Digital Curation as Collaborative Archival Method in Feminist Rhetorics

Pamela VanHaitsma and Cassandra Book

Abstract: Our essay advocates for digital curation as a collaborative archival method for feminist research and pedagogy. Based on our work together in a graduate seminar, we describe a repurposing of the Pinterest platform to feminist curatorial ends. Specifically, our class used Pinterest to collaboratively curate existing archives, construct new "lower-case-a archives," and build community as history was made in the present. We argue that such digital curation is fruitful for scholars interested in bringing together our field's established strengths in feminist historiography with emergent digital communication technologies.

Keywords: curation, digital, collaboration, archives, historiography, methods, Pinterest

As scholars of feminist rhetorics who advocate for digital curation as a collaborative archival method, we are in good company. Curation is commanding attention across both academic and non-academic domains. In the words of Krista Kennedy, "curation has moved out of the museum and into popular discussions of working with almost any everyday collection, most particularly digital ones" (Textual 5). Use of the term curation is so widespread that, as archivist Sammie Morris tweets, even the collection of ingredients for yet another snack bar is branded as such. "It's official," Morris quips, "the word 'curate' has now lost all meaning." Kennedy echoes Morris: "The problem with this increasing ubiquity of the term is that along the way, we've robbed it of its meaning" (Textual 5). Following Kennedy, rather than snack bar marketing, we understand curation as "a category of compositional craft" that requires "a rhetorical, dynamic skill set" involving "filtration, recomposition, and composing for findability and navigation" (7, 28). Recognizing that curation occurs in multiple sites—museums, archives, galleries, textbooks, encyclopedias, digital exhibits, and social media—our understanding of curation as a rhetorical craft nonetheless resists imprecise applications of the term to any "loose collection of links and opinions" (76). Indeed, the labor involved in the craft of curation is extensive, requiring the collaboration of multiple institutions, technologies,

and people. As we might expect, however, women's labor on large curatorial projects is frequently devalued if not entirely erased.¹

One "highly feminized digital platform" for curation is the social bookmarking site Pinterest (Wilson and Yochim 233). Women's participation on the site is visible but dismissed in equal measure. That platforms like Pinterest "are often denigrated by the culture at large further signifies their feminization," as Elana Levine writes in *Cupcakes, Pinterest, and Ladyporn* (1). Levine's title likely brings to mind any number of gendered, sexualized, racialized, and classed images associated with Pinterest. These images are examined by scholars of communication, digital rhetoric, and media studies; yet, women's varied and complex uses of Pinterest remain ripe for further research (Almjeld; Alperstein; Conlin, McLemore, and Rush; Gantz; Levine; Simpson and Mazzeo; Wilson and Yochin). Instead, this essay focuses on our own scholarly participation in Pinterest, as we collaboratively repurposed the site for curation in the service of archival research and pedagogy in feminist rhetorics.

Although feminist rhetorical scholarship takes many forms, it is marked by particular strengths in historiographic work and archival methods. As Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E. Kirsch note in their 2012 account of thirty-plus years of scholarship, "feminist rhetorical practices have been honed particularly on historical rescue, recovery, and (re)inscription" (20). In the words of Jessica Enoch and Jean Bessette, writing about feminist rhetorics and the digital humanities, "Feminist recovery...depends on the archive" (637). While traditional brick-and-mortar archival research remains central to the study of feminist rhetorics, we also "see new horizons emerging," with one "vista" consisting of attention to new communication technologies and their "impacts and consequences" for feminist rhetorics (Royster and Kirsch 149-50). In the realm of historiography, such attention tends to focus on work with digital archives.

These digital formations are marked by archival abundance and user participation. Enoch and Bessette list a number of digital archives that may ground research on women's rhetorics: "HEARTH: The Home Economics Archive; Digital Schomburg: African American Women Writers of the 19th Century; the Victorian Women's Writers Project; the Poetess Archive; the Gerritsen Collection; the Women and Social Movement database; the Queer Rhetoric project; the Orlando project; and Women Working, 1800-1903; among many (many) others" (638). Enoch and Bessette note how "these examples suggest archival abundance—a stark contrast from feminist historiographers'

¹ Kennedy notes women's contributions to the analog and digital encyclopedias that she studies (*Textual* 76-7, 140). Bessette considers the curatorial practices involved in lesbian archival activism (*Retroactivism*).

former scholarly situation" (638-39). "Whereas we once confronted a seeming dearth of archival evidence," they continue, "now it seems that opportunities for digital recovery are everywhere" (639).² This apparent abundance intensifies further as we consider not only digitized versions of existing manuscript collections, but a full range of born-digital artifacts and archives now available. Digital archives—or "archives 2.0," in the words of Alexis E. Ramsey-Tobienne—include born-digital collections.³ They are characterized, most especially, by user participation. "The most basic conception of archives 2.0," Ramsey-Tobienne explains, "is grounded on the idea of collaboration within a digital space" (5). Users collaborate to construct digital archives by uploading files, posting commentary, and recirculating archival materials via social media, including Pinterest.⁴

2 On "archival overabundance," see also Enoch and Gold (106); Rosenzweig. It is important to keep in mind that such abundance is accompanied by new forms of often gendered absence (Moravec).

3 Ramsey-Tobienne elaborates on the concept of archives 2.0 as theorized by Theimer.

4 User participation in archives 2.0 raises questions of copyright. While Pinterest (the company) is likely protected by Section 512 and "the safe-harbor provisions in the Digital Millennium Copyright Act ('DMCA')," the liability for copyright infringement of individual users is another matter (Carpenter 10). Assessing this potential for liability, Carpenter concludes that fair use likely protects most Pinterest users (11). Carpenter's evaluation seems relevant to most archival activity on Pinterest, which involves non-commercial uses that transform (in terms of purpose, even if not appearance) already-published materials in order to organize and comment on them. Whereas collecting and re-pinning found archival materials is one matter, uploading new images is another. As Gard and Whetstone explain, Pinterest's Terms of Use "clearly state that a member must be the owner of the material posted or have authorization to post it; anything she posts must not be in violation of a third party's copyright or a violation of any other intellectual property right" (272). Where we see potential for copyright infringement, then, is when a scholar uploads new photographs taken of brick-andmortar archival materials, especially unpublished ones. In this case, as when seeking to publish such photographs in scholarly journals, researchers would need to discuss copyright and the formal written permissions process with the archive in guestion.

Ramsey-Tobienne's concept of archives 2.0 aligns with longstanding investments in collaboration among feminist scholars (Lunsford and Ede; Enoch, Bessette, and VanHaitsma). Still, the collaborative possibilities afforded by digital archives for feminist research should not be romanticized (Enoch and Bessette; Graban, Ramsey-Tobienne, and Myers; Haskins). Whereas many women utilize Pinterest, affording users increased access to some forms of information and collaboration, the site's infrastructure also directs women's participation in limiting ways. As Katherine Gantz acknowledges in her study of women's discursive strategies and collaboration on Pinterest, "the site often functions as a repressive mechanism, recycling hegemonic notions of feminine politeness and capitalist-constructed heteronormativity" (28). These limitations are crucial to keep in mind as this essay moves forward. With our focus on collaborative uses of Pinterest in the service of our research and pedagogy, we intentionally resist hegemonic constructions of gender while pursuing explicitly feminist ends. Because the platform was not designed (or monetized) for these purposes, our feminist scholarly uses of Pinterest amount to a repurposing of the site.

Working with the example of Pinterest, we argue that digital curation may function as a collaborative archival method for scholars of feminist rhetorics who are interested in bringing together our field's established strengths in historiographic scholarship with emergent digital communication technologies.⁵ This argument is grounded in our collaboration within a pedagogical context and is developed here through three sections.⁶ In the first, Pamela introduces our collaboration as it began in a graduate seminar she taught, Women's and Feminist Rhetorics. For this course, Pamela designed a digital curation assignment that she initially intended to involve collaborative curation of existing archives. Over the course of the semester, however, other unanticipated curatorial practices unfolded through our collaboration. In the next sections, Cassandra, a participant in the graduate seminar, discusses two of these practices: constructing "lower-case-*a* archives" and building community through

⁵ Finnegan argues that curation—whether as process, practice, or platform—ideally plays a central role in the work of rhetorical criticism writ large (407).

⁶ For other pedagogical approaches to engaging digital archives in undergraduate courses, see Bessette, "Audio"; Enoch and VanHaitsma; Greer; Greer and Grobman; Hayden; Hayden and Graban; Mutnick; Purdy; Rice and Rice; VanHaitsma; Vetter.

history-in-the-making.⁷ We conclude by pointing to the implications of such collaborative digital curation for "new horizons" in feminist rhetorics.

Curating Existing Archives

Our understanding of digital curation as a collaborative archival method evolved through working together in the Women's and Feminist Rhetorics seminar that I, Pamela, taught during the fall of 2016. Informed by the piloting of a small-scale curation assignment in two prior courses, I developed a semester-long collaborative project to "curate...collections of archives...related to women's and feminist rhetorics from across historical periods and cultural contexts."8 On Pinterest, this curation takes the form of "pinning" the websites of digital archives to what the platform calls "boards" (see Figure 1). Along these lines, for example, I created an "Archives of Women's & Feminist Rhetorics" board where we began curating archives of potential relevance to both our shared course inquiries and individual students' final research projects (see Figure 2). To set the stage for Cassandra's discussion of the inventive ways students used the platform, this section draws on scholarship from rhetoric, communication, and composition as well as library and information sciences in order to detail the thinking behind the initial design of this digital curation assignment.

⁷ Our work is informed by collaboration with other seminar participants. We cite their unpublished and digital work only where given written permission to do so. Our essay expands on an earlier piece, "Teaching and Researching Feminist Rhetorics: Digital Curation as Collaborative Archival Method," which we wrote with Meagan Clark, Christopher Giofreda, Kimberly Goode, and Meredith Privott for the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition blog: <u>http://cwshrc.org/ blog/2017/02/24/teaching-researching-feminist-rhetorics/</u>.

⁸ Here we reference the assignment, which is available along with other materials at the course website: <u>https://feministrhetoricsblog.word-press.com</u>.

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Figure 2: "Archives of Women's and Feminist Rhetorics" board.

My goal when designing this project was to make archival research more accessible to seminar participants. While archival research is central to feminist historiography, involvement in such research is productive even for research agendas that are not primarily historical. In the words of Jonathan Buehl, Tamar Chute, and Anne Fields, archival training encourages graduate students to not only "conduct creative and provocative historical research," but also "think critically about methods, methodology, and scholarly argumentation"

(279). In Cassandra's case, as a doctoral candidate in English and a writing center administrator, her scholarship consists mainly of qualitative research in writing centers. However, her engagement with archives during the course facilitated new ways of thinking about the intersections of writing center studies with feminist rhetorical studies. Yet, material obstacles prohibit many scholars from traveling to brick-and-mortar repositories.⁹ A key obstacle that we faced, working together in a synchronous distance education course, was that we did not have access to the same analog archives. Most seminar participants attended the course via two-way streaming video from dispersed geographic locations. While I taught from Norfolk, VA, for instance, Cassandra participated in the course from Louisville, KY. Although synchronous distance education of this sort remains unique among PhD programs in rhetoric, limited access to brick-and-mortar archives is not. There are many who—whether for reasons of finances, (dis)ability, or family—do not have the ability to travel far and wide to conduct archival research. For these feminist scholars, the curation of existing digital archives holds particular possibilities for facilitating access.¹⁰

While any number of social networking sites may be used to collect and share primary materials, Pinterest is especially suited to the curation of digital archives.¹¹ As Elaine Thornton explains, Pinterest "functions as a place to purposefully collect images from the Internet. By providing functionality that allows users the ability to collect, organize, categorize, and share images, Pinterest fills a gap that other social networking tools do not" (165). Mark Baggett and Rabia Gibbs note that Pinterest's "specific focus on images" accounts for why institutions such as the United States National Archives, United Kingdom Archives, and New York Public Library "have embraced" it to facilitate

10 That said, increased access to archives through digitization and curation does not resolve the political questions of *which* archives are digitized (Enoch and Bessette; Moravec; Solberg).

11 For readers interested in exploring other options, McGrail and Powell offer a chart that compares different platforms.

⁹ Recognizing such obstacles, Purdy points out that accessibility is one the "gifts" of digital archives, which eliminate many of the "temporal and spatial obstacles to archival research" (40). On distinctions between access and accessibility with respect to digital research and primary sources, see Yakel. See also Graban, Ramsey-Tobienne, and Myers (237).

"the discovery and access of digital collections" (11, 15).¹² Baggett and Gibbs's study of the University of Tennessee Library found, for example, that more users accessed those digital collections for which images were uploaded to Pinterest.¹³ Not surprisingly, then, university libraries often elect the Pinterest platform when their goal is not simply to communicate with users, but to share digitized materials from their archival collections (Thornton 171). They use Pinterest, in Thornton's words, to "meet users where they are" and "draw visitors to collections, resources, and digitized archival materials" (164-65). Because libraries use Pinterest to meet users where they are, feminist scholars may use it to meet archives where *they* are within digital networks. Utilizing the platform's purpose as well as its visual functionality, feminist teachers and students are able to access and curate collections of existing archives.

The rhetorical dimensions of this curation encompass arrangement and invention. For example, in Nan Johnson's methodological reflection on collecting archival materials while conducting research for a book project, she writes, "Through incremental recalibrations of what I sought and what I collected the gap closed slowly between the popular rhetoric collection and the gender and rhetoric collection within my ever-expanding archive" (294). "At this point in my story," Johnson continues, "collecting material had become a heuristic act" (294). Cory Geraths and Michele Kennerly turn to practices for digital collection. Focusing on the rhetorical tradition of commonplace books, they "propose to revive the commonplace book and revise it for the digital age" ("Pinvention" 166).¹⁴ Specifically, they revive commonplace books through Pinterest, urging that this revision is necessary for navigating the seemingly overwhelming amount of information available online: "Our digital update of the commonplace book leverages both a time-tested form of information organization and the ease and accessibility of a digital platform" (167). This use of Pinterest as a commonplace book for digital curation is pedagogically productive in that "the activities required to start and maintain commonplace books reinforce... invention as a process that requires collection, organization, and reflection" (167). Moreover, the digital platform's emphasis on visuals allows students "to see, easily move around, and categorize materials" (167). Pinterest is well

13 See also Baggett, Gibbs, and Shumar.

14 Lui also situates Pinterest in relation to "past or offline traditions of curation," including commonplace books (130). Almjeld makes the connection to commonplace books as well.

¹² Hansen, Nowlan, and Winter also discuss the importance of visuals to Pinterest, especially with respect to teaching and student learning styles.

suited to making, refining, and moving around categories as students collect digital archives to enable invention. In Johnson's words, "Collecting was thinking: thinking was collecting" (295). As we might paraphrase, based on our experiences, curation was thinking: thinking was curation.

Invention through digital curation is, again, collaborative. More specifically, as Kennedy emphasizes, the type of collaboration that defines most curatorial work is large-scale, distributed collaboration, with important implications for pedagogy.¹⁵ Students, she writes, "will become writers in an increasingly networked world, and the writing they produce will be (and already is) almost entirely digital...They will also inevitably deal with highly collaborative, distributed environments [which] go beyond individual or even small-group websites" ("Textual" 186). With this exigency in mind, Kennedy ventures that, "In order for a class to take up a project of sufficient size to really grapple with the experience of creating a curated text, the instructor may choose to shape the entire semester's work to the work of building of such a site" (186).¹⁶ This is exactly what we did in the Women's and Feminist Rhetorics seminar, as I designed our digital curation project to foreground whole-class collaboration throughout the entire semester. While reading feminist scholarship about collaboration, we worked together to create Pinterest boards related to our various scholarly interests, collect pins for each board, and develop metadata for the boards and pins.¹⁷ We also held regular in-class meetings to discuss our collaborative process.

In some cases, our collaborative process functioned as I had initially intended, so that we curated links to existing digital archives in the service of the seminar participants' primary research projects. For example, Christopher Giofreda embarked on a feminist rhetorical study of Rosa Sonneschein's

15 See also Castro-Lewandowski; Lui.

16 This building includes, as Kennedy continues, "initial rhetorical analysis, developing the basic site architecture and helping students self-select topics based on interest, conducting careful research, filtering, drafting, and recomposition, inserting and maintaining navigation, usability testing, and iterative review" (186).

17 The scholarship we read for this assignment includes the following: Enoch and Bessette; Enoch, Bessette, and VanHaitsma; Geraths and Kennerly, "Pinvention"; Graban, Ramsey-Tobienne, and Myers; Johnson; Kennedy, "Textual"; Lunsford and Ede; McKee and Porter; Ramsey-Tobienne. A full list of assigned readings is available via the course website: <u>https://feministrhetoricsblog.wordpress.com</u>. American Jewess, digitized by the University of Michigan. Another graduate student, J. Meredith Privott, examined the rhetoric of Indigenous women water protectors as represented in video-recorded interviews from the #NoDAPL Digital Archive. Yet there was flexibility in the initial project design, in that it invited students to curate not only "links to digital archives," but also "online materials, and other resources." I built in this flexibility because, while I hoped to make archival work an accessible option for students, I did not want to force it on those students more interested in other sorts of feminist rhetorics projects. Indeed, whereas seminar participants like Christopher and J. Meredith did curate links to already-intact collections, most took another route, using Pinterest to construct their own collections of digitized artifacts and born-digital materials.

Constructing "Lower-case-a archives"

The other seminar participants and I, Cassandra, did not simply pin existing archives, but constructed our own collections, developing what Cheryl Glenn and Jessica Enoch characterize as "lower-case-*a* archives" (17). These archives stand in contrast with the "upper-case-*A* Archives" described by Robert Connors. As Glenn and Enoch insist, "Not all archival research...begins—or ends—on a university campus or at a prestigious research library" (17). Instead, researchers in rhetoric, communication, and composition need to also consult lower-case-*a* archives, which consist of artifacts not immediately recognized as central to historiography. These lower-case-*a* archives are especially important to feminist rhetorics because they allow scholars to construct histories that may be overlooked through research only in traditional archives.¹⁸

Employing Pinterest, we combined feminist investments in lower-case-*a* archives with the features of archives 2.0, which "are more than digital collections because they invite participation in the formation and expansion of sites, expecting involvement from both archivists and users/researchers alike" (Ramsey-Tobienne 6). By pinning both born-digital artifacts and links to existing archives, we created Pinterest boards where we curated objects of study related to a variety of existing research interests and areas of new inquiry prompted by the course. Examples include J. Meredith's board, "Digital Ephemera"

¹⁸ Geraths and Kennerly provide another example of using Pinterest in their work on Aspasia and nineteenth-century art ("Painted Lady"). Using a Google Images search, they collected and pinned lesser-known images of Aspasia on a publically available Pinterest board. Although they do not name their board an "archive," it functions much like a lower-case-*a* archive. See also Marshall (370-77).

(of the Standing Rock Sioux's fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline) (see Figure 3) and Kimberly Goode's board, "#YesAllWomen." J. Meredith noted that she collected "about 45 different memes [and] images circulating around the... movement," and that "this board could end up being a treasure trove for someone interested in visual rhetorics." Kimberly's board archived #YesAllWomen tweets, which she later examined as a form of public memory.

Even as we designate these Pinterest collections "lower-case-*a* archives," we recognize the concerns of some archival researchers—and archival scholars and practicing archivists especially—about the expansive application of the term "archive" to many kinds of collections, especially by scholars in the humanities. As Michelle Caswell argues, such references to the archive tend to ignore what Ann Cvetkovich terms "actually existing archives" (268), particularly with respect to "collections of records, material and immaterial, analog and digital…, the institutions that steward them, the places where they are physically located, and the processes that designated them 'archival'" (Caswell). From a feminist perspective, such disregard for the history of archival scholarship as well as the labor of practicing archivists is particularly troubling in its gendered and classed dimensions. Like us, Kate Eichhorn recognizes that, "professional archivists understandably worry about the increasingly hazy distinction between the terms 'collection,' 'library,' and 'archive'" (15).

Eichhorn reminds, however, that "to label a personal collection an 'archive'...remains a powerful authorizing act and not because [the] act is necessarily committed to preservation." Rather, "precisely the recognition of the archive as discursive structure has driven the archival turn in contemporary feminist activism, scholarship, and cultural production. For a generation or two of women born during and following the rise of the second wave feminist movement, inaugurating private and semipublic collections as archives... is central to how they legitimize their voices in the public sphere." In Eichhorn's discussion of how labeling collections "archives" is an important authorizing act, she also centers the act of donating such collections to established institutional archives: our lower-case-a archives curated on Pinterest are distinct from her examples in that respect. Still, in labeling our curated collections lower-case-*a* archives, we are intentionally engaging in an authorizing act, legitimizing our rhetorical practices less in relation to institutional archives or an abstract public sphere, but more as part of the broader "archival turn in contemporary feminist activism, scholarship, and cultural production" (15).

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Figure 3: J. Meredith's board, "Digital Ephemera" (of the Standing Rock Sioux's fight against the Dakota Access Pipeline)

One of our first hurdles in curating these lower-case-*a* archives was simply to reorient our understanding of research methods. As graduate students with research experience mainly in textual analysis and qualitative and quantitative methods, archival research was new to many of us. Because of our familiarity with digital research with secondary sources, several of us attempted to pin scholarly journal articles instead of primary artifacts such as memes, blogs, or websites. Heather Herbert described the learning curve and frustration she faced as a scholar working in a new digital platform. After she had worked on creating pins for her board, she realized, "the link I provided would fail to work later when my authentication to the site timed out," because she had pinned links that were behind a paywall.

But once we moved past such initial frustration, using Pinterest shaped our methods in productive ways. D. Knowles Ball describes how the ease of pinning memes revealed a new direction for her research: "A pin I made to my own board [led] me to my course research topic...This pin allowed me to take my investigation of feminist rhetoric and breastfeeding in new directions that I had never anticipated but am quite glad for the results." Her experience exploring Pinterest, beginning with her interest in breastfeeding memes, led her to consider questions of visual rhetoric within breastfeeding communities. Her work underscores how feminist researchers may use the networked affordances of Pinterest to discover new connections. Although the platform resisted our academic tendency to recognize scholarly journals as the only sources available, it also opened up the possibilities of primary research within lower-case-*a* archives of digital texts that are created and circulated among non-academic audiences.

As a writing center scholar, I seized an opportunity to curate lower-case-*a* archives of the history of women and feminism in writing centers. The field of writing center studies has a history of important conversations in spaces not immediately recognizable as serious academic publications. Notably, in 1976 Muriel Harris founded *The Writing Lab Newsletter* "on a Sears typewriter, cut and pasted—somewhat askew—at [her] kitchen table" (Kinkead 132); the newsletter was one space for writing center administrators "to exchange ideas and information" among "those who are of a helping, nursing bent anyway" (Harris 16). As the description of Harris's process and purpose illustrates, there is much to uncover about the impact of women, feminization, and feminist thought on writing centers. Yet this is a history that may not be found through research in upper-case-*A* Archives or electronic databases of journals.

For example, I created the "Searching for Feminism and Feminist Perspectives" board (see Figure 4). By including sources outside peer-reviewed journals, I used this board to begin curating a lower-case-*a* archive of women's conversations and experiences in writing centers. Later, for my final paper, I theorized the role of feminist thought and women themselves across as many writing center-related publications as I could find. I argued that a feminized versus feminist narrative tends to dominate conversations about the role of gender in writing center studies. However, I found alternatives to the feminized/feminist binary do exist. I pointed to examples of scholars who use feminist methodologies to create knowledge, disrupt narratives, and educate tutors. Because I did not include peer reviewed journals behind paywalls on the Pinterest board, my lower-case-*a* archive of course did not amount to a "complete" archive of published texts related to feminism in writing centers. Yet, the selections involved in my curatorial process contributed to my understanding of what constitutes an archive of a discipline's history. In particular, I discovered that including The Writing Lab Newsletter and dated edited collections in my final paper helped to historicize the prevalence of describing writing centers using feminized language. I found, for instance, that valid attempts to describe dialogic collaboration conflated "feminist" with "feminization" by drawing on the metaphor of tutor as midwife (DeLappe; Rabuck). Ignoring these sources and instead focusing only on the history of writing centers as represented in the flagship *The Writing Center Journal* might create a privileged version of our field's history. Through curating my lower-case-a archive, I

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began to understand how defining the archival boundaries of any disciplinary history limits its representation.



Figure 4: Cassandra's board, "Searching for Feminism and Feminist Perspectives" (in writing centers).

Importantly, those of us developing lower-case-*a* archives did not undertake this curation in isolation. Pamela set up our course Pinterest account specifically so that we could see the work of our peers and collaborate on boards with them. Our collaboration amounted to what Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede deem dialogic collaboration: "This dialogic mode is loosely structured, and the roles enacted within it are fluid...In this mode the process of articulating and working together to achieve goals is as important as the goals themselves" (235-36). Several of us wrote about our active engagement with one another's boards in our reflections on the project. For instance, Kimberly describes pins she added to Christopher's board, "Books on Jewish Women" (see Figure 5): "Since [his] final project is about...Rosa Sonneschein, I thought this was a great reference for him. It examines the various images and stereotypes lewish women historically had to combat over the past several decades in America." Kimberly's example shows how, with some understanding of Christopher's project, she could contribute meaningfully to his board. Kimberly reflected on the importance of this collaboration: "I felt like it [pinning to Christopher's board] encapsulated the purpose of our collaborative board. We are to help each other, be each other's sounding boards, as well as to suggest ideas and sources." Similarly, Heather reflects on pins added to her board by Casey Reid, acknowledging the scholarly fruitfulness of this type of dialogic collaboration: "Casey saved several pins to my Mansplaining board that gave me new ideas

of how to search for relevant materials." Several of us engaged with one another's research in a form of dialogic collaboration, which enhanced both our own projects and our collaboration skills.



Figure 5: Christopher's "Books on Jewish Women" board with contributions from both Christopher and Kimberly.

While we engaged with one another's research through dialogic collaboration, there were several boards on which no one other than the board's creator contributed. This lack of full participation suggests the importance of communicating clearly about our lower-case-*a* archives to potentially engaged audiences. Indeed, Ramsey-Tobienne recognizes that the "need for participation" is also "one downside of archives 2.0" (8). In my case, although I attempted to reach a peer through "tagging" her in pins, I did not receive a response from her, and there were no comments added to my board. One approach to addressing this lack of participation involves communicating about one's archival project beyond a course context. Such communication could include sharing on listservs and professional social media accounts. Our class had some success communicating with one another and even engaging outside audiences on Twitter (using the hashtag #WomFemRhet), as Kimberly points out in her reflection. But we could have done more to explicitly invite engagement with our lower-case-*a* archives.

Another approach to encouraging participation involves communication through metadata. On Pinterest metadata includes the captions, or descriptions of boards and individual pins, in order to explain to potential collaborators the goals for the lower-case-*a* archives. Kennedy describes the rhetorical dimensions of metadata: "These strategic links, recomposed texts, metadata elements, and information architectures are suasive elements that contribute heavily to the ethos of digital arguments, and they help both writers and readers realize the *full potential* of digital environments" ("Textual Curation" 175, our emphasis). The digital metadata that Kennedy describes is related to what archivists and archival scholars call the "representation" of a record. Caswell notes that, "how archivists represent records determines how researchers may access them, and subsequently, which records they use to write histories, make legal decisions, and shape society's views of the past." As humanities scholars attempting to reach potential audiences in digital spaces, then, we may learn from archivists and archival scholars about their composing processes as they represent records. Again, our class was excited to curate lower-case-*a* archives, but our experience shows that "realiz[ing] the full potential" of participatory archives 2.0 requires a wider range of communication strategies for engaging potential collaborators.

Along with the challenge of eliciting desired forms of participation, we received unwanted participation, as feminists often do in digital spaces. Levine, guoting Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, describes the vulnerability of public pinning: "The very act of selecting, sharing, and thus stabilizing a pin of trying to make it 'stand out from the larger flow'— opens the curator and the curated up to the contingencies of consumption and reception, as well as to the contingencies of ordinary affects" (241). In our case, we observed participation by Pinterest users from outside our class who did not share or respect our feminist approaches to curating lower-case-a archives. The unexpected trolling that we experienced pushed us to examine our rhetorical power as curators. For instance, I received a negative comment from a user who disagreed with the argument of an article I pinned, although my pin was selected not as an endorsement, but a historical artifact. I deleted the comment because its presence seemed to distract from the purpose of the archive; however, reflecting back on this decision, perhaps I had too much power to delete such comments from the archive. Another form of unwanted attention occurred when some of our pins were re-pinned to boards outside of the class. While reading about feminist involvement in Black Lives Matter (BLM), we curated a "#BlackLivesMatter Archives" board. Christopher notes that his "pin from the BLM board was re-pinned to an anti-BLM board." Once Christopher's pin was re-pinned, he lost power over its new curatorial life. In appointing ourselves as curators of lower-case-*a* archives, feminist researchers thus need to recognize

both the responsibilities and the limits of our power to circulate born-digital artifacts on Pinterest, a space not entirely welcoming of feminist rhetorical practices.

Building Community through History-in-the-Making

One of our most important curatorial insights emerged from utilizing Pinterest within our immediate historical context—a crucial moment of history-in-the-making for women's rhetorics—as we met for class on the eve of the 2016 presidential election in the United States. The week prior to the election, our reading and discussion focused on the history of women's presidential rhetorics. We considered democratic nominee Hillary Clinton's complex relationship with gender, feminism, and power in the 1990s (Anderson and Sheeler; Campbell; Dozier; Kenty). To situate Clinton's political career within a longer historical context, one attentive to black women's contributions, we also studied the career of Dorothy Chisholm, the first African American woman from a major political party to run for president (Vaidyanathan). In particular, we read about Chisholm's efficacious rhetorical strategies during the 1970s and 80s after becoming "the first black woman to be elected to the United States House of Representatives" in 1968 (Williamson-Ige 95).

Alongside this historical study, Pamela asked us to curate our first "weekly board," where we collected present-day artifacts related to the week's assigned readings. On this "Women's Presidential Rhetorics" board, we each pinned a minimum of two new sources and read two pins made by others (see Figure 6). The weekly board was a shared reading experience, but more social and collaboratively curated than traditional course reading lists. Though not everyone read every artifact posted, we shared responsibility for developing the board over the course of the week. As D. Knowles Ball describes the experience, "it was like making discoveries...going into the collaborative board and perusing my classmates' pinned contributions." We could visually see the collaborative effort as a whole due to the centrality of images to Pinterest boards. As of this writing, for example, there are 49 pins on the "Women's Presidential Rhetorics" board, though our initial plan required only 22 (two per person). Many of us continued to pin on the board throughout the semester. As we worked to make sense of the historical moment, the affordances of digital curation aided us in processing the endless flow of pre- and post-election media while also building community as scholars of feminist rhetorics.

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Figure 6: A section of the "Women's Presidential Rhetoric" board.

Through curating this first weekly board, we found that our process had become more fully collaborative, and we were excited as well by the outcome: a robustly curated lower-case-*a* archive reflecting a spectrum of perspectives related to women's presidential rhetorics, Clinton, and Chisholm. We were eager to continue this curation of history-in-the making. So D. Knowles Ball approached Pamela during our next class meeting to request that we move forward with developing weekly boards throughout the rest of the semester. For the remaining weeks of the course, then, we collaborated to curate digital archives of current events for each of the remaining course topics. These weekly boards included "Transnational Feminist Rhetorics," "Cultural Rhetorics," "#BlackLivesMatter Archives," "Lesbian Feminist Rhetorics," and "Queering Feminist Historiography." Pamela also created another board, "For Teachers and Students After the Election," which amassed 30 pins even though participation was fully optional.

Our energetic pinning during the latter portion of the semester may be attributed partly to post-election bewilderment. Several of us felt both a personal and professional need to process the loss of "our" potential history, as in feminist and women's history. But we were also energized by the community building that our collaborative curation afforded. These collaborative curatorial activities at times transcended the boundaries of personal and professional. Jennifer Douglas argues that even brick-and-mortar archives are often created through collaborative means because each archive has multiple stakeholders with various purposes (including personal ones) and audiences. Yet, Pinterest makes this collaboration, often hidden in brick-and-mortar archives, more visible to those working outside the archival professions. Debora Lui also discusses how Pinterest has the potential to "blur the line between personal and public," because it combines elements of private commonplace books with social media (130). Collecting and sharing pins that connected history-in-the-making to our weekly course topics not only helped us process the current news, but shifted our daily media consumption from private and oftentimes passive to public and more active. Referencing election news, Casey reflected,

> The articles I was posting on Facebook about the role of gender in the presidential election felt like they had relevance beyond how I was using them privately: I used many of them for our class boards, and as I began to see my pins and my classmates' pins accumulating, it felt as though we truly were creating something of potential interest to other feminist scholars, as well as individuals who are interested on a personal level with feminism and feminist commentary.

Casey underscores how our personal investments often carried over into the class's archival space, ideally enhancing this space we coded as "professional" for the purposes of our course.

As we collaborated to create new archives on Pinterest related to current events, we developed into a feminist rhetorical community whose goal was to help potential audiences make sense of history-in-the-making. As we described in the previous section, we learned the importance of cultivating a committed community of archivists who share feminist rhetorical goals. Although the degree of collaboration varied on the individual boards, the shared exigence of the weekly boards helped us define our rhetorical purpose and ethos as a class. Ramsey-Tobienne reminds us that "ethos-building is important for socalled archives 2.0 because guestions of trust and community are central to concerns about this developing archival space" (5). As we experienced sporadically on our individually-initiated boards, we needed dialogic collaboration in order for them to become fully realized archives 2.0. J. Meredith's reflection on the "For Teachers and Students After the Election" board describes her understanding of our ethos and how it helped to build community through curation: "these were all pins that I thought might help my classmates or any visitor get through that particularly tough week. It's clear that my classmates had the same idea in mind—everyone added pins that represented resources, inspiration, or new directions to turn to...[the board] may have been one of our most truly dialogic boards this semester." J. Meredith shows that our class-community's primary audiences were academic and non-academic.

Finally, our curation of history-in-the-making through the weekly boards exemplifies Kennedy's emphasis on the role of distributed labor in developing large-scale curatorial projects. She explains, "Textual curators must always contend with distributed collaborative environments and, consequently, distributed agency because they are always and ever working to arrange prior texts into innovative, flexible textual ecologies" ("Textual" 179). Distributed collaboration allows more archival work to be accomplished because multiple curators are working with a shared sense of purpose in a workflow that is more horizontal than vertical. In the case of curating lower-case-*a* archives, this curatorial labor includes identifying and addressing absences in the archives. In a blog post collaboratively authored by seminar participants, for example, we discuss Kimberly's contributions to the "#BlackLivesMatter Archives" board: "Kimberly pinned to this board an article that juxtaposed the generational pain of such violence alongside pins of protest footage. As a critical viewer of this archive constructed by the class, Kimberly recognized an omission in the board, and she used her position as a collaborative archivist to fill the gap" (VanHaitsma, Book, Clark, Giofreda, Goode, and Privott). Here and elsewhere on Pinterest, our feminist collaboration enabled not only community building through curation, but "distributed agency" as seminar participants created and revised lower-case-*a* archives that flexibly adapted to history-in-the-making, addressing archival absences along the way.

Conclusion: "New Horizons" for Feminist Rhetorics

Our experiences using Pinterest for collaborative curation involved both intended practices—curating existing archives of women's and feminist rhetorics—and emergent ones—constructing new lower-case-*a* archives as well as building community through history-in the making. In each case, these curatorial practices enabled our research projects, enlivened our scholarly conversations about methodologies and methods, and supported our collaborative efforts to bring the study of feminist rhetorics to bear on present exigencies. Of course, these curatorial practices also presented challenging opportunities: to be pedagogically responsive to unexpected turns in our collaboration; facilitate meaningful participation when collaboratively composing comments and metadata; and negotiate relations between academic and non-academic audiences, including undesirable responses from audiences unsupportive of feminist rhetorics. In navigating these possibilities and challenges, we have also reflected on the broader implications of our collaborative digital curation for teachers and scholars of feminist rhetorics.

First and foremost, this experience bolsters our conviction about the need for feminist rhetorical pedagogies that incorporate historical as well as digital approaches. We see that most graduate seminars focused on feminist rhetorics, in keeping with the longstanding emphasis on recovery and historiography, still tend to emphasize a historical approach. We believe this approach remains significant, in terms of both learning the history of our field and having opportunities to practice primary, archival methods. Still, as scholarship in recent years makes clear, there is much more to the study of feminist rhetorics than historiography and archival methods. We urge, then, that graduate faculty revise pedagogical approaches in light of ongoing scholarly developments. We have suggested one way to do so, through digital curation as a method for bringing together our field's established strengths in historiographic scholarship with the "new horizons emerging" through digital communication technologies (Royster and Kirsch 149).

For graduate students as well as established scholars across rhetoric, communication, and composition, knowledge of digital rhetorics and experience with collaborative methods are increasingly essential. Returning to Kennedy's call, we are reminded and want to underscore that scholarly conversations exist "in an increasingly networked world, and the writing [we] produce will be (and already is) almost entirely digital" ("Textual" 186). Anyone attentive to the actual, present-day job market that graduate students find themselves entering—both in and beyond the academy—must realize that excluding the study of digital rhetorics from our graduate pedagogies, particularly in courses that draw large numbers of women students, does them an incredible disservice with intellectual, professional, and material consequences. Of course, in order to teach digital rhetorics, more established scholars must be willing to engage with them in their own scholarship.

Geraths and Kennerly offer model projects produced through digital curation and collaboration. As feminist scholars curate and theorize digital lower-case-*a* archives, we need to follow their example by making our methods public. As in the case of archival research (Ramsey, Sharer, L'Eplattenier, and Mastrangelo), such transparency about digital curation will offer exemplars for scholars who wish to replicate curatorial practices. Moreover, sharing a link to a public lower-case-*a* archive may open up that collection for others to conduct additional studies as well as invite participation from new academic and non-academic audiences. Such increased collaboration is a new reality for scholarship in the humanities. While institutionalized hierarchies of value in the humanities continue to valorize the performance (and illusion) of sole authorship, our own ethics and methods in feminist rhetorics have long underscored the value of collaborative scholarship, even for those of us who remain highly strategic about the kinds of collaboration in which we invest our time and energies. Moreover, if the study of feminist rhetorics is to genuinely engage scholars from across the many subfields of composition and communication—including scholars in technical communication, compositionists who do empirical research, scholars involved in the digital humanities, and communication scientists—we would do well to attend to and make visible methods for collaboration, as collaboration often drives research in these areas.

As we conclude with these reflections on new horizons for feminist rhetorics through increased attention to distributed collaboration and digital rhetorics, we offer the use of digital curation as one method for accomplishing these ends. Yet we also want to continue to ask: How might we teach feminist rhetorics in ways that position ourselves and our students to conduct and contribute to the range of archival, digital, and social scientific research that characterizes our rich and methodologically diverse fields of rhetoric, communication, and composition? We invite our colleagues in feminist rhetorics to join us in imagining, articulating, and sharing still other ways to engage in and teach a range of digital and collaborative methods.

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About the Authors

Pamela VanHaitsma is an assistant professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Penn State University, where she also serves as an associate director of the Center for Humanities and Information. Her work has appeared in Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Advances in the History of Rhetoric, Rhetoric Review, and College Composition and Communication, among others. Her first book, Queering Romantic Engagement in the Postal Age: A Rhetorical Education, is forthcoming with University of South Carolina Press.

Cassandra Book is the associate director of the University Writing Center at the University of Louisville and a doctoral candidate in English at Old Dominion University. Her scholarship has appeared in The Peer Review, Southern Discourse in the Center, and Communicating Advice: Peer Tutoring and Communication Practice.