

CALL FOR PROPOSALS -- Special Issue of *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics*

CURATION: A MULTIMODAL PRACTICE FOR SOCIALLY-ENGAGED ACTION

This special issue explores the practice of curation as a multimodal form of creative-critical scholarship. Creative-critical scholarship often employs creative practice as methods and methodologies (Anderson, 2014). It does so in order to not only articulate, but to demonstrate and make material, the relevance of arts practice as scholarly inquiry (Wysocki, 2004). We see creative-critical scholarship as an artistic scholarly method facilitating action and engagement in critical social issues. We intend, then, for this special issue to call further attention to creative-critical scholarship as a multimodal rhetorical practice.

As a field, rhetoric and composition has begun to embrace a similar public turn towards community-engaged rhetorical action. Yet, we find curation, as a rhetorical and multimodal practice, has yet to be explicitly discussed as relevant to this endeavor. The *CCCC Statement on Community-Engaged Project in Rhetoric and Composition* has made space for the field to recognize the many forms of socially-engaged work, identifying examples such as community writing workshops, policy debates, the facilitation of public discussions, and digital storytelling projects, to name a few. Curation, we argue, should also be identified as a multimodal practice supporting rhetorical action in communities, classrooms, and our scholarship.

We take the position that the field should examine curation as a practice supportive of community-engaged action as it, too, “differ[s] from traditional scholarly modes of communication [which] involves both deep disciplinary knowledge and extensive critical and collaborative intellectual labor” (*CCCC Statement*). This special issue then seeks to make space for curation as a recognizable and valid practice of scholarly labor that when effectively performed is a conduit for social, rhetorical action. Given this, we invite contributors, both within the field of rhetoric and composition as well as in fields such as art and art history, arts education, arts and media management, digital humanities, multimedia arts, and library science to consider how curation, when enacted as a rhetorical, multimodal performance, creates an assembled and relational space for socially engaged action.

In practice, curation, is traditionally understood within the context of exhibitions, where the curator must consider: “exhibition layout, juxtaposition, and museum signage, shape [of] the floor plan of an exhibition and suggest, if not prescribe, not only visitor itinerary and movement but also ways of feeling about the cultures from which the objects on display derive (Tyburczy, 2016, p. 103). This definition of curation assumes then that “the role of the curator is seen as a creative, relational practice of mediation between artists and local communities to ensure that meaningful encounters occur” (Linden & Campbell, 2016 p. 19). As co-editors, we draw on these definitions to argue that the curator’s role is to not only think about relationality but evoke it by designing scenes of and for public learning. The curator makes decisions about what is shown, how it is shown, where it is shown, and the interactivity between the content and audience. Such decisions are rhetorical in themselves and collectively evoke what we see as

multimodal, embodied moments inviting “people to learn about themselves, their culture and society, and the larger world around them” (Camic & Chatterjee, 2013, p. 67). Curation is thus a relational, public, meaning-making practice.

Given this, we invite potential contributors to reflect and draw upon the role of the curator, as well as the rhetorical practice of curation, in order to make more explicit the connections between curation, multimodality, and socially-engaged action. We seek proposals that address a variety of questions, including, but not limited to:

- How may we measure and/or argue for curation as engaging in social change?
- What is the intellectual/rhetorical work of curation and how does it make civic and social impact?
- What methodologies and methods must the curator consider when curating?
- What ethics must the curator consider when curating?
- How does curation enact scholarly creative activity that engages in social change?
- What may we learn from community-engaged work that curates for social change?
- How may we act as curators in our classrooms? How may curation inform our pedagogy?
- How may definitions and/or theories of curation contribute to or extend conversations in rhetoric and composition?
- What are some limits or challenges of practicing curation for social change?
- How may tenure and promotion materials better account for creative-critical forms of multimodal scholarship, like curation?

Given these questions, we hope that this special issue may make space for recognizing curation as a form of creative-critical scholarship with contributors submitting proposals that address issues of methodology, theory, disciplinarity, and public pedagogy.

With curation as the foci of this special issue, we, as co-editors, simultaneously view our position as co-curators. In particular, we find that *The Journal of Multimodal Rhetorics* is well-suited to support our vision of a curated special issue by allowing for multimodal and performative pieces to be submitted. As co-editors, we also see our role as co-curators. We thus seek to curate this special issue as an online gallery space. Contributions to this special issue will take up these scholarly conversations by showcasing curation as a multimodal rhetorical performance by scholar-artists who do creative-critical scholarship, community-engaged projects, and/or the teaching and situating of curation within the classroom.

Timeline

- Proposals (500 word max) due: January 15, 2019
- Authors notified: March 15, 2019
- Full articles due: July 1, 2019
- Revised manuscripts due: January 15, 2020
- Anticipated publication date: Spring 2020

Submission and Contact Details

Individuals, co-authors, or collectives should submit a 500 word proposal that clearly situates curation as a rhetorical, multimodal and performative practice. We are especially interested in proposals that consider how their submission performs curation as multimodal, rhetorical practice. It is encouraged that proposals consider the format at of the journal and address how their piece will operate through the journal's platform. If you have questions or would like to pitch an idea prior to formally submitting a proposal, feel free to contact the editors. Proposals should be submitted to Ames Hawkins at ahawkins@colum.edu and Maria Novotny at novotnym@uwosh.edu.