

# Call for Proposals

## 2021 Rhetoric of Health and Medicine Symposium

### Theme: (Re-)Invention

#### Overview

The Rhetoric of Health and Medicine (RHM) Symposium is a mix of highly competitive, open-call papers and invited participants, which results in a diverse gathering of folks from graduate students to full professors from a variety of disciplines and fields. The RHM symposium seeks to bring together humanities and social scientific research traditions in a rhetorically focused way to allow scholars to build new interdisciplinary theories, methodologies, and insights that can impact our understanding of health, medicine, illness, healing, and wellness. **The 2021 RHM Symposium will be held virtually on September 9 & 10.**

#### Theme

We like to propose a theme to give us a unifying concept to work with during our time together. This year's theme, “**(Re-)Invention**,” is an invitation for RHM to deeply reflect and deliberately act toward redressing social injustices. As a central rhetorical principle and practice, *invention* most commonly refers to the first steps in the creation process of a text, speech, identity, etc. However, invention has also been theorized as the act of taking inventory, reflecting on what is stored and what is available. Holding these two definitions at once, the theme of (re-)invention calls us to take stock of RHM historically, presently, and moving forward.

The past year, in particular, has demanded that we continue to recognize interlocking systems of oppression and our participation in those systems, identify and carry out specific actions to dismantle those systems, create an inclusive community, and amplify the marginalized voices leading the fight against various forms of injustice.<sup>1</sup> Responding to such calls for reflection and action in meaningful, not simply performative, ways requires us to assess who and what — voices, experiences, perspectives, spaces, theories, methodologies, and values — are central to RHM presently and moving forward. Therefore, we will use the frame of “(Re-)Invention” to ground and guide our conversations at the 2021 Symposium as we invent and reinvent who we are and what we do in RHM as we work toward creating a field that is more inclusive, equitable, and just.

With this theme in mind, we invite works-in-progress at various stages, on a diverse range of RHM topics, and of various natures (methodological, pedagogical, public-facing and community-engaged, historical, theoretical, and interventional).

#### Inclusivity & Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring the Symposium is an inclusive and accessible space from proposal submission to day-of events. Read more about how we are prioritizing accessibility and inclusivity in our Accessibility Action Plan. We also invite feedback and recommendations at any time at [symposium@medicalrhetoric.com](mailto:symposium@medicalrhetoric.com)

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<sup>1</sup> Here, we follow the lead and calls of [Mckoy](#), 2019, the [MedRhet SIG](#), and [RHM Editors](#)

## Submission Details

The RHM Symposium is all about conversations. Therefore, participants propose **works-in-progress that will be workshopped in small groups**. Works-in-progress will be circulated among participants who are assigned to small, related groups in advance of the Symposium. During the symposium, participants share feedback on the works-in-progress within these small groups, giving participants the opportunity to have works-in-progress read closely by other scholars in the field. Past attendees have found this workshopping feature to be not only helpful to their own work but also invigorating to intellectual inquiry. The rest of the Symposium will have us engaging in conversations around different questions, topics, and concerns focused on the conference theme.

Your proposal for your work-in-progress does not necessarily have to be specific to the theme, but we do encourage you to reflect on how your work-in-progress connects to the theme, particularly as RHM commits to enacting social and racial justice.

To submit a proposal, please complete the [RHM Symposium 2021 Submission Form](https://tinyurl.com/rhmsymposium2021) (<https://tinyurl.com/rhmsymposium2021>). The form will ask for the following information:

- **Contact information:** name, affiliation, email, position
- **Type of work:** potential article, chapter in an edited book, dissertation chapter or prospectus, work for another conference, book proposal, etc.
- **Title** of your project/proposal
- **Keywords** that describe your professional identity, research area, and/or proposal
- **Proposal** of up to 1000 words, not including citations.

NOTE: Top papers will be selected during the review process and invited to work with the editors for submission to the journal, *Rhetoric of Health and Medicine*. Graduate students will automatically be considered for the Barbara Heifferon Graduate Student Fellowship for top graduate student submission.

## Important Dates

- March 31, 2021: Proposals due
- May 15, 2021: Decisions
- August 15, 2021: Drafts of works-in-progress due
- September 9 & 10, 2021: Symposium

## Have a question? Contact us!

Please contact [symposium@medicalrhetoric.com](mailto:symposium@medicalrhetoric.com) if you have any questions, if you have any accessibility requests or recommendations, or if you are in between projects and do not have something specific to propose for a works-in-progress and still want to attend.

More details can be found online at <http://medicalrhetoric.com/symposium2021>