BOOK REVIEW
Bradford Vivian, Editor

Review Essay

Rhetoric, Culture, Things

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Lawrence Grossberg, *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 372 pp. $89.95 (cloth), $25.95 (paper).

Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London, UK: Routledge, 2011), 270 pp. $130.00 (cloth), $41.95 (paper).

Christian Meyer and Felix Girke (eds.) *The Rhetorical Emergence of Culture* (New York, NY: Berghann, 2011), 342 pp. $95.00 (cloth), $95.00 (e-book).


A story can be told about all the ways that rhetoric's twentieth-century revival has been powered by ideas and studies of culture. Readers of this journal are most likely to know the chapter that begins in the late 1980s and 1990s, when the vocabulary and critical problematics of British Cultural Studies came to inform rhetorical study. A pair of QJS review essays, one by Thomas Rosteck (1995) and the other by Bonnie Dow (1997), captured this moment, institutionalized through the founding of the Critical and Cultural Studies Division of NCA and, in 2005, the first publications of its journal, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*. While Dow noted that most Speech Communication departments had yet to recognize that cultural studies existed when she was a graduate student in the mid-1980s, today cultural studies is a
firmly established, if intellectually protean, assemblage linked at multiple points with NCA communication and rhetorical studies.

In its more arrogant or perhaps just myopic moments, cultural studies has claimed to be the only real culture game in town. Lawrence Grossberg once asserted, for instance, that while “the investigation of culture is dispersed among the humanities and the social sciences, each [has taken] a particular aspect or definition of culture for granted, with little self-reflection. It was left to cultural studies to struggle with the concept of culture in something approaching its full complexity.” Anthropologists would beg to differ, as would cultural sociologists and ethnographers of communication. Not only have they addressed culture in highly sophisticated ways, they too have taken up rhetorical matters and exercised their own, albeit more limited, influence on rhetorical studies. Grossberg’s comment is one small reminder of the way in which cultural studies has invented what Raymond Williams would recognize as a selective tradition, “a version of the past which is intended to connect with and ratify the present” as viewed from one perspective.

That selective tradition has occluded other species of cultural rhetorical study worthy of our attention. This review essay speaks to that need while also considering emergent ways of thinking about rhetoric and culture in relation to materiality and things. To those ends, I briefly map different constellations of cultural rhetorical study that have emerged since the 1970s and remain vibrant today. Distinct but overlapping, they were all built upon social or linguistic constructivism that new materialisms now challenge. The five books I review point toward different ways of approaching rhetoric-and-culture study while variably incorporating recent material turns in interdisciplinary theory. Significant in their own right, they also help us think about the intellectual orientations, institutional locations, research methods, politics, pedagogies, and ethics of cultural—and perhaps post-cultural—rhetorical studies in the current moment.

**Rhetoric, Culture, Materiality**

Though we generally associate the cultural turn in rhetorical studies with the critical-cultural influx of the late 1980s and 1990s, the story really begins two decades earlier (and its intellectual roots run deeper still). Driven by an array of factors too complex to address here, ideas of culture came to inform rhetorical study in the late 1960s and 1970s, helping to expand our field of vision beyond discrete texts and speeches toward symbols, myths, ideologies, socio-historical contexts, and broader ways of life. Rhetoricians drew upon sociology, anthropology, and American studies to deepen their sense of collective phenomena and culture. The landmark *Prospect of Rhetoric* (1971) captured and advanced this impulse, declaring,

Rhetorical studies are properly concerned with the process by which symbols and systems of symbols have influence upon beliefs, values, attitudes, and actions, and they embrace all forms of human communication, not exclusively public address nor communication within any one class or cultural group.

As Carole Blair has observed, “symbols” became the new currency for students of rhetoric. Sociologists had drawn upon Kenneth Burke since the 1930s, none more than Hugh Dalziel Duncan, whose cultural theories of rhetoric influenced scholars in
speech communication. In the 1960s and 1970s, Burke also influenced a cadre of anthropologists, whose studies of symbolic interaction, tropes, and cultural meaning injected rhetorical elements into that discipline. One strain of this work developed into the ethnography of communication, which occasionally brought rhetorical categories to bear on its careful fieldwork. A few scholars began to use cultural frameworks to study non-Western and Native American rhetorical practices, opening up comparative horizons beyond the pale of Euro-American theory and public address. That work was a precursor to the excellent and growing body of work in comparative rhetoric. Meanwhile, rhetorical critics increasingly attended to cultural contexts, myths, and symbolic patterns. Ideological criticism arose out of this matrix in the 1970s and 1980s, with concepts like Michael McGee’s “ideograph” reformulating culturalist sensibilities within a Marxist frame more deeply in conversation with contemporary social theory; Raymie McKerrow and others would enrich the theoretical frame and move it further from orthodox Marxism, through readings of Foucault. When British Cultural Studies began trickling into rhetorical studies in the late 1980s, the ground was already prepared, resulting in the energetic growth of critical cultural studies in the 1990s and 2000s. Centered upon critical, poststructuralist, and feminist studies of ideology, hegemony, discourses, and identities, this latest configuration of rhetoric-and-culture study has been remarkably productive in generating research, teaching, and ways of thinking about the world.

Another species of cultural rhetorical study emerged in the 1990s largely independent from the critical cultural projects. Comparative rhetoric emphasized non-Western cultures and pushed the field in more global directions. Oliver’s Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China (1971) was a precursor, but George Kennedy’s Comparative Rhetoric (1998) consolidated and advanced research available at that time. More recent work has distanced itself from Kennedy’s universalism, reliance on categories of Aristotelian rhetorical theory, and linkages with evolutionary biology. Such recent work is marked by its sophisticated comparative sensibilities, immersion in primary historical and contemporary texts from outside Europe and North America, and deep understandings of the cultural meanings of rhetorical terms and discourses it examines. Much of this work has come from the English side of rhetorical studies, with NCA rhetoricians being slower to engage in sustained comparative or non-Western cultural inquiry. Around its edges, comparative rhetoric overlaps with post-colonial cultural studies of rhetoric, which have represented the main globalizing pathways for critical cultural work in NCA circles.

Looking back on the various cultural turns in rhetorical studies that have occurred since the late 1960s, one quality that stands out is their overarching social constructivism. This constructivism has assumed distinct forms and emphases, some more materialist than others. But all have emphasized ways that language, symbols, discourses, cultural practices, and texts constitute the world for humans, providing the meanings for phenomena that have no inherent meanings of their own. This insight, which is in some ways so obvious as to go without saying, is part of our conceptual common sense (though we often must work hard to instill it in our students). But like other cultural systems of common sense, expert or vernacular, it has a history and, perhaps, a half-life. The question we might ask now is whether our
broad constructivist paradigm, emphasizing language and discursively created meanings, has hit the half-life of its energy stores.

Imagining that discourse-centered constructivism would ever disappear from the dominant frameworks of rhetorical studies is nearly impossible. We have too much invested in it, and it has paid too many dividends. But in challenging the earlier, text-based humanism of pre-Wingspread rhetoric, the sociological and cultural inflows since the 1960s have opened the door to alternative frameworks as well. One is indexed by the array of understandings gathered under the headings of materiality and materialism. As chapters in Barbara Biesecker and John Louis Lucaites’ edited collection attest, those terms point to a variety of intellectual traditions and orientations, some of which are fully at home within linguistic constructivism.14

This was largely true of McGee’s “Materialist’s Conception of Rhetoric” (1982), which, in spite of openings toward senses, bodies, and things, remained centered in speech and linguistically mediated symbols. This is true, too, of poststructuralist and feminist materialisms that continue to center discourse and textuality, albeit conceived materially. Marita Gronnvoll’s review essay in this journal nicely captures some of these discursive materialisms within rhetorical and feminist studies.15

Other understandings of materiality do more to decenter (if not dethrone) language, discourse, and texts as the center of rhetorical attention. One derives from more orthodox Marxisms and stresses labor, social practices, institutions, and political economy as material forces within which rhetoric takes its particular forms and power. Represented in one way by Dana Cloud, in another by James Aune, this position and poststructuralist departures from it are relatively well established in the field. Far less established are the new materialisms that have appeared across the interdisciplinary theory-scape in the last decade. They have come in many inflections, drawing upon feminist theories of affect and the body, Deleuzian and Spinozan philosophies, actor network and assemblage theory, material culture studies, Friedrich Kittler’s media studies, and the anthropology of the senses, among other sources. They decenter and sometimes reject the language-based constructivism that has dominated rhetorical studies for more than four decades. Instead, they have drawn attention to matter, affect, embodied sensations, physical spaces, and what political theorist Jane Bennett calls “thing-power” as vibrant and consequential materialities that exert their force independent of signification. In so doing, they direct attention away from texts and symbolic meanings toward, for instance, the assemblage of materials that constitute media devices and the affective regimes of capitalism that make them desired-and-then-discarded objects.16 Emphasizing agencies beyond the logosphere, the main dwelling place of rhetoric since the sophists, these viewpoints pose different challenges to rhetorical studies than do discursive materialisms, be they Marxian or poststructuralist.

One pathway toward linking the new materialisms to rhetoric is by means of George Kennedy’s conception of rhetoric as a kind of “energy existing in life” that exists prior to speech and cuts across physicality and signification. Venturing that “rhetoric is perhaps a special case of the energy of all physics as known from subatomic particles,” Kennedy yoked rhetorical theory with evolutionary biology and expanded it from human to animal and even plant life.17 Debra Hawhee has folded insights from Kennedy intro a theory of the animality of rhetoric, while Jeanne Fahnestock develops links among rhetoric, sociobiology, and neuroscience.18
It is too early to say how new materialist insights will challenge or be incorporated into the constructivisms that have dominated the field since at least the 1970s. They take up space on one end of the highly compact map I have provided to contextualize the works I discuss below. These five books sit at or somewhat beyond the edges of NCA rhetoric, coming from cultural studies, anthropology, and the English/Composition side of rhetorical studies, but all speak into established or emergent problematics in our own field. Across them, we are brought questions about the overarching realities of our historical moment, political, and theoretical responses it calls out in us, and the rhetorical dynamics of cultures, meanings, and environments within it. We are brought into questions, too, about methods of inquiry, alliances of interdisciplinarity, styles of academic prose, and modes of pedagogical practice. Along the way, the books take up positions about symbolicity, materiality, institutions, and social practice, whose implications for how we understand, investigate, and produce rhetoric I try to draw out.

The Future of Cultural Studies?

Cultural studies has entered its latest round of intense self-scrutiny. “Inherited from the rituals of Marxist–Leninist auto-critique,” reflexive scrutiny has been part of the furniture of cultural studies since its origins in the British New Left of the 1960s. The current round comes at a moment when the formation has institutionalized itself globally through journals, conferences, and academic programs. This course of development has fueled arguments about the mission of cultural studies, the value of its work, and the relative advantages of consolidating itself as a discipline or reclaiming its more anarchic interdisciplinary roots. It also has evoked a new wave of historical consciousness about its origins and key intellectual figures, occasioned in part by the aging of scholars whose works have achieved something like canonical status among those who have often resisted canons.

Lawrence Grossberg’s most recent book speaks into that moment or, as he would say, the conjuncture. Cultural Studies in the Future Tense is a sometimes cranky, theoretical call-to-task written by one of the leading figures in cultural studies since the 1980s. Mixing comments about how “lazy” and “unproductive cultural studies has been” with an insistence that its “intellectual-political work…matters both inside and outside of the academy,” Grossberg advances his longstanding vision of “cultural studies as something that you make up as you go…respond[ing] to new conjunctures as problem-spaces” (1). In so doing, he responds to Stuart Hall’s challenge of the late 1990s, calling on cultural studies to “lift itself out of its earlier agenda” and critically address the exigencies of the contemporary moment, which differed from those that the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies cut its teeth on in its heady formative days of the late 1960s and 1970s.

For Grossberg, responding to the contemporary means fending off the false definitions and calcified irrelevancies of cultural studies as practiced by others. “I do not think cultural studies is about culture,” he writes, nor “the study of texts or textuality” or the reading of social power off them; nor is it about mass, popular, or subaltern cultures. Instead, he argues, cultural studies is about contexts and historically specific conjunctures. He defines these through a vocabulary that mixes
Hall and earlier Grossberg with Deleuze, the latter providing a major portion of the book’s theoretical DNA. A context is, for instance,

a singularity that is also a multiplicity, an active organized and organizing assemblage of relationalities that condition and modify the distribution, function, and effects—the very being and identity—of the events that are themselves actively implicated in the production of the context itself. (30–31)

A conjuncture is then a social formation described in its multiply fractured and conflictual qualities, producing particular problematics that are lived as social crises (40–41). While cultural studies has taken up a number of historically specific problematics—epistemology, cultural change, agency and resistance, subjectivity, and hegemonic state politics—Grossberg takes up a sixth, tied to historical periodization on an epochal scale and the conjunctural analysis it invites (49–51). This in turn leads him to declare that “the possibility of a multiplicity of modernities” is the overarching problematic of the current conjuncture (73).

The book then turns into what Grossbergcharacterizes as an effort to “tell better stories” about the conjuncture as a way of producing better knowledge and better politics alike. Though one might expect that claims about the epoch and its modernities would call for historical stories of a sort, Grossberg goes elsewhere, asserting that “we must think more rigorously about— theorize—the category of modernity itself” (72). He braces us for the fact that he has written “a political book addressed to the academy (and largely the highly professionalized, capitalized, and formalized US and European university systems)” (5), and follows through with a project that, despite its anarchistic anti-disciplinary sentiments, bears the stamp of the professionalized academy. After establishing the general contours of the conjuncture, he sets off on a theoretical slog through chapters on economics, culture, power, and modernities. Though Grossberg feints toward wanting to “change the world,” Ien Ang is correct that such claims “should be taken with a grain of salt,” since cultural studies “is first and foremost an academic practice.”

That said, there are compelling arguments and analyses scattered throughout the book, a number of which will be valuable to rhetoricians. Chapter three tries to open space for “a cultural studies of economies” that attends to both the discursive production of “the economic” and “the contextual construction and specification of economies and the economic” (102). The latter folds into one of the important cross-cutting themes in his conjunctural analysis of Euro-modernity, namely the disembedding of economic, political, and cultural spheres from considerations of the broader social totality. Grossberg’s economic analysis focuses on the construction of value and capitalist modes of reducing its multiplicity to a commensurable scale defined economically, a process embedded in both material and discursive practices. Here Grossberg alludes to work in the rhetoric of economics (112), though seems deliberately to ignore James Aune’s book on the subject, perhaps a reflection on their longstanding disagreements. He also ignores most economists.

The chapters on culture and power pick up from the argument that economics has become “the significant locus of the constitution and experience of change” in the current moment (180). In chapter four, “Contextualizing Culture,” Grossberg briefly historicizes the emergence of “culture” as a problematic in the postwar era, making it a relevant site for the cultural studies project of interrogating popular and media
cultures as technologies of power. He neglects the longer story of how culture discursively emerged as an identifiable, more-or-less disembodied realm within Euro-modernity, which cuts across the arts (as Williams traced in *Culture and Society*) and social sciences (particularly anthropology and sociology). This is true across the book, which aspires to tell “a better conjunctural story” centered upon multiple modernities, but mostly limits its historical range to Grossberg’s own baby-boomer generation. Even then, armchair theory far outweighs historical or socio-cultural specificity, making the book’s culminating Deleuzean “diagram of modernity” (279–88) significantly less useful than the article-length historical-cum-conceptual map provided by the sociological theorists Isaac Reed and Julia Adams.22

Nonetheless, Grossberg’s argument that textual or expressive culture “does not seem to be playing the same central role as it did in the postwar years” and “is no longer the site or form in which people live their experience of historical transformation” (180) is provocative and potentially important. He attaches it to an expansion of the realm of mediation to encompass more than signification, representation, and subjectification—extending to “the (not necessarily anthropocentric) trajectory of effectivity or becoming” in all its forms; or “the movement of events or bodies from one set of relations to another as they are constantly becoming something other than what they are” (191). Affect then refers to the “energy” of this mediation (193). This concept in turn shifts understandings of culture from regimes of signification toward apparatuses engaged in “the production of the habitual and the specific affective modalities or organizations (and significance, importance, interest) of a lived reality” (199). Cultural analysis starts not from a singular event, text, genre, or medium but rather from “an assemblage, a formation, which has to be constructed in its own right” (223). Though Grossberg does not address the topic, rhetorical studies operating from this understanding of culture would look toward the mediations and organizing energies within historically specific assemblages, mapping cross-currents, contradictions, and complexities instead of providing close textual readings.

The complexity of conjunctural analysis comes through in chapter five, “Complicating Power,” in many ways the strongest of the book. Here, Grossberg makes clear that, despite suggestions otherwise, his understanding of mediation and culture do not take him into new materialist accounts of power as operating at somatic and affective levels unmediated by meaning (230–31). He produces a diagram of the political as operating through the state, the body, and everyday life. Foucault, Agamben, and particularly Deleuze provide the main conceptual bearings, with Grossberg providing brief but useful examples to illustrate the heuristic value of the diagram. He follows with an ontology of power and a conjunctural definition of politics in relation to social, economic, and cultural phenomena understood in terms of Deleuze and Guattari’s “apparatuses of capture” (252). The final chapter of the book then feeds the political diagram back into his meditation on modernity, conceptualized as “the product of a stratifying machine that produces a new set … of ways of belonging to and in time and space,” and culminating in a stratifying diagram “of four distinct but articulated apparatuses of spatial and temporal belonging”—the former consisting of “institutional space and everyday life,” the latter of “change and the event” (279). The diagram, he intimates, will be a source of better stories and, with the book as a whole, “do some of the ground-clearing work necessary to find
analytic positions that can open up political futures and embrace a different kind of universality” (289).

There is much to commend in Grossberg’s book. It is an impressive intellectual labor, whose efforts to stitch Deleuzian theoretical categories to conjunctural and discursive analysis are provocative, even if some question whether they might come to fruition. For all its performative failings to fully live up to them, the ideals of humility, cross-disciplinary engagement, and global social imagination that it advances are important. One does not need to identify with the sort of engaged political activism Stephen Hartnett advocates, however, to question the relationship between the purportedly “better stories” of Cultural Studies in the Future Tense and identifiable projects for “changing the world,” as Grossberg phrases it. The book represents a sort of professionalized anti-professional academic practice, identified with the cultural studies brand that Grossberg has helped build. Its aspiration to speak into the conjuncture is laudable, but the diagram of multiple modernities is far less revealing than the historical or anthropological work that would show how they have actually played out.

Feminist Rhetorical Practices

In the contexts of the larger story I am telling, we could read Jacqueline Jones Royster and Gesa E. Kirsch’s Feminist Rhetorical Practices: New Horizons for Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies as an implicit critique and performative counter-strike to what Bonnie Dow once called “theoretically obscure cultural studies practice.” Their book is much more than that and, outside a conceptual linkage to Stuart Hall’s work, does not orient itself much toward cultural studies. But reading it alongside Grossberg invites a perspective-by-incongruity which illuminates two analogously programmatic books that aspire to change parts of the world through academic means. Placing them side by side, it is hard not to read Grossberg’s book as an expression of white masculinity (High Theory Division) and the material realities of the theory class within the humanities wing of research universities. Royster and Kirsch occupy different institutional positions, anchored in Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies with openings toward History, Women’s Studies, and the intersectional study of gender, race, and ethnicity.

In a book that is both programmatically ambitious andinvitationally collaborative, Royster and Kirsch set out to consolidate and advance contributions of feminist rhetorical studies to the fields of Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy (RCL). Their project draws its main bearings from feminist historiography and critical race studies cross-pollinated with Burke, Geertz, and Hall. The result is a kind of critical-interpretive humanism that leverages the gains of revisionist rhetorical histories and feminist theory in decentering elite, white, Euro-American male discourse and forcing broader reconsiderations of rhetorical practices, scholarly inquiry, and pedagogy. Redeploying DuBois’ founding metaphor for double-consciousness, they seek “to raise the veil of feminist rhetorical studies” (131) in order to reveal the ways it has impacted rhetorical studies over the last four decades and to articulate a framework “to propel general knowledge-making processes in the field at large” built upon feminist research efforts, particularly historical work involving what they call “the three Rs”—rescue, recovery, and (re)inscription of women’s rhetorical practices (18,
14). As my third-wave students were quick to observe, the book is built around second-wave feminist practices.

Written in generally lucid prose, Feminist Rhetorical Practices is an accessible and engaged book. This begins with the first chapter, where we get a sense of the authors’ professional histories (Royster is part of the same generation as Grossberg and Kirsch came of age a decade later). Whereas Grossberg tells a story of studying with Hall and Carey, Royster and Kirsch locate themselves through narratives of writing histories, developing feminist methodologies, founding a women’s studies program, and engaging in scholarly and educational work on and with women of African descent at an historically black women’s college. Intellectually, the core ideas for their framework grew out of Royster’s Traces of a Stream, the culmination of more than two decades of historical and theoretical work on composition and African-American women rhetors, developed through conversation with Kirsch, who has published important work on feminist methodologies, archives, and women’s writing.26 The institutional and praxical bases are relevant as well.

Their professional narratives launch an account of “tectonic shifts” in rhetorical inquiry over the past several decades and the parts played by feminist rhetorical practices in transforming the landscape. They foreground the “metaphorical anchor” of their methodology, organized around the terministic screen of “assaying,” or sifting through the different feminist ways of making sense of rhetorical activity (15–16). That assaying leads them to four methodological terms of engagement: critical imagination, strategic contemplation, social circulation, and globalization. These four terms make up the main points of their analytical model, which provides an interpretive scheme for identifying the “topological shifts” in feminist rhetorical research practices and composes “an intelligible narrative of the ways in which the work in feminisms and rhetorics are converging” (19, 31–32). Chief among those shifts is the decentering of elite, public, Euro-American male discourse and the radical expansion of the realm of rhetoric across lines of gender, race, ethnicity, social status, world geographical location, genre, mode of expression, and socio-cultural domain.

Their intelligible narrative may strike communication studies rhetoricians as less than inclusive, centered as it is on historical studies of women rhetors, revisionist histories of the rhetorical tradition, and feminist literacy and Composition Studies. To be fair, this reflects their institutional positions and the intellectual formations articulated to them; but it means that the “R” of their “RCL” focus is perhaps doubly truncated—first, in cutting off most of the communication side and, second, in sometimes emphasizing studies about women more than feminist studies. Among communication rhetoricians, they call out work by Karlyn Campbell, Susan Zaeske, Angela Ray, and Karen and Sonja Foss—but not by Barbara Biesecker, Celeste Condit, Bonnie Dow, or Lisa Flores, to name a very few. In this regard, their assaying might have been made richer by sifting the communication streams nicely sketched by Michaela Meyer.27 In addition, when the authors amplify ways that rhetorical studies has globalized its focus, they miss the chance to make alliances with the growing body of work in comparative rhetoric, some of which has focused on women or taken up feminist perspectives. Finally, sections of their mapping take the form of lists of authors and titles, resulting in abbreviated genealogies that are not as useful as they might be.
The core of the book lies in chapters four through nine, which outline “feminist rhetorical studies as a robust interdisciplinary framework” (40) and elaborate its elements. Royster and Kirsch cycle through their quartet of terministic screens as conceptual and methodological pathways for inquiry, analysis, and interpretation, providing for each a brief overview, research examples, and pedagogical applications. They begin with *critical imagination*, a term of art from Royster’s *Traces of a Stream* that calls out practices of “making connections and seeing possibility” (19), critically questioning received wisdom, and remaking interpretive frameworks accordingly. More specifically, it calls for “listening deeply, reflexively, and multisensibly,” grounding inquiries in evidence, creating schemata for critical attention, “and disrupting our assumptions regularly through reflective and reflexive questioning” (21). As they do with the other terms, they connect critical imagination to a Geertzian “tacking in and tacking out,” dialectically moving from microscopic attention using tools like close textual analysis to broader-angle contextual inquiry across historical, cultural, or sociopolitical locations (72). *Strategic contemplation* is then a kind of meditative, reflexive slowing down whereby researchers interrupt the inquiry process to “think multidirectionally … not just about the subject of study but also about themselves as the agents in the process” (86). This too is a dialogic, dialectical, and embodied process, tacking in and out from relevant viewpoints and providing a means for situating rhetoric “more clearly as an embodied social practice” (87). Royster and Kirsch adopt *social circulation* from Stuart Hall to emphasize how rhetorical performances move through cultures, social spaces, and networks, gaining traction or failing to do so along the way. They draw upon Hall’s notion of “circuits of culture” to emphasize the ways that “language use [is] a symbolic materiality for building circles of meanings that are shareable and usable in social interactions” across intersectional identities and force fields of power (102). *Globalization* then gives force to recent extensions of feminist rhetorical scholarship into transnational phenomena outside the global North and West. This extends the critical broadening of rhetorical phenomena beyond the performances of elite Euro-American males, introducing a global vision for considering things rhetorical and extending the study of women’s and feminist rhetoric into new geographical domains. Across the four strategies, Royster and Kirsch call for “[u]nderstanding rhetoric more overtly as social praxis” (135). They bring them together in “an enhanced inquiry model” informed by an ethics of hope and care and critically attuned to a full range of sociopolitical and sociopersonal dimensions of rhetorical action (esp. 148).

Overall, the book displays the ethic and model of inquiry that it calls for, issuing in a useful and teachable template for culturally inflected rhetorical research. The examples provided from research and pedagogy nicely illustrate the four critical terms in rhetorical inquiry as an embodied social praxis. The terms themselves might have been defined with more analytical perspicuity, both on their own and in relation to one another. The authors could also have elaborated on the fact that they offer a framework not only for feminist rhetorical studies, a significant accomplishment in its own right, but also for the field writ large (a point Patricia Bizzell also makes in her “Foreword” to the book). They advance that case in places, but the book’s center of gravity in historical research about women exerts a pull that partly reigns in those larger aspirations. One could argue that Royster and Kirsch overstate the influence feminist studies have had in expanding the topics and methods of rhetorical inquiry,
an over-determined development also powered by cultural and ideological turns in the field, studies of race and ethnicity, and attention to vernacular rhetorics and everyday life (some of which they do acknowledge). But the authors understate the fact that they have a general framework for conducting rhetorical inquiry, one that emanates from feminist praxis in dialogic contact with interpretive cultural studies that emphasizes gender, race, and intersectionalities. In that regard, the book can spur further, third-wave efforts to make feminist principles and sensibilities central to rhetorical studies as a whole.

**Anthropologies of Rhetoric Culture**

Grossberg orients toward high theory and the call of the conjuncture, and Royster and Kirsch toward history and intersectional feminist practices; the International Rhetoric Culture Project (RCP), however, offers a vision of cultural rhetorical study oriented toward anthropology, ethnography, and comparative analysis, and open equally to the humanities and social sciences. The RCP dates back to the late 1990s, when European and German anthropologists began to develop a rhetorical theory of culture in dialectical contact with their ethnographic field projects. In 2002, they organized the first of five conferences on *rhetoric culture*, the most recent taking place at Northwestern University in 2012 in collaboration with Robert Hariman and Ralph Cintrón. A handful of other rhetorical and communication scholars have appeared in their six published volumes, along with psychologists, linguists, economists, literary scholars, classicists, and philosophers. The core disciplinary members of the RCP, however, have been European (especially German) and U.S. anthropologists, revolving outward from Ivo Strecker and Stephen Tyler, and articulating with the German tradition of rhetorically centered philosophical anthropology associated with Hans Blumenberg and contemporary *rhetorische Anthropologie*. In the words of its chief architects, the RCP “arises from a fundamental chiasmus that leads us to explore the ways in which rhetoric structures culture and culture structures rhetoric.”

Across its published collections, the Project explores multiple dimensions of that chiasmus—partly the well-trodden path of seeing rhetoric as the instrument through which scholars describe culture, but more by casting rhetoric as a basic constitutive force for creating, stabilizing, and challenging culture under conditions of uncertainty, contradiction, and competing discourses. The RCP continues to evolve, with two more volumes just published (too late for inclusion in my essay), and two more due out next year, which will bring the total to eight. As currently framed by Christian Meyer and Felix Girke, editors of *Rhetorical Emergence*, the RCP investigates “interrelationships between cultural forms of practice, passion, and reason,” seeking to understand both “culturally generated orders of discourse … and their technologies of production,” while at the same time “trying to do justice to the situated, bodily, and often antagonistic character of cultural and communicative practices” (2). Following Kennedy, they look to rhetoric as “an energetic and bodily, as much as a semiotic and mental, phenomenon” (14). Meyer and Girke’s effort to balance the discursive with the corporeal and material has not been a prominent piece of the RCP thus far. The same can be said for their reaching out toward mass mediated rhetoric, which has been overshadowed by attention to face-to-face interactions. The fifteen chapters that follow their fine introduction do not fully
follow through on the openings toward material, bodily, and technologically mediated rhetoric, but they do form an interesting and wide-ranging volume that usefully advances the interdisciplinary study of rhetoric and culture. Chapters include theoretical, historical, and ethnographic studies divided across three sections: Intersubjectivity, Agency, and Emergence.

Theoretical bezels are scattered across the volume. Meyer and Girke usefully provide a brief intellectual genealogy of the rhetoric–culture nexus, extending back to Isocrates, Vico, and Nietzsche. They also contextualize the project within dialogic theories of culture and introduce key conceptual terms, particularly resonance—an “elusive and ephemeral process” indexing ways people “‘tune in’ with their social, cultural, and ecological environment” and find themselves able to coordinate with each other and be rhetorically moved through body, emotion, and mind” (12–13). Resonance seems at once a quality of scene, an agency, and an ongoing outcome of creative action and sociality, including “dimensions of confrontation, will, and power in interaction” (19). Québécois anthropologist Pierre Maranda (chapter three) develops the concept of resonance much further, providing a wild but fascinating general theory based on “cultural universes as probabilistic echo chambers,” where “[c]lusters of meanings intersect, rebound on each other, and may prevent further developments … along probabilistic vectors” (86–87). Complete with a nearly incomprehensible schematic model, he provides at least invention fodder for post-humanist rhetoricians with a taste for systems diagrams. Todd Oakley takes up Richard Lanham’s call to make attention a key concept for rhetorical studies. He blends cognitive linguistics and phenomenology in a model that breaks down the kinds of background awareness and focal attention that characterize human experience of rhetorical address. Contrasting the spaces and linguistic practices of traditional oratory with everyday experiences in a mobile world saturated with media, Oakley applies his model to an analysis of the 2000 census campaign. Stephen Tyler’s concluding essay (chapter fifteen) picks up another of the core concepts in the volume, emergence, which Tyler casts as autopoiesis, whereby “objects and the discourse about them are co-emergents”—a process he ties particularly to ethnographic writing, but which has broader application to the co-emergence of all kinds of rhetorical constructions and their symbolic and material objects (309). Tyler also makes suggestive gestures toward the idea of organized commonplaces as a traditional rhetorical concept that can be developed to capture important aspects of rhetoric in an age of “distributed agency, undeclared audiences, and unfamiliar cultural identities” (312).

Other more historical and empirical chapters will also interest readers of this journal. Two are written by NCA communication scholars—one “a plea for an ethnographical rhetoric” attuned to vernacular discourses, written by Jerry Hauser, which among other things charts the cultural rhetorical work of the 1920s that I briefly outlined above (chapter seven); the other by the ethnographers of communication Donal Carbaugh and David Boromisza-Habashi, which presents a fascinating analysis of the ethnorhetoric of Native American Blackfeet and the nonhuman agencies that contribute to their sense of what it means to listen (chapter four). Technical communication scholar and designer Filipp Sapienza pushes the RCP into cyberspace, drawing upon post-Bakhtinian Russian theories of transculture to make sense of diasporic Russia on the Web (chapter nine). Alexander Henn
contributes an excellent historical account of the sixteenth-century rhetorical contact zone in Goa, India, that consisted of Portuguese Jesuits and the military empire linked to them and the Indian natives who lived there; he brings out tangled webs of translation, understanding, religious truths, cultures, and violence (chapter ten). James Zebroski offers an account of gay authorship since the 1960s through a model of the development of social formations indebted to Victor Turner’s ideas of structure and anti-structure (chapter thirteen).

Other chapters are worth a look by NCA rhetoricians, too, as avenues toward perspective-by-incongruity with our own dominant species of rhetorical study. Bernhard Streck, for instance, argues for the “study of rhetoric culture to understand itself as part of a general anthropology of the senses,” a point he reaches through a genealogy of the aura as the genuine object of anthropology (120, chapter five). His and Franz-Hubert Robling’s valorization of the orator (chapter twelve) will strike American readers as stylistically German (not that there’s anything wrong with that). Other chapters, which draw heavily from the social sciences (e.g., cognitive psychology [chapter two]), are unlikely to move those with exclusively humanistic tastes. The same may be true for those chapters most deeply enmeshed in anthropological fieldwork in “traditional” societies (in Southern Ethiopia and New Guinea [chapters eight and eleven]), though they perform the important function of providing careful, on-the-ground accounts of non-Western rhetorics and the types of creativity, meaning-making, and sociality engendered through them. This part of the project potentially links up with comparative rhetorical study, though the connections remain unmade.

Overall, the RCP volumes deserve more attention than they have received in NCA circles. Part of the problem has been their price, but paperback editions are beginning to appear. As rhetorical scholars increasingly make use of ethnographic and field methods, anthropological work becomes more important. It provides the gold standard for cultural immersion and the deeper insights that come with it, and it pushes us toward cross-cultural and cross-national sensibilities that might help shake loose our lingering U.S. parochialisms. Some of the foundational theoretical principles of the RCP are old news to us, since rhetoricians have long argued that rhetoric helps constitute the world as humans experience it. But there are excellent chapters in all of the published volumes, offering both concepts and cultural analyses ready to enrich our conversations, classrooms, and rhetorical imaginations.

Materials, Meshwork, People

Like the RCP, Tim Ingold addresses creativity and meaning-making, though embedded less in symbolicity than in things, materials, and the lines of movement and activity that characterize what he calls the meshwork of life. In Being Alive, a collection of previously published or revised essays with new introductory sections, the British social anthropologist, like Grossberg, takes some of his key bearings from Deleuzian post-humanism. For Ingold, Deleuzian figures of lines and becoming are overlaid upon a broadly post-Marxian sensitivity to production, a Heideggerian attention to dwelling, an account of perception that blends the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty with the ecological psychology of James Gibson, and a sense of the creative openness of the world derived from Alfred North Whitehead and Henri
Bergson—linkages he usefully outlines in a brief intellectual-biography-cum-conceptual map in the “Prologue”. The lineages have some overlap with the new materialist and affect theories of Brian Massumi and others, but Ingold anchors them in Anthropology instead of textual analysis, Cultural Studies, or armchair theorizing, thus grounding his material orientation in “work and study with people” as well as things (238).

While rhetorical studies has discovered materiality rather late in its disciplinary development, cultural anthropologists have long attended closely to material artifacts. Lately, there has been a push for anthropological ways of reversing the traditional prioritizing of culture as determining the meanings of artifacts and other materials, taking “things as meanings” in their own right and not as some material substrate upon which cultural signification does its work. This pivots upon revisions of Heidegger’s concept of things as distinct from mere objects; things are gatherings, matters of concerns, relations, meanings in their own right, and places “where several goings on become entwined” (214). The concept makes a cameo appearance in Being Alive, but the more basic category for Ingold is materials. That is materials, not materiality, a distinction he cashes out in one of several chapters that will be of interest to theoretically minded rhetorical scholars (chapter two). He criticizes the abstraction and inherited baggage of the concept of materiality. Instead, he sees submerging life and human beings as submerged “in an ocean of materials,” always in flux, taking up properties relationally and through heterogeneous lines of activity (24). Materials are not tokens of some common essence called materiality but rather “partake in the very processes of the world’s ongoing generation and regeneration, of which things such as manuscripts or house-fronts are impermanent by-products” (26; see also chapter seventeen).

Materials, as Ingold conceives them, provide a counterforce to the idea that all meaning is symbolic, mediated by culture and signification. He gets there by means of an ecological and phenomenological view of perception as always tied to action, movement, and relationality, with meanings arising from activity and “the very process of use” to which materials and things give rise (76–78). The argument applies specifically to what he calls “environmental meaning,” or the relationship of organisms to their worlds, but we could extend it as at least a heuristic for all manners of meaning. For rhetoricians, this would mean looking to rhetorical things (e.g., manuscripts, computer screens, buildings, bodies) and the lines of activity and making in which they are embedded—the “the meshwork,” as Ingold calls it, borrowing Henri Lefebvre’s trope. Whereas the network metaphor implies distinct but interconnected nodes, meshwork suggests “knots in a tissue of knots, whose constituent strands, as they become tied up with other strands, in other knots, comprise the meshwork” itself (70). The relationality, knots, and lines of becoming are constitutive of life itself. They create worlds that beings “do not simply occupy … they inhabit … threading their own paths through the meshwork” and adding “to its ever-evolving weave” (71). Instead of Actor Network Theory (ANT), we have SPIDER, Ingold’s theory of ontogenetic development within living systems—“skilled practice involves developmentally embodied responsiveness” (64–65, plus chapter seven). These lines of embodied becoming are then always already engaged in movement as a condition of perceiving, acting, knowing, and taking part in the relationalities of being. They constitute humans as fundamentally “wayfarers” in
Ingold’s telling, creative makers of the world who inhabit the earth and move through its places (esp. chapter twelve). One might develop a rich, neo-sophistic anthropology of rhetoric as a practice of wayfaring SPIDERs.

Rhetoric is not an explicit topic in Being Alive. The project would arguably benefit from engaging Kennedy’s theory of rhetoric as an energy of life, taking some cues from the rhetorical anthropologists, and bringing out dimensions of symbolicity further in this theory. Conversely, we might fold elements of Ingold’s project into cultural and material rhetorical study. At the grandest level, this begins from his view of anthropology as above all committed to seeking “a generous, comparative but nonetheless critical understanding of human being and knowing in the one world we all inhabit” (229). If we were to substitute rhetoric for anthropology and making for knowing, we might have the core for a vision of an anthropological rhetorical studies embedded in an ecological ethic and a global imagination. Comparativist in outlook, if not always method, it would devote itself to meanings, materials, things, and people in the fullest complexities of their lives possible, animated by questions about the rhetorical energies that flow through the knots, strands, and broader meshwork of life within particular places and times in history. Ingold would have us approach this sort of study through terministic screens that emphasize creativity and open-endedness more than discipline and structure, all the while blurring boundaries among concepts, signs, things, and meanings. This is obviously considerably different from critical cultural studies that emphasize hegemony, domination, and the power of discourses to limit identities and other social realities. Elements of Ingold’s vitalism could arguably be added into these critical frameworks, however, supplementing their tendency to focus on determination with a richly textured and complex picture of creative potentialities for new makings. Beyond the more theoretically central chapters, Ingold’s treatments of earth, sky, and weather (chapters eight through ten) may be of interest to deep rhetorical materialists with ecological imaginations. Another, on the soundscape (chapter eleven), adds to discussions of visuality, embodiment, and emplacement that might help studies of visual and sonic rhetorics to move further beyond texts toward material experiences.

Though always smart and regularly provocative, Being Alive has drawbacks, both on its own terms and as a productive site for conversation within Rhetorical Studies. The author periodically disappears into fine-grained theoretical arguments and distinctions that can tax the patience of all but the most philosophically inclined readers, only to reappear a bit too prominently in equally fine-grained accounts of his own doings (sawing a board with a hand saw, drawing the letter “A”) that hover somewhere between tedium and narcissism. A persistent anti-modernism also runs through the book, valorizing shoeless walking through the countryside as a way of knowing and being alive in the world but rejecting modern systems of transport. The whole project would benefit from at least the most basic acknowledgement that lines of becoming are constrained by organizations of power, that the meshwork encompasses regions of radically different life possibility, and that his valorization of premodern and craft practices has its limits as either an interpretive or critical lens for making sense of life in commodified, industrialized, technologized, and deeply mediated worlds such as our own.
Rhetoric and Ambience

Thomas Rickert’s *Ambient Rhetoric* takes up some of the same themes as Ingold (who is cited a couple times in the book), but does so for the central purpose of advancing rhetorical theory. Subtitled *The Attunements of Rhetorical Being*, this is rhetoric played in a Heideggerian key—or, better, that dwells in a Heideggerian ambience. Rickert writes from the English side of Rhetorical Studies, educated in the hothouse of Continental theory that was the University of Texas at Arlington during Victor Vitanza’s time there. Like Diane Davis, another graduate of the same institution, Rickert wants to dislodge rhetoric from its tight identifications with symbolicity, casting it across affectability, things, the material and informational environments, and the ongoing disclosure of the world (xv, 3, 176, 281). His is in some ways a post-cultural rhetorical theory, where problematics of meaning give way to philosophically inscribed ontology, and questions of ideology, hegemony, and discourses of subjectivization are trace elements at most.

*Ambient Rhetoric* speaks into a world where the “networking, digitizing, and externalizing of information” have transformed rhetoric and “permeat[ed] the carpentry of the world” materially and otherwise (xviii, 1). “We are entering an age of ambience,” Rickert writes, where “boundaries between subject and object, human and nonhuman, and information and matter dissolve” (1). Such an age calls for a rethinking of rhetorical theory that must go beyond its traditional topics and “diffuse outward to include the material environment, things (including the technological), our own embodiment, and a complex understanding of ecological relationality as participating in rhetorical practices and their theorization” (3). *Ambience* captures the shift from rhetorical subjects and cultures to environments, and slides as a concept between descriptive and normative. Rickert introduces it through the French winemaking term *terroir*, “which conveys the materiality of the sky that nourished and the ground that grew grapes” (x). He proceeds to theorize it by means of science of embodied cognition, Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology, twentieth-century ambient music, and new materialisms of nonhuman agencies (5–37). Ambience marks what Heidegger described as “the background of intelligibility and practical coping from which we work” and “invites us to understand the complex give-and-take we have with our material surroundings” (5). Rickert links it to the idea of *attunement*, which names ways of being entangled and embedded in environments, encompassing feeling, mood, intuition, and decision making. As the book progresses, attunement opens further into ecological ways of being and sustainable modes of dwelling in the world (esp. chapters seven and eight). Within this scheme, rhetoric is conceived ontologically: embedded in material being, intimate with the environments in which it emerges, not limited by human motives and agencies, and operating as

*a responsive way of revealing the world for others, responding to and put forth through affective, symbolic, and material means, so as to (at least potentially) reattune or otherwise transform how others inhabit the world to an extent that calls for some action.* (162, emphasis in original)

Rickert develops his rhetoric of ambience and attunement over eight chapters sandwiched between a substantive “Introduction” and briefer “Conclusion.” Part I, “Diffractions of Ambience,” begins with two theoretical chapters on invention, both based on previously published essays. The first discusses the concept of the *chôra,*
Plato’s word for space, made newly salient in the writings of Kristeva, Derrida, and Gregory Ulmer. The second is an excursus on *kairos*, where Rickert adds to the ongoing neo-sophistic revival of that concept and brings out its spatial dimensions, culminating in a brief reading of the 1995 film *The Usual Suspects*. Those chapters work toward a theory of ambient rhetorical beginnings not located within the subject or limited by what is currently representable. Chapter three, “Ambient Work,” explores networks as principles of being, complexity theory as a way of understanding contemporary culture, and related practices of ambience as manifest in Brian Eno’s music and the ambientROOM project at the MIT Media Lab. Chapter four then takes Microsoft Windows startup sounds as an object of ambient rhetorical analysis and entry into discussions of the Heideggerean idea of mood, along with concepts of musical worlding and soundmarks that will interest those interested in sonic rhetorics.

Part II, “Dwelling with Ambience,” maintains a similar ratio of theory and philosophical exegesis (lots) to exemplifications and analyses (not so much) across four more studies. Rickert provides an insightful and nuanced discussion of Burke and Heidegger on language, opening back toward a theory of rhetoric as a way to reveal the world and reattune how others inhabit it, capped by a brief analysis of advertising (chapter five). He follows with a consideration of “the rhetorical thing” (chapter six) that leads him through Bruno Latour and Jane Bennett to a discussion of the ways that objects both present themselves and withdraw from our knowledge of them, taking shape within lifeworlds where rhetoric is “a collectivity of interacting elements, energies, and forces, human and nonhuman” (212)—an idea he illustrates through a reading of the iconic *Earthrise* photo taken from space by Apollo 8. The account of things continues as he shifts to the Heideggerean notions of dwelling and the fourfold (earth, sky, divinities, and mortals), where the story takes on a kind of spiritual tenor, only briefly interrupted by a quick reading of the Foghat tune, “Fool for the City” (chapter seven), one of several cameos by 1970s music (which one gets the feeling Rickert is listening to on his basement stereo). Dwelling opens into a discussion of automobility and ecologically attuned sufficiency, cashed out through analyses of the EV1 electric car and efforts by Toronto Island to prevent connection to the mainland that would allow cars to stream across (chapter eight). Rickert’s “Conclusion” then attempts to answer critiques of Heidegger based on his politics and nostalgic rootedness in (rural) place. It ends by injecting senses of movement, difference, and play into core themes of the disclosure, affect, and deep ecological ethics of his ambient rhetoric, usefully articulating it to the work of both George Kennedy and Karen Barad.

*Ambient Rhetoric* is a creative and deeply learned book that advances the project of post-humanist rhetorical theory. It places Rickert among the leading interpreters of Heidegger in U.S. rhetorical studies. He adds philosophical depth to conversations about the ontological and material dimensions of rhetoric, conjoins them to literature from contemporary cognitive science, and plays them out through affect, bodies, things, and space. He also pushes us to conceive of rhetoric as a feature of environments with their full arrays of human and non-human actants and particular ambience. For all these reasons, the book deserves to be taken seriously and engaged.

I would do so by suggesting that, while *Ambient Rhetoric* advances one kind of materiality, it is tone deaf to others and, ironically, is performatively idealist in its
dominant mode of intellectual production. There is something odd about making a
case for materiality and affect by leaning so heavily on philosophy, that most
intellectualist and logocentric language game. Though the paradigm of ambient
rhetoric calls out bodies, senses, objects, and spaces as central loci, this is in large part
a project of reading theory and thinking. That kind of work is absolutely necessary for
advancing rhetorical studies (and is also a personal hobby of mine), but it has its
limits, especially when appeals to world in the Heideggerean sense stand in for the
lived rhetorical worlds of humans—something the RCP at its best helps us to
understand. Ontology in the human world plays out in fields of differential power
and privilege, where it is particularized through culturally inscribed sorting schemes
based on class, gender, race, and sexuality, all of which mediate rhetorical ambience
and the disclosures of the world as experienced by human bodies thrown into it. This
sense of differential placement within ambient environments, and the politics and
struggles that attend to it, are largely missing from the book (just as Rickert’s analysis
of the Microsoft startup sound draws out user-machine attunements but ignores how
its obvious function is sonic branding). To pursue the ambient rhetoric project
further, I would argue, we need to bring Rickert’s theory into the rhetorical lifeworlds
of particular places in ways best illuminated by field study or at least robust corporeal
engagement with public worlds, not indoor reading and textual analysis.

Conclusion

As these books indicate, the rhetoric-and-culture machine keeps churning. It
produces theory, methods, criticism, history, field studies, pedagogies, political
sensibilities, practical engagements with the world, professional identities and
organizations, and critiques of its own ways of operating. In this review essay, I
first turned toward history to gesture toward the array of approaches to rhetoric-and-
culture that have developed since the 1970s. That set a scene where multiple and
sometimes competing traditions, orientations, and institutionally anchored intellectu-
 tal formations have generated ways of thinking about rhetoric, culture, and materi-
 alities. The five works I reviewed occupy different places on that scene and offer
readers multiple provocations and pathways forward. I close with two exhortations
that collectively emerge from them.

First, we need to conduct studies and develop theories that account for
symbolicities and materialities alike, making use of both the fundamental categories
of critical studies dating to the 1970s and emerging post-humanist vocabularies. No
adequate framework can ignore the way that rhetoric as a lived human phenomenon
takes shape on terrains of unequal power where gender, race, class, sexuality, and
social status are all salient categories of differential rhetorical experience, production,
and reception. As we adopt useful categories like assemblage, meshwork, and
ambience, we need to be vigilant to the materially enacted social ontologies of
human being and their fault lines of power and privilege. This means paying
attention to discourses, texts, symbolic utterances, and communicative exchanges as
well as bodies, sensations, institutions, and things—the social, the cultural, and the
material alike. It strikes me that a broadly anthropological perspective has potential
here, particularly if cross-fertilized with Royster and Kirsch’s feminist rhetorical
practices and Rickert’s deep ecological thinking. If we adapt a Burkean principle and
recognize humans as rhetorical animals, then the time is ripe for a theoretically sophisticated, empirically grounded, historically informed, and comparatively attuned anthropology of rhetoric.

Second, as part of that project and an initiative in its own right, we need to continue to internationalize rhetorical studies. This is the promise of comparative and post-colonial rhetorics, carried through in ethnographic inquiry advanced within the RCP, championed by Royster and Kirsch in their attention to global rhetorical flows, and advanced too in Grossberg’s attention to non-European modernities. As rhetorical studies continues to develop around the world, we U.S. rhetoricians must continue to expand our fields of vision, read more widely, seek to cultivate regional expertise outside English-speaking North America, and enter into new conversations and collaborations beyond our national borders. Surely such expansion responds to the call of our conjuncture, fed by globalization and shared environmental responsibilities. On a more modest and professionalized scale, it also represents a way to advance the vitalities of the rhetoric-and-culture nexus.33

Notes


See the special issues of Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies 10, no. 1 and 2–3 (2013); Western Journal of Communication 77, no. 5 (2013); and Inter-Asia Cultural Studies 14, no. 3 (2013); as well as Graeme Turner, What’s Become of Cultural Studies? (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2012).


Carried out more fully in Meyer’s excellent “Precursors of Rhetoric Culture Theory,” op cit.

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Thanks to Brad Vivian, Devon Bouffard, and Lisa Flores for insightful comments and encouragement on drafts of this essay.