cording to familiar and known standards to demonstrate that they are not only learning, but also writing in good faith? To use Habermas’ language, is the point of our work to teach students to write in ways that provoke a mutual recognition of their ideas?

Considering the significance of how an object of representation *looks* marks the space in which rhetoric meets aesthetics, where strategizing also bespeaks a philosophical orientation about whether interlocutors should consciously attempt to craft representations that will be recognizable, comprehensible, as well as pleasing in appearance to others. It would have been nice if Panagia had explored the relationship between aesthetic and rhetorical traditions, since each is pertinent to any examination of the poetics of political thinking. Thinking through this relationship is not an issue Panagia addresses at length because, unfortunately, he writes from the perspective of the literary critic who associates rhetoric with the study of proper arrangement and delivery. Further conversations, however, might draw upon both aesthetic and rhetorical traditions when examining the ways in which embodied reactions to images encounter commonplace conceptions of the work of representation.


Reviewed by Phyllis Mentzell Ryder, George Washington University

At La Marcha, the April 2006 march on Washington in support of immigrant rights, men, women, and children waved a sea of U.S. flags; others draped themselves in the colors of El Salvador,
Mexico, Guatemala, Columbia. One woman held a sign that asked, "Who you calling immigrant, pilgrim?" Another woman's sign queried, "What is the face of a U.S. citizen?" Other marchers had answers. They asserted their productivity: "I built your house!" "I pay taxes!" They proclaimed their humanity: "No human being is illegal!" "¡No Soy Criminal!" (this held by a young boy of about six, who also waved a brown-skinned, black-haired paper puppet.) They asserted their power: "¡Sí se Puede!" invoking Cesar Chavez and the 1960s grassroots mobilization for Latino and Filipino farm workers that successfully took on the economic and political powers in California. The signs, the chants, the speeches called out in both Spanish and English. The event served as a reminder, yet again, that the definitions of "American" and "public" and even "democracy" are always in contention. The struggle at the march and daily in multiple other venues is about the material repercussions of definitions, of language; it's about the elasticity of the term "American citizen" and how it can encompass the diversity that is already fully intertwined in—and constitutive of—the economic and political landscape of the country. This very question about the interrelation among language, material reality, and discourses of race, gender, and culture lies at the heart of an important new anthology, Calling Cards: Theory and Practice in the Study of Race, Gender, and Culture, edited by Jacqueline Jones Royster and Anne Marie Mann Simpkins.

One sign at La Marcha particularly stands out to me in relation to Calling Cards: a young toddler is on her father's back, snug in a backpack. Her white bonnet flutters over her dark hair. In her chubby fist, she holds a sign up high: "My Mommy was once undocumented now she has a Ph.D.!" The sign reads as a celebration; the mother has one-upped a system that tried to label her as "undocumented," that is, unproductive, criminal, financially burdensome, and so on. However, the sign also begs the question of the relationship of the academy to citizenship. The sign yokes academic and legal status in the play on documentation: either the Ph.D. substitutes for the mother's legal documents, or it takes her beyond mere citizenship into a new realm of knowledge and
document-makers. To what extent does academic work—teaching, research, academic service—confer legitimacy in American culture? To what extent does academic work recognize how it is inevitably yoked to questions of social justice? The sign, after all, also reveals the crushing power of language politics: the run-on sentence is an easy target for anyone who wishes to challenge the authority or contribution of the writer's experience.

I think of this particular sign because *Calling Cards* pokes, prods, and pushes at the very question of the relationship between the work of the academy and social justice. The volume considers university professors in their role as creators and disseminators of knowledge, and it explores the responsibilities teachers and scholars have towards people, past and present, who suffer from oppression. The book stands as a warning that we as academicians and as citizens must examine our presumptions about language and knowledge-making, about who gets to speak and what counts as evidence, about what historical and material constraints prevent us from seeing the limitations of a hegemonic approach. However, the book is not only a warning; it also stands as an invitation to a new kind of scholarship that, by keeping central theories of race, gender, and culture, can reveal alternative knowledges, values, and rhetorics of resistance that can be deployed in the name of social justice. The book stands as an invitation to others to join in and celebrate all these developments.

The anthology introduces scholarship on an impressive range of contemporary and historical figures; as such, it "extend[s] the range of subjects deemed appropriate for scholarship" (x) and demands that we attend to the diversity of those who populate our rhetorical landscape. The authors tug back the hegemonic blinders of the field and introduce new faces and events—people whose perspectives, knowledge, and values have been written out of the dominant history and contemporary renderings of what counts as viable sites for textual and historical analysis. For example, we are introduced to a range of sites through which slaves and free blacks gained a rhetorical education in the 1800s (Logan), and how African-American women slaves were able to get their lives in print
Reviews 347

through a diverse range of antebellum print literature (Moody). We are introduced in more detail to two black women rhetors of the 1800s: Mary Ann Shadd Cary, who fought for the rights of black émigrés in Canada (Simpkins), and Maria Stewart, who argued in Boston for universal black citizenship and every woman’s right to speak publicly (Carlacio). We meet Native Americans whose life stories and educational choices speak back to dominant stereotypes (Krouse and R. Bizzaro). We learn of indigenous feminist agendas in India (Ramnarayan) and of the historical contexts that influence the rhetorical appeals of post-Maoist women writers in China (Wu). We meet working-class women at the forefront of the Progressive Era labor movement (L’Eplattenier) and those negotiating classism in the academy now (Green).

Overall, the anthology has much to offer in broadening what rhetoric and composition scholars consider when we perform textual studies or reflect upon the professionalization of our field. The book also provides a valuable analysis of the methodology of such work. Jami Carlacio poses a vital challenge: referring to the practices by which scholars present their “calling cards’ whose imprints bear the categories of race, class, gender, and so on,” she writes, “we must ask ourselves whether this is an act of symbolic representation used to authenticate our work, or whether it makes a positive contribution to clarifying the material conditions that made this textual, symbolic production possible” (132). How do we change our scholarship when we interrogate the race, class, and gender of a researcher, a teacher, a rhetor? Joyce Irene Middleton offers one response: we must recognize how these terms point in multiple directions, how the act of identifying the ways a text or a person or an event is “raced” not only positions people of color, but also bolsters white privilege, usually through habits of de-racing and de-contextualizing history. Akhila Ramnarayan offers a second response: we cannot assume that one’s geographical or racial or gender location confers with it a particular ideology (164). Finally, Hui Wu makes a provocative point in her explication of post-Maoist Chinese feminist writing: one part of considering one’s subjectivity is examining whether the key concepts used to evalu-
ate a text take into account the text's local, cultural, historical, and material conditions.

Barbara E. L'Eplattenier's chapter, "Questioning our Methodological Metaphors," is a strong and powerful review of the many layers of self-reflection that are necessary when studying the histories of rhetoric. She writes that historiographic methods must account for the subject positions of the researcher, the incompleteness and fragmentary nature of her work, the multiple forces and tensions in alliance-building that rhetors must engage in, the cultural and historical factors that shape what is valued and believed possible (both then and now), and the chronology of concepts over time. L'Eplattenier writes, "Acknowledging our own subjectivity might allow us to see additional stories available to us" (137). What is especially exciting about this chapter is L'Eplattenier's explanation of how this worked for her—how acknowledging her own subjectivity brought her attention to working-class women in the labor movement in the Progressive Era, and how their fiery rhetoric and strategic negotiations in that labor struggle defied the usual rhetorical theories and required her to attend to a different range of pressures on the rhetorical situation.

A number of chapters in the book take up the question of scholarly authority in reference to scholarship in which the researcher is white and/or middle-class and the person being studied is not. L'Eplattenier writes, "My own interest in these women [white women in the 1920s labor movement] developed precisely because they were so different from myself" (137). In contrast, Carlacio asserts that her authority to research Maria Stewart comes from "bracket[ing] difference to some degree in order to realize [her] affinity with Stewart so that the lines of communication across the discursive and material borders of race and class remain fluid" (128). This is a risky move, as Carlacio seems to recognize in her own justification of it. Carlacio's piece is a thoughtful reflection on the relationship she wishes to forge so that she can speak to and with Stewart; however, I find myself wanting to hear more about why she chooses to try to bracket difference rather than foreground the ways those power dynamics affect her
research process. I would have liked more concrete examples of how studying the life and rhetoric of a black woman in 1830s America led Carlacio to reflect on her “complicity in a racist and classist structure where [she] enjoy[s] the cultural power [accorded her] at least insofar as [she is] white and work[s] as a university instructor” (128) and how that experience might have forced her to contend with otherwise unacknowledged (hegemonic?) values, methods, assumptions.

Joycelyn Moody adds a different layer to this debate on scholarly authority. In her own experiences as a black scholar in the field of African-American literature, she identifies an ongoing privilege of white scholars who do the same work: white students in her field, she observes, receive better mentoring and are therefore better positioned to be hired into the few available positions. White professors, she observes, are seen as more authoritative scholars; they don’t have to wrestle with the accusation that they are simply promoting “feel-good nationalism for the black community” (113). I appreciate how Moody calls our attention to the broader picture: the effects of a professor’s choices of scholarship show up not only in the knowledge-making process, but also in the larger politics of the academy.

The call for multiple layers of self-reflection in one’s scholarship sets the standards high and is particularly challenging because it demands such a recursive methodology and such a broad, interdisciplinary scope. Moody admits that the interdisciplinary scholarship of such projects “both daunt[s] and inspire[s]” her (117). Moody doesn’t back off from the challenge, however; she writes, “I feel more conviction than ever about holding students of every academic department accountable to the rigors of interdisciplinary work” (116). There are several places in the anthology where I wished the writers were held more accountable. For example, as much as I value the lesson that Wu teaches about all that is overlooked when scholars insist on using contemporary and culturally-biased criteria (in her case, Western feminism) to analyze the texts of a different time and place (post-Maoist China), I found myself wondering about the ways she characterizes West-
ern feminism in her piece. She argues that Chinese gender studies challenges Western feminism’s mapping of the public/private split, in which full “humanity” is granted only in the rational, decision-making, and male-gendered public sphere. In Confucian traditions, she points out, women were seen as fully “human” in that they controlled domestic spheres that were not subordinated to the public sphere. I take her point, and consider it illuminating and valuable. However, I can’t help wondering how her analysis of gender politics in Chinese rhetoric might be more fruitfully analyzed through the works of feminists of color. For example, her description of the ways women in the Maoist era were desexualized and denied any position of power within a domestic sphere in order to “allow” them to perform physical labor seems to have a lot in common with the experiences of generations of African-American women in the U.S. The limitation of white Western feminists’ conceptions of the public/private split has been exposed by feminists of color, and it would be valuable to consider their works in relation to the arguments made by the eight Chinese writers whose work Wu explicates.

I also would have appreciated more attention to the “calling card” of sexuality. Granted, the book never promises to take on issues of heteronormativity or homophobia; however, it also never explains why such an analysis is so muted in the book. Only one contributor lists sexuality as one of her “calling cards”; Moody names herself as a “black lesbian feminist academic” (109) but doesn’t say much more about how this identity affects her work. L’Eplattenier mentions that the labor organizers she studies fought homophobia (139) but does not elaborate on how that manifested or what insights she gained about rhetorics of hegemony or resistance from studying that fight. In “Last Words,” L’Eplattenier notes the absence of any queer theory in the volume and argues that

including sexuality in our methodological frameworks might reveal other insights and aspects of our analyses—for example, in rhetorical studies, about rhetorical ability/understanding, about the performativity of gender roles, an aspect
I agree and would love to see a more thorough analysis of sexuality in a number of these pieces. Patrick Bizzaro’s question about how to be a feminist role model for young men, for example, would benefit from an interrogation of how the “wimp”/“bully” dichotomy he evokes reveals an anxiety that is at the intersection of both gender and sexual identity, and how teaching young men about a range of masculine identities must address queer identities as well.

What I like most about this volume, overall, is the way the pieces talk back and forth to each other. For example, the first and last main chapters (by Valerie Babb and Joyce Irene Middleton, respectively) both identify how race and class are marked in sites beyond the literary and civic spheres. Babb locates racial discourses in early American popular culture, including such family entertainment as Barnum’s 1882 traveling circus, which “paraded representatives of the ‘uncivilized races’ Cannibals, Nubians, Zulus, Mohammedans, Pagans, Indians, Wild Men—in gilded chariots” (26). Here, race is written onto the “uncivilized” people in the exhibit, while whiteness (the condition of being “civilized” and all the privileges of gaze and definition that come with that) is consolidated in the viewers. Middleton considers a contemporary example, Tiger Woods. Noting that the media championed Woods for “[breaking] the race barrier” when he won the Master’s Tournament in 1997, Middleton adds, “This description of Woods’s ‘accomplishment’ effectively avoids noting who created the racial barrier in the first place” (246). She continues with other, equally provocative examples of “race matters” in contemporary popular culture. Together, these pieces challenge the other authors in the book to locate their historical analyses not only within the literary and political contexts as they do, but also—and equally as importantly—within the broader, cultural contexts that demarcate hegemony and difference.

Another important conversation in the book focuses on autobiographical writing. Ann E. Green and Joycelyn Moody empha-
size their own rhetorical strategy of inserting personal narrative into their scholarly work. For Green, "a story allows room for complexity that is richer and thicker than that conveyed by definitions" (78); it's a pedagogical and rhetorical strategy that breaks down stereotypes and draws the reader to empathize with a different set of values and perspectives. Moody says, "I 'write myself into being' in autobiographical essays such as this one" (109). Hers is an act of public self-affirmation. For similar reasons, both Green and Renee M. Moreno attest to the value of assigning personal narratives to composition students. Green believes she affirms her working-class students when she invites them to write personal narratives about topics that are marked by class, such as hunting, drunk driving, and farming. For Moreno, the personal narrative allows marginalized students to explore experiences of oppression and find a way to name it for what it is; the genre enables students "to [develop] critical strategies to combat the explosive forces that surround us . . . through the creation of counterdiscourses and counterknowledge that corrects, as [James] Baldwin suggests, 'so many generations of bad faith and cruelty'" (34). Yet the question of the economics of circulation—the possibility and methods of getting one's story picked up by the larger public—must also be addressed. Moody's analysis of the methods by which African-American slave women got their stories told through a range of antebellum print media provides an important starting point for this question. I would like to see more discussion of the ways composition classrooms that rely on personal narrative deal with the question of how to insert their critiques into larger circles of discourse.

Though the "Last Words" chapter promises a meta-discussion that isn't fully enacted (the comments there include only a few very gentle beginnings of cross-talk and critique), the chapters themselves speak to each other enough that the book as a whole—with all of its interwoven arguments for self-reflection, the complexities of personal narrative, the attention to cultural and historical realities—carries out much of this meta-conversation. One could link other chapters in similar ways; each combination would highlight a
different thread of the conversation, demonstrating the complexities and challenges of the work that the book takes on. Because of these interesting conversations, the anthology would work especially well as a text in a range of courses, including surveys of the history of rhetoric, methods courses, and courses on composition pedagogy.


Review by William P. Banks, East Carolina University

If I want to know what’s going on in the United States or abroad, I rarely pick up the newspaper, nor do I spend much time watching television news. Like our students, I jump on the Internet and begin prowling around various news sites and blogs; this move is more for convenience than because I think all American news is inherently bad or any more biased than other news sources. However, if I want to know what’s going on with lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people or issues, I open my FeedReader program, a dynamic content news aggregator, and see what’s happening in the blogosphere. I do this because I know I won’t learn anything much from mainstream news about queer people or politics. What I get from these various blogs are the stories my colleagues and friends will most likely never read: stories of queer youths verbally or physically assaulted at schools or in their own neighborhoods, stories of these same youths kicked out of schools by principals for various nonsensical reasons, stories of gay couples beaten up while on vacation, stories of child custody battles for lesbian and gay parents, stories of local—and simultaneously pervasive—legislation to deny queer people access to marriage or spousal