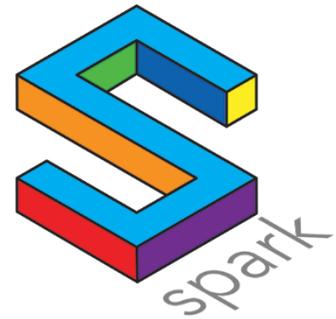


[Spark: A 4C4Equality Journal](#)

an open-access, online, peer-reviewed journal on activism in writing, rhetoric, and literacy studies



Spark 2020 Call: Volume 3, April 2021

Call for Submissions

For the past four years, the United States government and the American people have experienced an unprecedented upheaval, culminating in a local, national, and global focus towards the 2020 election cycle and the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Fueled by partisan divisions, widening social inequities, media representation, the Trump impeachment trial, and the COVID-19 pandemic, the upcoming election has intensified political conversations about healthcare, race relations, immigration, climate change, student debt, and income and wealth. While many of these conversations are happening in mainstream and independent media channels, local and grassroots activism has also continued to address these issues.

Crucial to such activism—both historically and currently—is a focus on building coalitions. While the nature of coalitions is inherently dynamic, we might think of coalitions in terms of organizations, such as the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (LCCR), which comprises more than 200 national organizations as a coalition and works “to promote and protect the civil and human rights of all persons in the United States.” We might also think of coalitions as tightly bound to specific communities, such as the Coalition of Communities of Color (CCC) that strives to “address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism, and inequity of services experienced by our families, children and communities; and to organize our communities for collective action resulting in social change to obtain self-determination, wellness, justice and prosperity.” Given the current political landscape, coalitions and coalition building are a crucial foundation for enacting social change.

Regardless of the scale and mission of a coalition, we can draw on Karma Chavez’s definition and general purpose: a coalition “is a present and existing vision and practice that reflects an orientation to others and a shared commitment to change. Coalition is the ‘horizon’ that can reorganize our possibilities and the conditions of them” (146). Coalitions, of course, are not only built on the left, but also exist across the political spectrum, as seen recently with the Michigan Conservative Coalition’s organizing of the April "Operation Gridlock" protest in Lansing, MI. What makes the way we are framing coalition building differently, however, is a focus on social justice. That is, this *Spark* issue seeks submissions that address the connection between coalition building and social justice in relation to the 2020 presidential election. With adaptiveness and responsiveness of current events in mind, we are particularly interested in submissions that illustrate the actions, ideologies, beliefs, and events that led to November 3rd, the election results, and future implications of the results.

Recently, rhetoric and writing scholars have drawn attention to social justice issues (Agboka, 2013; Agboka, 2014; Frost, 2016; Jones, Moore, and Walton, 2016; Jones, 2016; Haas and Elbe, eds., 2017; Walton, Moore, and Jones, 2019). Social justice requires rectifying historical, systemic inequities that affect current relations and conditions. In *Technical Communication After the Social Justice Turn: Building Coalitions for Action*, Rebecca Walton, Kristen Moore, and Natasha Jones offer a four-step heuristic for action: recognize, reveal, reject, and replace. That is, social justice work requires our recognition of systemic oppressions and our participation in them, that we “reveal” them to others as a clarion call, that we reject these oppressions and complicities, and replace them with “intersectional, coalition-led practices” (133).

As with previous [Spark](#) calls and the ongoing [Teacher-Scholar-Activist Blog Series—A Year of Activism: Perspectives on the 2020 U.S. Elections](#), we ask for a variety of [scholarly and socially engaged texts](#). In continuing *Spark*'s mission to reflect on individual, collective, and organizational action, this 2020 volume of *Spark* calls for submissions that approach coalition building and social justice in the context of the 2020 elections and political activism, especially those that relate to writing, rhetorical, and literacy practices and pedagogies. Contributions may examine a variety of topics, including but not limited to the following distinct, yet interconnected areas:

Local, State, Organizational, and Tribal

- Land and water rights, particularly with Indigenous, Black, Latinx, and migrant communities
- Voting inequities, particularly with redlining, gerrymandering, and mobilization
- Community resources including food, medical care, and housing
- LGBTQIA2+ rights
- Labor, particularly the work of local unions, “essential” and wage workers, workplace conditions, and unrecognized workers

National

- Non bi-partisan interests and representation
- Presidential impeachment and acquittal
- Healthcare systems, policy, industry, and access
- Education, particularly with federal austerity measures, student debt, institutional budgets and restructuring, and educator (faculty, grad students, teacher aids) labor and compensation
- Border politics and immigration in relation to Indigenous, Black, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and migrant communities

Global

- Social media and digital engagements, particularly with transnational organizing, fake news and/or media bias, algorithmic manipulation, and surveillance
- Climate change, global warming, and environmental concerns
- Economy, including markets, trade, transportation, and policy
- International responses to global crises, such as COVID-19, 2008 economic crisis, Brexit, and international conflict

Timeline

The timeline for this volume is:

Deadline for Submissions: December 5, 2020

Reviews and Decisions: January 15, 2021

Author Revisions and Resubmission: February 15, 2021

Publication of Volume: April 1, 2021

Submitting Your Work

When submitting your work, please [read through the guidelines and follow them as closely as possible when preparing your submission](#). We ask the contributors submit a .doc file with minimal formatting. If you include images or multimedia with your submission, please only list the placement for your assets in the body of the submission. Do not embed the files into your .doc. Include them as separate files. See the instructions for including media with your submission on [the guidelines](#). Finally, please name your file using the first author's last name and an abbreviated version of your title, e.g., Unger_LocatingQueerRhetorics.doc. All submissions should be sent as email attachments to Jaquëta Shade-Johnson and Phil Bratta at 4C4Equality@gmail.com

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