and symbolic actions of the Madres also remake theories in literacy, rhetoric, and composition in ways that are more expansive than identity-focused movements, or postmodernism's questioning of traditions.

I've turned to the Madres as an example of successful collective resistance, a coalition that facilitated popular education with literacy practices that included petitions, letters, and newspaper ads, but primarily I want to draw attention to the organization's symbolic disruption of the junta's violent crackdown on anyone suspected of political disagreement or disobedience. The Madres' iconic white pañuelos, the presence of hundreds of women marching around their nation's center with plain-clothed cops parked

in cars surveilling them with video cameras, the association of mothers with caregiving for a body politic, and the grieving Madonna, contributed to the impact of the Madres' efforts alongside their words as their nation returned to a democratic government.

My focus on coalitional literacies enables connections among the literacy practices from progressive coalitions, such as the Madres of the Plaza de Mayo, as crucial points of connection to Rhetoric and Composition's ethical and social turns. Two crucial questions emerge: How should participants address differences in social location (e.g. race, gender, sexuality, and nationality), ethics (responsibilities, human rights, and individual motivations), and resources (education, time, and finances)? What are opportunities for participants to see each other's differences not as obstacles to be overcome, but assets? Shifting from a focus on the history and study of coalitions and onto a coalitional literacy orientation on language as a social practice enables an optimistic shift in perspective that can facilitate crucial engagement in shared systems of academic, cultural, and political life. The coalitional theorist and rhetorician María Lugones compares a coalitional literacy way of seeing and living, to a spiritual pilgrimage, suggesting, "it is about learning to write *within* resistance rather than about it" (30, my emphasis). Lugones' call to examine opportunities out of moments of discomfort, or significant risk, offers a possibility to center collective movements to expand rhetorical scholarship and composition pedagogies.

I advocate deepening our knowledge of way to slow down habitual practices to consider practical applications of excessive readings of political rhetoric, and ways to apply the shared insights of social pedagogies in our attempts to dialogue with composition students as they revise their papers. Composition and Rhetoric scholars have

shared commitments to “social epistemic” ideologies of collective community empowerment and acknowledge there is no single one-size fits all variety of the English language that fits all writers’ genres, purposes, and contexts (Berlin). Jacqueline Jones Royster extends this insight to urge attention to “rhetorically responding” capable of engaging multiple language varieties performing “an ability to engage with both sense and sensibility, rather than just power, authority, and arrogance” (296). Jones Royster’s call to consider more empathetic responses extends coalitional literacies in a more rhetorically-oriented direction. With such a focus, there is a possibility to center the expansive literacy practices of progressive coalitions that may inform possibilities to cross professional divisions to create conditions in which authentic writing and rhetoric, that acknowledges histories of political exclusions are possible, and differences in social location, and political ideologies, can be assets.

Rhetoric and Composition has been profoundly altered by those invested in the ways historically marginalized, and multiply marginalized, communities use reading, writing, and rhetoric through altering laws and prevailing social norms. Recently, scholars direct attention to the Battle for Seattle, Occupy Wall Street, environmental justice movements, and accessibility concerns for people with disabilities (see Foust et al.; Alexander et al.). These efforts are related to key professional commitments to promote college students’ civic participation, resist disinformation, and study the circulation of content on social media (Reyman and Sparby; Porter; McComiskey). Perhaps the most lasting contribution of the social turn will be for scholars and educators to see more human nuance in the ways they study interactions among people, social systems, and language.

Other eras of widespread social movements have motivated scholars and educators to modify how writing is often taught within US public universities. Civil Rights activists helped bring about "Students Rights to Their Own Language" as Black and brown students were legally allowed to enroll in the universities their tax dollars financed (see Kynard; Lamos). Feminists called for women's access to all programs at the same schools and expanded knowledge of Western rhetoric to better account for the persuasion of emotions (Jarratt), and experience-based knowledge (Royster; Spigelman), while also pursuing workplace parental leave, and sexual harassment reporting systems. Queer activists have pursued partner benefits while describing alternative approaches to read texts (Alexander and Rhodes; Malinowitz). People of color, women, and LGBTQ communities continue to experience disproportionate violence, wage gaps, and discrimination; and yet, activist investments for those communities within Rhetoric and Composition are valuable for all social groups.

However, I do not want to downplay substantial risks. Coalitions can be like chemotherapy, a treatment more painful than the cancer it fights. Multiple movements may dissolve, negative publicity may turn away potential allies and supporters, or members may be further exposed to various types of harm. Social scientists find many coalitions fall apart before they achieve their goals. Literacy practices emerging from such groups may also be messy or ineffective. At the same time, as I've worked on this project, I've realized the necessity to thoughtfully engage processes of establishing trust across social and political divisions as crucial to fulfill norms of democratic deliberation. There are literacies that are not natural, inevitable, or common sense. They may not rely

on a shared identity that can be fully known and require the active engagement of taking a stance to earn trust and credibility (see Goncalves 97).

Such forms of authority depart from public sphere theories through a recognition of conditions where not all speakers have an equal likelihood to shape the outcome, access the deliberative space, or ability to act as if they could set aside their differences (see Benhabib; Fraser). I center literacy efforts from coalitions that take a democratically inclusive approach, through those that seek to strengthen shared decision making, justice, and citizenship rights. In these inclusion-oriented projects, individuals who publicly name their experiences open themselves to a great deal of vulnerability through courtroom proceedings, libel suits, doxing, threats of violence, isolation, and being ignored. The coalitional literacies I center come from an "often temporary and shifting, valuing 'togetherness in difference' (to use Lu Ming Mao's powerful phrase), and devoted to action" position (Glenn and Lunsford 13). Usually, these alliances are achieved through a writer calling readers to recognize injustices and marking commitments to a particular community. As central voices, intersectional feminists center overlapping forms of oppression—primarily sexism and racism, and at times also classism, homophobia, xenophobia, islamophobia, and ableism—to call attention to key oversights in contemporary movements, such as Audre Lorde's critique of the naïve exclusions at a women's conference in "The Masters Tools will Never Dismantle the Master's House." This desire for pluralistic recognition resists a tendency to essentialize difference, thereby flattening the significance of individual lives and other social differences, and disengaging the work of deliberation. As the Black women co-writers of The Combahee River Collective illustrate, "We believe that the most profound and potentially radical

politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression. […] To be recognized as human, levelly human is enough" (Eisenstein n. p.). The rhetorician Karma Chávez notes this coalition work is not comfortable, or always safe (147), but as I explore, consciousness of such a stance creates powerful positions in rhetorical studies and composition pedagogy.

I engage coalitional literacies that do not assume solidarity, a global sisterhood, automatic trust among composition teachers and students, or participants can set aside all of their differences for productive actions. While recent legislative efforts seek to limit critical race theory due to allegations of provoking individually focused shame, Rhetoric and Composition has long-standing commitments to examine how socially and politically marginalized communities define themselves in an effort that Audre Lorde describes as "divide and conquer must become define and empower" ("Master's Tools" 112). The sociologists Elizabeth R. Cole and Zakiya T. Luna also challenge the perception that coalitions are brought together exclusively through individual self-interest or shared identities all participants have before joining the alliance. Instead, part of the effectiveness of coalitions can take place when participants shift how they see themselves because they participated in the alliance. Stephanie Kerschbaum directs attention to the importance not to essentialize differences, assume they may be easily recognized, and consider how they may not obviously shape students' work in their college composition classes. I take seriously the ways differences can be rich assets enabling students' entrance into the most valued uses of literacy to enhance the lives of those they care about and create new cultural legacies. As I do not assume solidarity without effort, and

risks that are always evenly shared, I do so to resist perceptions of essentialized identities that must be completely known, or only engaged as obstacles to deny or overlook.

Coalitional literacies offer a way to examine how rhetoric coincides with social and political change. As an example, Kathleen M. de Onís examines the metaphor "look both ways" that directs audiences to connections among environmental and reproductive justice causes. I suggest a coalitional literacy focus on how affective bonds can humanize the leaders of coalitions through using the attention gathered by the alliance—one often far from ideal that may only last in the short term—to direct audiences to surprising ways communities may come together in impossible seeming situations. The humanities have key investments in the interplay among mythology and reality, fact and faith, and empiricism and imagination. We know mythologies—Romulus and Remus or the American dream—build nations. We recognize language's power that has no group or individual as the exclusive owner of powerful writing that shapes minds and actions. This type of language that produces changes in more than the abstractions of ideas, is like a democracy. It requires significant trust that is fragile, systems of accountability, and tough conversations about what it open to revision and what is nonnegotiable. The challenge for rhetoricians is to pay attention to how groups use a collective voice that accommodates the different, yet related, interests and needs of participants in ways that respond to genuine issues of shared concerns. Recently, this has included a focus on person-centered language—e.g. people with disabilities—language of empowerment—survivors of intimate and family violence—and accurate names of literary traditions as seen in Joseph L. Coulombe's recent *College English* article arguing to replace the term "slave narrative" with "abolitionist" or "emancipation" narrative. I suggest directing attention to

coalitional literacies enables a crucial set of commitments worth adopting to further knowledge that can correct popular misperceptions of composition as exclusively focused on Edited American English and clarifying already worked out ideas.

College-level writing classes are key shared experiences in higher education (Crowley; Skinnell). And yet, the work of teaching college-level writing is the symbolic dirty work of English Departments. In one crucial moment in Susan Miller's *Textual Carnivals,* she argues neither composition students, nor their teachers, are imagined as culturally or economically significant writers (179).[3] I hold fast to the idea that the work my students and I do can have meaning in workplace literacies and minimal civic duties to vote or serve on a jury, and hopefully in more significant spheres of influence. However, Miller is not wrong to observe composition functions at least in part to shape student writing for business leaders and politicians' approval. Afterall, writing within composition classrooms holds a different institutional purpose than creative writing workshops or literary studies classrooms. One lasting impact of Miller's critical history of college composition is it directs attention to the ways institutional factors deemphasize writing's content and purpose in favor of sentence-level cleanliness.

Composition historians note equating good prose with Standard English norms emerges from specific labor conditions of massive classrooms and a separation of writing's content from its linguistic features. In one telling historical analysis, Kelly Ritter examines the professional lives of the woman-dominated lay readers program in the 1950s and 1960s. The lay readers often worked in basements with red pens in hand

[3] Susan Miller also extends this claim, arguing composition "stripped from students and a nation of unschooled potential writers their needs and desires to create significant pieces of writing" (55). Miller also continues to describe how composition instructors impose guilt on writing administrators and tenured faculty in a similar way Victorian families felt guilty about their maids (p. 147).

marking the papers of students they had no classroom interactions with. Ritter quotes one college student's description, "Ladies who don't know us correct our papers" (Kolker 54 qtd. Ritter 401). While the work of textual corrections provided a rare opportunity for women to work within higher education at the time, it also contributed to the still prevalent perception of the work of teaching college-level writing as requiring few rhetorical skills, and revision as a movement into standardized surface-level correctness.

This focus on Standard English focused revisions is directly associated with the exclusion of communities of color, and other nonelite social groups, within higher education. Neoliberal ideologies offer a savvy rhetorical smoke and mirrors show by appealing to desirable notions of freedom, and decreased public responsibility, while stripping most citizens of public rights including entrance into public schools. Historian Nancy MacLean writes a wide-ranging historical analysis of the origins of such ideologies to find the economist James Buchanan proposed financial freedom at the expense of government intervention in order for southern states to resist racially integrating public schools following *Brown v. Board of Education*. To briefly highlight the valuable contributions of more composition-oriented works, Steve Lamos finds after *The Civil Rights Act*, even students of color who passed the University of Illinois' writing placement test were nonetheless encouraged to enroll in basic writing (16). Carmen Kynard, too, finds "Students Right to Their Own Language" was a key document resulting from student activist pressures to have curricula reflect the histories and languages of communities of color,[4] rather than equating complex thought exclusively

[4] Kynard notes "SRTOL" coincided with the efforts of many white writing teacher allies, especially during the start of the College Composition and Communication Black Caucus at 4Cs in 1968, which coincided with the Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination (see *Vernacular* 87). Central to Kynard's archival work is the ways black activists wanted their languages accepted within public universities, rather than adapted into

with the Standard English most often spoken by middle class white communities (see also Frisicaro-Pawlowski; Lindemann and Anderson 75; Jordan). A focus on textual corrections remains a popular perception in need of revision.

I find Elizabeth Ellsworth offers one of the most detailed descriptions of the value emphasizing the shared responsibilities that come into focus through considering alternatives to pedagogies focused on setting aside differences or focusing exclusively on single identities. As Ellsworth critically engages the ways critical pedagogical focuses on dialogue and voice can retain established power dynamics, Ellsworth considers ways classroom practices can "find a commonality in the experience of difference without compromising its distinctive realities and effects" in ways that emphasize conversations beyond established cultural and social borders in ways that all participants acknowledge how their responsibilities relate to each other are "partial, interested, and potentially oppressive to others" (324). This always incomplete, never fully universal or detached way seeing oneself, seeing others, and seeing the lenses that shape all such perceptions, perhaps breaks from the certainty of writing from chaos into coherence or total understanding. This vantage point is also not as simple as valuing subordinated rhetorics at the expense of arbitrarily excluding more dominant ones. It is messy and uncomfortable and with many dissenting voices, a type of shared buy-in and engagement healthy democracies require. Such a coalitional literacy orientation brings into view more variables that a text-only focus of good writing to generative nuance to promote new possible relationships between subjects, contexts, and texts.

Chapter Summaries

---

standardized academic discourse. As Kynard notes, this is not to ignore the influence of "standards" or "student need," but, a shift in focus (see *Vernacular* 93).

The throughline in this project is a coalitional literacy stance to bring people and communities together—one modeled in scholarship, one of re-reading what appears as unproductive resistance, one valuing the agency of teachers and writers as knowledge creators. While this project does not adopt a traditional empirical methodology, I read a coalitional stance through the public sphere, critical theorists and educators, and pedagogical praxis. Tracing the term coalition is a way to help us see threats to our discipline, and, more importantly, recognize opportunities to respond through an alliance-oriented resistance praxis.

In the first chapter, I adopt Gesa Kirsch and Jacqueline Jones Royster's "strategic contemplation" to examine how coalitional literacies draw attention to embodied knowledge that can direct readers to notions of bodies at risk as central to democratic political empowerment through attention to Hillary Rodham Clinton's descriptions of her gender and race in her memoir *What Happened*. In textual and rhetorical analysis of specific passages, I find Clinton deviates from her familiar forms of credibility to pragmatically, and symbolically, take a stand with Lezley McSpadden and the Mothers of the Movement (the important advocacy group of Black women who lost children to gun and police violence) who endorsed Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign. I suggest Clinton's brief, yet significant, moments of pluralist feminist credibility can direct readers to hope that even an established politician with a controversial reputation can use their platform to direct readers to the long-term benefits of political coalitions to make beneficial changes in the lives of women and people of color, and direct rhetoricians to the alarming circumstances that motivated the Mothers of the Movement to risk granting Clinton their endorsement.

In the next chapter, I expand on coalitional literacies to focus on ways of seeing and listening in local contexts that may expand knowledge of how politically marginalized communities use literacy for multiple purposes and challenge popular perceptions of the value of a background in Rhetoric and Composition. I consider how to deepen coalitional literacies' focus on respect for social location through reading Kimberlé Crenshaw's "Mapping the Margins" and Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak" for pluralistic understandings of social and cultural difference. I illustrate my interpretations through examples from my participation in an English language class for adult immigrants and refugees. This experience can suggest pluralistic coalitional literacies can facilitate ways for scholars and educators in Rhetoric and Composition to complicated simplified perceptions of the human and social dynamics shaping literacy education as not worth the effort to engage.

As a third case, I consider practical ways college writing instructors can act as allies with their students in response to the students' writing. I propose formative responses can be approached in similar ways to the flexible, and at times risky, practices of those who aspire to alliances across differences in social location. My approach does not assume achieving a dialogue with students about their writing is common sense, or something only writing scholars practice. I suggest a coalitional literacy orientation allows instructors to see moments in students' writing as invitations to work with students to better understand central learning outcomes and the key expectations of the genres they are composing in. Through attention to composition scholarship and my process of responding to three exceptional students' compositions, I develop a short list of coalitional possibilities: trust resistance is possible, recognize what is nonnegotiable,

consider if or how to call students into risky situations, and find opportunities to learn with trusted peers and mentors. I conclude to consider how my approach may also enable Writing Program Administrators to recognize professional working conditions to facilitate continued teacher to teacher inquiry into how to compose strategies and tactics to facilitate students' holistic and lifelong education.

As a final case, I consider ways coalitional literacies can connect back to mentorship and the field's recent interest in intergenerational conversations. I include sections of an interview with Nancy Welch for the ways she used knowledge of progressive social movements to shape two strategies to keep writing centers she coordinated in operation, her descriptions of rhetoric connected to social class, and the ways she understood her role as someone who can listen and direct students to the history of progressive strategies. Perhaps most centrally, I conclude with my interview with Nancy through her description of a vision for a future of Rhetoric and Composition that may be able to retain its radical potential to alter the world. In this conclusion, I also name the possibilities to apply coalitional literacies to learn from social movements, to take risks to invest in organizations such as national professional organizations, and consider ways focusing on shared projects—such as including vernacular and World Englishes more fully within first-year writing classes or ensuring the latest on-campus writing initiative retains funding and a director—as key struggles worthwhile to engage across academic disciplines and social locations to develop writing programs shaped less by competition and more so by a pluralistic collaborations capable of affirming differences to shape the next generation of people who find deep joy through the written word.

I closed my 2023 Conference on College Composition and Communication presentation by making a comparison among coalitions and training for a half marathon. In my running life, I research equipment: the best shoes to avoid blisters or shorts that will carry house keys. I signed up for a group running class with a coach. I gathered friends for long training runs, and those friends have called me when I'd rather stay on a couch on a Sunday afternoon than start up a treadmill. As the Civil Rights activist and singer Bernice Johnson Reagon writes in her "Turning the Century" speech at the West Coast Women's Music Festival, coalitions matter in those mundane moments, running another hill interval on a Sunday afternoon, and less so for the splash race finish (172). Literacy practices from coalitions also matter in the mundane moments that may not always feel worthwhile to show up and engage. Those I cite, for the most part, have shown up in the doldrums, and also have had collective forces behind them to enable their writings and its influence. My favorite picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. shows him surrounded by a microphones and reporters with papers in hand with body language that conveys he would like to be just about anywhere else (Yapp 87). Las madres y abuelas de la Plaza de Mayo did not circle the pyramid in Buenos Aires by themselves or know how to put international pressure on the junta before they met with each other. An orientation to see and learn from progressive coalitions, and their complicated human leaders, may transform the prevailing forces happy to support uncritical readings of dominant market society values, unknowingly support neoliberal policies that can rely on deceptions of already achieved consensus (see Scott and Welch) or abdicate the responsibility and specialness of communication for humans by humans to artificial intelligence, instead of

joining shared efforts to promote human communication that is delightful because of its differences.

It can be tempting to internalize the frequent reminders in academic journal articles and the mainstream media, that higher education may be past a place of no return as far-right wing state governments seek to further restrict budgets for public education or eliminate programs that promote the inclusion of underrepresented students and communities within higher education. The key responsibilities to seek funding for composition programs under the austerity mantra to do more with less can be draining for a discipline without the cultural capital of literary studies or market value of creative writing. I aim to provide much needed optimism. Knowledge of different types of authority extending from embodied experiences or shared caregiving responsibilities can provide hope for citizens to engage in shared avenues of political life. Taking commitments to recognize social differences, and to consider the histories of how language and social change relate to each other, can shape provocative new ways to engage with students and writers outside of university classrooms. Revisiting conversations about how to respond to students and their writing through coalitional literacies can provide a set of tactics that can enable students in required composition classes to consider key questions of writers and citizens' shared responsibilities in ways that can use social differences as assets. Listening to those who have dynamic careers in Rhetoric and Composition can provide key reminders of the importance of seeking connections through universities and offer encouragement that the radical possibilities of reading, writing, revising, and publication can remain a revolutionary force capable of widespread empowerment for life-long writers. If we carefully consider ways to apply

coalitional literacies, our daily lives as scholars, teachers, and administrators can have a renewed sense of encouragement that the knowledge, and commitments central, to Rhetoric and Composition remain so worthwhile.

Chapter 1:
Hillary Rodham Clinton's Rhetorical Shifts in *What Happened:*
Pluralist Feminist Credibility Post-2016

While twentieth century US women's rights advocates have a wealth of knowledge of ways to establish coalitions across racial differences (Cole and Luna 96), feminist rhetorical scholars urge careful attention to how such strategies should not exclusively establish an individual's virtues, but motivate audiences' long-term participation (Howell; Busch). Such knowledge emphasizes descriptions of joint decision making across social locations, the boundaries of allyship, and how leaders may use moments of failure to call in allies to continue resistance efforts. Pough and Jones open the *Peitho Journal's* "On Race, Feminism, and Rhetoric" issue with the reminder to "hold space for tension and nuance" because "ongoing protests and unrest around police brutality and murders have forced us to come to terms with the meaning of solidarity and coalition" (n.p.). To study the rhetoric of feminist coalitions, scholars are challenged to understand both traditional political movements such as political election campaigns, and more "leaderful" grassroots collectives, such as the original Women's March ("Women's March on Washington Guiding Vision and Definition of Principles"). Hillary Rodham Clinton is a representative figure for this crucial line of inquiry, as someone Susan Bordo notes "for better or worse has represented a particular generation of feminists for decades (187)," whose rhetoric shows a remarkable shift regarding gender and race following her 2016 Presidential election loss among the Electoral College.

It is tempting to interpret Hillary Rodham Clinton (HRC)'s rhetoric as representative of white neoliberal feminism. As a recent example, the sociologist Ashley

Noel Mack interprets one of HRC's tweets from her 2016 election campaign as an indication of the pattern of white women referencing intersectionality in ways that fail to acknowledge the term's history connected to Black women. Following the 2016 election, HRC's rhetoric is more complicated. Such shifts are worthwhile to examine because Clinton's image--more so than her positions, policies, or history—has functioned as a rhetorical straw woman with media coverage focused on the pseudo scandal of her email server and far right conspiracies of her connections to QAnon (Bordo). Clinton's sixth memoir *What Happened* is an especially interesting case study due to the ways book reviewers note the politician's open feminist commitments, a remarkable observation given the book's primary focus on correcting misperceptions surrounding Donald Trump's election. In some moments, HRC employs the rhetorical practices coalition-oriented feminists call on for white allies. What is especially striking is a moment in the middle of the book in which the former Secretary of State describes her shared caregiver identity with Black women who lost children to police violence in ways that acknowledge structural racism. Clinton describes the Mothers of the Movement in ways that emphasize the life and death stakes compelling a group of Black women to trust her, despite significant risks of tokenization, denial, and unaltered conditions.

In this chapter, I examine brief moments in HRC's memoir *What Happened* where she deviates from the forms of credibility rhetoric scholars have noted throughout her political career. Through decades in national politics, HRC has represented herself as a detail-oriented "policy wonk" or as a Christian "Madonna" (Kaufer and Parry-Giles; K. V. Anderson; Campbell). In brief moments in *What Happened,* HRC uses a "rhetorical feminism" experience-based form of authority (Glenn), which makes rhetorical space for

the Black women led advocacy group The Mothers of the Movement in such a way that can emphasize the "unruly" force of bodies at risk, and coalitions, as more central to a healthy democracy than partisan politics, and political press coverage (Alexander et al. 13). While HRC has received important critiques for representing white neoliberal feminism, I attend to brief moments in her memoir that enabled book reviewers to label the book a feminist text due to shifts from expected presidential rhetoric into embodied knowledge, consciousness of sexism, and a recognition of shared caregiving responsibilities. Attending to these shifts in HRC's ethos can create the symbolic disruptions necessary to allow for the recognition of the Mothers of the Movement anti-racist, poverty, and gun violence coalition.

A central challenge for feminist rhetorical scholars has been to attend to ways to resist appeals to a shared sisterhood that ignore racial differences or create false equivalencies among sexism and racism. Such post-second wave projects take on increased urgency in the context surrounding the 2016 US presidential election. As readers of this journal are aware, coalitions remain central action-able networks sustaining commitments to end sexist oppression in daily life and scholarly practices. Anti-racist feminists name the responsibilities white allies have to "a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" that include reflexive engagement, embodied knowledge, interracial friendship, and scholarly practices that resist tokenization (hooks 1; Lugones). These commitments and corresponding rhetorical practices take on heightened urgency in the context of the 2016 election, which saw open displays of white supremacist rhetoric, increased racial violence, and massive protests. Within such a

context, how can anti-racist feminist credibility strategies extend knowledge of coalition rhetoric and rhetorical scholars' responsibilities?

Feminist rhetorical analyses often focus on liberal and progressive causes. Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald note questions of how to include the rhetoric of women who supported conservative causes, such as temperance, presents a significant challenge for scholars concerned with inclusive histories of rhetoric to notice not all women have advocated for women's rights. Examining uncomfortable appearing coalitions may create new knowledge of inclusive rhetoric, which Karma Chávez models through examining the shared pursuit of migrant rights among a Catholic Church and queer rights organization (133). HRC's memoir is one such text that may provide opportunities to "strategically contemplate" our stances (Kirsch and Royster 656-9), as individuals and parts of organizations, in relationship to the rhetoric of those it is easy to dis-identify with, or distrust.

Cheryl Glenn presents a useful differentiation among feminist rhetoric and rhetorical feminism. These conceptual labels provide a way to recognize different definitions of feminism, and their corresponding purposes, such as a liberal concern with inclusion into workplaces or public life. In this liberal tradition, HRC's rhetoric has gained recognition especially for her "Remarks to the U.N. 4th World Conference on Women" with the oft-cited "women's rights are human rights" phrase (*American Rhetoric*). The politician's rhetoric has often functioned as an exigency for conversations surrounding shifting gender norms and feminist responsibilities. Younger generations have engaged key critiques of HRC's generation. The author, and cultural critic, Roxane Gay describes herself as a "bad feminist" to acknowledge a historical emphasis on elite

white women's concerns, but suggests those with fewer privileges should not disassociate from expansive efforts to "believe in equal opportunities for women and men" that "can be pluralistic so long as we respect the different feminisms we carry with us" (n.p.). It can be noteworthy to attend to Clinton's text for the ways it contains some pluralistic possibilities not exclusively concerned with formal inclusion, smashing glass ceilings, or blindness to the significance of racism within women's lives. Johnathan Alexander, Susan C. Jarratt, and Nancy Welch urge more attention to the "unruly" force of bodies at risk as a crucial element of recent social movement rhetoric. Cheryl Glenn notes in the conclusion of *Rhetorical Feminism and This Thing Called Hope* the feminine counterparts of masculine rhetorical traditions may alleviate persuasion efforts that spread conspiracy theories, violence, and many pressing social inequalities.

Rhetoric scholars note a crucial shift following feminism's second wave involves attempts to form connections among women's rights and other social movements. Krista Ratcliffe in *Rhetorical Listening* notes speakers often do not want their various, and overlapping, social differences to prevent them from addressing issues that do not focus on their social differences (2; see also 25-6). Ritchie and Ronald note in their introduction to *Available Means* that due to the millennia of practices denying women access to education and public spaces, a throughline in women's rhetoric is women advocate for their presence as a prerequisite to address other issues (xvii). This requirement to justify one's presence, can, at times, become an invitation to use one's status and embodied presence as an asset. In the late 20th century, Shari J. Stenberg and Charlotte Hogg note the exclusion of women from powerful domains is perhaps more insidious because in many nations it is no longer formally written into laws (4), but prevalent in practices such

as interpersonal violence, workplace sexual harassment, online doxing, and economic inequalities.

Some women may be able to act as if their gender is irrelevant to their lives, or perhaps only prevalent once they attempt to ascend to leadership positions. Such a post-feminist position is often individually focused and ignorant, or in denial, of the pervasive inequalities shaping the practices of organizations and governments. It is tempting to place HRC, and her rhetoric, into such a position. Interdisciplinary scholars spend significant time developing a useful definition of coalitions as embodied human entities, and ethical commitments among different groups. As embodied entities, scholars in political science note paying attention to coalitions is a useful way to read American politics, such as understanding the impact of the Democrats and the New Deal Coalition in the early 20th century (Genovese and Han). Scholars in sociology often examine coalitions as alliances among multiple stakeholders often within government entities and nonprofit networks, as seen in Elizabeth R. Cole and Zakiya T. Luna's qualitative research into the insights of US women in different grassroots activist organizations or Karama Chávez's ethnographic description of shifting rhetoric among the queer-rights oriented Wingspan and the migrant-focused Coalición de Derechos Humanos nonprofit groups. Within these conversations, scholars offer definitions of coalitions as functional alliances among two or more groups working together on a common goal, often in pursuit of political, or otherwise institutional, change. However, these scholars often note such entities are often short term, more theoretical than functional, and often fail to alter the conditions that brought the group together.

Feminists of color are key voices who point to the ways mid-twentieth century feminist and anti-racist movements had a tendency to overlook the specific needs of women of color. Kimberlé Crenshaw in "Mapping the Margins" notes the limited resources of domestic violence shelters resulted in turning away women of color (1245). Coalitional political goals can encompass everyday acts, which María Lugones notes can include asking a woman how she's doing as her partner is arrested (2; see also "Hablando Cara a Cara"), and calls to resist racially exclusive practices within progressive organizations (see also Audre Lorde's "The Master's Tools will Never Dismantle the Master's House"). Collectively, these conversations challenge a single identity-political focus.

HRC's rhetoric following the 2016 election is worthwhile to analyze due to her status as the first US woman to win the popular vote for president, and because her image featured predominately in election coverage in ways that represent, at least in part, public perceptions of feminism. I find it worth attending to how, following the 2016 election, HRC's rhetoric is more complicated than a straightforward read of whitewashing, or white supremacist feminism, due to the moments in which HRC's feminist consciousness includes established pluralist features that acknowledge cultural influences, draw upon embodied knowledge, and listen to Black women. In this chapter, I focus on three chapters in HRC's *What Happened* that center credibility and gender: "Get Caught Trying," "On Being a Woman in Politics," and "Turning Mourning into a Movement." I conclude through considering textual moments of regrets, and credibility earned through failure, as potential central features of the rhetoric of coalition leaders. Studying these textual moments may contribute to knowledge of ethos as a central persuasive feature in

contemporary memoirs and the study of feminist coalition rhetoric that requires alliances with unevenly shared risks and controversial allies (Mack and Alexander; Kelm).

"This is a Story of What Happened." (Clinton xv)

Although Clinton notes her memoir "isn't a comprehensive account of the 2016 race," readers see many versions of the author throughout the book's 500 pages that devote significant attention to the features that made the election depart from run of the mill partisan politicking (xv). The book fits well within the expectations of a failed presidential candidate's tell all with chapters devoted to thanking running mates, staffers, and voters; descriptions of policy proposals, a political origin story connected to family and faith, correcting political press coverage, and a call for readers to engage within the institutions of public and community life. The text is also notable for the "Those Damn Emails" chapter addressing the pseudo scandal that dominated election coverage and the "Trolls, Bots, Fake News, and Real Russians" chapter on electoral interference. Throughout, HRC names regrets that include her endorsement of the 1994 Crime Bill (204), her "put coal miners out of work" quip (263), and the "political piñata" of her email server (p. 322, "It was a dumb mistake. But an even dumber scandal" (292)). Throughout, HRC relies on her established forms of credibility. In policy wonk mode, HRC names multiple advisors and cites from public opinion polls. HRC also makes multiple religious references to her Methodist background, the Bible, and conversations with pastors. The memoir also presents a different type of credibility, which HRC's writes as "now I'm letting down my guard" (xviii) to ponder: "You've read my emails for heaven's sake. What more do you need? What could I do to be 'more real'? Dance on a table? Swear a blue streak? Break down sobbing? That's not me. And if I *had* done any of

those things, what would have happened? I'd have been ripped to pieces" (122, emphasis in the original).

What Happened has several chapters that examine the person who has been a politician to resist the caricature constructed by media coverage, political rivals, and disinformation campaigns. HRC responds to the frequent criticism that she has been a career woman without significant family attachments as she makes frequent references to her husband Bill, daughter and grandchildren, and mother. With many of her quotations, such as the 1992 "I suppose I could have stayed home and baked cookies and had teas, but what I decided to do was pursue my profession," she provides additional context and notes regret, in this case writing "I hadn't tamed my tongue" (118). Clinton complicates readings of her life as an establishment partisan career politician focused on identity politics and neoliberal economics out of touch with citizens' needs to reverse unaffordable health care, preventable gun deaths, and unequally resourced schools. It is likely this combination of well-timed political insider knowledge and nothing left to lose reflexive moments landed the book accolades, such as *Time* magazine's book of the year and a spot on *The New York Times* bestseller list. Reviewers praised the book's exploration of gender, such as the reviewer Jennifer Senior who calls it a "feminist manifesto" and *National Public Radio's* Danielle Kurtzleben who calls the book "the embattled cry of the hyper-competent woman who desperately wishes the world were a meritocracy."

"'Why do you want to be President? Why? But, really—why?'" (Clinton 40)

Throughout her text, Clinton is self-effacing about her gender, while subsequently describing consciousness of the challenges women face in politics. Clinton places herself

in association with men. In an especially interesting comparison, Clinton names her husband Bill Clinton's rags to riches story of growing up in poverty and Barack Obama's immigrant background (111-2), two experiences that work well within an American dream cultural narrative of upward mobility. After naming the backgrounds of the two former Democratic party presidents, Clinton then describes her own rise from the Midwestern middle class to become the first woman presidential candidate for a major political party (see 111-112). As others have pointed out, Clinton has situated her political rise in relationship to Bill Clinton and Obama throughout her career (see Kaufer and Parry-Giles), which connects to the strategy Andrea Lunsford notes of women cultivating authority through associations with men. In this tradition, Clinton's strategic choice mitigates the risks associated with deviating from the tradition equating political authority exclusively with men.

While Clinton establishes her credibility through former Presidents Clinton and Obama, she dismisses her own lived experiences. HRC writes, "Few people would say that my story was quite so dazzling" and "We yearn for that showstopping tale—that one-sentence pitch that captures something magical about America; that hooks you and won't let go. Mine wasn't it" (112). And yet, this self-effacing gesture then allows Clinton to include her own political personal narrative. Through writing her memoir outside of the purpose to win an election, HRC establishes an opening to name the contextual reasoning informing her actions.

Early in *What Happened,* Clinton devotes a chapter, "Get Caught Trying," to explain her decision to enter the 2016 presidential race, a decision connected to critiques the politician received during the campaign, as well as what Ritchie and Ronald consider

perhaps the unifying feature of women's rhetoric (xxiv-v). Clinton adopts a position of reluctance to write "probably the most compelling reason *not* to run—was being a grandmother" (47, emphasis in the original). However, she continues to describe how after receiving encouragement from other politicians, including her husband Bill Clinton and then-President Barack Obama, she decided:

> In short, I thought I'd be a damn good president. Still, I never stopped getting asked, 'Why do you want to be President? Why? But, really—why?' The implication was that there must be something else going on, some dark ambition and craving for power. Nobody psychoanalyzed Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, or Bernie Sanders about why they ran. It was just accepted as normal. But for me, it was regarded as inevitable—people assumed I'd run no matter what—yet somehow abnormal, demanding a profound explanation. (40)

While readers can interpret Clinton's question regarding why she ran as one requiring an answer, in this context it can also function rhetorically, without a genuine and logical answer. Further, media and voter questioning of Clinton's motivations reflects a deep tension between Clinton's role as a family caregiver and politician. This tension extends to the historical requirement that women justify their right to speak or have political ambitions in ways that are not required for men, or the politicians Clinton names (see Ritchie and Ronald xxii). An impossible set of choices—campaigning but going against established political and gender norms in doing so—is one paradox Clinton continues to expand upon as she describes her decision not to foreground her gender in her campaign rhetoric.

Clinton continues to position her political rise as the result of good timing rather than ambition. But Clinton does so in a way that momentarily breaks from the universal, or culture-less, assumptions María Lugones notes characterize exclusionary practices of "ethnocentric racist" feminists (43-4). Clinton provides readers with her origins as someone who grew up in a white middle class Park Ridge, IL community during a prominent point in history with changing norms enabling women to participate in a greater range of paid employment (113-114). Clinton writes:

> I never figured out how to tell this story right. Partly that's because I'm not great at talking about myself. Also, I didn't want people to see me as the 'woman candidate,' which I find limiting, but rather as the best candidate whose experience as a woman in a male-dominated culture made her sharper, tougher, and more competent. […] But the biggest reason I shied away from embracing this narrative is that storytelling requires a receptive audience, and I've never felt like the American electorate was receptive to this one. (113-114)

As in other moments in *What Happened,* Clinton desires to claim her experiences as a woman as a valuable rhetorical resource. At the same time, she resists claiming such a perspective due to her perception that her audience was not ready to vote for a presidential candidate who openly addressed her gender as a strength, a feeling conformed by political research (Bauer; The Pew Research Center). In the context of the 2016 election, naming one's experiences as a woman would likely create a liability. Yet, despite Clinton's rational decision to carefully represent herself in an acceptable way to her audience, during her campaign some voters still dismissed her as untrustworthy, unlikable, and unworthy of a vote.

Clinton adds an additional complication to gendered logic through comparing the criticism she received to Barack Obama in such a way that begins to illustrate a shift in vision María Lugones notes is necessary for white feminist allies. As Clinton describes her gender during her campaign, she observes:

> People say I'm guarded, and they have a point. I think before I speak. I don't just blurt out whatever comes to mind. It's a combination of my natural inclination, plus my training as a lawyer, plus decades in the public eye where every word I say is scrutinized. But why is this a bad thing? Don't we want our Senators and Secretaries of State—and especially our Presidents—to speak thoughtfully, to respect the impact of our words? President Obama is just as controlled as I am, maybe even more so. […] This is generally and correctly taken as evidence of his intellectual heft and rigor. (122)

In this reflection Clinton considers the ways her speaking style is not a deviation from American presidential norms. She answers her own question pondering why leaders cannot be respected for their planned-out speaking style. Clinton continues to justify her style through describing her professional background as a lawyer and public figure, and one she considers may even be highly valued among political leaders. In an especially interesting twist, Clinton makes a direct comparison to President Obama to note a reserved style is far from a liability for him, but an asset, while Clinton accurately acknowledges the many racist attacks he endured, such as false claims of his lack of citizenship (see p. 6-7, 366-7, 414-5). And yet, Clinton does not explicitly consider Obama's race in the above quotation, although her descriptions may indicate her awareness of the ways gender norms are different than racial norms, where Barack

Obama, a Black man, did not receive the same criticism as Clinton, a white woman. It is through this implicit description of the different, yet related, effects of sexism and racism that HRC positions herself as capable of adopting a position as an ally for intersectional feminist efforts.

"Well, what would *you* do?" (Clinton 136, emphasis in the original)

Although for most of the book Clinton separates her personal and political lives, in her "Sisterhood" chapters she describes how Clinton the presidential nominee and Clinton the woman blend. In a pattern fitting the second wave mantra the personal is political, I find Clinton resists a separation among her roles as a politician and citizen through naming her embodied experiences in a male-dominated profession that directs readers to challenges more significant than glass ceilings and salary negotiations.

Clinton describes the significance of her gender within her political life through her embodied experiences. Through doing so, she begins to establish an ethos able to direct reader attention to gender-based violence at the core of many feminist movements. Ritchie and Ronald note women cultivate authority through describing their gendered bodies—such as Sojourner Truth's identification with her audience's awareness of her skin color and the physical impacts of slave labor that made her body challenge Antebellum assumptions of women's fragility. This is not to suggest Clinton engages a similar repurposing of embodied gender and racial norms from her standpoint as a 21st century white woman. However, I find Clinton establishes agency through resisting an easy understanding of language divorced from speaking bodies.

In the "Sisterhood" chapter, Clinton describes brief moments she experienced to show the stakes of pervasive sexual harassment. One key illustration takes place during

Clinton's description of the second national presidential candidate debate. Trump stood behind Clinton as she spoke. In response to this physical form of intimidation, Clinton describes her embodied reaction. She writes, "He was literally breathing down my neck. My skin crawled" (136). This resulted in pondering two choices.

> It was one of those moments where you wish you could hit Pause and ask everyone watching, 'Well? What would *you* do?' Do you stay calm, keep smiling, and carry on as if he weren't repeatedly invading your space? Or do you turn, look him in the eye, and say loudly and clearly, 'Back up, you creep, get away from me, I know you love to intimidate women but you can't intimidate me, so *back up'.* (136, emphasis in the original)

Clinton continues to explain why she chose the first option. "Maybe I have overlearned the lesson of staying calm—biting my tongue, digging my fingernails into a clenched fist, smiling while, determined to present a composed face to the world" (136-7). In these statements, Clinton refutes the critique that she didn't react to Trump's physical presence on stage. The rhetorical questions direct readers to consider the ways a calm reaction is not a natural one given the situation, and one Clinton herself considered resisting. In addition, Clinton names her embodied reaction to Trump's breath. Clinton's description of overlearning how to stay clam points out the ways her reaction is not natural in response to a physically threatening figure. Instead, Clinton's statement highlights the intentionality around maintaining a calm exterior. Clinton's descriptions of biting her tongue and digging her fingernails into her fist continue to show a schism between her calm facial appearance and her more expressive physical reactions. Her body tensed up,

but she continued to present a composed face of rationality and politeness, one traditionally expected of politicians.

The politician provides a further justification of her actions during the debate through connecting her embodied experiences to sexist and racist stereotypes. Clinton writes if she directly confronted Trump's behavior, "he would have surely capitalized on it gleefully. A lot of people recoil from an angry woman, or even just a direct one" (137). Clinton's decision to resist the public association of an angry woman to her observations of the public punishments faced by other high profile women including Coretta Scott King, Kamala Harris, and Arianna Huffington (137). Unlike earlier moments in Clinton's text, here she establishes herself through associations with other women, a crucial shift in her identification. Through naming the connections among the negative public reception of women considered angry to white and Black women, Clinton implicitly directs reader attention to the ways Black women face additional barriers to their participation in politics.

"[B]ut are we going to see any change? Are we going to see some action" (McSpadden qtd. Clinton 180).

While HRC seeks to enhance her public image as someone whose gender could be a political asset, by itself this does not challenge racism among women. I find a third form of HRC's revised ethos illustrates the possibilities of a more complicated understanding of the politician as she writes of her association with the group the Mothers of the Movement comprised of Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, Gwen Carr, mother of Eric Garner, Lezley McSpadden, mother of Michael Brown, and Lucia McBath, mother of Jordan Davis, and other primarily Black women who lost

unarmed children to gun and police violence, many of whom spoke in support of Clinton during the 2016 Democratic National Convention. In this section, I find HRC positions herself within a more "leader-full" system ("Women's March on Washington Guiding Vision and Definition of Principles"), one where Clinton's election loss has a deeper significance than her career. Instead, the memoir can direct readers beyond the Clinton 2016 presidential campaign to the pressing needs to address the epidemic of gun violence as it intersects with violence against communities of color through a movement led by Black women.

Throughout the chapter "Turning Mourning into a Movement," HRC returns to the experiences of the activist group the Mothers of the Movement to illustrate the pressing needs for legislative reform to curb the United States' high rates of gun violence that especially impact communities of color. Clinton opens the chapter with a description of the meeting she organized at a Chicago diner with some of the women who would later campaign for her at the Democratic National Convention as the Mothers of the Movement. Clinton mediates the experiences of the activists within her own bestselling memoir through quoting their words and using their experiences to illustrate the stakes of her failed gun reform policies. As the chapter continues, Clinton attempts to further situate herself for wide reader appeal through naming the support she won from police chiefs (177), her support for law abiding gun owners (187), and her recognition of the importance of guns within American culture (181). The Mothers activist group sought justice for their children, and in Fulton's words, "We don't want to be community activists, we don't want to be the mothers of senseless gun violence, we don't want to be in this position—we were forced into this position. None of us would have signed up for

this" (qtd. Clinton 174). Clinton's stakes were much more political than personal. Clinton describes the political power of the National Rifle Association lobbing campaigns as significant liabilities for Democratic politicians. However, these significantly different stakes reflect a key feature of feminist coalitions. As Bernice Johnson Reagon notes, matters of survival, life and death, are the most compelling reasons motivating women to find ways to work together across racial differences (357). In a similar way that a feminist ethos can reveal the rhetor's context (Reynolds; Schmertz), the Mothers of the Movement's engagement with the controversial white politician can direct readers toward the intersecting histories of US gun and racial violence. These textual moments can indicate the rhetorical and political failures directing HRC, and her readers, to coalitional movements, especially the Black women-led Mothers of the Movement.

After Clinton describes the initial Chicago meeting, the politician positions her family within larger political structures. Clinton briefly names her racial subject position. She writes, "My daughter and grandchildren are white. They won't know what it's like to be watched with suspicion when they play in the park or enter a store" (176). This moment relies on a complex identification, one requiring Clinton share an identity as a parent and recognize the crucial racial differences among herself and her guests that significantly inform interactions in public spaces. Yet, perhaps more powerful than modeling her own racial subject position, Clinton directs readers to a more expansive form of accountability through implicating herself in the failure to implement gun and police reform legislation. Clinton notes the Mothers "had come to talk about what had happened to their kids and to see if I would do something about it—or if I was just another politician after their votes" (173). This self-recognition breaks from a white

feminine position of assumed innocence or naivety about the reasons the Mothers would be inclined to distrust a white liberal politician. In the context of a political memoir from an unsuccessful cannidate, Clinton's reflection takes on additional weight as a form of acknowledgement of the on-going preventable tragedies she was unable to stop.

This awareness becomes the starting place of a coalitional anti-racist feminist ethos as Clinton attributes a question she does not attempt to answer to Lezley McSpadden, a shift that demonstrates Clinton's knowledge of the interconnections among Washington politics, the lives of the Mothers and other families, and her own failure to prevent future gun deaths. According to Clinton, McSpadden asked her, "Once again we're around a table, we're pouring our hearts out, we're getting emotional, we tell you what we feel—but are we going to see any change? Are we going to see some action" (180)? While in majority of this chapter Clinton describes the recent history of gun policies and lobbies within national politics, Clinton provides no textual explanation for McSpadden's call for accountability. Within the text, McSpadden's question is visually set off by a double paragraph break functioning as an intentional pause for readers. While it may be possible to answer McSpadden with a yes or no, McSpadden's question demands an answer in more than words, and implicates Clinton as an unsuccessful presidential candidate. Through Clinton's inclusion of this moment, there is the possibility of authority gained because of self-implicating failure with consequences beyond a single election.

McSpadden's questions emerge from her lived experiences as she forms an appeal directed to the influential white politician. McSpadden's challenge to Clinton to produce meaningful change for parents who lost children to unprovoked violence shows a level of

rhetorical complexity Clinton herself rarely employs in her text. In keeping with a coalition's focus on action, McSpadden's rhetorical questions aim for more than awareness of violence but form a call to accountability from lawmakers. By including McSpadden's words, Clinton connects readers to the ways women of color may creatively appeal to potential allies through shared identities as a way to point out significant social differences, a move Clinton demonstrates is possible as her inclusion of McSpadden's words in the best-selling memoir may reach audiences who may not read the activist's work (see McSpadden; McSpadden and LeFlore), or see the Mothers' media coverage.

Clinton's choice to include such a complex call for accountability forms the starting place of an ethos in vulnerability, or failure. While earlier in *What Happened,* Clinton establishes her authority in association with former Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, here she establishes her authority in association with McSpadden. This brief, yet significant, moment illustrates a central finding from the social scientists Cole and Luna's interviews with activists in the *Global Feminisms Archive* that a crucial aspect of studying feminist coalitions centers on if or how identities should be forged through the alliance (75–76), which in this case required Clinton write of herself as someone who became committed to gun reform legislation due to devastating human consequences that disproportionately impact Black communities. Through this uncomfortable association with McSpadden's unanswerable question of accountability, I suggest Clinton forms the starting place of a form of credibility calling for readers to cross racial divisions to end gun deaths.

This credibility is perhaps most important to attend to due to what its inclusion suggests of the Mothers' of the Movement. Clinton establishing her authority alongside Lezley McSpadden's call for accountability can be read as appropriation or amplification. In either interpretation, the moment's inclusion shows McSpadden trusted Clinton enough to meet with her, to speak rather than assume her words would fall silent, and that the epidemic of gun violence and need for police reform were significant enough to risk engaging with the politician despite risks of denial, appropriation, or further harm. Clinton's controversial reputation did not lead this group of Black women to disengage with her and may have required she alter her consciousness of state sanctioned harm and mass incarceration following the 1994 Crime Bill. Clinton's inclusion of the Mothers of the Movement's can provide a reminder of the necessity to risk allyship with those who show a willingness to listen to act on a hope that future tragedies can be prevented (see Taylor 189).

Conclusion

Throughout *What Happened,* Clinton seeks to revise her controversial reputation in an attempt to offer readers avenues to influence politics following her 2016 election loss among the Electoral College. Clinton is a complex figure, which she acknowledges in the text through noting her regrets, frustrations, and many privileges due to her wealth and status. In the "Get Caught Trying" chapter, Clinton situates her presidential campaign as emerging after receiving encouragement from the previous two Democratic presidents. The "On Being a Woman in Politics" section may help readers recognize patterns of assumed distrust, and embodied vulnerability for women in US politics. In the "Turning Mourning into a Movement" chapter, Clinton describes the Mothers of the Movement

group that endorsed her, and required she recognize shared family caregiving responsibilities with crucial racial differences. These humanizing features are worthwhile to direct readers to of the moment political tensions, and, from a feminist perspective, shifts in Cliton's rhetoric that include some anti-racist consciousness.

Other rhetoricians who engage *What Happened* may find it beneficial to focus on Clinton's frequent use of rhetorical questions or calls for readers to participate in formal institutions and grassroots movements to shape civic life. Throughout the text, Clinton uses questions to ponder the causes and aftereffects of the Trump election, with questions such as: "But what more could we do" (351)? and "How can we build the trust that holds a democracy together" (431)? In one trend, Clinton points out the US' geopolitical divisions to ask, "How many shrinking small towns and aging Rust Belt cities did I visit over the past two years where people felt abandoned, disrespected, invisible? How many young men and women in neglected urban neighborhoods told me they felt like strangers in their own land because of the color of their skin" (431)? Further examining the function of HRC's rhetorical questions may contribute to knowledge of the books' "uptake" and circulation (Mack and Alexander). A related project may track the strategic shifts among the ways Clinton writes of her enduring faith in the US Federal Government in ways that consider the intersection among political deliberative norms and the "unruly" presence of bodies at risk in physical places and online spaces (Alexander et al.). There are also potential projects that consider HRC's *What Happened* in relationship to potential shifts in the rhetoric of other contemporary high-profile women's rights advocates.

The additional political readings of the text should also not remain removed from more personal ones. As I went to bed the night of the 2016 election, I was in denial that Clinton, someone with immense political experience and policy plans, would lose to a man who pitted the American polis against itself, and whose armed supporters would storm the Capital four years later. There are no cozy metaphors to describe the process of members from marginalized groups finding ways to acknowledge each other, work together, and still maintain autonomy. Like María Lugones writes, "we want to break cracked mirrors that show us in many separate, unconnected parts" (43). Lugones calls on white women, like Hillary Rodham Clinton and me, to move past abstract commitments and our sense of innocence (48). To apply Chávez and Lugones calls, I turn the mirror of critical examination partially upon myself to conclude my analysis of the ways Clinton's text resists a position of denial.

What happens to compel a writer to adopt such a risky position to unapologetically write as a woman, and use such gendered knowledge as an asset? In this chapter I've turned to HRC's book to answer that question through attention to moments of consciousness of sexism, writing from the body, and recognition of shared caregiving responsibilities. At the same time, I also recognize such types of credibility may be most useful to call readers into increased political engagement. Clinton closes *What Happened* with a similar revelation about the growth of new grassroots forms of resistance under first-time leaders and not always taking place within traditional political spheres.

> Would all this be happening if I had been elected President? Would women and young people be running for office in record numbers? Would people have filled

> the streets to demand action after the shooting in Parkland? Would #MeToo and Time's Up be sweeping industries? Maybe. But on the whole, I think no. (Clinton 503)

If it wasn't for Clinton's loss, I likely wouldn't have worn the pink hat my mom made me and joined a carpool with friends to walk in my state's 2016 Women's March. I'm not so sure I would have later presented at a local feminist conference in a "women of color take on institutions" panel if I hadn't considered gender and its connections to race. I'm not sure I would have found it important to talk with acquaintances who protested through not voting or voted for Trump. I wouldn't have learned to chant "this is what democracy looks like," or how to sing "We Shall Overcome," a type of hymn pulling me toward those who learned the lyrics decades earlier.

The members of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric recognize the many contested definitions of feminism in theory and practice along with responsibilities to ensure rhetorical knowledge is not applied in situations that justify poverty, violence, or debunked conspiracies. The organization attends to the complexity of the contexts surrounding rhetorical situations that may involve acknowledging important moments of revision because of alliances formed across differences in race, social location, and political power. A careful negotiation among trust and skepticism is crucial to study feminist coalitions and their rhetoric. As we examine deeply uncomfortable rhetoric that initially appears as straightforward appropriation, we may more fully understand the central issues that have compelled individuals to trust each other, persuade those who appear immune to change, and hold onto trust in the benefits of solidarity.

Chapter 2:

Composing a Coalitional Literacy Stance[5]

> *When the movement reflects divisions that the American state actively promotes, it makes all the movements against racism weaker. This does not mean the movements should paper over actual differences among various groups of people, but it does mean there is a need to understand the commonalities and overlaps in oppression while also coming to terms with the reality that there is a lot more to gain by building unity and a lot more to lose by staying in our respective corners.*
>
> --Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* pp. 189

In the previous chapter, I adopted Gesa Kirsch and Jacqueline Jones Royster's "strategic contemplation" to examine how coalitional literacies can direct readers to notions of bodies at risk as central to democratic political empowerment through attention to Hillary Rodham Clinton's descriptions of her gender and race in her 2016 presidential loss memoir *What Happened*. In a brief passage, Clinton deviates from her familiar credibility to pragmatically, and symbolically, take a stand with Lezley McSpadden and the Mothers of the Movement advocacy group of Black women who lost children to gun and police violence and endorsed Clinton's presidential campaign. I suggest Clinton's short, yet significant, moments of feminist credibility can direct readers to hope that even an established politician with a controversial reputation can use their platform to direct

[5] Part of this chapter was previously published in my co-authored piece with Debbie Minter, "Pedagogical Alliances among Writing Instructors and Teaching Librarians through a Writing Information Literacy Community of Practice," *Writing Program Administration,* vol. 6, no. 2, 2023, pp. 12-29.

readers toward the long-term benefits of political coalitions to make beneficial changes in the lives of women and people of color, and direct rhetoricians to the alarming circumstances that motivated the Mothers of the Movement to risk granting Clinton their endorsement. In this chapter, I expand my focus on coalitional literacies to describe two central features of what I call a coalition-oriented stance that can extend knowledge of how marginalized communities use literacy for legal, professional, and expressive purposes.

I'm interested in questions of responsibility, reciprocity, and representation coalitional literacies can bring into view from this experience in ways the Combahee River Collective describes as "we cannot pretend to be raceless or classless workers" to a space filled by people with expansive lives outside the classroom as family members, workers, and citizens in transition. In the tradition of María Lugones, who writes "not theorize what I will not live out," I want to briefly describe one short-term collaboration I participated in intended to alter the political status of immigrant and refugees in an adult English language class through the nonprofit Lincoln Literacy. [6]

During an initial classroom observation, I noticed the students repeated their volunteer teacher and all the information they receive was delivered in the language they are in the room to learn with an emphasis on Midwestern pronunciation. Would it be responsible to remain a detached observer when I had experience working with multilingual adults and knowledge of language acquisition? Should I take over the class from a dedicated teacher only to drop the new responsibility in the highly likely scenario

[6] This reflection focuses exclusively on my experiences and did not require IRB approval. This reflection is also taken from my 2021 CCCC conference paper that I was unable to deliver due to COVID-19 conference modifications.

when my central purpose as a graduate student to develop new knowledge overwhelmed my time? A deep commitment I realized I brought with me in the short-term internship was to trust adults to listen to those who have different accents than they do, whose names they may need to practice pronouncing. I also respected those who desired to assimilate to their new country and may wish to erase the traces of their first languages and cultural traditions.

I wanted to offer the teacher, and her students, options to consider through engaging with each other that bell hooks notes is essential for democratic teaching (*Teaching To Transgress* 196–97). I also was committed to using my short time in the classroom to provide benefits to the teacher and her students for sharing their classroom with me. After the initial class period, the teacher told me she wanted to include opportunities for her students to write. The next week, both of us considered our individual commitments, as well as those of the nonprofit. I was committed to a World Englishes understanding of English as the language of political and business communication for an estimated one and a half billion people internationally ("The Most Spoken Languages Worldwide 2023"). The teacher and I decided to respond to student descriptions of important people in their lives in ways that point out three or fewer standardized grammatical errors and provide encouragement, a practice that resulted in student voices filling the classroom.

I write about my collaboration with the English language teacher for the ways it illustrates a key moment in my graduate education that required I carefully consider my central commitments—the stance I should adopt—to act on them to contribute to a type of coalition seeking to use literacy to enhance the lives of adults with vulnerable

economic and citizenship statuses. The nonprofit resembled a coalition with alliances among administrative staff, volunteer teachers, cultural liaison van drivers, and academics, including myself. The classrooms also had potential to function as what the community literacy scholars Campano et al call a "literacy coalition" of cross-cultural communication in service of slow building change to the limited financial and political opportunities for immigrants and refugees. I suggest recognizing the differences present among the teacher, myself, and the students in the room—in this case especially race, country of origin, class, gender, and religion—is a first crucial step. I do not propose naming differences to arbitrarily divide the class, or advocate recognizing differences in ways that are not open to altered actions. A second step is a desire for students to experience the ways English can establish human connections that enable sharing important aspects of one's life beyond the impersonal functioning of politics or work's daily grind. This second step is crucial to motivate students to establish a coalition. These collective engagements may even resist false oversimplifications about immigrants and refugees.

It is also crucial to adopt the responsibilities to facilitate coalitional literacy practices to address racism and xenophobia. In doing so, we consider nuance, ask challenging questions about what is worth preserving in which contexts, and hold out trust that if relationships do not fracture, they can change for the better. I've realized both the necessity of engaging the complicated dynamics of establishing trust across key divisions as crucial for fulfilling norms of deliberation and consensus-building informing democratic institutions that include public universities and prisons. The alliances I'm interested in are not natural, inevitable, or common sense. They may not rely on a shared

identity easily recognized or codified on a survey (Kopelson). Instead, such expansive literacy practices rely on the active engagement of taking a stance through applying knowledge to pressing responsibilities to local avenues of shared life that are essential for healthy democratic governments and classrooms (see Gonclaves p. 97).

I turn to two central theorists—Crenshaw and Spivak—to read for opportunities for a stance that uses social differences as assets. I then turn to my "Full Class Annotated Bibliography" as an example of a classroom activity that centers the practical decision-making responsibilities of a coalitional literacy stance for college composition students. In this chapter, I approach the work of two central scholars that consider ways to see and listen to differences as crucial assets to facilitate expansive coalitional literacy practices primarily, and not exclusively, intended to benefit women, people of color, and people from Southern nations. I suggest attention to these insights can inform a stance for Rhetoric and Composition scholars to adopt to challenge the prevailing trends of isolation to foster engagement in local avenues of shared cultural, economic, and political local life. The stance I'm interested in can offer a guide for scholars and educators to embody a scholarly position that uses consciousness honed in a multiply marginalized community as an asset to ameliorate pressing injustices related to dehumanizing language practices and corresponding conditions of violence, poverty, and mass incarceration. Like my involvement in the Lincoln Literacy classroom, a stance in service of asset-based coalitional literacies may be short term and may not involve empirical data indicating measurements of success. With those caveats, I do want to suggest there is a great deal Rhetoric and Composition can offer knowledge of coalitions through contributing to political efforts to communicate with a storytelling core, sharing knowledge of language

acquisition that can influence teacher development programs and curricular designs, and above all emphasize the ways human communication—be it expository prose or the rhythmic verses of poetry—can spread hope that alongside the world's alarming changes, the careful arrangement of words retain power to enhance lives.

A stance is at once an embodied term, such as a runner's stance, and a theoretical emphasis on one's particular viewpoint. I use the term stance to emphasize the contextual and embodied locations writers draw attention to, and use, to challenge the assumptions behind traditional authorities. While neoliberal ethos resists locating agency in a particular person in a specific place (see Riedner), to adapt a stance, one must have a body and be located somewhere. As an illustration, early in her book, *Tell the Truth and Shame the Devil,* McSpadden describes herself as ten toes down, an idiom referencing planting one's feet in the ground in an unwavering commitment to pursue expansive efforts seeking justice for her son and other unarmed Black people. My choice to use the term stance is also a connection to the feminist rhetorician Nedra Reynolds, who in the 90s described the ways feminists situate their authority, and later, examined the influence of geography's impact on scholarly writing practices as a predecessor to Ryan, Myers, and Jones' work on feminist ecological understandings of ethos. I use the term stance because it directs attention to individual agency, rather than their surroundings, but like a feminist ecological ethe a coalitional stance is a highly contextual form of authority taking place in specific times and places, one intended for persuasion, advocacy, and debates.

The coalitional stance I describe is not the only one. My definition emerges primarily out of intersectional feminist scholarship, and to a lesser degree, my teaching

and advocacy experiences. Although some coalitions such as the Third World Liberation Front have been highly successful in securing their instrumental goals, usually, the alliances I focus on are hoped for collaborations among communities of unequal access to resources and power. Other scholars have, and likely will, examine coalitions beyond my scope, such as those of far right and populist alliances, and alliances across national borders. For writing studies, I find it remains important to continue the provocative descriptions of Welch, Baniya et al, and others to define an inclusive coalitional tradition extending from Black women, queer women, other women of color and allies, for the ways this stance can provide us with a hopeful orientation to disrupt neoliberal common-sense notions of good writers and writing that strip away authority and resources from our classrooms, Departments, and profession.

I find it crucial to understand the amorphous dynamics of coalitional literacies, and the complex responsibilities they require, those that are at the center of recent social movements, non-fiction writing, and radical spaces in the discipline. In Welch and Scott's "One Train May Hide Another" article, they argue we should turn to history and human impact to engage meaningful acts of resistance to the most compelling challenges of our age—poverty, violence, and mass incarceration. The language of intersectional feminist coalitions provides bridges to those who invest time engaging responses not only in language. Recognizing these responsibilities requires a shift to imagine potential alliances, perhaps in circumstances that seem impossible. In "Hablando Cara a Caro," María Lugones describes the deceptively simple metaphor of looking into a mirror to reflect the profound implications for forming and sustaining expansive coalitions across differences in profession and social location in ways that recognize not all oppressions

are the same. In more straightforward scholarly prose the Black and working class studies scholar Keeanga Taylor writes it is crucial to recognize the interconnections and shared successes possible among anti-poverty and violence struggles. I find intersectional feminist scholars of coalitions offer nuanced, and practical, answers to key questions in our field about what we offer in circumstances that disempower the abilities for language to humanize people and situations. The coalition-oriented scholars and writers I cite emphasize the widely agreed upon importance to connect form to audience and occasion, which we can extend to share the value of participating in public life.

I take seriously cross-disciplinary calls to consider coalitions to understand movements throughout political spectrums in ways that are especially crucial at a time in which democratic institutions in the US and abroad face significant threats. Within feminist rhetorics, activists and scholars have called coalitions as essential to maintain the rights of women and girls in the 21st century, and sociologists propose studying coalitions offers a central roadmap to large-scale social and political changes. Within composition, the term coalition is often used in an aspirational or imaginative sense, such as Geneva Smitherman's reflection on the "Students Rights to Their Own Language" committee as a coalition among multiracial educators, or the Digital Black Literacy and Composition collective comparing the origins of the NextGen listserv as a coalition primarily for scholars of color, international scholars, and graduate students. I extend these conversations through turning to the central writers and theorists—especially the co-authors of Moraga and Anzaldúa's *This Bridge Called My Back,* Kimberlé Crenshaw, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and bell hooks—who inform a theoretical underpinning of such conversations.

This chapter is not intended as an exhaustive list, rules for composition radicals, or an antiracist feminist writing studies manifesto. Instead, it is a starting place, a short summary of ways intellectuals have embodied a coalitional stance in work that has seen significant cross-disciplinary uptake, and an example of what applying such a stance has looked like closer to home in literacy, rhetoric, and composition. These examples can be read as inquiry directing writing educators to compose coalitional consciousness with their students and direct attention to places where a coalitional literacy stance can form connections to further social justice work within college classrooms and local communities.

Border Vision and Seeing Walls: The Urgency of Intersectionality

Walls appear solid. They hide people, buildings, borders—simultaneously keeping some out and others in. Someone who adopts a coalitional stance recognizes human imposed divisions among communities and the tensions that come from moving within them. I adopt this section's name from the reoccurring phrases "wall" and "border" from Chandra Talpade Mohanty, María Lugones, and Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga who urge examining the boundaries among nations and the lives of those who live there. These authors urge looking at borders forms a central process to establish trust across racial and ethnic differences. In an especially useful description, Sara Ahmed calls for recognition of systematic injustices that while immediately visible to some, may remain invisible to others, as a useful metaphor for multi-directional consciousness raising that is essential for sustaining collective resistance efforts. Recognizing which differences are relevant in a given situation is central to craft a social movement. Identity-focused scholars point out the crucial challenge not to make assumptions (all women have

caregiving responsibilities) or to assume such differences are irrelevant (fail to consider workplace parental leave policies or affordable childcare options). A coalition orientation presents the challenge to examine immutable differences—specifically gender and race—and the ways considering those outside the margins of power—women, people of color, and women of color—can provide beneficial impacts on the lives of those in especially dire situations, such as women and children experiencing domestic violence (see Crenshaw “Mapping”). This border vision emphasizes multi-dimensional consciousness raising as a central process to establish a shared group identity, and in some cases, co-develop pragmatic goals.

Scholars direct attention to the importance of collective consciousness raising to learn how individual experiences have shared features, and the ways academics can participate as engaged learners. A central feature of many coalitions is a group gathers to affirm shared experiences, develop actionable commitments, and forge a shared collective identity that may act in ways different than the individual groups. Such a consciousness raising stage, or willingness to look at what can be disturbing, can be a frustrating place to be. It can be especially frustrating for those who are all too aware of the crucial issues and must risk trusting those whose lives and knowledge have blinded them to such injustices (see especially Lugones “Cara a Cara”). This is a vision that carries the risk of losing collaborators rather than bringing them together due to ignorance of the validity of embodied or experience-based knowledge. However, shifts in vision, a “starting from zero” to learn from and with members of different communities provide crucial places to direct scholarly attention in ways that can complicate established knowledge (Lal "Interview with Ojeda" 25). Many activists and scholars note

this reality through offering reassurance that being disturbed by significant oversights within inclusion-oriented movements, or learning of violence unequally impacting minoritized communities, is a central process to form alternatives to narrow binary interpretations and call in engaged collaborators (Reynolds). Joining a consciousness raising group is often an embodied process central for individuals to recognize themselves as part of a collective disrupting business as usual to prevent the trend of language education removed from its central human communication purposes.

The legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw has built a career as someone who urges a focus on communities that movements and policies overlook. Decades after publishing her foundational "Mapping the Margins" article, Crenshaw retains a presence as scholar and public intellectual devoted to spreading consciousness of those whose lives take place in the connections of two or more forms of marginalization, especially Black women. While Crenshaw's "intersectionality" has become a well circulated theory within academic disciplines and activist circles, its connections to coalitions are easy to oversimplify (Zurcher; Mack).

Crenshaw's 2016 Ted Talk "The Urgency of Intersectionality" illustrates the human consequences of limited media frames to provoke wide-ranging audiences to collective consciousness. To gather attention to the pressing work to acknowledge how overlapping forms of marginalization impact communities, Crenshaw opens by asking her audience members to sit down when they don't recognize a name. As Crenshaw lists names—among them, Tamir Rice, Tanisha Anderson, and Michelle Cusseaux—her audience members sit down until only four people are left. After, Crenshaw names the connections among the widespread lack of recognition of the women and girls of color

killed by police over the last two years at the time of her speech to her well-known theory of intersectionality, a theory that rather than exclusively offering a critique can draw attention to the need for coalitions to emerge out of identity-focused movements.

Crenshaw developed “intersectionality” as a lens to acknowledge exclusions within feminist and anti-racist movements “[o]riginally articulated on behalf of black women, the term brought to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members, but often fail to represent them” ("Cannot Wait" n. p.). Crenshaw has devoted much of her public work to retracing intersectionality’s origins in 20th century anti-discrimination laws, as well as correcting easy misperceptions of intersectionality as either exclusively identity politics or calls for change in words only. Crenshaw has drawn upon a 1976 lawsuit that exposed the ways laws intended to prevent discrimination against women and people of color, in practice, left Black women out of employment opportunities. Crenshaw’s central legal studies article, “Mapping the Margins,” draws upon her observations at a domestic violence shelter that many women of color, and non-English speaking people, were turned away from due to the shelter’s limited staff and financial resources ("Mapping"). Intersectionality is crucial to “highlight the multiple avenues through which racial and gender oppression were experienced so that the problem would be easier to discuss and understand” (“Cannot Wait” n.p.), rather than rely on a narrow identity-politic orientation limited to self-interest. As Crenshaw argues, a change in vision or consciousness should not be the end point of inclusion efforts for “[w]e simply do not have the luxury of building social movements that are not intersectional, nor can we believe we are doing intersectional work just by saying words” (“Cannot Wait” n. p.).

In a classroom-focused application of Crenshaw's intersectionality, Valeria Luiselli's extended essay *Tell Me How It Ends* is an illustration of a starting place for college students to engage in collective efforts to support people oppressed by international political circumstances. Luiselli's text is an in-depth exploration of critical consciousness raising from the connections of legal rhetoric and practices, and embodied knowledge. Luiselli lists the intake questions she translates from the English legalese to Spanish for children who crossed the US border without legal authorization, questions that place translators in impossible situations through asking children to share trauma and documentation, to build a legal case to stay in the country. Luiselli was involved in efforts to listen to the experiences of migrant children, the practices of lawyers, and desires of the college students she taught. Luiselli's descriptions then result in grassroots actions.

Luiselli directs her readers to see the literal, and proposed, walls between Mexico and the United States to recognize the precarious legal position of unaccompanied children, those marginalized due to their country of origin, race, and age. Luiselli describes her writing that took place through involvement with the Immigrant Children Advocate's Relief Effort, a coalition of seven NGOs in paradoxical terms.

> [H]ow do you explain that is never inspiration that drives you to tell a story, but rather a combination of anger and clarity? How do you say: No, we do not find inspiration here, but we find a country that is beautiful as it is broken, and we are somehow now part of it, so we are also broken with it, and feel ashamed, confused, and sometimes hopeless, and are trying to figure out how to do something about it? p. 24

This urgency to "do something about it" is part of the book's key appeal for scholar-teachers. Luiselli uses the questions of lawyers' immigration intake forms to structure her work as a volunteer translator awaiting her green card during a massive humanitarian crisis. As she writes of shifts in her consciousness, she also notes how sharing this awareness of the influx, and lack of support, for refugee children influences her students. Ten of them used a Spanish language conversation class to form the starting place to support the refugee children through coordinating soccer games, English classes, and rides home. Luiselli closes her essay with a recognition that the international humanitarian crisis is far from solved through publishing her essay, or her students' actions. However, those efforts can illuminate the significant stakes of transnational immigration on the lives of migrant children with the potential for educators and students to intervene through shared participation in consciousness raising sessions. Adopting an intersectional vision to recognize human imposed boundaries shaping lives does not have to inevitably result in a critique without collective actions.

Sounds of Home and Languages of the Street: Repurposing Assumed Relationships among Discourse and Social Change

A coalitional stance's language can acknowledge complex relationships among the histories of language and social change. This is a feature of a coalitional stance that relies on both scholarly knowledge making, and an activist protest tradition, and the ways both may blend. Activists can find agency through disrupting a binary understanding of linguistic assimilation or silence[7]. At the textual level, many coalitions use a variety of

[7] I use the term "the street" to connect back to the innovative work in community literacies that especially values public engagement with communities of color. The term street also connects to María Lugones coalitional feminist process of adopting a "street walker vision."

language and purposes, such as the California Coalition of Women Prisoners' *Fire Inside Newsletter's* legal advice columns, Spanish language editions, and poetry (Block et al.). These features make use of expansive knowledge of the relationship among social change, academic knowledge, and linguistic varieties.

To describe the centrality of listening, I turn to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak," and carmen Kynard's "New Life in This Dormant Creature," to draw attention to the hegemonic forces informing language from a perspective critical of some coalitions.[8] Both Spivak and Kynard adopt a Marxist-orientation that challenges common sense assumptions regarding the relationships among discourse and social change through critiquing European post-structuralism to account for ideology (Spivak), and illustrate the racist assumptions of what college students, and their writing, should look like (Kynard). Directing attention to the possible connections among literacies across different levels of power connects to Composition's commitment to value students' literacies in addition to Edited American English and Rhetorical studies' purpose to understand how disruptions to daily life can inform processes of political participation (Alexander and Jarratt 4,7; see also Foust et al.).

In "Can the Subaltern Speak," Spivak emphasizes the importance of listening and speaking across differences of social and economic power. Spivak deftly engages European post-structuralist thinkers, and points out the ways they overlook ideology, which makes actions outside of Western contexts impossible to fully hear. Spivak's essay remains provocative in its applications. The critical theorist notes the historical context

[8] Spivak argues it is a privileged position to aspire for global alliances (p. 43) and Kynard uses a reference to the rainbow coalition to critique educational policies and practices assuming Edited American English is necessary for all college students to enter into global economic markets (*Vernacular* 136).

behind widow self-immolation, writes the provoking line "white men saving brown women from brown men," and the limitations of Western feminist reading practices to understand the political motivations of a young woman's death by suicide.[9] Nearly three decades later, Spivak revisited her essay to describe coalitions, language differences, and educator responsibilities. She notes the power of collectives, while also noting this angle has not sustained her interest, drawing on Gramsci to note "[t]o represent 'one' self collectively is to be in the public sphere" (232). As Spivak ponders the future of changing conditions for subalterns to be heard, she turns to both her knowledge as a student of new languages and as an educator. Spivak writes, "we would need the project of listening to subalterns, patiently and carefully, so that we, as intellectuals committed to education, can devise an intuition of the public sphere in subalternity—a teacher's work" (232). This knowledge of history forms a connection to a coalitional stance attuned to differences not essentialized, and impossible for living subjects to speak back to within transnational capitalist roles of producers or consumers.

Carmen Kynard is among central educators and scholars in composition studies who adopts a similar focus on speaking back to examine Civil Rights rhetorics within educational settings. In *Vernacular Insurrections,* Kynard writes "to argue that our role as literacy educators is merely to provide our students with the rules and norms of academic literacy and 'codes of power' contradicts an extensive black protest history" (66).[10] To

[9] The anthropology professor Rosalind C. Morris notes those are among the primary critiques of Spivak's original essay. Morris, and Spivak in her revised essay, both intended the cultural references to be read parodies (see Morris' "Introduction" to *Subaltern* 2-3).

[10] Mid-20th century Back power activists published in vernacular languages to draw public attention to "the racial origins and legal processes that constrained their trials, imprisonment, and release"(Corrigan 7). For more on the histories, and pedagogies embracing, US Black languages see Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin*; Baker-Bell.

acknowledge this history enables recognizing the ways the formation of the "Students Rights to Their Own Language" (STROL) committee coincided with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s murder during the College Composition and Communication convention and the work of the Black Caucus (87). Like the published STROL document, Kynard too does not call for educators to ignore grammar or form, but to make use of knowledge from multiple academic disciplines that Edited American English is not an inherently superior language, and nor should the languages of schools and languages of homes inevitably remain separate.

In "New Life," Kynard illustrates the ways it is not one language, consciousness, or interpretation of history that should inform all classrooms. Kynard draws attention to the importance of listening to draw attention to assumed monolingualism of students or their teachers that can block knowledge of productive collective struggles, such as the Young Lords. These languages also call for readers to recognize the appearance-based assumptions often made about Black, brown, and working class students as incapable of intellectual work (see Anderson). Kynard illustrates how using vernacular linguistic knowledge can direct students from those backgrounds to collective efforts of previous generations of college student activists.

Kynard opens through addressing her readers in Edited American English before describing her classroom in ways that draw upon Black languages. While several well-recognized composition scholars also employ both English varieties in their academic prose (among them Vershawn Young, Jacqueline Jones Royster, Neisha-Anne Green),

what makes Kynard's essay remarkable is the ways her language illuminates a connection with a student. Kynard's student, April, wrote in an essay describing her desires to end the cycle of domestic violence she grew up with, as well as her hope to look more Puerto Rican and speak Spanish. Kynard notes such desires reflect historical and political tensions in ways that connect to a central goal of community-engaged pedagogies "to connect personal commitments to social and political realities, the hope that writing could address problems the writer recognizes in the world" (Julier et al. 56). After April turns in her final essay, she recognizes connections among herself and Puerto Rican student activists. Kynard writes, "I see you, now at the end of the semester, MAD OPEN on a spoken word kinda vibe. […] Remember the music and complexity you invoke in the language and content of your discourse… and then the lie [of the requirement to write exclusively in Edited American English prose] becomes quite apparent" ("New Life" 43). Kynard's letter responds to an insightful student, while also showing other teachers the ways in this classroom context, Black language promotes a student's agency based on their specific social location, connected to a particular history in a "kind of productive 'unease'" essential for participating in socially-informed literacy contexts" (Spivak in Olson and Gale 244), one that may foreclose the possibility of total mastery of a discourse, or interpret assimilation within binary terms, to instead listen and speak with the unknown in pursuit of a future not yet written.

A Full Class Annotated Bibliography

My "Full Class Annotated Bibliography for Health and Mental Health" assignment can illustrate a coalitional literacy stance of possibilities within a structure of peer and instructor accountability that resembles scholarly peer review processes or a

democratic legislative body in ways that require students participate to jointly decide on knowledge intended to benefit the other students in the class. This is an activity that requires students consider the stances they adopt in relationship to various networks of information as consumers, students, and critics, as well as the stances they adopt in relationship to other students in ways that are completely outside of their control and may show them ways their experiences and embodied knowledge can benefit communities they didn't think were possible.

My full class annotated bibliography activity challenges a panopticon surveillance state of students' compositions as exclusively inventive exercises primarily for themselves or formal assignments for their teachers' evaluation. This activity enables students with the possibility, and responsibility, to influence their peers on a topic of widespread, and not universally experienced, concern for their classmates. This assignment is one example that can speak back to a central critique of some critical pedagogies that gloss over local classroom conditions to theorize idealized understandings of problem posing classrooms that envision students capable of influencing and being influenced by each other, and opportunities for the teacher to be influenced by students (see George).

I created the full class activity, published in the *Writing Spaces Assignments and Activities Archive*, the semester after I participated in a professional development workshop focused on providing part-time writing instructors time to integrate professional student learning outcomes from composition pedagogy and information literacy (see McDonald and Minter). Through my knowledge of women's studies and ethnic studies programs, I've recognized not all students have had the same opportunities

to "study themselves . . . [and] 'give and get' something through writing . . . to write about something that matters to them," in their required first-year writing classes (Sommers and Saltz 141). I wanted to prioritize class conversations about different types of knowledge and authority rather than assume authority is something a source has or doesn't have without careful consideration of its context for a particular project, as the first ACRL information literacy "authority is constructed and contextual" and the CWPA, NCTE, and National Writing Project "metacognition" student learning frames emphasize. I designed the full class annotated bibliography for students to have experience shaping the class's knowledge and experience the ways evaluating sources requires technical skills such as identifying an author's credibility markers and social skills such as deciding how a specific source may be worthwhile to share with readers in the class. I wanted to provide time for students to discuss their research processes, the context of their sources, and different types of authority. I also wanted to provide time for students to collectively reflect on the value of those whose knowledge is often glossed over in more general sources of knowledge in a similar purpose to feminist rhetorical recovery efforts (Ritchie and Ronald; Lunsford; Royster).

The activity prompt engages a central information need of the class, such as examining local resources and scholarship addressing health and mental health among college students. From there, students individually find one or two sources they recommend the class consider annotating and posting on a discussion board. During class time, students work together in small groups of three to four students to decide on a single source their group will spend time annotating and describing. This requirement facilitates student conversations centering a holistic evaluation of the credibility of

different sources for in-class audiences, such as if information about a sober tailgate hosted by the campus counseling center may be more useful for the class to read about than a social work academic journal article summarizing key practices among campus health center staff. Once each group has decided on their source, each student has a role to play in the full class discussion board. One student reads the source to write an annotation. A second student justifies how the group's source is a valuable contribution to the class's knowledge. A different student posts a description of why their group chose their source. A final student reads a different group's annotation and makes a comparison between their group's source and that of a different group. The resulting discussion board can then inform class discussions as students engage their individual research-informed projects, or as a reference for students researching health and mental health.

My assignment emphasizes attention to dynamic social relationships and to making choices, that, while they can be uncomfortable, are central for democratic pedagogies.While this deliberation-oriented movement has a deep history within democratic pedagogies and the National Writing Project, it is especially beneficial for writers from historically marginalized backgrounds to initially break into supportive groups as one way to participate in more general conversations. However, as I noted above, this deliberative step on its own cannot be assumed to automatically center the needs of historically marginalized, and multiply marginalized, students or their knowledges (hooks; Ellsworth). Instead, this class activity created time for student conversations about the interconnections among power, social location, and knowledge, a central starting place for students to equitably assess the credibility of sources in traditional and online media environments.

Conclusion

In this chapter I've turned attention to how pluralist feminist theories can direct readers to potential coalitions waiting to form through consciousness raising of multiple forms of marginalization and listening to the tensions among multiple languages. For rhetoricians, there are symbolic language patterns through reoccurring metaphors of walls and streets. Such language patterns also have instrumental functions through the wide cross-disciplinary uptake of many coalition-oriented scholars, especially Kimberlé Crenshaw and Gayatri Charavorty Spivak. For composition scholars, focusing on coalition-oriented interpretations of these scholars' works has pedagogical applications to help teachers, and their students, adopt similar processes and practices that make pluralist aspirations detach from separatist desires, or anything-goes acts of individual expression, to inform shared speech acts disrupting the harms of business as usual, as seen in Luiselli's descriptions of her students supporting local migrant youths and Kynard's interactions with her student April in Black English. Within Composition's latest turns, better examining the practices that illuminate the contexts that especially provide women of color agency within local, professional, and political spheres are of too much importance to ignore, or overly simplify, to understand violence, poverty, and transnational migration. My annotated bibliography activity is one specific way to facilitate some of the key social responsibilities, and discomfort, central to a coalitional literacy stance.

A coalitional literacy stance can acknowledge politics in classrooms shaping teacher worldviews. To adopt this stance is to not settle to quickly accept the world as it is. A coalitional stance can provide multiple voices to write with, one of normative

aspirations, moving toward clarity and composure in a dominant tongue. It also allows for a voice of counter or anti-normative aspirations, moving toward the unknown, what's restless, and listening to the tongues silenced: Black Englishes, World Englishes, creoles, and argot. This is a daily challenge. The normative is not forgotten, but neither is it dominating. While the key student learning documents emphasize student abilities to write in multiple forms, a coalitional literacy stance recognizes the political risks writers take on when writing in languages other than Edited American English, and the struggles for ideas to be heard even for some who write in such a language. These are struggles that may compel working together and innovative solidarity practices.

In the next chapter, I extend knowledge of the best practices to respond to college students and their writing through an approach I call "coalitional commenting."

Chapter 3:

Coalitional Commenting

One of my 200-level writing students, Trinity Thompson (Them/Them)[11], stayed after class to tell me they planned to spend the night in their car to travel across state lines to interview people for their literary nonfiction essay. As I considered how to respond, I wasn't thinking about how Trinity would move their ideas into clarity, demonstrate a key learning outcome, or if I could type an end note in the 20 minutes before my Writing Center shift started. Part of me was jealous I wasn't the one traveling. More troubling still, I projected my own past disappointment onto Trinity to wonder if this experience would discourage them from writing with primary sources in the future, and if they would be physically safe. I've forgotten how I responded. What I do remember is through Trinity's composition, both of us felt a restless energy shaping its creation,[12] the features that made it a good fit for the essay genre. Moments like this one with Trinity, whose essay I return to in this chapter, enabled my recognition that there's something more at stake in my response than unclear prose or incomplete thinking, something that causes me to hesitate before I "teach one lesson at a time" (Sommers 44).

In this chapter I propose extending the coalitional literacy stance from the previous chapter to literacy, rhetoric, and composition's knowledge of how to respond to students and their writing. Much like my experience with Trinity reveals, Linda Adler-Kassner in her 2017 C's keynote "Because Writing is Never Just Writing" draws attention to the field's widely shared emphasis on "troublesomeness" a process emphasizing modifying assumptions. 74or significant learning to take place, Adler-Kassner notes "the

---

[11] I include student names with their signed written permission following UNL IRB project ID 21974.
[12] I adopt this phrase from Nancy 's Welch's *Getting Restless: Rethinking Revision in Writing Instruction*.

educational intelligence complex" is concerned with students pursuing seamless paths from college to career ("Because Writing Is Never Just Writing" 320, 323, 329). These arguments work alongside policies that have moved public funding toward administration in a decades long process Adler-Kassner connects to so called alternative facts, online conspiracies, and widening socioeconomic inequalities (see also Welch and Scott; MacLean). Adler-Kassner urges her audience to consider the ways the field's knowledge of writers and writing can contribute to collective resistance efforts. As Adler-Kassner observes, activists recognize coalitions--alliances among two or more organizations-- are often most successful when they unite through a shared central responsibility (see also *The Activist WPA)*.

At the level of individual classrooms, writing instructor responses are highly ethical teaching situations and perhaps the central responsibility uniting instructors across many differences in institutional affiliation, social locations, and individual commitments. Responses are key actions of teacher agency and responsibility, especially in the post-truth age where once commonsense notions of writing are up for public debate. There is a great deal of shared knowledge about what makes for effective responses to student work—tailored feedback for a particular assignment, shared authority with the student, and a focus on a single key lesson. Yet the limitations of response scholarship have not been greatly expanded since the empirical and expert-practitioner generalizable insights originating in the 1980s and 90s, a mostly pre-social turn era.[13] As writing teachers consider their responses to individual students and on-

[13] Sommers includes a "Responding to Student Writers: Best Practices" in *Responding to Student Writing.* Haswell recommends using as few comments as possible (604). Straub and Lunsford, too, extrapolate generalizable recommendations from their study in their chapter "7 Principles of Response," which notes comments should be purposeful, nonauthoritarian, rhetorically focused, and individualized for the writer

going tensions—specifically, racial inequalities, unequitable access to public decision making, and the field's poverty wage jobs—returning to Composition's knowledge of response practices, with additional awareness of ways this knowledge is not complete, is a valuable way to establish trust to sustain the discipline, and collectively pursue the rich multiple uses of writing to humanize communities and complex situations only the humanities can provide.

Ideal features of instructor responses have been well studied, which I've synthesized in an image. As central insights, Nancy Sommers emphasizes comments should start a dialogue with students (20). Richard Straub and Ronald F. Lunsford describe the importance of shared textual authority, and Lad Tobin challenges instructors to share student writing at professional development sessions. However, these insights fail to "strategically contemplate" classroom conditions with instructor's limited time (Kirsch and Royster), a resource likely to become increasingly scarce with additional public budget cuts to higher education. In a quantitative study, Melanie Lee finds a correlation among the least pedagogically effective comments and the most professionally "overloaded" faculty with the highest number of writing courses per term, and students per course. Renee DeLong and colleagues note similar poor working conditions exacerbate racial inequalities.[14] Although these may be obvious insights, there

---

and situation. Tobin describes recommendations for reading student writing on page 29, including 1.) student writing is worthy of analysis, 2.) Talking about student writing with academic peers can be "delightful", 3.) such conversations have important pedagogical implications, and 4.) it can be useful to share student writing at professional development meetings. In creative writing classes, see also Bizarro's theory informed responses and more recently Rose Chavez's "Conferencing as Critique."

4. In the introduction to *Writing Toward Racial Equity in First-Year Composition,* DeLong et al write: "We are expected to teach 5/5 course loads with classes of 25 or more writing students (well over the NCTE size of 17) and we fight over the professional development pool funds" (2).

has yet to be widescale professional instance upon implementing the NCTE and C's professional working conditions ("Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty"; "Preparing Teachers of College Writing"; *The English Coalition Conference*), despite their proven educational and civic benefits.

Rhetoric and Composition's recent project to better understand fairness and evaluation rarely extends to response and feedback practices. Anne Ruggles Gere and colleagues note changing definitions of fairness have shifted with pedagogical turns that deemphasize textual products, in favor of composing as a highly social process in traditional print and multimodal mediums. Asao B. Inoue and Maya Poe introduce *Race and Writing Assessment* in the context of the field's long-standing commitment not to punish students of color and non-standardized literacy practices (see also Poe and Elliot). However, the lack of explicit engagement with instructor response practices is significant given the importance of feedback for evaluation, revision, and just labor conditions. Nancy Sommers opens *Responding to Student Writers* observing, "Reading drafts—and responding to student writers—takes up more time, thought, empathy, and energy than

any other aspect of teaching writing. […] Responding is serious business—and seriously time consuming" (x, emphasis in the original). Because of this highly contextual process, Richard Straub compares responding to playing chess (245). And yet this serious business is often thought of as an exclusively private teaching practice, no longer worth discussing within *College English* or *College Composition and Communication* for productive intersections among response research and social turn teacher-inquiry.

In this chapter, I call for Writing Program Administrators and teacher-scholars to turn attention to the working conditions under which college writing instructors respond to students, and their writing through what I call a coalition-oriented approach. Such possibilities draw upon theoretical and practical insights from social scientists about the ways different organizations have worked together. From an intersectional feminist perspective, a focus on coalitions directs attention to the necessity to recognize plurality to make beneficial impacts on the lives of the multiply marginalized, especially Black

Principles for High Impact Responses to Student Writing

1. Engage ideological tensions
2. Share responsibility and direct students to resources
3. Focus on rhetorical features and content before linguistics
4. Connect feedback to class instruction
5. Leave a few high quality comments, and only point out significant error patterns
6. Offer specific and authentic praise
7. Focus on what the writer can change
8. Demonstrate an informed reader's presence
9. Encourage risk taking as essential learning transfer
10. Provide students with models
11. Provide metacognitive opportunities

*Modeled after the NCTE "Principles for Successful Writing Instruction" resolution

women, women of color, and women in Southern nations. Combining both definitions is especially worthwhile due to the uneven power dynamics of teachers and their students that may also be complicated due to differences in social locations. Both coalition-oriented approaches enable a subtle, yet profound, shift that can unite insights from writing researchers, and inclusion-oriented teacher-scholarship that takes an asset-based approach to the backgrounds of those who have had to protest to enter public colleges and universities. Such a unified reading of empirical and inclusion-oriented knowledge emphasizes the need for field-wide collective action to circulate a "Principles for High Impact Feedback" professional position statement, educate critically committed teachers about coalitional commenting possibilities (see the illustration on this page), and to form cross-disciplinary research alliances to share the benefits of well-resourced writing classrooms for students and their local communities. To further illustrate the benefits of connecting scholarship on coalitions and their rhetoric to writing instructor response scholarship, I turn to interactions with former students to illustrate the benefits of drawing attention to crucial writer decisions and need to work across differences in status and discipline to advocate for just classroom conditions.

Turing to scholarship of coalitions enables recognizing the necessary discomfort essential for college-level literacies. This need is emphasized in two recent books, Adler-Kassner and Wardle's *Naming What We Know* and Ball and Loewe's *Bad Ideas about Writing.* While there is agreement that instructor's responses to student work should feature a few carefully chosen responses (Harris), response scholarship often quickly moves past "troublesome" constraints (Alder-Kassner "Writing" 323), especially the limited time many instructors have available. Sommers introduces *Responding to Student*

Writing as a book that circulates assumed commonsense about what is perhaps the key responsibility of college writing instructors in ways that should motivate further inquiry. Straub and Lunsford in *12 Readers Reading* arrive at a key finding that instructors should share textual authority with their students, but they fail to replicate classroom conditions in a study design that relied on writing scholars engaging allegedly representative student texts without a time limit. More recent teacher-scholars more fully consider classroom conditions in addition to cultural norms that emphasize ideal and predictable student texts, often at the expense of engaging student ideas (Tobin; Delong et al). In perhaps the most in-depth theory-driven focus on response in the last 30 years, Nancy Welch analyzes her work with students during challenging revision work to conclude powerful writing has a restless quality that provokes readers to take action in the world, such as the writer "Margie" who shared her experience with workplace sexual harassment to a state labor board in language "far from being polished, perfect, chiseled in stone, seem[s] to work to invite others to speak" (*Restless* 89), a constitutive purpose essential for the rhetoric of coalitions. I suggest it is through turning to bodies of knowledge explicitly concerned with power differences, competing interests, and pluralistic cultural traditions that can enable applications from response research to work with teacher-inquiry that can challenge the perceptions students, and their teachers, embody in their writing-centered interactions to use differences less as resistance and more so as generative possibilities.

Ove the last fifteen years, literacy, rhetoric, and composition has re-entered an ethical turn. Teacher scholars examine different origins of composition to question the implications of standardized spelling and grammar connected to morality (Frisicaro-Pawlowski), elitist educational gatekeeping (Lamos), and an advocate tradition (Kynard).

Other recent works question how to acknowledge uneven power dynamics to attempt engagements across differences in ways that resist simplistic codification (Stephanie L. Kerschbaum), respect the wishes of research subjects (Restaino), and seek to keep vulnerable members within digital public spaces (Reyman and Sparby; Baniya et al.). James Porter adds, "we may have to resort to abstractions and slogans—yes, by all means, Free Speech! And hurrah for Democracy!—but remember how easy it is to misuse such slogans" (161), which Haivan V. Hoang further extends in an in-depth analysis of the ways colorblind democratic discourses have contributed to limited opportunities for Asian Americans. Pritha Prasad and Louis M. Maraj also point out: "If rhetoric and composition have just recently entered a 'social justice turn,' where do we situate the decades of scholarly and political work by Black, Indigenous, Latnix, and Asian/Asian American scholars… for whom social justice has been not a 'turn,' but a mode of survival" (326)? Engaging the recent ethical turn from the angle of non-negotiable survival-oriented practices may enable a route to link pedagogical knowledge from composition's past and present.

I propose turning to the ways coalitions can speak back to oversights of critical pedagogies[15]. A solidarity-oriented position emphasizes collaborations, applications in daily life, and democratic principles as something to work for rather than assume. Critical pedagogies emphasize pursuing egalitarian relationships among teachers and students, especially in ways that provide students opportunities to influence the classroom through discussions of student texts, after class focus groups, student created classroom norms.

[15] I use the term "critical pedagogy" to reflect the school of thought summarized by Anne George as "critical pedagogies (a.k.a. liberatory pedagogy, empowering pedagogy, radical pedagogy, progressive pedagogy, or pedagogy of hope or love) envision a society not simply pledged to, but successfully enacting, the principles of freedom and social justice (77).

However, critical pedagogies typically deemphasize classroom applications, especially surrounding student resistance, opportunities to use classroom knowledge to extend educational theories, and the influence of the instructor's background (George) [16]. Coalition theories and practices contribute a focus on non-negotiable commitments within less-than-ideal circumstances, often among groups of different levels of power. Through a coalition-oriented position, instructors can start from the specific location of a classroom, and its complex sociopolitical ecology, to pursue dialogues with students, rather than assume they are already achieved.

I suggest turning to the theories and practices of coalitions. In this chapter, I define a coalition as a working alliance among two different groups desiring mutually beneficial political change, *or* a commitment to improve the conditions of the multiply marginalized within inclusion-oriented efforts, such as women of color within feminist movements. Although it is worthwhile to briefly separate these definitions, they are not mutually exclusive in either theory or practice. I've developed these definitions from community literacy scholars and feminist theorists due to the ways both emphasize action-able, and theoretical positions. Such coalitions often involve college faculty and students, nongovernmental organization staff and volunteers, lawmakers and public sector employees. Ethical questions surround: Should the coalition be long or short term? Should the coalition be responsive to the community it serves or lead by the community? Should the coalition seek legal change or alternative routes, and be led in a hierarchical structure or a more egalitarian one? Community literacy scholars apply bell hooks' call to "have more written work and oral testimonies documenting ways barriers are broken

[16] This orientation has much in common with a counter public sphere tradition as described in the work of Nancy Fraser and Sheyla Benhabib.

down, coalitions formed, and solidarity shared" through emerging scholarship into coalitional literacies, and classroom applications (*Teaching To Transgress* 110; Hsu; Goncalves; Ridzi et al.).[17] And yet, this work has yet to directly intersect with college writing pedagogies, instructor commenting, or feedback practices. Intersectional feminists, among them Audre Lorde, Gloria Anzaldúa, and María Lugones, are often the central theoretical foundations of such works due to the challenges these scholars name for inclusion-oriented groups to resist naively replicating traditional systems of power "at the site where cultural horizons meet, where the demand for translation is acute and its promise for success, uncertain" (Butler x). Such high-risk situations inform debates regarding if coalitions are utopian due to their necessary compromises (K. R. Chavez; Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions*), how they can be sustained (Cole and Luna), and how they may influence academic practices (Glenn and Lunsford; Jones et al.; Pettus et al.). For instructors committed to students as writers in ways that can make use of literacies from social locations historically ignored or devalued, such conversations should revitalize theoretical, and practical, opportunities to provide instructors tangible ways to engage students in formative feedback.

I turn to textual exchanges among former students and myself to illustrate how a teacher's coalition-oriented stance can illuminate: 1.) central challenges required to cross

---

[17] "We define coalitional literacies as critical social practices whereby community members enact language and literacy across cultural boundaries in order to learn from others, be reflective with respect to social location, foster empathy, cultivate affective bonds, and promote inclusion in the service of progressive change" (Campano et al. 315).

contested social divisions, 2.) suggest coalitional possibilities for college writing teachers that may provide improved classroom conditions, and 3.) enable students to also consider how their compositions can reflect central questions of responsibility as participants in a coalition. My student interactions should not be read as one-size fits all practices to be imposed on part-time faculty who have not had the professional working conditions to fulfill the "CCCC Statement on Preparing Teachers of College Writing," teach no more than two courses a semester, and design assignments that follow a "writing about writing" focus with the Department's specific course student learning "aim and scopes" outcomes (Minter et al.; University of Nebraska-Lincoln) . Through writing this chapter, I've negotiated a need to provide context into my evolving pedagogical emphasizes, each class's student learning outcomes, and individual assignments. For ease of reading, I've included the assignment descriptions in the appendix. To follow the IRB requirements, and the signed student permission forms, I can include my full end notes, but not the complete student essays. The short moments are those I find can illuminate the benefits for student writing and metacognition that can result from working with questions from social justice-oriented coalition scholars. To organize these readings, I've labeled them with subheadings from a short list of coalitional commenting possibilities that inform this chapter's conclusion. I hope this chapter can remind each of us reading this what it is we like about engaging our students' latest work, and we can recognize something we can do.

Resistance is Possible

A central feature of some coalitions is to collectively question if normative aspirations, and rewards, are worth the struggle or are even possible. The essayist and

critic eli clare describes his experience attempting to hike a mountain as a person with a physical disability to reflect on the ways many dominant notions of success are out of reach for those with lives, bodies, and experiences outside of what disability studies scholar Rosemarie Garland Thomson calls the imagined ideal of the normate. In scholarly life, Renee DeLong et al. in *Working Toward Racial Equity in First-Year Composition* write of their collective recognition that a similar position of resistance is possible as they describe their joint decision to refuse permission to republish their essay "The Risky Business of Engaging Racial Equity in Writing Instruction: A Tragedy in Five Acts" (see "Introduction"). My student Arianna helped show me critically questioning what appears as normal or taken for granted is a central responsibility for coalition-oriented responses.

Arianna Mercer was part of an argument-themed first-year writing class I described in a seminar paper as "my students and I remain together in a dance as we move forward albeit with stepping on each other's toes." I was teaching at the University for the first-time struggling to design a class that met the "aim and scopes" student learning outcomes that require students compose 25 pages and use information "to clarify their stances, identify meaningful contexts for their work, and build effective arguments" (*The Writing Teachers' Sourcebook 2018* 13). During the semester I struggled to scan readings for each class, eat three meals a day, and teach a group of resistant appearing students. Arianna showed up each day to take notes longhand in a notebook. She'd nod her head in recognition even when no one in class spoke.

Arianna examined Black Lives Matter in the "perspectives paper" research-based assignment. To provide students opportunities to apply their rhetorical analysis skills to a meaningful question, the assignment asks students to practice "researching a question that

engaged multiple sides of an issue in an effort to learn from and negotiate with them" to practice adopting a position as a writer "willing to listen to new perspectives [… and] analyze how they [the different sources] form arguments and how they represent different interests and perspectives" (see "Perspectives Paper" in the Appendix). Adopting a willingness to engage multiple sources, but notably not being able to engage all possible information in a type of ideal speech condition (Habermas), is one similar to Ratcliffe's "rhetorical listening," a type of inductive reasoning that can allow students to arrive at conclusions, and perhaps even cross gender and racial social locations, they likely wouldn't have arrived at if they approached their research process with a conclusion already in mind to set out to prove or defend regardless of available information.

Arianna approached this assignment through a counterstory tradition that draws attention to the absurd logic informing resistance to Black Lives Matter (BLM)'s calls to end racist poverty and violence. Early in the paper, Arianna writes, "some individuals have compared white supremacy to Black Lives Matter and that is bizarre to me" and continues, "Yes, there have been hate crimes against cops around the same time period but that is not the mission statement of BLM." I was initially impressed by the ways Arianna names tensions informing public perceptions of BLM, as exigencies to speak back to, such as the ways she writes: "What does your favorite ice cream brand say about politics? Probably nothing because they are scared of losing sales." Other moments in her draft stood out at me due to her almost ironic interpretation of serious subject matter ("when Palestinians gave BLM advice on how to deal with tear gas. It put a huge smile on my face." And in response to the ice cream company Ben and Jerry's support of BLM: "I think I might cop a pint soon."). Most of all, I was impressed by the ways Arianna

writes of herself and her audience in relationship to the racial justice movement. “Being a millennial, I see BLM as being our civil rights,” and later, “The rise of Black Lives Matter has made Caucasians feel like they are being discriminated against. Caucasians feeling this way is extremely problematic and they are complaining like they have only child syndrome. And, yes this is coming from an individual of color.” This moment of addressing the differences among herself, as a person of color, and her audience, myself and her mostly white classmates, shows a high level of audience awareness shaping how she approached the assignment.

As I responded to Arianna’s draft, I wanted to validate her important inquiry into Black Lives Matter, and to direct her attention to the part of the assignment that asks her to negotiate the multiple perspectives, to consider what uniting them can place into view through an intentional organization. In the twenty minutes I used to write my end note, I adopted strategies from Carmen Kynard and other social pedagogues to encourage Arianna to extend her knowledge about the rhetorical situation shaping Black Lives Matter within the context of a Predominately White University. I made one connection to a historical piece that might provide Arianna with a way to connect racial and gender oppression through Alice Walker’s “Womanist” , a short essay that wasn’t required class reading that I now recognize was my attempt to encourage Arianna to consider connections to my knowledge of feminism. I also compliment Arianna’s rhetorical questions. My end note continued to name two specific revision recommendations. The first is to pay attention to an upcoming class presentation on citations, an institutional assessment requirement for the class for students to attribute sources, a comment focused on a highly traditional element of college-level writing, one I hoped Arianna could

interpret as a highly subordinate recommendation to her developing ideas in a similar way to Richard Haswell's number-based code for surface level errors that regulates a minor element of composing to a minor element of the overall class (604). The next recommendation was for to consider the organization of the piece, perhaps through considering argument as a form of storytelling, a recommendation I hoped Arianna would find intriguing enough to try in her final draft.

Arianna's final draft does not demonstrate performative satisfaction, or a one-way movement into confidence and clarity. She writes in her writer's note, she worried about adding "strong" perspectives that are used to delegitimize Black Lives Matter. She continues to note "The perspective of the black cop was emotional for me […]. […] The talk about conducting yourself around law enforcement is like the new birds and the bees for African American culture." As her writer's note continues, Arianna describes the frustration with two of the central requirements of the assignment. "I had to choose more perspectives to hit the length requirement. I was not too happy about the number of pages that we had to write" and "I had a couple of statistics and I can see how my reader can question where these even came from. […] It felt kind of dumb when I got called out about it." I agree with her assessment. I too find citations and page lengths among the least interesting aspects of composing. And yet, those elements are two central institutional learning outcomes, two human imposed boundaries that may only come into view once challenged. Anti-racist advocates recognize the necessity to call audiences into a shared recognition of such crucial human created obstacles as a starting place to form

critical consciousness (Kimberle Crenshaw; Ahmed), a disposition that is also central for democratic pedagogies (Freire).[18]

The most interesting part of Arianna's final draft writer's note is her response to me. Arianna's reflection reads in part:

> My professor also advised me to think about finding the resolution to the conflict. Most stories have a conclusion and my issue [Black Lives Matter] did not. I wrote about an ongoing issue and it is still prevalent today. She also advised that I find the biggest conflicts in my issue and I believe I did that well.

In Arianna's reflection, she demonstrates she considered my specific comments and made informed choices. Noticeable, in the final draft, Arianna does cite more sources to support her information, and she added two paragraphs that center racism within the US criminal justice system. In my response to Arianna's rough draft, I asked her to consider her paper as a story, and Arianna extended this recommendation to explain her decision not to include a traditional narrative style conclusion. In a new final paragraph, Arianna writes, "it sounds like trashy propaganda year after year. Racism is more than Republicans versus Democrats. It is a white American problem and until everyone can come to an understanding of that then we will remain the same." This position urges a shared consciousness that crosses partisan political divides to address the racially privileged in hope of a collective consciousness not yet achieved, one that may not be possible. Arianna engages a high level of ethical awareness through choosing a topic which has a bearing on her life, other people of color, and the relationships among black and white citizens. She locates herself in her writing and finds ways to demonstrate her learning

[18] Crenshaw and Ahmed

through carefully considering the necessity of White Americans' involvement to make the US a post-racial society not only in its rhetoric. Arianna works within the frustrating requirements of the assignment; her exploration of a movement to end systemic racism and poverty for people of color in a structure motivated through her subject material. Arianna's response to me is a reminder a complex reply should not be out of the ordinary. Social pedagogues emphasize a central learning outcome for students, and their teachers, is to examine how acts of composing have complex relationships to the world, ideological commitments, and political consequences. While I doubt I would have consciously articulated such a conservative understanding, at the time I was teaching Arianna's class, I did desire a type of textual obedience, or cleanliness, nearly at the expense of student ideas, and those central struggles that make it likely Arianna focused on her ideas and regarded citations as an afterthought. My other responses to Arianna remain much more traditional textual focused than exposing human imposed boundaries to collectively resist them. My end note on her final draft slipped into an almost exclusive normative focus on justifying a grade, and nowhere in my comments do I model how I, a Millennial white person, have changed through considering her the words. My end note could have encouraged her engagement out of class, asked her to investigate statewide BLM efforts or to form connections to clubs or start a social media campaign. While my end note on her rough draft performs the work of acknowledging and valuing social differences, Arianna does more work to name and challenge dominant cultural narratives about BLM than I do to challenge the dominant story of writing teacher responses as exclusively one-way movements into textual coherence or justifying a grade, which if I were engaging a more coalition-oriented position I would have pointed out as normative

aspirations and far from the only ones, part of what Sara Ahmed calls the wall with academic institutions that may not forever stand.

Demands May be Necessary

Some coalitions have hierarchal formal organizational structures that can make their internal functions top down and authoritarian. Although there is wide-spread agreement writing instructors should share authority with their students over the revisions of their papers (see especially Straub and Lunsford), a coalition-oriented approach does not always forgo recognizing hierarchies and issuing carefully reasoned demands that may be refused. This is not to propose writing instructors should issue uncritical demands, issue several in a single draft or place students in the impossible position to change their immutable characteristics. I turn to my student Nick to call attention to connections among central non-negotiable commitments made by many coalitions to the ways teachers may find a demand position necessary for students to develop their knowledge to persuade reluctant audiences.

Nicholas Kinzer was part of the argument-themed first-year writing course I significantly revised in the two years since I taught Arianna's class. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic of the fall 2020 semester, Nick's class was de facto hybrid. About half the class participated virtually through discussion boards and Zoom with about half the students, including Nick, arrived for the once a week evening class meeting time with masks on and sitting six feet apart. Part of my revision to this class involved participating in a summer community of practice focused on "writing information literacy" that funded part-time instructors to work with teaching librarians to develop class materials that drew upon knowledge in library science and composition studies focused on ways to educate

students to carefully consider the authority and credibility of online sources in ways that worked with the Department's student learning goal for students to "develop an informed and committed stance on their topic, using arguments as a means of sharing this stance with particular audiences for particular purposes" (*The Writing Teachers' Sourcebook 2018* 13; McDonald and Minter). In this way, a central commitment for this course is not for students to produce abstract papers to prove competency for an idealized academic reader. The course aim and scope asks for a more localized authority, one similar to those Royster observed from Black women writers in *Traces in the Steam,* one David A. Gruenewald urges should not disconnect different definitions of justice, noting: "Human communities, or places are politicized, social constructions that often marginalize individuals, groups, as well as ecosystems" (7). My challenge in this class, and in my response to Nick's work, was to emphasize this highly contextualized notion of authority, one scholars in "writing information literacy," Royster, and Spivak note has political consequences that do not lead to uniformity, one that makes use of pluralism through encouraging writing from one's well-known knowledge of particular audiences and their values. The "building an argument" assignment deviates from a generic research paper with the purpose for students to prove their competency that instead asks students to build off their knowledge to identity a significant limitation in existing knowledge to response to in ways they believe readers would find compelling.

Nick approached the "building an argument" assignment through describing the need for environmentally sustainable agricultural practices to resist climate change. In his rough draft, Nick shows a high level of research competency through citing sources, but I notice his abstract passive voice sentences ("the more income is returned to them") and

cliches ("soil is not a bottomless money pit"). In his rough draft writer's note, Nick also recognizes his reliance on stock language. He writes, in part, "I feel like I am delivering these points with quite a bit of cliché. […] One thing I am really struggling with is seeing and addressing opposite view point from my argument. I feel like with such a multi sided argument it is hard to address all opposing views with out getting to far away from the main point."[19] As I consider my response, I want to build Nick's confidence that he demonstrates many key expected features of this assignment, while at the same time, direct him to take a more contextualized understanding of audience that will likely enable him to use more authentic language to extend his persuasive capabilities. I want him to think of obstacles to this knowledge that aren't common, to envision a scenario where an opposite position may not dominate the other as in a wrestling match, but more so of dancers moving with each other.

I frame my comments in a subjective, and qualified, "I find" or "I recommend" position, one that tacitly gives Nick permission to question or disagree. While Straub and Lunsford find this shared authority position is a unifying feature of writing scholars' responses to student essays, it is also closely related to forming coalitions that bring together people across power differences with shared commitments. In my middle recommendation, I reference a recent shared class reading as a mentor text to show Nick how one author kept alternative perspectives in mind, a strategy I want him to use as he imagines himself writing back to those inclined to disagree, distrust, or resist his words. This statement is a command without the hedging of the other recommendations. As much as I critique my end note, I stand by that unqualified requirements to consider

[19] This writer's note has the original sentence level errors from the student intact.

resistant audiences, a type of sentence that would make my writer self want to resist. But. I suspect Nick can hear in a more nuanced way than I often do when confronted with a direct demand, a feature that is also part of coalitions as groups name their non-negotiable commitments in ways perhaps most recognizable through the manifesto genre essential to many collective movements (see for example Rhodes).

In his final draft, Nick engages my command to localize his focus. In his revision, he describes economic conditions, systems of sponsorship Deborah Brandt notes are central for literacies to develop, and Rhodes and Alexander note should not be lost within composition's social turn. In a way akin to Arianna, Nick notes an unusual barrier, as he writes, "I grew up in a farming community and most of my friends are farmers just like their parents. The number one fear of the farmer when they hear the words organic and diversify is the bottom dollar." He finds a lack of capital is a key challenge to sustainable agriculture, an awareness that falls outside of mainstream media coverage that often casts blame on farmers' assumed ignorance or distrust of left-leaning government subsidies. A coalition on the horizon in Nick's composition brings together the farmers with the environmentalists through pointing to the economic benefits that require substantial upfront economic investment (Chávez), as he writes, "It will take time and it will take an effort, both financially and in labor, but the restoration of Americas [sic] farmland is possible. […] Lets [sic] keep our money in the local economy while still building ourself a better ecosystem." These lines show Nick's thinking has deviated from his rough draft frustration to "address all opposing views" and into the assignments' a more local engagement in a way that enables him to claim authority due to his knowledge of a community often assumed to be already known in media conversations, one he describes

in his final writer's note as one he knows from his background in a rural farming community, a position that does not foreclose realist arguments that green agricultural practices are unlikely without substantial financial investments. Nick writes out of frustration in abstract argumentation lore into a refined position of authority that may enable him to speak about an audience he knows to explain why his findings of the economic benefits of organic farming are not yet a reality. Although in his rough draft end note, I don't give Nick permission to do otherwise, I remain impressed by the way he trusts me to show him one way out of his frustration, even though he would have many reasons not to grant me such authority to shape this thinking, and perhaps the ways he views the world after the semester as he writes in his final writer's note: "I have started taking a little extra time while shopping to buy local produce and meat."

Call Students In

Coalitions may bring together people who have differences neither party knows how to cross. In community literacies, Linda Flower notes college students and faculty may have to recognize how they are perceived outside their campuses in ways they may not recognize, intend, or desire. These challenges to shift how one views oneself due to encounters with unfamiliar communities and situations contributes to a possible teaching position making use of differences as assets in pursuit of an alliance more expansive due to the variety of social locations and knowledges that can form an invitation for participants to see, act, or respond differently than they would otherwise. Within reflexive essay writing, this asset-based position may call students and teachers into enhanced mutual recognition and a shared sense of satisfaction that doesn't deny far from certain futures. This shared engagement across differences in power and social locations may be

an utopian desire, and yet is essential for teachers to recognize as crucial yet risky work necessary to attempt dialogue with students about their writing.

Trinity, the student from this chapter's opening, was in a 200-level composition class centered on writer's responsibilities within "the social dynamics of actual contexts for writing" (ENGL 254 "Aim and Scopes" 4). Following our after-class conversation, Trinity worries me as they tell me of their plans to drive to Iowa to conduct an interview. I imagine myself as a writer and the ways I hope for students to learn to write with discomfort in more productive ways than I have. I don't assume Trinity plans on Gonzo journalism or Holden Caulfield type adventure for its own sake. But. This is much less predictable than what I often imagine my student do, a process that involves spending a few hours sitting in the stacks of a library or pulling an all nighter caffeine fueled writing session to the soundtrack of a favorite playlist and nearby friends. I don't want Trinity to be disappointed after investing significant time on a trip that may not result in an interview, or a realization more damaging, the danger that causes scholars to note coalitions can place participants on the edge of death and may be impossible to sustain (Chávez; Lugones; *Bloomsbury*). Trinity's work is more complicated than a failure to follow some academic conventions like Arianna or develop textual credibility like Nick. Trinity's plans demonstrate a type of engagement that shows they understand the literary non-fiction assignment well, perhaps *too* well as they engage the ways scientific conventions to document even underrepresented points of view are shaped by a human being, one who while developing knowledge, reveals speculations about how they may be perceived in different situations.

In my end note to Trinity's proposal following our after-class conversation, I decide to encourage Trinity to focus on in-class audiences for this assignment. I close with the question: "Even if people in IA don't share ideas you hope to hear, what's the value in asking, and sleeping in your car to find out?" While I often include questions in my end notes, and marginalia, usually I have an answer in mind. This isn't the case with Trinity. There is a great deal of knowledge about the value of the writing process as more significant than a final product (Perl; Anson), a satisfaction through the struggle I have learned is necessary in much of my writing, something I want Trinity to attempt to place into words as something I want both of us to hear.

The majority of Trinity's resulting essay focuses on the lack of perspectives from the people most impacted by wind turbines in the rural Midwest. Then, following my end note recommendation, and encouragement from myself and their writing group members, Trinity's essay turns to emphasize themself as the writer not as a textual self adopting a persona, but as a holistic person engaging composing as an activity.

Trinity writes:

> As I ate my breakfast and observed the older citizens and the young teen in the coffee shop, I grew increasingly panicked about my task to speak with these people about my wind turbine questions. Why would these people give some gay city kid the time of day? I made assumptions about what they would say before they spoke. I made assumptions about what they would think about me before they even met me. Should I tuck up my septum [piercing]? Should I have worn straight-leg jeans and boots? No amount of style exchanges would have mattered; I might as well have been as naked and exposed as my confidence.

In this moment, Trinity takes on a post-modern position, noting concrete sensory details, a multi-part self that informs observations in a small Iowa coffee shop expressed in a metaphor that fits the paragraph's earlier focus on physical appearance. As fits the essay genre, Trinity writes less from a position engaging knowledge they have honed through class research assignments and their environmental studies major, and more so from their experiences crossing across state lines with realizations about how they assume they are perceived. Trinity's speculation is a connection to educators who recognize as writers compose texts, they are, in a sense, composing selves in more significant ways than performative textual credibility on a page (Sommers and Saltz; Herrington and Curtis; Williams). Although these purposes are highly valued within liberal arts and humanities traditions, it remains tempting to ignore the significant investments required to make them possible. As is also unsettling, like the interviews with the women's rights activists in Cole and Luna's coalition study, if composing selves are authentically engaged, they would need to be open to revision, peer review, and edits for publication.

Based on my recommendation, Trinity reads Alice Walker's "In Search of Our Mothers Gardens" for an essay reading response assignment. I want Trinity to engage the literary and personal elements of creative nonfiction, those connected to possibilities of dialogues across significant differences that may form successful coalitions, a position Elisabeth Ellsworth describes as "the necessity to take the voices of students and professors of difference at their word—as 'valid'—but not without response" (304). This is a position cultivating authority from strategic vulnerability, a position connected to the authenticity so admired in expressivism and the post-2016 memoir boom (see Berlin; Mack and Alexander). In my end note to Trinity, I write in part:

> Alice Walker's "Mother's Garden" is not really about gardens, but the gardens become something rooted to write about the more abstract concepts of Black women's creativity, which is something you are beginning to do as you write about families and being a gay kid from the city.

I ask Trinity to carefully consider applications from Walker's essay centering Black women, imagining extensions to queer people who accept composing in circumstances not of their choosing to make something beautiful.

My end note reflects my desire for Trinity not to avoid the significant challenges of their essay project, but delve deeper into engaging the connections this process raises. This desire is high risk and high reward, one that required I trust Trinity's abilities to not rely on simplistic comparisons. As Trinity responds to this challenge, they describe a central ethical challenge for scholars of coalitions and their rhetoric. Karma Chávez concludes *Queer Migration Politics* noting that although after five years institutional memory was lost, a coalition of queer and migrant rights nonprofits successfully passed local laws (143). Within writing studies, Adler-Kassner adopts a similar more future-oriented position.

> What I describe here--especially trying to build connections with those whose stories and values initially seem different than our own--might seem risky. But to not make this attempt, to connect only with those who share our ideas and ideologies, replicates the same issues with predictive analytics that I described earlier--it leads us back to ourselves, creating the filter bubble that we heard so much about after the recent [2016 US Presidential] election. Additionally, it's

> from this risky place, these attempts to put our knowledge into practice with others, where we can most effectively advocate. “Just Writing” p. 335

Adler-Kassner acknowledges the deep challenges that have resulted in a type of mirroring, or reflection without the reflexivity that informs an “essaytic” stance (Qualley; see also Miller; Solnit). Advocacy in this orientation is not something innate, something already known without the need to engage the risky work that can look like the central composing actions of reading, invention, and revision, and that in politics may look like a listening session, grant solicitation, policy writing, and vote gathering. It is troubling for me to consider the ways in acting upon my end note Trinity may default to easy notions of a twentieth century sisterhood that glosses over sexuality and racial differences or revise those differences out of their essay. Finding ways to resist both tendencies to do otherwise is a central task for our generation’s creative nonfiction writers, essayists, and activists. This may be a position so fraught it may be impossible, and yet it remains too pressing to disengage.

Trinity’s revision deviates from the initial focus on controversies among people who live near wind turbines to focus on their family. They write: “Although I left the (potentially only perceived) judgement by the older citizens of Greenfield [IA] in my rear-view mirror as I flew south to Missouri, I had similar reservations about seeing my older relatives.” As the essay continues, Trinity notes: “My fear in facing them [their relatives] with a more androgenous look was not unfounded nor their prospective judgements unprecedented.” This realization led Trinity to a comparison.

> Despite this sort of warning that my cousins were indirectly presenting to me, my family said nothing hurtful about my new physical appearance, at least not to my

> face. I guess their love encompasses dramatic anticultural appearance changes, but relatives with non-Caucasian partners lie outside its scope. I feel as though I'm counting down the days until I have to worry about introducing my same-sex partner to my racist, and likely homophobic, relatives.

This complex realization, with the speculation of the family's unacceptance of a future partner, results in a short meditation that Trinity writes has people "reserve, or attempt to reserve, their judgements" that extends to those in the Iowa café. Trinity concludes their essay by describing a central element of risky trust required to form coalitions. They write, "I might not have personally uncovered a group of disgruntled wind turbines symbiotes, but I bore witness to a symbolic community of people who can overlook their reservations for the betterment of those around them." Rather than a more abstract deliberative position assuming the abilities of citizens to address issues of shared concern, this position Trinity writes from does not ignore or deny the differences they describe throughout their essay, or come across as a rubber-stamped insight, but provides a way for a talented young writer to turn a risky, and initially disappointing, experience into an illustration of the ways coalitions have been essential for healthy democratic systems of shared political responsibilities.

Trinity writes a memorable final writer's note. In the text, they adopt a position I doubt is intended to please me through naming class concepts and a sense of satisfaction. Trinity reflects: "I wrote something, I did, but I just wish I liked it more. […] It's just so frustrating! I know there is something here, but I'm having the hardest time finding it. […] I realized how much easier it is for me to write based on the physical world than it is to write from ideas that are in my head." This complex sentiment, perhaps unlike any

other student I've had, reminds me of myself as a writer, the writer I'd like to be, the texts that compelled me to become an English major in college, and the dispositions of the most successful students to transfer knowledge outside of the classroom (Yancey et al.): self-effacing, prone to resist satisfaction, seeking dialogues that may never materialize, or reveal something painful in ways that are hopeful. I recognize a type of energy that has enabled insights to arrive in the shower, motivate professors to tell me to stay after class because the ideas are interesting yet impossible to follow, opportunities to continue to struggle with how language can connect people that surprise me, and make me cry as I realize faculty may mean it when they say well done. This is the lesson I want Trinity to internalize more so than any other words I spoke or wrote in the class. I hope Trinity, Nick, and Arianna can recognize critique is the love language of the academy, a far from ideal institution with norms constraining, liberating, and in need of deep revision, and an institution that may just be one of the best incubators for democracy there is.

Conclusion

At this chapter's conclusion, I want to explicitly offer four possibilities for what engaging responses to students and their writing from a coalition-oriented approach may look like, and what adopting such a position calls on teachers to do. I hope the coalitional commenting possibilities work alongside the more generalist strategies and tactics within composition research and pedagogy scholarship that teaching a single lesson and valuing students as holistic individuals.[20] For a coalition-oriented approach, first trust resistance is possible. Higher education and composition pedagogies have not remained static through the last half century, and the most expansive learning moments for students and

[20] I've also included the "Conditional Commenting Possibilities for College Writing Teachers" in the Appendix.

their teachers may come to be through engaging struggles. Like Arianna did as she resisted her interpretation of my recommendation to consider her assignment a story that required a straightforward conclusion, students have a right to respond and resist, to refuse to slot themselves into established roles as passive consumers of information or writers who truncate ongoing social movements into the tidy conclusion of some traditional narrative structures. Next, recognize what may be, or should be, a demand worth holding students accountable for. Central to the formation of coalitions is establishing crucial non-negotiable commitments. Crucial to issuing a demand is recognizing what it is and where it comes from. In Nick's case, I recognized students' development of highly contextual authority was a central student learning outcome for the class, and it also has expansive support in the Association of College and Research Libraries' "authority is constructed and contextual" learning outcome. Although I wielded the power of assigning his work a grade, Nick maintained a right to refuse my demand. Next, consider if or how to call students to engage in risky situations through carefully considering an expansive definition of safety in relation to likely student benefits. With Trinity, I perceived the benefits for their essay, and knowledge of writers' responsibilities, would be worth their solo trip to Iowa, and I also was unsure they would call off their trip at my recommendation. If a teacher decides to call a student into a risky situation, it is useful to be able to direct them to expansive supports within and outside of the classroom. In Trinity's case, they had a semester-long in-class peer writing group. Coalitions often require like-minded peers and mentors who can provide encouragement and accountability and those elements are also essential for a coalitional commenting approach. I've learned of uncomfortable ways response research and inquiry may work

together through on-going conversations in formal professional spaces such as pedagogy seminars and professional development sessions, and more casual conversations with other teachers in hallways, offices, and writing centers. Places to start may be talking with a trusted fellow teacher about Felicia Rose Chavez's "Conferencing as Critique" chapter in *The Antiracist Writing Workshop* or asking a mentor how they learned to recognize when to use a demand within their feedback

Arianna, Nick, and Trinity worked through what Nancy Welch calls a "fiction-full" notion of composing that indicates knowledge more expansive than a "just writing" transcription process (Adler-Kassner). The struggles the students and I engage are not exclusive to revisions on a page or confined to individuals. They are intimately connected to sociopolitical circumstances shaping an expansive definition of politics as the distribution of resources determining who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell; Rom et al.). I've described each student's work due to the ways each shows an exceptional level of knowledge of their subjects, and an openness to consider my recommendations,[21] in ways that can shape coalitional possibilities for educators in literacy, rhetoric, and composition. I suspect those insights were not forgone conclusions for the students, and they certainly were not for me, which is as it should be if we are authentically responding to students and seeking a coalition across the differences in power and responsibilities we have as teachers and the holistic people in our classrooms have as students

None of the students describe a sense of satisfaction, or complete mastery, in their final writer's notes. As I've reviewed my comments, neither am I fully satisfied with how

[21] I'm also indebted to Rachael Shah who shared her emerging theory of "critical hope" in community engagement work during her community literacies seminar in the spring of 2020 and as part of our unaccepted 2021 Conference on College Composition and Communication panel.

I responded. I fall into over commenting. I fail to consider how knowledge from my embodied social location could have been beneficial to each writer. Each writer described considering my feedback, deciding how to apply it, and their sense of central constraints, such as how Arianna describes frustration over the page length and citation requirements that were central learning outcomes for the class. I wonder if Nick's final draft is too obedient through showing he has followed my requirement to focus on his insider knowledge, rather than a more genuine sense of the value of contextual authority he may choose to engage in a context where it is not required. I wonder if I encouraged Trinity to consider what may be a painful possibility regarding acceptance within their family that Trinity may not be equipped to engage, and that I hope is speculation rather than a likely reality. I urge college writing teachers, and myself, to listen to those who tell us we should be careful not to assume insider knowledge we do not have or that student experiences are except from careful interpretations, much as our pedagogical writing should be as we keep local student learning outcomes in view even as we recognize they may need to change. In similar ways that the students write into central barriers shaping their generation's pressing questions of collective responsibilities, my responses many illustrate a position adopting the generalizable insights from Sommers' generation and social turn teacher-scholars that can work together as instructors pursue dialogues with students, rather than assume them.

Because coalitions often focus on professional advocacy, I also want to briefly name potential benefits of forming coalitions through professional organizations and across disciplinary divisions. Adler-Kassner and Welch urge members of the field to work with faculty in other disciplines to conduct, and share, the insights about the wide-

ranging benefits for students and local communities when undergraduate education in the humanities is well supported. Kynard, Hoang, Ruiz and earlier generations of social pedagogues, including Malinowitz and Smitherman, note the expansive benefits that have resulted from historically marginalized, and multiply marginalized, communities learning to work together in literate actions, such as designing classes, writing position statements, and moving the field toward equitable linguistic practices. Powerful discourses often rely on quantitative analyses to address state legislatures responsible for public educational budget allocations, university administrators interested in student retention rates and equity initiatives, and among public avenues such as letters to the editor and union picket lines. Possible mixed methods research can account for the timing of specific budget cuts, such as my University's spring 2023 $13 million cut (Dunker), and the demographics of students. Such data can inform wider conversations about the immense value of critical thinking, engaged reading, and empathy when students learn, and instructors teach, in classroom conditions the NCTE and CCC's have long recognized as essential that include small writing class sizes, living wages, and professional development opportunities. While it will be tempting to pursue correlations among student future earnings, as language experts we're well positioned to make sure such efforts include crucial caveats to resist assuming correlation is causation, or financial benefits are the only worthwhile outcomes. If we pursue expansive professional alliances--perhaps with experts in education, law, sociology, political science, and Offices of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion--we may have hope to circulate a nuanced professional resolution with a short list of central practices for high impact responses to student writing, and the classroom

circumstances that make their implementation likely for the most “overloaded” college writing faculty (M. Lee).

Coalitions are not easy to form or sustain, and the stance they require participants to adopt is often not without significant challenges, especially across significant differences in power such as grade wielding teachers in relationship to their students. Scholars of coalitions describe the necessity to learn what is valuable, what is non-negotiable, and how to share responsibility, especially across significant differences in power and social locations. Some scholars find compromises, and different relationships to power and resources, make many alliances in name only, or short term. There is great social and political potential in coming together across central shared responsibilities. Like Straub and Sommers, I too find instructor responses are one of the primary responsibilities of writing instructors, and all faculty who value language to share knowledge and create it. As we seek to break the apathy of our students, we must also demystify our own. Let us choose to view the many differences those of us who teach within literacy, rhetoric, and composition have as potential assets, embrace the uncomfortable, and endeavor to act on commenting’s coalitional possibilities.

Coda:
Working to Recreate the Composition Revolution:
An Interview with Nancy Welch

In this coda, I consider the benefits of coalitional literacies as the key asset Composition and Rhetoric scholars can bring to the study of coalitions and their rhetoric through expertise in studying language for its rhetorical elements, composition pedagogy in theory and practice, and coordinating Writing Centers and college writing programs. Coalitional literacies offer one way to approach these responsibilities in ways that reveal processes of crossing borders of gender and race with refined empathy that can offer an interpretation of Hillary Rodham Clinton's shifts in her ethos in *What Happened* as genuine. Coalitional literacies promote inclusive, and progressive, change that can direct attention to opportunities for scholars and educators to use their knowledge to beneficially impact material conditions for those—such as first-generation college students, immigrants, and people incarcerated-- most aware of how revolutionary written communication in English can be. Coalitional literacies emphasize reflection into social locations that can inform strategies for composition instructors to work with students as allies as they revise their compositions in ways that enabled Trinity Thompson to consider Alice Walker's "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" as they revised their creative nonfiction essay. An expansive understanding of applications of the literacy practices from progressive coalitions can enable optimism in Composition and Rhetoric as able to welcome what many believe are key revolutionary responsibilities to educate undergraduates, mentor graduate students, and facilitate dynamic writing programs.

As a coda to my exploration of coalitional literacies, I focus on an interview I had with Nancy Welch. Our conversation can illustrate examples of how Nancy used protest tactics from the history of college student organizing for women's and ethnic studies programs to save her Writing Center from elimination (see "UNL Writers" in the Appendix; see also hooks; Hoang), and shape a nuanced perspective into how a working class means of persuasion can provide hope for the upcoming generation of those who have found an academic home in Rhetoric and Composition. My decision to include an extended selection of my interview with Nancy reflects several scholarly traditions. Feminist recovery efforts seek to make communicative forms often considered too personal to be rhetorical public, and worthy of collective memory (Lunsford *Rhetorica;* Kirsch and Royster). There has been recent attention in Composition and Rhetoric to conversations among established and emerging scholars to resist austerity measures threatening higher education with free market virtues that treat students like consumers and faculty like disposable cogs in the machine, to circulate wisdom to advocate for key conditions for students as life-long writers (Brerenton and Gannett; Wetherbee Phelps). In feminist rhetorics, Jessica Enoch and Jenn Fishman call for greater attention to listening to previous generations as well. Printed dialogues also have a key function within Black and working-class educational commitments as seen in Frankie Condon's dialogue with Vershawn Young in the final chapter of *I Hope I Join the Band,* Taiyon J. Coleman et al's introduction to *Working Toward Racial Equity in First-Year Composition,* and bell hooks' "Living Engagement" faculty professional development conversation with Douglas Reimondo Robertson. Nancy Welch is certainly worthy of inclusion within these lines of scholarship.

Nancy's career has spanned three decades. She received early career recognition for her analyses of writing center consultations through continental philosophies. Her first scholarly book, *Getting Restless,* examines ways to consider revision within writing centers and writing classrooms through psychoanalytic, feminist, and poststructuralist theories. Nancy is also an accomplished fiction writer. Nancy's later scholarship includes *Living Room* that centers austerity rhetoric and policies and the edited collections *Composition in the Age of Austerity* with Tony Scott and *Unrurly Rhetorics: Protest, Persuasion, and Publics* with Johnathan Alexander and Susan C. Jarratt among many other publications including the 2017 keynote for the Council of Writing Program Administrators.

I interviewed Nancy during the fall of 2022, the first year of her retirement, to ask her about connections among the history of progressive coalitions and connections to her work and expertise. When I took Nancy's writing centers in theory and practice seminar in the spring of 2016, I experienced the expansive possibilities of a discipline I didn't yet know existed. Nancy provided me with a sense of purpose through an experience-based education working in the Writing Center as she challenged me through her comments in my papers and office hours conversations to let go of the interpretations I would develop only for the sake of an assignment. Nancy was a key mentor who showed me what a life as a publishing fiction writer, scholar, dedicated teacher, and life-long learner could look like. I also interviewed Frankie Condon, and another established writing scholar who requested the pseudonym Ivy. Both directed attention to ways faculty members can proactively work with each other across social locations and disciplines to resist the impacts of financial austerity and political polarization. Frankie Condon recommended

teaching counterstory as a methodology in first-year composition and providing writing instructors time to learn ways to incorporate World Englishes into their classes. She also emphasized the importance for white people to not wait to have all the answers before they act on anti-racist commitments. Ivy emphasized the importance of teaching students the ways the credibility of online sources should be taught less as check boxes on a worksheet but a key piece of a college writing curriculum. Ivy also expanded on her published work to emphasize evaluating student writing should involve carefully implemented ungrading practices to consider the ways instructors may need additional time to redesign their classes and modify learning management programs. After the interviews, I realized I needed to narrow my focus on coalitions into coalitional literacies. I've returned to Nancy's insights because her descriptions of the key motivating wins that allowed Writing Centers she directed survive are key illustrations of the potential power of drawing from protest traditions to call in allies from across campus to support a shared spaces for students to work on writing as one of the central benefits of examining connections among Rhetoric and Composition and the study of coalitions.

I've edited this interview for length and clarity while seeking to preserve the insights of someone who described herself at the start of the interview as "no longer beholden to any administration, not that I ever was."

Zoe: One key thread that I noticed throughout your work is you've had many collaborations throughout your published work and your professional life. You have many published works with Tony Scott. I know you've worked with writing center tutors,

colleagues, and union leaders. Can you tell me a story of one of your favorite collaborations?

Nancy: I'll say something about the most recent one. It's a co-authored essay that will be in the winter issue of *The Writing Center Journal* and that's a piece that's really close to my heart for a couple reasons.[22] First *The Writing Center Journal* is one of the first places I've published. It was through networks of writing center people nationwide that I felt for the first time I found an academic home within Composition and Rhetoric, which otherwise just seemed at the time like a lot of really big names, you know, panels with all of the B's as I called them: Berthoff, and Bruffee, and Bizzell, and Berlin. My name starts with a W-- where do I fit in here?

I had felt so much of a sense of home with the writing center community at that point nationally and also being able to be a part of starting the first writing center at the University of Nebraska. Then at the very end of my career being able to work on an essay with seven former consultants who are now off at academic and industry and nonprofit, or NGO, type jobs all around the world was a fun thing to do but it also felt like a critically necessary thing to do. The Writing Center at the University of Nebraska was almost shut down, after its first year because a new Chancellor had come to town. Our Graduate Writing Center [at the University of Vermont] after maybe four years into its existence, COVID hit, and the Provost fired all "temporary" staff on campus and said each one would have to reapply and justify the worth of what they do. We survived that and I also knew I was retiring. I had signed a voluntary separation agreement a year and

[22] See Welch et al. "Multidisciplinary Staffing in a Graduate Writing Center," *The Writing Center Journal,* vol. 40, no. 3, 2022, pp. 76-89.

change before that and it wasn't clear that there was going to be a next coordinator for the Graduate Writing Center.

So how can we take a thing we built that has a physical location on campus that has consultants bringing their incredible disciplinary knowledge--for many of them deep knowledge in writing, editing, and teaching--but many who don't have specific training in Composition and Rhetoric? So that is what as the Director I could provide. Here is how we can learn to talk to each other. Here's the language for talking about writing. Here's how to think about what different writers are experiencing at different stages in different disciplines, different kinds of conditions given their identities, life experiences, programs advisors, and climates they're experiencing.

As one of the consultants said, as Director I had knowledge, meta knowledge, and a language to share. I also had time to give, to listen, to help them figure out what they were doing to help them develop their ideas.

It wasn't clear if suddenly someone was going to say we have a Writing Center but without that person to bring it all together. Without that person to advocate for the conditions for the consultants, to make sure they get paid for their actual hours of consulting and all the time they spend on training, reflecting outward, developing special programs… So we wrote this article together to try to create a picture of who we were, what we did, and from a socialist feminist social reproduction theory framework, make a case for why it matters. This just can't be something people can figure out how to do on their own.

I'm happy to say in the end, at the very last minute, two days before my retirement, the future for the Graduate Writing Center was secured, at least for the next however many years. Having that article, doing the interviews with the former consultants about where are you now a few years since you helped build up the Graduate Writing Center, finding out what they are doing in whatever their workplaces may be to cultivate and support writing: That is really special and gratifying.

Zoe: As you were working to secure the future of the Graduate Writing Center, what would you say were some of your non-negotiables?

Nancy: The non-negotiables were that the person needed to come from either a specific background in Composition and Rhetoric or in science writing, not just science. Not someone who was particularly trained in applied linguistics or Teaching English as Another Language, because one, that just describes only a portion of all the students that we serve and two, it doesn't capture the full breath of second, third, and fourth language students we serve because most of them were not English Language Learners. Most of them were advanced stage doctoral students for whom English is a foreign language but who have a depth of experience writing in English. It was a question of how much and how often do I signpost and put in those kinds of markers of a reader friendly text that seem to be what my advisor is looking for. The conversations they wanted to have are beyond the things in linguistics handbooks for English Language Learners.

The other thing that was non-negotiable for me, not that I was in charge of this, was if the person taking the position is a Senior Lecturer, someone without access to tenure, then they need more course releases than I had. I had two course releases a year and some summer money. In a typical year, I'd teach one or two courses and everything

else was the Graduate Writing Center. If the new person was a lecturer, they needed at least what the undergraduate Writing Center director had which was 100 percent of her job is the Writing Center and teaching the two-semester course that goes with it. The idea that you could have a Senior Lecturer who has an eight-course schedule each year and have a six-course schedule and do the Graduate Writing Center: No.

And also, there were things that I did: the late May dissertation camp, the August dissertation camp, the winter-break writing camp, a lot of these things I did while I was still on contract and didn't take any extra money. You couldn't ask a lecturer who has a whole other teaching load to do it.

Zoe: One key thread I've noticed throughout your scholarly work is you reflect on these rich connections among activism, politics, and spaces where deliberation takes place, especially within Writing Centers and some other public areas. So what started your interest in activism?

Nancy: Some years ago I was part of a fund raiser for local social justice groups. It was like a Moth story slam kind of thing. It was billed as What Moves You. So there were these really big consequential stories.

Then I told about organizing the Write In at the Writing Center at the University of Nebraska with other tutors and students when a new Chancellor came to town and tried to close us down.[23] That was what I would say was the very first thing I did that got me involved in trying to figure out how do I have a public voice and what do I need to do about these decisions that are being made far away and behind closed doors and during

[23] See "UNL Writers" in the Appendix.

finals week when the Writing Center was closed. I thought, well women's studies programs got started with sit ins in libraries so maybe we should have a sit in at the Writing Center. Maybe it should be a write in. It was really before email was ubiquitous, so we were on the phone all weekend calling up students who had visited the Writing Center over the last two semesters to come in and write a letter to the *Lincoln Journal Star,* write a letter to the Chancellor, and we wrote a press release. The press actually showed up and there ended up being TV cameras.

That was how you do it. You take space with a bunch of other people and that creates a platform that you wouldn't otherwise have. The other thing that it taught me is do not expect people who occupy a different class or space to love what you just did. But we saved the Writing Center. You can actually win. It is possible, but you're going to be criticized for it. That was a good early lesson. It's been pretty much the same ever since, except you rarely win.

Zoe: I know I needed to hear you can have wins. What would you say are some of the key differences in assumptions to provide spaces for students and contingently employed writing professionals-- I'm thinking specifically about first year writing instructors and writing consultants-- to come together?

Nancy: I think about rhetoric from a standpoint of social class.

If we look at the neoliberal university, the rhetorical strategies at hand for the administration are those of the *langue de coton*—fuzzy obfuscating woolly language—that especially relies on the idea of presupposition and assertion that consensus has

already been reached.[24] We've all already agreed that this is critical for this very narrow purpose and we're not going to talk about the conditions in which writing and learning to write flourish. We're just going to jump ahead and presuppose there is a problem and it can be remedied by assessment. It's not that they [academic administrators] sit around thinking how can I take the money from the public coffers of the university and put it into the private pockets of consultants and cronies. It's the air they breathe. It's the zeitgeist. It's the world they inhabit, and they believe it fully.

Then there's the middle class whose rhetorical strategies are middling, like the class. The professorial tenured class is getting smaller and smaller. They are both looking up to the administrators above and they're looking below to the many masses of workers below them. Their means are a letter to the editor, an op-ed. or the Faculty Senate, if you have one.

If you look at university campus strikes, it's the people who have working class means of persuasion. It can also be other forms of performance, theatrics, organizing, and building coalitions across campus that includes staff, dining, and custodial services folks, student groups and so forth. It's power in the idea that we are many, they are few. They hold lots of powerful tools, but we have, potentially, the power of numbers.

It's not something most people go through graduate school necessarily learning how to do. There is a ton of organizing happening among students at Dartmouth which is really inspiring. Where they learn to do that isn't necessarily through their Ivy League educations. A lot of them learned it from the group of more than 90 women who came

---

[24] See Welch "La Langue de Coton: How Neoliberal Language Pulls the Wool over Faculty Governance," *Pedagogy,* vol. 11, no. 3, 2011, pp. 545-553.

together and won a multimillion-dollar class action suit because for years Dartmouth had looked the other way while three male faculty members in one department systematically assaulted and raped them.[25] Suddenly it's like wow. If we want to do something about this institution, we have to do it together.

Middle class rhetorical means tend to be individual. Working class means--we do this collectively, whatever we decide to do.

Zoe: One struggle I'm having, and see as rich with possibility, is this notion of coalition building that in many ways comes from a different tradition than a vague notion of collaboration or even a theory of problem posing. How do you define coalitions, especially emerging from a more working class means of persuasion?

Nancy: And that's just it. There is struggle. I think you can see if we were to win health care for all, Medicare for all, that would certainly benefit many middle-class people.

I come from a working class or lower middle-class family, and like many people of my generation, the reason I went to college for free was that I benefited from the Civil Rights and Black Power movements and Chicano Power movements. There is still that clash between the working class and the ruling class. It is a coalition to build power within that fight, whether that fight takes place through a union contract or takes place through a walk out.

---

[25] See Casey, Michael. "Dartmouth Settles Sexual Misconduct Lawsuit for $14 Million." *The Associated Press,* 6 Aug. 2019 Dartmouth settles sexual misconduct lawsuit for $14 million | AP News.

I'll give one more example of this. There was a question of whether we would reopen the Graduate Writing Center in the fall of 2020. A group of the Graduate Writing Consultants with the Graduate Student Senate launched a petition. They launched a petition to gather signatures and testimony from graduate students, former graduate students, and advisors about the value of the Graduate Writing Center. Very quickly they were able to get hundreds of signatures, a great deal of testimony because the consultants came from all across campus. So we have a reach all across campus and there wasn't a notion of "Oh, this is just the English Department, and we don't care." We already have that coalition feel happening.

At first, the Graduate College Dean was upset by this. Like nobody said the Graduate Writing Center is going to be closed, we just don't know if it is going to open. I understand that position of "Don't embarrass me in front of the Provost. Don't speak directly over me to the Provost." I said this is what the consultants wanted to do and listen to some of these things people are saying about the value of what we do.

Then, last spring, the Dean of the Graduate College asked if I could put her in touch with the student who had helped direct the petition because she wanted to have the testimony to use in her negotiations for the next Graduate Writing Center Director. So anyway, it's friction but it's not friction all the time.

There are a good number of folks in community literacies who have a notion of coalition politics that don't drain away conflict. Some are more about mediation and building bridges, but it's still done within the sense of here's communities that are being harmed by the status quo and I'm positioning myself with them rather than somewhere else. I would recommend that.

I think Black socialist feminists are the best place to put yourself: the Combahee River Collective, Barbara Ransby, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. And you know, potentially, this might seem like a reach, but there are many incredible women of color who are one, in the police and prison abolition movement and two, in the global and US struggle for abortion rights, and particularly reproductive justice. So Sister Song and the many networks that right now are organizing to make sure that Plan B, Plan C, access to safe, legal, free abortion are available to people-- no matter what state they live in--I would look there too.

Zoe: Thank you. This is one of my favorite questions to ask. What hopes do you have, specifically for the University of Vermont (UVM) Graduate Writing Center, Composition and Rhetoric as a field, and perhaps the next generation of young scholars?

Nancy: What gives me hope? I think if I had not had the chance to launch the Graduate Writing Center and to have that experience with working with those amazing consultants, meeting so many of the students, doing the [writing] camps, also, working in a University that really discourages any kind of programmatic approach to anything, being able to have my office in the Library with other Writing Program Administrators… If I hadn't had that experience I would have almost no hope for anybody with any kind of future, particularly for Composition and Rhetoric because the emphasis is so much on casualizing labor, squeezing more out of fewer people, denying the kinds of funds, support, space, for people to come together to have those deep conversations about what are we doing in our classes and what kind of writing program do we want to have. [Resources] for that to be genuinely collaborative and not just one person whose been

hired to ride herd on everybody and check their syllabi. There's so few opportunities for that so I just feel lucky that I was able to experience that but also that it didn't go away.

I always joked that I built three programs and I hoped one of them would survive. The first was a community literacy project that as soon as class sizes got raised it, wasn't possible to keep doing a class working with the community youth center because I would be overwhelming them with 26 students instead of ten or 12. The next was UVM's first campus-wide first year composition requirement. We built a pilot program, had a big coalition of faculty who were deeply interested in how to teach writing, support writing, respond to writing, and assess writing. Then the moment that requirement was approved, they stripped away the funding.

We have the requirement. I wrote about this in my piece for *Composition in the Age of Austerity*.[26] We have the requirement, but there's absolutely no infrastructure and now no director.

I would feel pretty beaten down and think I'm going to take my hope elsewhere. I'll take my hope to the union. I'll take my hope to reproductive justice and migrant justice, but I'm not going to put all my little hope balls in the Composition and Rhetoric basket.

The Graduate Writing Center was something that showed me it is difficult but if the stars align and conditions align, something really cool can happen. It does require people with a background in Composition and Rhetoric but who are also open to, interested in, and learning from, and working with people from across the campus.

---

[26] Welch "First-Year Writing and the Angels of Austerity: A Re-Domesticated Drama," pp. 132-148.

Zoe: I appreciate the way that you said you wouldn't necessarily put your little hope balls in Rhetoric and Composition.

Nancy: Not all of them.

Another way that I would think about this is when I first came into Composition and Rhetoric, I came in having attended an open admissions college and after having taking night school classes in writing while I was working as a secretary. It was UMass Boston the year after Anne Berthoff had retired but there was Hephzibah Roskelly, and John Brereton. It was a place filled with people who were deeply dedicated to writing and to teaching writing in the context of an open admissions university. So I really came to the conclusion that Composition and Rhetoric was a liberatory field.

The other thing was I was taking classes with one of Paulo Freire translators at UMass Boston and someone else who was one of the early translators of Mikhail Bakhtin, so I'm like this is where you change the world through this field.

Since then, learning more about the history of what created open admissions, including the strikes by Black and Chicano students, the radical politics particularly of Black queer socialist feminists who taught in the first CUNY programs, I realized no, it's not that composition is the revolution. What I experienced as the best of Composition and Rhetoric was the result of a revolution. If I want that idea of the field back, I need to work for revolution all around.

Zoe: Is there anything that you see as recreating the revolution in Rhetoric, Composition, or community literacies?

Nancy: The fire last time came out of the Black Power, Chicano Power, and Gay Liberation movements and that's the kind of hopeful struggle we would need to see again. We've seen in all kinds of ways signs of it. If this is a subterranean fire, it does spark.

I think my own role, in my teaching and now in my work beyond it, is to try to connect students with the history of that for whatever might be useful to them.

The last class that I taught at UVM was called Protest and Persuasion and as it happened, it coincided with mass police defunding encampments. The class was on Zoom and it turned out to be a very good thing because most of the students in the class were at an encampment outside the Burlington Police Station in Battery Park and those who weren't were in encampments in Connecticut or in New York City so they were calling in on their phones from their tents and saying, "I've just organized a teach in around the Battle of Seattle because I hadn't heard of it until I took this class. Or oh my gosh we are a BIPOC femme led movement and I had never heard of the Combahee River Collective. I didn't know I had foremothers."

I'm not going to lead any revolutions but I'm helping to connect people to the history of how people have done what they're trying to do and letting them know they're not alone.

As I've thought of the benefits of coalitional literacies I continually return to Nancy's definition of coalitions as collaborations that do not deny class conflicts, or conflicts in crossing social and cultural borders. Learning how to make use of such

collective forms of responsibility, as Nancy described in her references to the Dartmouth women's lawsuit or the students in her Protest and Persuasion class, may not be typical parts of many college students' educations apart from classes that emphasize curiosity, history, and language as a process to share and create meaning. Places that provide the time for committed scholars and educators to come together to learn from and with each other are immensely valuable to move students beyond assumptions of impactful writing as a solitary activity and straightforward process of moving ideas from chaos into clarity. Rhetoric and Composition studies have deep investments in emphasizing processes through investments to evaluate student writing that consider labor and inventive exercises, professional development programs to provide experienced teachers time to continue to learn, and to direct student attention to the ways historically marginalized groups have used literacy to share their needs and knowledge to benefit political institutions. Conversations about process are what have continued to motivate me as I teach students in first and second year composition classes strategies to slow down their reading practices to pay attention to a text's rhetorical situation or encourage them to form study groups or stop by office hours with their not-yet finished drafts to consider the motivating tensions of key assignment expectations and their desires to share insights they find too pressing to share in any other form but the written word. A focus on process, and ways to be open to shared yet different histories that have allowed those of us who a few generations ago had our ancestors engage in fierce struggles to access education and the responsibilities to participate as equal citizens in public life, may be the central gift coalitional literacies offers Rhetoric, Composition and community literacies: a love letter

to the dynamic ways human communication remains a vital force able to change lives and benefit the world.

Appendix

Author's Note

I do have regrets as I reflect on this project. Missing my chance to talk other leading scholars is a primary one as is the many months I spend in what was unproductive inventive writing rather than honing interview questions, re-reading former students' work, or committing to a small number of primary sources for the "stance" chapter sooner. Plans fell through, ideals of inclusion went unfulfilled; and yet, I've been surprised by the ways IRB staff, mentor faculty outside of my committee, fellow graduate students, and my neighbors have been crucial to this project, although I take full responsibility for each confusing sentence or missing citation.

Student Essay Assignment Descriptions

Portfolio 3: "Perspectives Paper" –25% of final grade

Our recent class readings have advocated for using multiple view points to put forth a position that is meaningful for the writer and his or her community. Additionally, we've explored how listening, withholding judgement, and avoiding biases are strong components of argument. In this paper, you'll have the chance to employ those strategies through researching a question that engages multiple sides of an issue, in an effort to learn from and negotiate with them. For this assignment you will analyze—and put into dialogue—three different perspectives on a civic, cultural, social, or philosophical issue that you would like to learn more about and that is meaningful for others. That is, don't choose a topic that have a fixed or decided position. Or if you do, please make sure you are willing to listen to new perspectives. After gathering sources, you will analyze how they form arguments and how they represent different interests and perspectives.

For this portfolio you will:

1. Gather **three different sources** representing three different perspectives on your topic or question. At least one must be an **academic source** such as a peer-reviewed journal article or book chapter. At least one must be a **primary source** such as an interview, newspaper article, field note, or archival document or photo. The third source is your choice.

2. Write a **six-page double spaced** academic paper describing possible answers to your research question using your sources to support your ideas. Consider this paper as a road map describing how your thinking about your question has

changed what you've found in your sources. Consider re-reading one of the class readings for ideas on incorporating different perspectives into your writing. **Cite sources in Chicago. Remember to include page numbers for all direct quotations and a works cited page.**

Building an Argument:

Contribute to an academic or popular media conversation

Expand the research you did in your identifying arguments paper to put forth a way to extend expert knowledge on your topic. You do not need to conduct a study, but instead point out the limitations of current knowledge and suggest why your idea or perspective focusing on one limitation is valuable to those interested in your topic. This option should contain evidence from credible and interesting sources presented in an interesting way. Using your own experiences , considering alternative arguments, and storytelling elements are highly encouraged.

Paper 5: Literary Nonfiction Essay—8 pgs. dbl. spaced, 1 pg. cover letter

In this final assignment write an 8-page literary nonfiction essay that combines the critical and creative writing techniques from the other papers in this class to describe how your thinking has changed due to an encounter with an Other, such as a conversation with someone, reflecting on your past self, an experience you've had, or something you've read. Use a well-selected combination of techniques—such as observation, scene setting, and incorporating critical sources—that allow you to share insights with the members of this class, and readers of a publication of your choosing. Plan to examine example literary nonfiction essays on your own outside of class to gain ideas for your own writing. In this final essay, use the number of sources you think are needed for your specific project. Also, use the language(s) that are most authentic to your purposes and the communities you are writing with.

You will turn in a short proposal to describe initial ideas, contact one potential out of class reader (journal 11), and meet with a conference with your teacher and writing group members. Before that conference you will also write a detailed peer response letter to share with the other members of your writing group. Along with the final draft, include a one page cover letter explaining your writing and revising choices.

End Notes to Student Drafts

End note response to Arianna's "Perspectives Paper" rough draft

Zoe McDonald: I recommend reading Alice Walker's "Womanism" if you're interested in how one influential black woman connected Civil Rights to feminism. (Nov 11, 2018 at 4:19pm)

Arianna,

Once again, I'm captivated by your writing voice. I wasn't sure where you were headed with your ice cream question on page 3, but I loved it. Ben and Jerry's is obviously the best.

I have two major recommendations for your final draft as you can see from my comments in the margins.

The easy one is to make sure you connect ideas (I'm especially interested in where you found your info on the history of BLM) to sources. We'll go over this in class on Monday, but this means naming the person who had the idea and including the page numbers where you found the quote or idea.

The harder recommendation, is to consider your final draft a story. Right now you have great paragraphs but I'm not sure how they're organized overall. Often stories introduce the background information or setting and build toward some sort of resolution to the conflict. I recommend taking a step back and asking yourself: What are the biggest conflicts? A friend in class, writing tutor, and myself can help if you need it.

I'm looking forward to what you come up with. (Nov 11, 2018 at 4:38pm)

End note response to Nick's "Building an Argument" rough draft

Nick,

You're well on track with this assignment.

Much like your cover letter to your research, I find your descriptions of your self listening to farmers and your ending argument that more sustainable agriculture would benefit local economies fascinating. Those are areas I recommend researching some more, especially for ways to respond to the challenge that at least in the short term making a shift away from a monoculture of corn will cost both farmers and consumers, two groups that often do not have extra money. Doing some more research into monocultures or describing more of your experiences will be valuable. Much like Eula Biss does in her "Sentimental Medicine," keep those alternative arguments in mind as you write and imagine yourself writing back to specific groups of people and experts who would argue against you. Doing so will likely also move your language away from cliches and into a original perspective about a crucial environmental and economic issue. I also recommend that even if you like your writing, it is ok to change what you like into an overall paper that you love, and as a teacher I like to see evidence that writers break from their comfort zones.

I look forward to your final draft.

Zoe McDonald, Nov 17, 2020 at 4:50pm

End note response to Trinity's essay proposal

Trinity, You have a fantastic plan for this assignment.

In a move to intentionally not overwhelm you as you plan to drive to The Corner cafe this weekend, here is my biggest recommendation.

Consider your exigency, and key area in your essay final draft, to be reflections on what researching wind turbines and the reactions of some rural community members, and what those insights can tell your writing group members and myself about the relationship among writing and different communities.

In your proposal the most interesting moment in terms of this class was when you noted you initially searched for research on wind turbines that matched the views of your peers, but you found few and also noticed a general lack of rural community member voices. This led you to fascinating questions, and this project.

Even if people in IA don't share ideas you hope to hear, what's the value in asking, and sleeping in your car to find out?

I look forward to hearing your developing thoughts about your experiences this weekend during our conference.

Zoe McDonald, Nov 19, 2021 at 6:11am

Letter response to Trinity's essay draft

Trinity,

You're well on your way to a fantastic and interesting cnf essay. Your rich moments of writing from description—thin skinned confidence and a pause that could give birth—are especially powerful alongside the descriptions of yourself as a complex person traveling for a somewhat disappointing interview about the complex technology of wind turbines.

This "what is really at the center" or "what I really mean to say" question is the key missing element. My biggest recommendation for your final draft is to continue writing, and to plan enough time to continue to write well past the required eight pages, and then go back and reread what you have to modify to see what is truly at the center of your essay. Alice Walker's "Mother's Garden" is not really about gardens, but the gardens become something rooted to write about the more abstract concepts of Black women's creativity, which is something you are beginning to do as you write about families and being a gay kid from the city.

During class next Monday I'll demonstrate a "reverse outlining" technique that can be especially useful once you have written what you know will be the primary scenes, and need to rearrange the moments to tell a captivating story. Plan on using next week for making hard choices about modifying your writing, but continuing to give yourself permission to explore with words this week.

I look forward to what you come up with, and I recommend continuing to read other cnf essays—Nyugen's "America Ruined my Name"—for ideas.

Best,

Zoe

Coalitional Commenting Possibilities for College Writing Teachers

1.) **Trust resistance is possible**
   a. Working conditions for college instructors have changed and students can learn to be more responsible and empathetic writers. Often high impact literacy learning involves a struggle rather than business as usual.
   b. Recognize students rights to disagree, refuse, and disengage.

2.) **Recognize what may be a demand**
   a. Make sure it is clear where the demand comes from, it is well supported, and important.
   b. Consider:
      i. Professional knowledge, local student learning outcomes, and individual pedagogical commitments.

3.) **Consider if, or how, to call students into risky situations**
   a. Consider safety in a holistic sense in relation to likely benefits for the student
   b. Direct students to resources and supports as needed
   c. Consider:
      i. On campus support, such as: Writing Centers, Offices of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and libraries.
      ii. Local community support, such as: Crisis centers, legal aid and other public services, and connections to multicultural organizations.

4.) **Find, or create, opportunities with trusted peers and mentors**
   a. Create a supportive network to benefit your teaching and provide accountability.
   b. Consider:
      i. professional development opportunities, online networks, and professional conferences.
   c. Read response pedagogical knowledge, especially from critical and inclusive orientations.
      i. Places to start:
         1. Chavez *The Antiracist Writing Workshop*
         2. Hooks and Robertson "Living Engagement"
         3. Shor *Empowering Education*
         4. Sommers *Responding to Student Writing*
         5. Straub *The Practice of Response*

News Coverage of the 1993 UNL Write In, courtesy of Nancy Welch

GAIL FOLDA/LINCOLN JOURNAL

Students put their opinions in writing Tuesday, protesting plans to close the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Writing Laboratory because of budget cuts mandated by the Legislature. Among those in Andrews Hall writing to Chancellor Graham Spanier and others were (from left) graduate students Kate Flaherty, Biljana Obradovic, Pam Weiner, Jana Bouma and Keith Rhodes.

UNL writers: Don't write us off

BY JACK KENNEDY
Lincoln Journal

The Writing Laboratory has helped about 1,000 University of Nebraska-Lincoln students since its inception in 1991 and should not be written out of the UNL budget, supporters said Tuesday as they crowded into the lab for a protest "write-in."

Many of the students used the time to complete papers that are due during this final exam week.

Others in the Andrews Hall quarters wrote letters to Chancellor Graham Spanier, urging him to take the lab off his list of $2.9 million in budget cuts mandated by a special session of the Legislature last fall.

Tough decisions must be made, Spanier said earlier. The lab is not as heavily used as some other UNL functions and is staffed primarily by graduate students. Also, Spanier said, he's tried to avoid dropping any tenured faculty.

But the lab is important to hundreds of students, graduate student Nancy Welch said before the 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. protest began.

Writing is fundamental to every kind of learning, she said.

As examples, she recalled a former Marine, just back in school, who got assistance there and an older woman who received a boost when she returned to UNL following a divorce.

Some students complete work on current papers, supporters said. New students find it a place to get oriented to the large university, while others work on research papers, creative writing assignments, or even letters home.

The lab has also aided international students, Welch said, at a time when one of UNL's stated goals is to become more of an international community.

The chancellor has said he wants to give more encouragement and financial support to graduate students, but closing the lab is counter to that goal, Welch said.

The lab opened in January 1991 after UNL officials determined that freshmen and other students need to learn how to write better, examine ideas and get immediate feedback on their writing.

Eliminating the lab will save about $60,000, Spanier said. Also erased from the budget were the Academic Success Center, a counseling unit; the Czech language program; and certain faculty grants through the chancellor's office.

Lincoln Journal
Wed May 5 1993

Works Cited

ACRL. "Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education." *Association of College & Research Libraries*, 2016, https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework.

Adler-Kassner, Linda. "Because Writing Is Never Just Writing." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 69, no. 2, 2017, pp. 317–40.

---. *The Activist WPA: Changing Stories About Writing and Writers*. University Press of Colorado, 2008.

Adler-Kassner, Linda, and Elizabeth Wardle, editors. *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*. University Press of Colorado, 2015.

admin. "CCCC Statement on Preparing Teachers of College Writing." *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, 6 June 2018, https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/statementonprep/.

---. "CCCC Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty." *Conference on College Composition and Communication*, 6 June 2018, https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/working-conditions-ntt/.

Ahmed, Sara. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Duke University Press, 2012.

Alexander, Jonathan, et al. *Unruly Rhetorics: Protest, Persuasion, and Publics*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018.

Alexander, Jonathan, and Susan C. Jarratt. "Rhetorical Education and Student Activism." *College English*, vol. 76, no. 6, 2014, pp. 525–44.

Alexander, Jonathan, and Jacqueline Rhodes. “Queer: An Impossible Subject for Composition.” *JAC*, no. 1/2, 2011, pp. 177–206.

American Rhetoric: Hillary Rodham Clinton -- United Nations 4th World Conference Speech (“Women’s Rights Are Human Rights”). Video Recording, 1995, https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hillaryclintonbeijingspeech.htm.

Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*. Univ of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Anderson, Karrin Vasby. “Hillary Rodham Clinton as 'Madonna”’ The Role of Metaphor and Oxymoron in Image Restoration.” *Women’s Studies in Communication*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2002, pp. 1–24.

Anson, Chris M. “Process Pedagogy and Its Legacy.” *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, edited by Gary Tate et al., 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, pp. 212–30.

“Anti-Ableist Composition Collective.” *Anti-Ableist Composition Collective*, 5 Sept. 2022, https://antiableistcomposition.wordpress.com/.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands: The New Mestiza*. Aunt Lute Books, 2012.

Arellano Cabusao, Jeffrey, et al. “Shifting from Professional Development to Professional Learning: Centering Teacher Empowerment.” *NCTE*, https://ncte.org/statement/proflearning/. Accessed 4 May 2022.

Baker-Bell, April. *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Routledge, 2020.

Ball, Cheryl E., and Drew M. Loewe, editors. *Bad Ideas About Writing*. Open Access Textbooks, 2017, https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/dpi-textbooks/1.

Baniya, Sweta, Sara Doan, et al. “Coalitional Literacies of Digital Safety and Solidarity: A White Paper on nextGEN International Listserv |.” *Computers and Composition*, vol. 62, no. 102681, 2021, pp. 1–14,

Bauer, Nichole M. *The Qualifications Gap: Why Women Must Be Better than Men to Win Political Office*. Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Beckett, Linnea. “Tantear Practices in Popular Education: Reaching for Each Other in the Dark.” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2020, pp. 120–40.

Benhabib, Seyla. “The Utopian Dimension in Communicative Ethics.” *New German Critique*, no. 35, 1985, p. 83. *DOI.org (Crossref)*, https://doi.org/10.2307/488201.

Berlin, James A. *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900 - 1985*. SIU Press, 1987.

Block, Diana, et al. “The Fire Inside: Newsletter of the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.” *NWSA Journal*, vol. 20, no. 2, Summer 2008, pp. 48–70.

Bordo, Susan. *The Destruction of Hillary Clinton*. Melville House, 2017.

Brandt, Deborah. “Sponsors of Literacy.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 49, no. 2, 1998, pp. 165–85.

Brerenton, John, and Cinthia Gannett. “Where We Are: Intergenertational Exchanges.” *Composition Studies*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2021, pp. 119–24.

Busch, Megan J. “Rhetorical Failures and Revisions in the Second-Wave: Emerging Intersectionality in the Ethe of Activist Zelda Nordlinger.” *Peitho Journal*, vol. 24, no. 24, 2021, https://cfshrc.org/article/rhetorical-failures-and-revisions-in-the-second-wave-emerging-intersectionality-in-the-ethe-of-activist-zelda-nordlinger-1/.

Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Tenth Anniversary Edition*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2006,

Bystydzienski, Jill M., and Steven P. Schacht. *Forging Radical Alliances Across Difference: Coalition Politics for the New Millennium*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

Cain, Mary Ann. "Interchanges: Inquiring into the Nexus of Composition Studies and Creative Writing." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 51, no. 1, 1999, pp. 70–95.

Campano, Gerald, et al. "Toward Community Research and Coalitional Literacy Practices for Educational Justice." *Language Arts*, vol. 90, no. 5, 2013, pp. 314–26.

Campbell, Karlyn Kohrs. "The Discursive Performance of Femininity: Hating Hillary." *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1998, pp. 1–20.

Carlo, Rozanne. *Transforming Ethos: Place and the Material in Rhetoric and Writing*. Utah State University Press, 2020.

Chavez, Felicia Rose. "Conferencing as Critique." *The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop: How to Decolonize the Creative Classroom*, 2021, pp. 151–64.

Chavez, Karma R. *Queer Migration Politics: Activist Rhetoric and Coalitional Possibilities*. University of Illinois Press, 2013.

clare, eli, and Dean Spade. "The Mountain." *Exile and Pride*, Duke University Press, 2009, pp. 1–14.

Clinton, Hillary Rodham. *What Happened*. Trade Paperback Sept. 2018, Simon and Schuster, 2017.

Coalitions | Bloomsbury Guide to Human Thought - Credo Reference. https://search-credoreference-com.libproxy.unl.edu/content/entry/bght/coalitions/0. Accessed 5 May 2022.

Cole, Elizabeth R., and Zakiya T. Luna. "Making Coalitions Work: Solidarity across Difference within US Feminism." *Feminist Studies*, vol. 36, no. 1, 2010, pp. 71–98.

Coleman, Taiyon J., Renee DeLong, Kathleen Sheerin DeVore, Shannon Gibney, Michael C. Kuhne, and Valerie Deus. *Working Toward Racial Equity in First-Year Composition: Six Perspectives.* Taylor and Francis, 2019.

Corder, Jim W. "Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love." *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 4, 1985, pp. 16–32.

Corrigan, Lisa M. *Prison Power: How Prison Influenced the Movement for Black Liberation*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2016.

Coulombe, Joseph L. "Stop Calling Them Slave Narratives: Anagrammatical Blackness in Our Academic Discourse." *College English*, vol. 85, no. 2, 2022, pp. 107–32.

Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review*, vol. 43, 1991 1990, p. 1241.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé. "Opinion | Why Intersectionality Can't Wait." *Washington Post*, 2015. *www.washingtonpost.com*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/09/24/why-intersectionality-cant-wait/.

Creswell, John W., and Timothy C. Guetterman. “Narrative Research Designs.” *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitive and Qualitative Research*, Sixth, Pearson, 2019, pp. 512–43.

Crowley, Sharon. “Composition’s Ethic of Service, the Universial Requirement, and the Discourse of Student Need.” *Composition in the University: Historical and Polemical Essays*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998, pp. 250–65.

de Onís, Kathleen M. “‘Looking Both Ways’: Metaphor and the Rhetorical Alignment of Intersectional Climate Justice and Reproductive Justice Concerns.” *Environmental Communication*, vol. 6, no. 3, Sept. 2012, pp. 308–27.

DeLong, Renee. “Nobody’s Mama: Interrogating White Mothering Impulses in the Classroom.” *Working Toward Racial Equity in First-Year Composition: Six Perspectives*, edited by Renee DeLong et al., Taylor & Francis, 2019, pp. 118–30.

Desmond, Matthew. *Poverty by America*. Crown, 2023.

Dingo, Rebecca, and Clancy Ratliff, editors. “Transnational Solidarities.” *Peitho: Journal of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric & Composition*, vol. 26, no. 1, Fall 2023, pp. 1–421.

Doing Hope in Desperate Times: 2023 CCCC Convention Feburary 15-18 Chicago, IL. National Council of Teachers of English, 2023.

Dunker, Chris. “Enrollment Drops Will Force UNL to Close $13M Budget Gap This Year.” *Lincoln Journal Star*, E-Edition, 7 Feb. 2023, https://journalstar.com/news/local/education/enrollment-drops-will-force-unl-to-close-13m-budget-gap-this-year/article_1be8949a-8557-533d-abc5-9bafe8861fad.html.

Eig, Johnathan. *King: A Life*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2023.

Eisenstein, Zillah. *The Combahee River Collective: The Combahee River Collective Statement*. Apr. 1977, https://americanstudies.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Keyword%20Coalition_Readings.pdf.

Ellsworth, Elizabeth. "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering? Working through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy." *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 59, no. 3, 1989, pp. 297–325.

Enoch, Jessica, and Jenn Fishman, editors. "Looking Forward: The Next 25 Years of Feminist Scholarship in Rhetoric and Composition." *Peitho: Journal of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric & Composition*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2015, pp. 2–143.

Flower, Linda. *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement*. SIU Press, 2008.

Foust, Christina R., et al. *What Democracy Looks Like: The Rhetoric of Social Movements and Counterpublics*. University of Alabama Press, 2017.

Fraser, Nancy. "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy." *Social Text*, vol. 25/26, 1990, pp. 56–80.

Freire, Paulo. "Education and Conscientizacao." *Education for Critical Consciousness*, pp. 37–78.

Frisicaro-Pawlowski, Erica. "Rhetorical Ethics and the Language of Virtue: Problems of Agency and Action." *College English*, vol. 81, no. 2, 2018, pp. 110–32.

Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Affluent Society*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1998.

Garza, Alicia. *The Purpose of Power: How to Build Movements for the 21st Century*. Black Swan Edition, Transworld Publishers, 2020.

Gay, Roxane. "Why I Am A Bad Feminist: Author Roxane Gay on Being a Bad Feminist and How You Can Be One Too." *Buzzfeed.Com*, https://www.buzzfeed.com/roxanegay/consider-me-already-knocked-off. Accessed 3 Feb. 2022.

Genovese, Michael A., and Lori Cox Han. "Coalitions." *Encylopedia of American Government and Civics*, 2nd ed., Credo Reference, 2017, https://search-credoreference-com.libproxy.unl.edu/content/entry/fofgac/coalition/0.

George, Anne. "Critical." *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, edited by Gary Tate et al., 2nd Ed., Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 77–93.

Gere, Anne Rubbles, et al. "Communal Justicing: Writing Assessment, Disciplinary Infrastructure, and the Case for Critical Language Awareness." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 72, no. 3, 2021, pp. 384–412.

Glenn, Cheryl. *Rhetorical Feminism and This Thing Called Hope*. SIU Press, 2018.

Glenn, Cheryl, and Andrea A. Lunsford. "Coalition: A Meditation." *Peitho Journal*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2015, pp. 11–14.

Goncalves, Zan Meyer. *Sexuality and the Politics of Ethos in the Writing Classroom*. SIU Press, 2005.

Gruenewald, David A. "The Best of Both Worlds: A Critical Pedagogy of Place." *Educational Researcher*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2003, pp. 3–12.

Guzman Bouvard, Marguerite. *Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo*. Rowman & Littlefield, 1994.

Habermas, Jurgen. *Justification and Application: On Discourse Ethics*. Wiley, 1995.

Harris, Muriel. "When Responding To Student Writing, More Is Better." *Bad Ideas About Writing*, edited by Cheryl E. Ball and Drew M. Loewe, Open Access Textbooks, 2017, pp. 268–72.

Haswell, Richard. "Minimal Marking." *College English*, vol. 45, no. 6, 1983, pp. 600–04.

Hawkins, Stephen, et al. *Hidden Tribes: A Study of America's Polarized Landscape*. More in Common, 2018.

Herrington, Anne, and Marcia Smith Curtis. *Persons in Process: Four Stories of Writing and Personal Development in College*. National Council of Teachers of English, 2000.

Hoang, Haivan V. *Writing against Racial Injury: The Politics of Asian American Student Rhetoric*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015.

hooks, bell. "Feminist Politics: Where We Stand." *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics*, Pluto Press, 2000, pp. 1–6.

---. *Teaching To Transgress*. Routledge, 2014.

hooks, bell, and Douglas Reimondo Robertson. "Living Engagement." *Living*.

Howell, Tracee L. "Manifesto of a Mid-Life White Feminist, or, an Apologia for Embodied Feminism." *Peitho Journal*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2021, https://cfshrc.org/article/manifesto-of-a-mid-life-white-feminist-or-an-apologia-for-embodied-feminism/.

Hsu, V. Jo. "Toward QTPOC Community: A Theory in the Flesh, an Open Letter, a Closing Wound." *Rhetoric, Politics & Culture*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2021, pp. 27–33.

Hubrig, Adam, et al. “Enacting a Culture of Access in Our Conference Spaces.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 72, no. 1, 2020, pp. 87–117.

Inoue, Asao B., and Maya Poe, editors. *Race and Writing Assessment*. Peter Lang, 2012.

Interview with Nancy Welch. Audio Visual Recording, Dissertation Informative Interview, 1 Nov. 2022.

Johnson Reagon, Bernice. “Coalitional Politics: Turning the Century.” *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology*, edited by Barbara Smith, Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, 1983, pp. 356–68.

Jones, Natasha N., et al. “So You Think You’re Readin to Build New Social Justice Initatives?: Intentional and Coalitional Pro-Black Programmatic and Organizational Leadership in Writing Studies.” *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 44, no. 3, 2021, pp. 29–35.

Jones Royster, Jacqueline. “When the First Voice You Hear Is Not Your Own.” *Views from the Center: The CCCC’s Chairs’ Addresses 1977-2005*, edited by Duane Roen, Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2006, pp. 284–97.

Jordan, June. “Nobody Mean More to Me Than You and the Future Life of Willie Jordan.” *Harvard Educational Review*, vol. 58, no. 3, pp. 363–74.

Julier, Laura, et al. “Community-Engaged.” *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies*, edited by Gary Tate et al., 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 55–76.

Kaufer, David S., and Shawn J. Parry-Giles. “Hillary Clinton’s Presidential Campaign Memoirs: A Study in Contrasting Identities.” *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, vol. 103, no. 1–2, 2017, pp. 7–32.

Kelm, Sara. *What a Way to Make a Livin': Women Constructing Ethos in Contemporary Professional Memoirs*. 2021. Texas Christian University, Dissertaton. *repository.tcu.edu*, https://repository.tcu.edu/handle/116099117/47953.

Kerschbaum, Stephanie L. "Avoiding the Difference Fixation: Identity Categories, Markers of Difference, and the Teaching of Writing." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 63, no. 4, 2012, pp. 616–44.

Kerschbaum, Stephanie L. *Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference*. National Council of Teachers of English, 2014.

Kirsch, Gesa E., and Jacqueline J. Royster. "Feminist Rhetorical Practices: In Search of Excellence." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 61, no. 4, 2010, pp. 640–72.

Kock, Christian, and Lisa S. Villadsen. "Rhetorical Citizenship: Studying the Discursive Creaft and Enactment of Citizenship." *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 21, no. 5, 2017, pp. 570–86.

Kopelson, Karen. "Rhetoric on the Edge of Cunning; Or, the Performance of Neutrality (Re)Considered as a Composition Pedagogy for Student Resistance." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 55, no. 1, Sept. 2003, pp. 115–46.

Kurtzleben, Danielle. "Who Is 'What Happened' For? Maybe Hillary Clinton Most Of All." *National Public Radio*, 12 Sept. 2017, p. Book Review.

Kynard, Carmen. "'New Life in This Dormant Creature': Notes on Social Consciousness, Language, and Learning in a College Classroom." *ALT Dis: Alternative Discourses and the Academy*, edited by Christopher Schroeder et al., Boynton/Cook, 2002, pp. 31–44.

Kynard, Carmen. *Vernacular Insurrections: Race, Black Protest, and the New Century in Composition-Literacies Studies*. State University of New York Press, 2013.

Lal, Jayati. *Transcript of Martha Ojeda*. Transcript, 9 Apr. 2004, https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/globalfeminisms/wp-content/uploads/sites/787/2020/04/Ojeda_U_E_102806.pdf. Global Feminisms: Comparative Case Studies of Women's Activism and Scholarship, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Lamos, Steve. *Interests and Opportunities: Race, Racism, and University Writing Instruction in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. University of Pittsburgh Pre, 2011.

Lasswell, Harold D. *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How*. Pickle Partners Publishing, 2018.

Lee, Melanie. "Rhetorical Roulette: Does Writing-Faculty Overload Disable Effective Response to Student Writing?" *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, no. December, 2009, pp. 165–77.

Levitsky, Steven, and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die*. Crown, 2019.

Licona, Adela C. *Zines in Third Space: Radical Cooperation and Borderlands Rhetoric*. SUNY Press, 2012.

Lindemann, Erika, and Daniel Anderson. *A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers*. 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, 1995.

Lorde, Audre. "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House." *Sister Outsider*, 2007th ed., Crossing Press, 2007, pp. 110–13.

Lugones, Maria. “Hablando Cara a Cara/Speaking Face to Face: An Exploration of Ethnocentric Racism.” *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Againist Multiple Oppressions*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2003, pp. 1–40.

---. *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes: Theorizing Coalition Against Multiple Oppressions*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.

Luiselli, Valeria. *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions*. Coffee House Press, 2017.

Lunsford, Andrea A. “Composing Ourselves: Politics, Commitment, and the Teaching of Writing.” *Views from the Center: The CCCC Chairs’ Addresses 1977-2005*, edited by Duane Roen, Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2006, pp. 185–200.

---, editor. *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995.

Mack, Ashley Noel. “Foreword: Intersectionality and the Colonizing Forces of Whiteness in Feminist Communication Studies.” *De-Whitening Intersectionality: Race, Intercultural Communication, and Politics*, edited by Shinsuke Eguchi et al., Lexington Books, 2020, pp. ix–xv.

Mack, Katherine, and Jonathan Alexander. “The Ethics of Memoir: Ethos in Uptake.” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, vol. 49, no. 1, 2019, pp. 49–70.

MacLean, Nancy. *Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right’s Stealth Plan for America*. Penguin, 2018.

Malinowitz, Harriet. *Textual Orientations: Lesbian and Gay Students and the Making of Discourse Communities*. Heinemass, 1995.

McAlevey, Jane. *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*. Oxford University Press, 2016.

McComiskey, Bruce. *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition*. Utah State University Press, 2017.

McDonald, Zoe, and Deborah Minter. "Peadgogical Alliances Among Writing Instructors and Teaching Librarians through a Writing Information Literacy Community of Practice." *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2023, pp. 12–28.

McSpadden, Lezley. "Opinion | Michael Brown's Mom, on Alton Sterling and Philando Castile." *The New York Times*, 7 July 2016. *NYTimes.com*, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/08/opinion/michael-browns-mom-on-alton-sterling-and-philando-castile.html.

McSpadden, Lezley, and Layah Beth LeFlore. *Tell the Truth and Shame the Devil: The Life, Legacy & Love of My Son Michael Brown*. Regan Arts, 2020.

Miller, Richard E. "The Dark Night of the Soul." *Writing at the End of the World*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005, pp. 1–27.

Miller, Susan. *Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1991.

Minter, Debbie, et al. "Teaching at UNL: An Overview : New First-Year Writing Teachers 2023-2024." *New First-Year Writing Teachers 2023-2024*, Spring 2023, https://canvas.unl.edu/courses/155971/pages/teaching-at-unl-an-overview?module_item_id=4014799.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity*. Duke University Press, 2003.

Moraga, Cherríe, and Gloria Anzaldúa. *This Bridge Called My Back, Fourth Edition: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. SUNY Press, 2015.

National Council of Teachers of English The English Coalition Conference: College - National Council of Teachers of English. https://ncte.org/statement/englishcoalitioncoll/print/. Accessed 30 Mar. 2023.

Olson, Gary A., and Irene Gale, editors. *(Inter)Views: Cross0Disciplinary Perspectives on Rhetoric and Literacy*. Southern Illinois University Press, 1991.

Perl, Sandra. "Understanding Composing." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 31, no. 4, 1980, pp. 363–69.

Pettus, Mudiwa, et al. "Non-Negotiable Inclusivity: Chronicling the Relational, Embodied Work of Antiracist, Accessible Conferencing." *Writers: Craft & Context*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1, Nov. 2022, pp. 45–57.

Poe, Maya, and Nobert Elliot. "Evidence of Fairness: Twenty-Five Years of Research in Assessing Writing." *Assessing Writing*, vol. 42, no. 100418, 2019, pp. 1–21.

Porter, James E. *Rhetorical Ethics and Internetworked Writing*. Ablex, 1998.

Prasad, Pritha, and Louis M. Maraj. "'I Am Not a Teaching Moment': The Benevolent Gaslight and Epistemic Violence." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 74, no. 2, 2022, pp. 322–51.

Qualley, Donna. *Turns of Thought: Teaching Composition as Reflexive Inquiry*. Boynton/Cook, 1997.

Ratcliffe, Krista. "Rhetorical Listening: A Trope for Interpretive Invention and a 'Code of Cross-Cultural Conduct'"." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 51, no. 2, 1999, pp. 195–224.

Restaino, Jessica. *Surrender: Feminist Rhetoric and Ethics in Love and Illness*. SIU Press, 2019.

Reyman, Jessica, and Erika M. Sparby, editors. *Digital Ethics: Rhetoric and Responsibility in Online Aggression*. 1st ed., Routledge, 2019.

Reynolds, Nedra. "Ethos as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority." *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1993, pp. 325–38.

Rhodes, Jacqueline. *Radical Feminism, Writing, and Critical Agency: From Manifesto to Modem*. SUNY Press, 2012.

Rhodes, Jacqueline, and Jonathan Alexander. "Reimagining the Social Turn: New Work from the Field." *College English*, vol. 76, no. 6, 2014, pp. 481–87.

Ridzi, Frank, et al. "From Read Ahead to Literacy Coalition: The Leadership Role of the Central New York Community Foundation in the Creation of a Local Institution." *Community Literacy Journal*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2011, pp. 101–33.

Riedner, Rachel C. *Writing Neoliberal Values: Rhetorical Connectivities and Globalized Capitalism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Ritchie, Joy, and Kate Ronald, editors. "Introduction: A Gathering of Rhetorics." *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric(s)*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001, pp. xv–xxxi.

Ritter, Kelly. "'Ladies Who Don't Know Us Correct Our Papers': Postwar Lay Reader Programs and Twenty-First Century Contingent Labor in First-Year Composition." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 63, no. 3, 2012, pp. 387–419.

Rom, Mark Carl, et al. “Defining Politics: Who Gets What, When, Where, How, and Why?” *Introduction to Political Science*, OpenStax: Rice University, 2022, p. 1.1, https://uofnelincoln-my.sharepoint.com/personal/zmcdonald3_unl_edu/_layouts/15/onedrive.aspx?csf=1&web=1&e=k66KHc&cid=a514efc0%2D4a2e%2D49c3%2Dbb10%2D9969910abcdc&FolderCTID=0x0120003DFF9D5A89D4FE468B36C7AEF87B4F38&id=%2Fpersonal%2Fzmcdonald3%5Funl%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FDissertation%20Interview%20Recordings%2FGMT20221121%2D192724%5FRecording%5F640x360%2Emp4&parent=%2Fpersonal%2Fzmcdonald3%5Funl%5Fedu%2FDocuments%2FDissertation%20Interview%20Recordings.

Royster, Jacqueline Jones. *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change Among African American Women*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000.

Ruiz, Iris D. *Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and Other Ethnic Minorities: A Critical History and Pedagogy*. Palgrave McMillian, 2016.

Ryan, Kathleen J., et al. *Rethinking Ethos: A Feminist Ecological Approach to Rhetoric*. SIU Press, 2016.

Schmertz, Johanna. “Constructing Essences: Ethos and the Postmodern Subject of Feminism.” *Rhetoric Review*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1999, pp. 82–91.

Scott, Tony, and Nancy Welch. “One Train Can Hide Another: Critical Materialism for Public Composition.” *College English*, vol. 76, no. 6, 2014, pp. 562–79.

Senior, Jennifer. “Hillary Clinton Opens Up About ‘What Happened,’ With Candor, Defiance and Dark Humor.” *The New York Times*, 12 Sept. 2017. *NYTimes.com*,

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/books/review-hillary-clinton-what-happened.html.

Sipiora, Phillip, and Jane Atwill. “Rhetoric and Cultural Explanation: A Discussion with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak.” *(Inter)Views: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Rhetoric and Literacy*, edited by Gary A. Olson and Irene Gale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1991, pp. 243–54.

Skinnell, Ryan. *Conceding Composition: A Crooked History of Composition’s Institutional Fortunes*. Utah State University Press, 2016.

Smitherman, Geneva. “‘Students’ Right to Their Own Language’: A Retrospective.” *The English Journal*, vol. 84, no. 1, 1995, pp. 21–27.

---. *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America*. Wayne State University Press, 1986.

Solnit, Rebecca. “Introduction.” *The Best American Essays 2019*, edited by Rebecca Solnit, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2019, pp. xvii–xxvii.

Sommers, Nancy. *Responding to Student Writers*. Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012.

Sommers, Nancy, and Laura Saltz. “The Novice as Expert: Writing the Freshman Year.” *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 56, no. 2, 2004, pp. 124–49.

Spigelman, Candace. *Personally Speaking: Experience as Evidence in Academic Discourse*. Southern Illinois University Press, 2004.

Spivak, Gayatri Charavorty. “‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ Revised Edition from the ‘History’ Chapter of Critique of Postcolonial Reason.” *Can the Subaltern Speak: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, edited by Rosland C. Morris, Columbia University Press, 2010, pp. 21–80.

Stenberg, Shari, and Charlotte Hogg. *Persuasive Acts: Women's Rhetorics in the Twenty-First Century*. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020.

Stimpson, Catherine R. *Where the Meanings Are*. Methuen, 1988.

Straub, Richard. *The Practice of Response: Strategies for Commenting on Student Writing*. Hampton Press, 2000.

Straub, Richard, and Ronald F. Lunsford. *12 Readers Reading: Responding to College Student Writing*. Hampton Pres, inc, 1995.

Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Haymarket Books, 2016.

"The Most Spoken Languages Worldwide 2023." *Statista*, https://www.statista.com/statistics/266808/the-most-spoken-languages-worldwide/. Accessed 22 Oct. 2023.

The Pew Research Center. "An Examination of the 2016 Electorate, Based on Validated Voters." *Pew Research Center - U.S. Politics & Policy*, 9 Aug. 2018, https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/08/09/an-examination-of-the-2016-electorate-based-on-validated-voters/.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Composition Program. *English 254: Writing and Communities a Teaching Sourcebook*.

The Urgency of Intersectionality | Kimberlé Crenshaw. Directed by TED, 2016. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o.

The Writing Teachers' Sourcebook 2018. A Publication of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Composition Program, 2018.

Thomson, Rosemarie Garland. *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Culture and Literature*. Columbia University Press, 2017.

Tobin, Lad. *Reading Student Writing: Confessions, Meditations, Rants*. Boynton/Cook, 2004.

Truth, Sojourner. "Sojourner Truth: 'Ain't I a Woman?', December 1851." *Modern History Sourcebook*, 2021, https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/sojtruth-woman.asp.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln. *Composition and Rhetoric | Department of English*. 2023, https://www.unl.edu/english/composition-and-rhetoric.

Walker, Alice. "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens (1983)." *Avilable Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric(s)*, edited by Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001, pp. 314–22.

---. "Womanist." *Feminist Frontiers*, edited by Laurel Richardson et al., 6th Ed., McGraw Hill, 2004, p. 84.

Warnock, Raphael G. *A Way Out of No Way: A Memoir of Truth, Transformation, and the New American Story*. Penguin Press.

Welch, Nancy. *Getting Restless: Rethinking Revision in Writing Instruction*. Boynton/Cook, 1997.

Welch, Nancy, and Tony Scott, editors. *Composition in the Age of Austerity*. University Press of Colorado, 2016.

Wetherbee Phelps, Louise. "Generation(al) Matters: Story, Lens, and Tone." *Composition Studies*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2022, pp. 106–26.

Williams, Bronwyn T. *Identity Papers: Literacy and Power in Higher Education*. University Press of Colorado, 2006.

"Women's March on Washington Guiding Vision and Definition of Principles." *The Forum on Human Rights at The Carter Center*, https://forum.cartercenter.org/media/womens-march-washington-guiding-vision-and-definition-principles. Accessed 3 Feb. 2022.

Yancey, Kathleen, et al. *Writing across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing*. University Press of Colorado, 2014.

Yapp, Nick. "MLK 12 April 1963." *Getty Images 1960s*, Konemann, pp. 86–87.

Zurcher, Anthony. "Critical Race Theory: The Concept Dividing the US." *BBC News*, 21 July 2021. *www.bbc.com*, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-57908808.