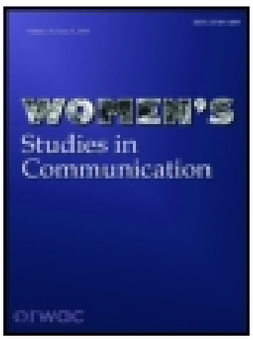

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Matthew Houdek & Kendall Phillips

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INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric and the Temporal Turn: Race, Gender, Temporalities

Matthew Houdek[a] and Kendall Phillips[b]

[a]University Writing Program, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York, USA; [b]Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York, USA

In September 2019, climate activist Greta Thunberg chastised members of the United Nations over their inaction on climate change. The sixteen-year-old Swedish student emphasized the generation gap between the senior diplomats and policymakers and the community of young climate activists she represented, including outspoken Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) teen activists such as Jamie Margolin, Mari Copeny, Xiye Bastida, Nadia Nazar, Elsa Megnistu, along with many others. The younger generation would, Thunberg argued, pay for the inattention of their elders. At the conclusion of her speech, she insisted, "We will not let you get away with this. Right here, right now is where we draw the line. The world is waking up. And change is coming, whether you like it or not" (Greta Thunberg's Speech). Whether her prophetic words will come true remains to be seen, but one notable aspect of Thunberg's speech is its emphasis on temporality. Underlying Thunberg's emphasis on the clash between generations and the urgent need for action is a distinct rhetorical emphasis on the now of the present moment. Thunberg's address suggests not only that now is the time for action but that now constitutes an inevitable shift toward something new, the "change" that is coming.

Rhetorics of protest routinely invoke a sense of the now, a sense that the moment of address is particularly important in the broader scope of history. In what is perhaps the most iconic moment in the rhetoric of protest, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood upon the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in August 1963 and insisted upon the "fierce urgency of now" (217) as he called upon the nation to pursue more concrete steps toward civil rights. Harvey Milk used a similar appeal in a 1978 column in the *Bay Area Reporter* when he insisted to his supporters that "the fight has to begin right now … yesterday. It must be fired up now" (232). This notion was further reflected in a statement signed by more than 1,000 Black activists, artists, scholars, students, and organizations that expressed "solidarity with the Palestinian struggle and commitment to the liberation of Palestine's land and people," asserting that it is a "key matter of our time." Statement co-organizer Kristian Davis Bailey elaborated, insisting:

> [W]e're at a crucial moment in the global struggle against racism, in which the Black and Palestinian struggles play a crucial role. We wish to send a loud and clear message to Palestinians, as well as the governments of the US and Israel that now is the time for

CONTACT Matthew Houdek mthuwp@rit.edu University Writing Program, Rochester Institute of Technology, LBR-A118, One Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623, USA; Kendall Phillips kphillip@syr.edu Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies, College of Visual and Performing Arts, Syracuse University, 100 Sims Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244, USA.

> Palestinian liberation, just as now is the time for our own in the United States. (quoted in Palumbo-Liu, np)

This sense of now seems particularly common as a means of motivating action, as the current moment is depicted as being the moment of action.

A common corollary to this sense that now is the time for action is the suggestion that the normal course of prior life is no longer tolerable. Sylvia Rivera's defiant declaration to the 1973 Christopher Street Liberation Day Rally that "I will no longer put up with this shit" epitomizes such exasperation. A similar sentiment served as the basis of the response by many women in Hollywood who, in coalition with other organizations like the Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, declared "Time's Up" on the culture of sexual and racial bias and harassment in the U.S. entertainment industry. Likewise, Wilhelm Van Spronsen, who was shot and killed by Seattle police in 2018 for trying to burn an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center to the ground, reflected on his youth growing up in post-WWII Germany in his manifesto, stating:

> We are living in visible fascism ascendant … . I promised myself that I would not be one of those who stands by as neighbors are torn from their homes and imprisoned for somehow being perceived as lesser … . Detention centers are an abomination. I'm not standing by … . You don't have to burn the motherfucker down, but are *you* going to just stand by? (quoted in Jaywork, np)

In these and countless other cases, the rhetorical focus on the moment of now is commonly envisioned as a turning point and a call to action, one which reflects on past injustice to issue a promise that the future will look different. Echoing King's belief in his dream, César Chávez proclaimed, "Our day is coming. It may not come this year. It may not come during this decade. But it will come, someday" (121).

Philosophical, rhetorical, and literary investigations into temporality and the nature of time date back thousands of years; until the 1940s, they were among the dominant themes in European philosophy (Heise). Rhetorical scholars, too, have a deep history with the study of time, timing, and temporality, as evidenced in scholarship on kairos (Hesford, "Kairos"; Kinneavy; Rickert; Sipiora and Baumlin; Walzer), akairos (Boer; Moore and Walzer; Myers), chronos and "chronistic criticism" (N. Allen; Brigham), speech (Leff), and the uneven politics of temporality in labor and everyday life (Sharma). While these and other established approaches to temporality provide useful insights into the way rhetors and institutions invoke time and the now, there may be more at stake in these moments of protest. Lake's study of the 1980s' Native American movement, Red Power, for instance, reveals how the directionality of time itself is often contested within protest rhetoric. He shows how Red Power's rhetoric "subverts not only our own sense of the appropriate time for and timeliness of native activism, but also the very constructs with which we theorize about the temporal dimensions of (their) rhetoric" (125). Nick Estes similarly argues that the #NoDapl protests at Standing Rock and the Indigenous activist refrain *Mni Wiconi* ("Water is life") mark a demand on the present that both "reaches into the past" and is "future oriented" (256)—a gesture to an alternative "indigenous temporality" that is often suppressed by settler colonial intensities and dispositions (Rifkin). Rhetors like Thunberg, King, Chavez, the Water Protectors, Black activists, and anti-fascists like Van Spronsen do not merely invoke a sense of the now to advance a particular policy or concern but also to challenge the established sense of temporality itself. For as Lake asserts, "[H]umans, as

symbol-using animals, are … the inventor of the temporal" (124), and the call to protest often serves as a flashpoint for such moments of (re)invention.

In recent years, critical scholars across the humanities have paid increasing attention to temporality as a site of power and resistance as they recognize that our sense of the flow and order of time is far from transparent or innocent. This special issue of *Women's Studies in Communication* seeks to build upon this "temporal turn" and add to it. Gathering several scholars of rhetoric whose work attends to critical intersections of race, sexuality, and gender, we seek to demonstrate ways in which temporality can be seen as something other than opportune moments or chronological orderings. In particular, as we will seek to discuss more thoroughly throughout this introductory article, the authors in this special issue offer ways of thinking about temporality as invested with logics of colonialism, patriarchy, racism, anti-blackness, and other frames of oppression and the rhetorics that uphold these dynamics of power. We seek, in other words, to suggest the possibility of "temporal rhetorics," by which we mean those ritualistic and repetitious discourses, practices, and performances that produce and sustain how a given people views themselves as existing within time. J. G. A. Pocock observes that "language practices" and dominant representations of national identity often evidence how a given "society is structured by time" and "perceives itself as existing within time" (39). The collective production of this "shared time" (Lake 124) structures rhetorically how publics make meaning of their relation to the nation, humanity, the flow of history, and responsibility for in/justice, but also their relation to those who are constructed as outside of that contingent temporal formation. As we will explain in the next section, the history of this dominant temporal formation has its roots in European colonialism, the slave trade, and U.S. settler colonialism. Its continuous evolution and production across various historical periods reveal how time itself has been colonized by a white, Western, heteropatriarchal, capitalist logic that maintains the status quo and demarcates the boundaries of belonging.

In exploring temporal rhetorics, then, we seek to examine not only these repetitive and habitual understandings and productions of hegemonic time but also the counter-temporal interventions through which these dominant frames are contested by those who perceive or experience time Otherwise. Through these explorations, the question of how we understand the movement of time becomes both explicit and urgent. It is not just that there are multiple temporalities; what is more important is what the rhetorical articulation of alternative temporalities enables—forms of resistance and solidarity, hope and community, healing, survival, Black rage, and much more. Such interventions, as the collected articles contained herein demonstrate, can occur in public venues like congressional hearings or in everyday activities like fantasy football leagues; they can be experienced in personal reflections or through popular media. But, whether framed in terms of complex theory or as embodied experience, we believe the kinds of interventions made and explored in these diverse essays call us to consider the temporal as a complex entanglement of relations of power and oppression that seeks to enforce a sense of normal time while erasing its own enforcement.

Our intervention into questions of temporality, of course, has its own temporality and we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the important role of scholars and activists who have long championed theories and foundations of rhetoric that diverged

and challenged dominant Western framings. Scholars like Molefi Kete Asante, Alberto González, Marsha Houston, Raka Shome, and Dolores Tanno have built a powerful foundation for developing alternative cultural rhetorics and for challenging the hegemony of Western-centered conceptions of persuasion, justice, civility, and time. Their foundational scholarship has been made even more urgent by recent efforts to call out the discipline by the #CommunicationSoWhite (Chakravartty et al.) and #RhetoricSoWhite (Wanzer-Serrano) movements, and the institution-building work of the Communication Scholars for Transformation. The current special issue is indebted to these and other scholars and to all who have challenged the dominance of white and European perspectives within rhetorical studies. In a cultural moment marked by many overlapping "crises"—from environmental degradation and deregulation to the resurgence of white nationalism, intensified border politics to genocidal movements against Syrians and the Rohingya people, attacks on workers' rights and LGBTQ protections, the rise of detention centers in China, the United States, and India, heightened precarity and rampant economic inequality, and much more—the need to challenge and rethink fundamental white and Western cultural constructs like temporality is as urgent as ever. We hope that elevating the question of temporality and the prospects for alternative views of temporality can contribute to these movements and to all those who seek to build, imagine, and occupy different possible futures.

In what remains of this introduction, we seek to frame the collected essays by, first, charting the violent evolution of the dominant temporal formation over several distinct periods of power and oppression. Although our historical narrative spans hundreds of years and is thus limited in depth, we hope to demonstrate how a focus on temporality and temporal rhetorics can aid scholarship on colonialism, settler colonialism, Indigenous genocide, the afterlives of slavery, the postracial era, and "MAGA," in addition to the types of protest and social movement rhetoric noted previously. Second, we briefly aggregate those scholars who are leading the temporal turn to expose the myth of hegemonic time's assumed universality and who foreground alternative, nonlinear temporalities. Doing so gives credence and further exigence to our suggestion that a temporal turn is currently under way while creating an archive of citations for those who wish to continue transforming the rhetorical canon and who, like us, view temporality as a critical site of power, epistemic disruption, and possibility. Finally, we conclude by offering a short preview of the essays that make up this special issue and suggest ways in which the temporal turn can open up productive and critical space within rhetorical studies and the study of gender and communication more broadly.

The violences of universal time

The present conjuncture is defined by a complex temporality composed of otherwise contradictory temporal rhetorics of progress and toxic nostalgia. Race scholars have long critiqued progress narratives for how they often disavow historical and ongoing legacies of structural violence (Ray et al.) and assume the legitimacy of the cultural and institutional norms of cismale whiteness while remaining hostile to racial and gendered difference and disparities (Chávez; Ray et al.). Racial progress narratives found their apogee in the postracial discourse that resounded with the election of Barack Obama.

Within this context, racism intensified and "expressed itself anew in the name of racial disappearance, disavowal, and denial … and the supposed death of race (Goldberg 1–6). Wendy Hesford describes the so-called postracial era as constituting a "temporal fantasy that race is no longer a structuring principle in inequality" ("Surviving Recognition" 593), a fantasy underwritten by rhetorics of progress and a politics of what Kristen Hoerl calls "selective amnesia" (see also Squires). "The postracial is the most racial," David Theo Goldberg contends, defined by a temporal rhetoric that reanimates racism through forgetting, erasure, and disavowal. In the postracial era, the naming of race is inverted as "racist" in itself and disregarded as a residue of hostile memories, whereas inferential or even overt racist pronouncements are protected by the temporal fantasy that the present represents a sharp break from the past. Any race-based grievances or critiques can quickly be quashed with an appeal to "look how far we've come, so get over it."

On the other hand, the campaign slogan "Make America Great Again" ("MAGA") comprises another element of this dominant temporal formation, one which draws from a deep history of racialized and gendered animosities, affects, and intensities; this is not an aberration. MAGA, a symptom of these deep-seated issues, simultaneously calls forth a postracial nostalgia for a mythical great white past, and reproduces the futural orientation of whiteness and hegemonic masculinity, while insisting that its xenophobic, racist, misogynistic, and homophobic core have nothing to do with race, gender, or sexuality. Within this complex temporal formation, for MAGA patriots, increasing Black and Brown populations, interracial couplings, lagging white fertility rates, feminist, queer, and trans* activists' demands for change and recognition, religious diversity, and immigration together represent a looming threat to white men's hold on the control over time and future of the nation. This was on full display in the scorn directed at Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib in summer 2019 when President Trump and his supporters demanded that the four congresswomen "go back where they came from." Although this was clearly an assertion of the white control of space, it also reinscribed the temporalization of their racialized bodies. Here, it becomes a question of not only whether these Black women and women of color representatives belong within the spatial boundaries of the nation but also equally suggests a call for them to "go back *when* they came from." It is a demand to go back to a time when white supremacy was mostly unquestioned in the mainstream and where Black people and people of color, especially women, had no recourse to make critical claims against the state—back to when the United States was supposedly "great."

Although the present character of universal time is grounded in violence, the historical and ongoing construction of temporality has long served as a principal mechanism of race making and in the constitution of the human or so-called Man. Frantz Fanon writes in "The Fact of Blackness" that the temporality of modernity figured the colonial encounter as the moment in which Man was "authorized" and came into being. The Black subject, by contrast, was constructed in a position of belatedness, always already behind the assumed universality of white and Western culture and rationality. Armond Towns argues that Hegel's *Philosophy of History* reflected the dominant ideology of the period and assumed Europe and its inhabitants as the natural extension of Ancient Greece. As Towns shows, to be seen as fully human required being recognized within

this linear narrative of Western history, while those who were written into colonial narratives as "primitive" Others were outside the realms of the social and structurally foreclosed from entering the ontology of the human. Colonialism, then, was framed as a benevolent project of bringing the colonized into history but only to fortify the zero-point epistemology that undergirded the ascendant Western world and as a foil to resecure the centrality of white men. This anachronization of the racialized Other closed off the possibility for being or becoming otherwise and often justified various forms of exploitation and violence. And while the construction of blackness and race were at the forefront of these temporal logics, these dynamics of knowledge/power were also distinctly gendered, wherein the white cisheterosexual man came to "overrepresent itself" to occupy the full space of humanity (Wynter 260). Patricia Murphy, for instance, argues that the construction of temporality during the colonial and Victorian era was grounded in gendered conceptions of history, progress, evolution, and Christianity and reinforced rigid boundaries between masculinity and femininity. The control over time, in short, was a principal resource in producing these constitutive forms of violence and subject making that demarcated the lines of what Stuart Hall calls "the west and the rest."

The United States further stretched this linear temporal narrative and realization of Western and white male supremacy, and far preceded the complex temporality of post-racism and MAGA that shapes the current moment. John Locke famously described the early United States by stating that "in the beginning, all the world was America," suggesting that the New World represented a rupture and new origin point in modern time. Its government, it was believed, would become the template for nation-states of the future, something which continues to materialize today in the temporal rhetorics of so-called first worlds and third worlds, developed and developing nations—all temporally erected boundaries demarcated along racial lines. But the project of manifest destiny and its vision of the ideal nation was complicated by the transatlantic slave trade, slavery, settler colonialism, indigenous genocide, racialized sexual violence, and the forced sterilization of Black, Brown, and indigenous women. Thus, a rich set of temporal rhetorics animated political thought in this period to address these tensions and contradictions. For example, six years before John O'Sullivan coined the term *manifest destiny* in 1845, he wrote another essay in the *Democratic Review* titled "The Great Nation of Futurity." Westward expansion was the spatial and masculine telos of the nation's earliest days, but O'Sullivan equally emphasized the temporal dimension of expansion. "The far-reaching, the boundless future will be the era of American greatness," he wrote. "In its magnificent domain of space and time, the nation of many nations is destined to manifest to mankind the excellence of divine principles." Here, O'Sullivan positioned the future as the site of U.S. greatness, a living destiny unfolding in front of their eyes that allowed for a negotiation of the violence being carried out in its name (T. Allen).

Historian Thomas M. Allen's study of early U.S. political writings and correspondence by men such as O'Sullivan, Thomas Jefferson, William Gilmore Simms, George Bancroft, and others identifies a pattern of similar metaphors that evidence a "tropic economy of time and space that has operated throughout American history." As he shows, early political thinkers' preoccupation with time was meant to allay the tensions

and contradictions between the nation's claims of liberty and independence, the break from European imperialism, and the desire for westward expansion, which required imperial forms of domination. Jefferson was particularly troubled by these inherent tensions, represented in the then-popular phrase "Empire of Liberty." The phrase showcases the contradiction between a universal concept of liberty for all with the imperial–expansionist need to colonize space and dominate, contain, and eradicate those already living therein. Time, then, and the time of the future in particular, became an abstract, unoccupied space for the projection of (white, masculinist) national fantasies and aspirations.

For Jefferson, as with O'Sullivan's "Great Nation of Futurity," any tensions that existed within the Empire of Liberty would be resolved as the nation continued to progress and expand into the abstract time of the postracial future, thus allowing for a white social imaginary to form that granted a pregiven atonement for the nation's sins. Progress narratives thus not only worked to divorce the present from the past, as critical race scholars rightly argue (Ray et al.); they also functioned as temporal rhetorics that constructed the national present as a futural democratic and just ideal whose realization was a given. In this sense, the United States has always already been "postracial," even if only aspirational and ultimately delusional, a conjuring of the collective hallucination of whiteness. These temporal rhetorics have and continue to serve as a "nationalist rhetoric that produces the United States as a republic whose real territory is more temporal than spatial," while demarcating the lines of who belongs in time and who is outside its linear flow (T. Allen 19). Given that the United States has always been a "'white man's country,' a *herrenvolk* republic," in Omi and Winant's (77–78) terms, the temporalscape that the nation-state sought to occupy was not only racialized but distinctly gendered as well.

This temporal dimension of nationalist rhetoric has sedimented into the nation's structures and institutions and has long served as the rhetorical backdrop for justifying and producing ongoing conditions of settler violence, oppression, and exploitation. As Mark Rifkin argues in his book *Beyond Settler Time: Temporal Sovereignty and Indigenous Self-Determination*, "[T]he U.S … . produces its own temporal formation, with its own particular ways of apprehending time, and the state's policies, mappings, and imperatives generate the frame of reference" that is "cast as the only temporal formation—as the baseline for the unfolding of time itself" (2). Competing constructions of time, such as Indigenous temporalities, are hastily denounced as irrational or incompatible with state interests and those who are seen as part of "the people." Lake, for example, details the way the state views Indigenous cultures as "outdated and regressive, native histories as uncorrectable (if regrettable), and native activism as a historical anachronism" (125). In framing Indigenous life as lagging behind universal time, as the constitutive outside of settler time, the state structurally forecloses the possibility of granting "Indigenous temporal sovereignty" and indigenous ways of being in and representing the world (Rifkin).

The state's reliance on chronological narrative structures has led to a host of false charges of infanticide against Indigenous women. This is an effect of indigenous women's inability to provide representations of violence that make sense within chronological frameworks. Instead, their narratives reflect a cyclical sense of time and a

framing of family relations—the relationship between a mother and child, for example—in ancestral terms (Briggs). Similarly, the hegemony of universal time has limited Indigenous people's agency in treaty making and assertions of peoplehood due to its suppression of Indigenous temporalities (Rifkin 83–84). The reservation became not only a space of dislocation and racialization, then, but also a "space … of anomaly to which Indianness can be consigned as a temporal oddity, aberration, and/or vestigial artifact even as it is straightened into modes of tribal lineage" (170). The containment of such competing temporalities demarcates and fortifies the borders of universal time and who belongs therein. Continuing the legacies born of the colonial encounter, this construction of hegemonic time reflects the state's system(at)ic capacity to determine who can be recognized as fully human, as well as who may live and who may die—a similar logic that informs other settler colonial contexts such as in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Achille Mbembé (*Necropolitics*) describes this cruel calculation as "necropolitics," an insidious determination of what lives are deemed disposable and exploitable, even necessarily so, for the advancement of capitalist accumulation and so-called progress. Necropolitics and biopolitics sit at the core of the construction of time and have often been imposed in the name of "creating the conditions of (settler) futurity" through the "eradication" of those who are perceived as outside the straight line of progress, outside the interlocking logics of capital, so-called Man, and nation (Mbembé, *Necropolitics* 170).

The construction of the hegemonic temporal formation also segments history into discrete units along a chronological line that allow national memory projects and myths to compartmentalize historical atrocities from having any bearing on the white-futural present. Christina Sharpe, for example, points to how slavery is imagined as a "singular event" of a bygone past in the U.S. national imaginary. As a result, white civil society is unable to come to terms with the "singularity" and ongoingness of anti-blackness that manifests today in police brutality, mass incarceration, sexual violence, and dispossession (106). This resonates with Bradford Vivian's insistence that hegemonic conceptions of time "endows the power and authority" to the dominant social group "with such an ethos of … fundamental correctness that their reign appears coeval with the order of time itself," which can "unwittingly eclipse efforts to publicize the realities of emerging or ongoing patterns of systemic violence" (84). Even well-meaning efforts to confront past wrongdoings through legal means often serve as "narratives of redemption" and atonement within white public memory that obscure the white supremacist "terror apparatus" that enables such acts of violence (Romano)—a notion that has been amplified in the present conjuncture's complex temporality. The structural inability to grapple with past racist violence, terror, and other atrocities similarly works on the terrain of everyday life. For as Helen Ngo insists, the familiar, racist exhortation for Black people to "get over it" with regard to racism and slavery is grounded in the anachronization of Black life and how white bodies are rendered "futural in their orientation." This frees white people "from the vestiges of racism's history" and allows them to be "free to adopt any number of stances on its continuing legacy" (239–40). In short, temporality has long been a principal mechanism in both legitimating and disavowing various forms of racist and gendered violence.

And while this is certainly a thin and mostly U.S.-centered recapitulation of the dominant temporal formation's historical development, it is key to note how the order of time has shifted in response to changing contexts and ruptures, from the colonial encounter and Hegel's historical fantasy to manifest destiny, postracism, and MAGA. While this sense of time has largely maintained its assumed forward orientation and inextricable logic of whiteness and hegemonic masculinity, such shifts reveal a fundamental instability that requires constant upkeep and recalibration through the mobilization of temporal rhetorics, despite their often-contradictory nature. In the undercurrent of its development it has also fractured time to create alternative temporalities that it continually seeks to suppress, forget, and deny—including "colonial time" (Stoler), "settler time" (Rifkin), the "afterlives of slavery" (Hartman, *Lose Your Mother*; "The Time of Slavery"), as well as different forms of Black and queer futurity that seek to imagine better possible worlds (Muñoz; Keeling). By suppressing competing temporalities, and through its various permutations throughout Western history, the dominant temporal formation has been viewed as universal, marked by an unquestioned assumption of temporal homogeneity and singularity—yet stained in blood and violence.

The temporal turn for rhetorical studies

The temporal turn reflects an emerging cross-disciplinary conversation in the humanities that views temporality as a site of power and resistance. Working against the hegemony of universal time, these scholars center critical approaches to temporality with a particular focus on uncovering the relations between time, identity, futurity, and various forms of racialized, gendered, and sexual violence and agency. These include works such as Sara Sharma's *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics*, Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, Sam McBean's *Feminism's Queer Temporalities*, Elizabeth Freeman's *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*, Mark Rifkin's *Beyond Settler Time*, Alexis Pauline Gumbs's *M Archive: After the End of the World*, Kara Keeling's *Queer Times, Black Futures*, Ian Baucom's *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*, Nick Estes's *Our History Is the Future*, Jane Gallop's *Sexuality, Disability, and Aging: Queer Temporalities of the Phallus*, Ace J. Eckstein's "Out of Sync: Complex Temporalities in Transgender Men's YouTube Transitioning Videos," Jack Nielsen's *The Afrofuturism Cyclicality of Past, Present, and Future in Kendrick Lamar's* To Pimp a Butterfly, the recent edited collection *Futures of Black Radicalism* (edited by Johnson and Lubin), and Anne Laura Stoler's *Duress: Imperial Durabilities of Our Time*. Similarly, LuMing Mao explicitly called for a "temporal turn" in rhetoric and composition studies to better account for Asian American rhetorics, a sentiment reflected in other essays in that same forum. A forthcoming special issue in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, coedited by Frida Buhre and Collin Bjork and titled "Bending Time: Rhetoric, Temporality, and Power," will further amplify these conversations within the discipline. These are just a few of the interventions that reflect this more critical turn toward temporality. Across this nascent body of work, these authors illuminate how recognizing and opening space for nonlinear, alternative temporalities can enable tactics of resistance and worldmaking, affirmation and survival, radical and intersectional political formations, liberatory and future

imaginaries—all of which push against the hegemony of universal time. In short, these and other critiques of the normative violence(s) inherent in universal linear time, and what is enabled by articulating nonlinear temporalities, mark time as an emergent and robust site of transdisciplinary struggle and transformative possibility.

Rhetoricians in both communication and English/composition studies have much to offer these conversations. If, as a discipline, we are to continue the hard, critical work of investigating discourses of power to make space for recognizing the differential mattering of different bodies and lives, then it is imperative that we join these broader conversations. The focus on how time and temporality structure and are structured by bodies, institutions, performances, speech, protest, popular culture, legal frameworks, technologies, memory, colonial narratives, and national imaginaries are centrally questions of context and invention—key concepts that position rhetoric as a compelling site to contribute to these emergent dialogues. This special issue assembles a unique and varied set of theoretical, methodological, and conceptual approaches toward these ends. Moreover, the contributing scholars represent a diverse grouping of voices which reflect different identity positions and stages in their respective careers and which cut across both communication and English/composition studies.

The five essays and collectively written coda included herein provide useful and provocative models for how rhetorical scholars might enter into discussions surrounding the temporal turn in the humanities. Together, they suggest ways in which the notion of temporality can productively inform our thinking about topics ranging from trauma and justice to popular culture and the Anthropocene. As an interdisciplinary project tuned toward disciplinary transformation, the contributing authors draw from rhetorical theory, critical race theory, Afro-pessimism, queer theory, memory studies, postcolonial and decolonial scholarship, Black and women of color feminism, and diverse methodological traditions. In this sense, the temporal turn, as we see it, opens space to bridge what Chela Sandoval calls "the theoretical apartheid that separates disciplines today" (70) and which constrains radical imaginaries, coalitional possibilities, and epistemic disruptions. By engaging the intersections between race, gender, and temporalities, this collection of essays offers insights about the relations of power and precarity evidenced therein, what these relations can tell us about how publics make meaning of violence in situated con/texts, and how these rhetorical structures can be rethought, rearticulated, reimagined, and resisted.

While rhetorical scholarship has often attended to the kind of spectacular public interventions mentioned in the opening of our introduction, the essays collected here begin in a much more personal and intimate mode. Reflecting on the trauma of the 2016 Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting, Robert Gutierrez-Perez returns to a topic about which he has written before and provides a poignant and powerful sense of the time of trauma and its aftermath. Deeply invested in the embodied and performative experience of trauma and grief, Gutierrez-Perez draws upon Gloria Anzaldúa's path of *conocimiento*, a walkway to inner and spiritual change, and offers queer worldmaking as a response to the violent temporal structures of racism and homophobia. As he suggests, "[T]he temporal turn in the disciplines of rhetoric and communication studies … must be an embodied or performative turn as well" to militate against the violent structures and forms of gatekeeping that discipline and constrain categories of difference such as race, class, gender, and sexuality. In this way, the strategic style and methodology

driving the piece, even down to how Gutierrez-Perez plays with verb tense and disrupts linearity, performs the argument and challenges normative academic writing conventions.

Where Gutierrez-Perez's embodied theorizing provides an inward journey, Louis M. Maraj explores the temporal dynamics of race and gender through the complex personal relationships of a fantasy football league. Maraj demonstrates the ways that hegemonic structures of whiteness are maintained through microaggressions masked as humor and gameplay. Maraj's critical autoethnography provides insights into what Kara Keeling has called "quotidian violence," which she argues "names the violence that maintains a temporality and a spatial logic hostile to the change and change immanent in each now" (17). Engaging in what Christina Sharpe has called "wake work," Maraj exposes the echoes of the transatlantic slave trade and discourses of anti-blackness intertwined with his experience of National Football League (NFL) fantasy football. He demonstrates how wake work performed through Black/feminist autoethnography can reveal how Black rage and racialized emotions "can push us to cognizance of the dominance and violence in the everyday mechanisms of whiteness that cut away at Black being." Although his contribution reflects a different tradition than Gutierrez-Perez's essay, Maraj's style and methodology also perform his argument to emphasize how wake work disrupts or otherwise ruptures dominant notions of temporality through the exposure of anti-blackness in lived experiences.

Shifting toward public media, Lee M. Pierce analyzes the trailer for the 2018 film *The Hate U Give*. Placing the trailer into the conversation with the influential source novel, the film itself, and the contemporary examples of shocking police brutality against people of color, Pierce attends to the rhetorical dynamics of the editing of sequences and the recurrent image of hands to complicate normative reading practices. As another distinct methodological intervention, Pierce employs what she calls "imaginative close reading" or "affective formalism" to capture in writing the "visually cued temporality of the trailer." Her essay foregrounds the importance of close reading while critiquing the disciplinary tendency toward thematic analysis and reading from a distance, which she suggests reinscribes white privilege and reflects a "bourgeois luxury." As Pierce provocatively asks: "Do we know how to read texts for survival? Do we know how to pay attention to the movement of hands quickly enough to tell friend from foe? Can we find the difference in repetition that makes the difference?" Her essay takes up these and other questions.

G. Mitchell Reyes and Kundai Chirindo advance a theoretical perspective on the Anthropocene based on Achille Mbembé's work (see Mbembé, *Critique of Black Reason*; *Necropolitics*). As human activity continues to radically alter conditions on Earth, precarity becomes one of the defining conditions of the present moment, what Mbembé describes as the "becoming Black of the world." Within this condition of global precarity, Reyes and Chirindo argue that a new understanding of the relations and temporalities of racism, patriarchy, and capitalism is necessary. Such a new understanding will require rethinking our ontological assumptions and questioning our understanding of rhetoric. What is needed, they argue, are new perspectives that enable "rhetorics of race and gender as mobile networks of relations available for subversive repurposing, inventive reimagining" and can provide some means of addressing the time of the

Anthropocene. In short, the Anthropocene harkens a new rhetorical situation that demands a reorientation to the symbolic-material practices of necropolitics and the manner in which temporality undergirds such practices.

Our penultimate essay explores the rhetorical temporality of memory through recent efforts to instantiate the legacy of lynchings into national collective remembrance. Ersula Ore and Matthew Houdek detail how anti-Black racism and historical processes of race making create "times of suffocation" for Black lives that limit the possibilities for justice, memory, and recognition. Against this backdrop and through a two-part case study, the authors examine efforts to pass the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act and the Equal Justice Initiative's National Memorial for Peace and Justice to advocate for a "spatio-temporal politics of breathing" as a framework for enabling liberatory models of justice, healing, remembrance, and responsibility. Attending to the rhetorical efforts of Black feminist activists pushing for the bill and the unique moral demands of the Equal Justice Initiative's lynching memorial, Ore and Houdek find a countertemporality that evokes the complex nonlinear relationships between past injustices and the prospects for a more just future. Their analysis calls attention to the radical possibilities of reorienting the normative temporalities embedded within the structures of both public memory and the law.

Finally, we conclude this special issue with a collectively written coda that responds to the temporal rupture(s) caused by the current COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread uprisings against police brutality and systemic racism that took hold in response to the lynching of George Floyd. This special issue was originally scheduled for a spring 2020 publication date; thus, the essays previewed here were finalized before these events irrupted onto the scene. Due to the pandemic-related publication delay, however, we collectively decided to take this extra time to respond to these events and reflect back on their implications for our own respective essays and more. The coda, in this sense, was written in the future and reflects the many tensions, anxieties, pains, frustrations, trauma, insecurities, fears, and emergent forms of hope and possibility that these events have brought to the fore. Each author or coauthor pair crafted their own short response that we organized and arranged into a single essay, a format which reflects the fragmented nature of pandemic time and the notion that all are in this together, even if in uneven ways.

Taken together, this special issue aims to demonstrate that a critical investigation of temporality can facilitate more robust and responsible theories and critiques of in/justice, processes of racialization, racist and gendered state violence, precarity, trauma, memory, "breathing," and more. As these essays suggest, examining the rhetorical contours of temporality opens space for taking up a number of crucial questions: If "struggles for recognition are also struggles for visibility," as Hesford insists ("Surviving Recognition" 537), then what happens when the temporal formations and frameworks through which we make meaning of the world obfuscate calls for recognition and justice and impede a nation's ability to confront historical and present-day racial injustices? How might we think against the supposed universality and homogeneity of time that confers the dominant interests of white supremacy and heteronormative patriarchy and propels quotidian and gratuitous forms of violence, and what might this against-the-grain thinking enable? What could opening an investigation into alternative nonlinear

temporalities provide for social justice efforts, the life chances of Black and other racialized communities on the margins, and projects aimed at confronting past and ongoing wrongdoings? What does rethinking temporality along the axes of race, gender, and violence enable within rhetorical scholarship and the questions of what type of future we might imagine? Although the articles herein mostly focus on the temporalities of anti-blackness, we view this intervention as a starting point toward answering these and other questions. As such, we encourage broader attention to other temporal formations of race and gender as well as the situated efforts of activists, scholars, and social movements to disrupt such rhetorical structures and create different possible futures and worlds. In a cultural moment marked by overlapping and emergent forms of violence, precarity, hostility, divisiveness, racism, oppression, and vulnerability, there is a fundamental need to challenge otherwise taken-for-granted white and Western epistemological and ontological constructs and think the world otherwise. The temporal turn reorients the discipline toward such transformation.

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