

Medical Rhetoric CCCC 2020 Roundtable CFP

Describing and Deconstructing Rhetoric of Health and Medicine's Commonplaces

Ralph Cintron (2010) has noted that *topoi* or commonplaces are “storehouses of social energy” that “organize our sentiments, beliefs, and actions in the lifeworld” (p. 100). Similarly, convention chair Julie Lindquist’s CFP describes commonplaces as offering a viable way to unpack a given community’s “beliefs and values,” and, by default, commonplaces provide insight into how a field “defines and defends its borders.”

Rhetoric of Health and Medicine (RHM), of course, is a growing, interdisciplinary field of study marked by what Melonçon and Scott (2018) have called “methodological mutability” or “a willingness or even obligation to pragmatically and ethically adjust aspects of methodology to the phenomena under study”; they make it clear that RHM is still very much in the process of defining its commonplaces and remains tentative about staking out borders. Still, a strong enough corpus of recognized work in RHM might suggest tacit borders to our work worth further consideration as these *topoi* might very well impede the important project of intentionally and thoughtfully growing the field. At the same time, RHM scholars must be mindful of the ways they are dipping into and out of related fields of study such that those fields’ commonplaces are considered or even honored. This roundtable, thus, will hope to offer insight into commonplaces that are implicit in RHM work in order to deconstruct any “borders” these might be creating and, in turn, provide guidance on how we might keep our borders fluid and open to new ideas, energies, and participation.

Roundtable Objective

The objective of the roundtable is to foster interactive discussions between and around these issues and among presenters and the audience. To this end, we invite proposals for modified ignite (5-minute) presentations where participants provide an overview of their primary research or a review of existing literature, discussed within the framework of commonplaces or *topoi*. Each presenter will be asked to conclude with a question or questions they will pose to the audience to foster discussion. Once all presenters have finished speaking, attendees will break into small groups to discuss the questions/topics presented.

Prospective Topics

To examine these ideas, individuals are invited to submit proposals for short (5-minute) presentations that will focus on themes and topics such as:

- What commonplaces might characterize existing RHM literature, and how does your work relate to or challenge these *topoi*?
- Using commonplaces as a framework, how does RHM interact with related disciplines, such as, for example (but certainly not limited to): disability studies, health communication, or the medical humanities?

- If RHM commonplaces erupt organically, how can we be mindful of their appearance and purposeful in how we support, sustain, or interrupt them?
- As RHM grows, how can we support work that will keep our borders open to a vibrant variety of perspectives?

Submissions

Please submit 250-word proposals to molloycs@jmu.edu by **April 26, 2019**. Submissions from co-authors considered. Queries welcome.

In your proposal, note the following:

- The topic/focus of your proposed presentation
- How you will address the theme of commonplaces in your presentation
- The final question(s) you will use to engage the audience in a conversation at the end of the presentation

Responses will be sent out before the CCCC deadline of May 6, 2019.