

# Toward a *Peitho* Citizenry: A Welcome and Introduction

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Welcome to the Fall 2025 issue of *Peitho*, our first as the new co-editors team. We are excited to be here in these pages, and we could not be more grateful to our predecessors, Drs. Rebecca Dingo and Clancy Ratliffe. We have participated in a nearly six-month transitional period of learning from them and gaining insight into the many processes and logistics of running the only academic journal on the history of feminisms and rhetorics. To say that we are humbled and proud to take the reigns from these esteemed scholars and their team is an understatement: Thank you to Rebecca and Clancy, editorial assistants Rachel Smith-Olson and Jade Onn, and the outgoing editorial board, chaired by Tarez Graban, for your service and commitment to the excellence we hope to carry on.

We join *Peitho* editorial team members Dr. Jennifer Nish, who remains the associate editor, and Hannah Taylor, who will stay on as web coordinator. We'd also like to introduce Holli Flanagan and Taylor Hughes as our graduate editorial assistants. The WAC Clearinghouse and, in particular, Mike Palmquist has also welcomed us into the technical aspects of the journal, and we thank him as well. We are honored to have been entrusted to lead this team, and we are thrilled that Rebecca and Tarez will stay on as members of the newly composed editorial board ([view the full list here](#)), bringing with them their expertise and historical memory of *Peitho*.

We also hope that the continuity they will all bring will help us nurture what we're envisioning as a *Peitho* citizenry, *Peitho* as a place where authors, reviewers, and editors collaborate to create knowledge that supports a well-informed public. In the second issue of the Coalition newsletter (the first one to be called *Peitho*), editors Kay Halasek and Susan Jarratt (1997) describe *Peitho*, the Greek goddess of persuasion, as one who "crosses from a feminized world of seduction into the public life of communities" (p.7). They continue, "her power is necessary for establishing civilization and democracy"; she is "of the people" (p.8). Now, more than 2000 years later, we take it seriously that the work of academic journals is to produce scholarship that does nothing less than use its power the way *Peitho* did, to establish the standards of civilization and democracy. We see it as our duty as editors of *Peitho* to provide a space where the link between feminism and public action can continue to be strengthened.

Feminisms and rhetorics are important to the three of us as scholars, teachers, and people. Feminisms have inspired us throughout our lives, as we grew from girls observing the limitations apparent in life and the messages aimed at us into women who wished to think critically and deeply about those things, to learn from others' perspectives, and to influence our contexts and make improvements for others. Rhetorics brought us together as students and lovers of language, writing, and people. Rhetorics help us "do" our lives—understand situations, speak up, take action. Together, of course, the combination is potent. In our roles at the journal, we are taking the two forces as a way to listen and learn more—about our histories, about our read-



ers, about the scholarship of the next generation percolating “out there.” We invite you to tell us so we can listen and learn: What are you learning? What is there to know? What haven’t we heard of yet? How can things change? As mothers of grown and still growing children, ages 7 to 23, we say: Our listening ears are on.

In addition to calling for your feedback, we have calls to make for new types of journal submissions. One of the best aspects of *Peitho* is its expansiveness; many subjects, contexts, topics, people, histories, stories, methods/methodologies, and types of arguments and evidence fill these pages. Some themes over the past five years that have emerged within the journal, and which we are happy to see evolve include: archival research, activist research, transnational feminism, microhistories of feminist politics/political movements and political people, counter-narratives and alternative rhetorics, rhetorical analyses, work on women’s safety, rhetorics of the body, and much more. We will continue the tradition of publishing rigorously reviewed traditional articles, book reviews, and Recoveries and Reconsiderations. Additionally, we are happy to announce that we are launching two new submission types for future issues.

## Overlays: Citizens with New Insights

*Peitho* is a feminist citizenry that values how archives provoke new and more complicated understandings of people and pasts. We envision “Overlays” as short, exploratory essays that make room for presenting interesting archival finds, learning, or insights that help researchers explore rhetorics further; work out ideas they are gleaning from historical feminist research; or share something relevant that perhaps “didn’t make it” into a more formalized or finalized academic writing product. Inspired by Michael R. Hill’s (1993) description of “overlay channels,” or artifacts that show layers, reveal connections, or speak to multiple points of view simultaneously, Overlay essays:

- Are short, first-person or otherwise less formal academic essays of up to 3,000 words
- May be artistic and feature narrative and dialogue conventions as appropriate
- Should nod to appropriate theories or extant scholarship
- May contain original photography of archival finds that fall within permissions of their archives of origins and/or IRB permission
- Should be clearly linked to the aims and scope of *Peitho*

Prompts to encourage your Overlays:

- An archival research challenge, struggle, tangle, or unclear, frustrating experience that you cannot yet understand, that flies in the face of your assumptions, that complicates what you thought you knew
- An archival find that doesn’t fit, that extends thinking, that challenges our paradigms, that is not expected, or that can’t yet be easily categorized or understood in our field of feminist rhetorical research
- An “a-ha” moment you had in the archives, how archival methodology’s limits and affordances

pushed you to learn, to make connections, or to understand something in a new way

- Commentary on archival experiences that underscore the limits of whose lives are recorded, saved, and archived, and how and whether we can resuscitate more and different artifacts
- A research experience or story that encapsulates why archives remain important to feminist rhetorical research, and/or what new affordances there may be in conceptions of 21<sup>st</sup> century archives as mediated by technologies

Please [read more about Overlays at our website](#). We look forward to the possibilities of this kind of submission.

## **Pedagogies: *Peitho* as a Teaching Citizenry**

Feminist rhetoricians are often citizens who teach. Therefore, our second new submission type is *Pedagogies*. In *Teaching Rhetorica: Theory, Pedagogy, Practice*, Kate Ronald and Joy Ritchie (2006) lamented that feminist rhetorical practices and theories had not yet been integrated into curriculum and pedagogies the way the classical rhetorical tradition had (p. 5). In the nearly 20 years since then, in our practices as teachers and among the many colleagues we know working in feminisms and rhetorics, things have changed greatly. Therefore, *Peitho* welcomes written submissions on the teaching of feminist rhetoric; we encourage you to send us pieces that describe and reflect on innovative teaching practices in courses where the focus is feminist rhetoric and where you, as a teacher, implement feminist pedagogies in innovative ways.

Pedagogies can take shape in two ways: course designs (adapted with permission from our colleagues at *Composition Studies*) and instructional notes (adapted with permission from our colleagues at *TETYC*). While adapted from writing studies journals, our call has, of course, a special caveat: The design of the course or activity should focus on feminist rhetoric (i.e., students are learning about/using feminist rhetoric) or a course or activity in teaching feminist rhetoric (i.e., students are learning how to teach feminist rhetoric). Please [read more about Pedagogies submissions here](#). We are excited to learn more about our feminist peers' teaching.

## **Getting Involved with *Peitho***

If you are a *Peitho* reader, you are a member of the *Peitho* citizenry, and we look forward to collaborating with you to enhance the journal's vision for civic participation. Whether or not your own scholarship currently fits the journal mission, or if you're not ready to submit, there are other ways to get involved with the journal. We welcome readers as peer reviewers. You can sign up to be a reviewer [using our interest form at this link](#). We also welcome cover art. As you can see from past issues, many types of art are welcome: drawings, whether digital or by hand (rendered digitally); photography; or photos of other types of visual representations. We are looking for interesting, poignant, beautiful, provocative, and diverse subjects and depictions that speak to the aims and scope of *Peitho*. Please email your submissions to [peithoeditorsteam@gmail.com](mailto:peithoeditorsteam@gmail.com).

## In This Issue

We have been energized by the submissions we've seen over the past few months and the commitment of their authors to a citizenry with scholarly integrity. We see them, and the almost 40 years of prior Peitho scholars, as the foundation of the kind of citizenry we are enthusiastic about nurturing. Here, we are thrilled to introduce you to the pieces and authors included in this issue.

In the lead article for this issue, Carolyn Skinner contributes to the study of “reception” as a rhetorical phenomenon by exploring the collective, dispersed, and evolving processes by which rhetoric affects audiences and alters worldviews in a new coinage she calls “meta-reception.” As she argues, “reception” refers to the effects that texts have on audiences and to what audiences do with the texts they read, watch, or hear, and “meta-reception” refers, instead, to the commentary on direct reception—to reception of the reception. Sharing a variety of examples to illustrate this new concept, the author ultimately argues that meta-reception, as a variation of reception, presents similar opportunities to feminist scholars of rhetoric. Thus, the piece offers future researchers a new and generative concept through which to conceive of their own work. Meta-reception is presented as an analytic tool specifically for feminist rhetorical work, yet it is also clear that the concept has utility for rhetorical studies in general.

Next, readers will find Kelly Franklin's beautifully written essay on African American Vernacular English (AAVE), linguistic justice, and first-year writing. Using the organizing principle of an experience tutoring a Black athlete at a PWI as he struggled through a first-year writing course, Franklin shows how scholarship related to sociolinguistics, educational malpractice, and linguistic justice helped her to help the student in his endeavor to present his professor with a research paper on those topics—a sort of metacommentary on his own experiences of cultural erasure in the context of damaging pedagogies. Using a strong narrative voice alongside scholarly commentary to present this case, Franklin ultimately shows how Black student athletes and Black feminists can challenge white supremacist logics in their day-to-day work.

We are also pleased to include “‘The rapist is you!’: Remixing the Repertoire of Performance-Protests,” by Stephanie Leow in which she analyzes the rhetorical phenomenon of “Un violador en tu camino” - “A Rapist in Your Path.” She traces the origins of the performance in Chile to the global stage, how it becomes a form of social media activism, and then the backlash to and parody of the movement. Leow's case studies demonstrate how performance theory extends the methodology of iconographic tracking; she offers tools to analyze rhetoric in motion and archiving. Her work teaches readers how feminist protests as performances help us understand historically situated and embodied transmissions of knowledge in digital and physical publics.

Finally, in “Marjory Stoneman Douglas's Everglades: River of Grass, the Rivers of America Book Series, and the Origins of an Environmental Rhetoric,” Paige Banaji beautifully intertwines the publication history of River of Grass within the Rivers of America Series in the mid-century, arguing for Douglas' early contributions to activist environmental rhetorics. Particularly, Banaji traces Douglas' rhetorical savvy in participating as an amateur female science writer in early ecological thinking as the discipline of ecology evolved (and excluded); her savvy in using a nationalistic platform such as the Rivers of America Series to offer critical

histories of Florida that shine an honest light on colonization's cultural and environmental harms; and her early environmental activism in helping to save the Florida Everglades during Florida's development boom of the 1940s.

## The Future of *Peitho* as Citizenship

Our tenure as co-editors will take the journal to 2029. Our hope is that those involved with the production of the journal, from writers to copy-editors, embrace the challenge of a *Peitho* citizenry, and that we all take on the pervasive challenges to democracy, human rights, and integrity that characterize the current sociohistoric moment. While it can often feel like the work we do does not make an impact beyond our own small circles, in contexts in which we run the risk of preaching to the already converted, we call on our community to use their scholarly projects, their everyday insights, and their day-to-day teaching as opportunities to reach and nurture wider publics in the riches of feminist rhetorical thought and action.

## Biographies

**Cathryn Molloy** is a professor of writing studies in the University of Delaware's English Department. She is the author of *Rhetorical Ethos in Health and Medicine: Patient Credibility, Stigma, and Misdiagnosis*. Before joining the co-editing team at *Peitho*, she was on the editing team at *Rhetoric of Health and Medicine* for eight years. Currently, she is co-editing the *Routledge Handbook on the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine* with Lisa Melonçon and J. Blake Scott.

**Bryna Siegel Finer** is a professor of English at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, where she serves as Director of Undergraduate Writing Programs. Her published work has appeared in *Rhetoric of Health & Medicine*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Teaching Writing in the Two-Year College*, *Praxis*, and the *Journal of Teaching Writing*, among others. She has served as the associate editor of *Rhetoric of Health & Medicine* and book reviews editor for *Composition Studies*. She is also the co-editor of *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research* (2017).

**Jamie White-Farnham** is professor in the Writing Program at University of Wisconsin-Superior, where she serves as Director of Teaching, Learning and Technology and the Jim Dan Hill Library. Her work appears in *Peitho*, *College English*, *Community Literacy Journal*, *Rhetoric Review*, *Computers & Composition*, among others. She was previously the associate editor at *Prompt: A Journal of Academic Writing Assignments*. She is also the co-editor of *Writing Program Architecture: Thirty Cases for Reference and Research* (2017).

Together, Cathryn, Bryna, and Jamie have co-edited *Women's Health Advocacy: Rhetorical Ingenuity for the 21st Century* (2019) and *Confronting Toxic Rhetoric: Writing Teachers' Experiences of Rupture, Resistance, and Resilience* (2024) and co-authored *Patients Making Meaning: Theorizing Sources of Information and Forms of Support in Women's Health* (2023).



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