Editor’s statement

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According to its aims and scope, research published in the Quarterly Journal of Speech takes a rhetorical approach to “diverse texts, discourses, and cultural practices through which public beliefs, norms, identities, institutions, affects, and actions are constituted, empowered, enacted, and circulated.” The purview of the journal is intentionally broad, but at its core, the study of rhetoric has always been an examination of human community. How it is forged and ravaged. How it is remembered and forgotten. Who is included and excluded. And how to change all of that.

Those of us who identify as scholars and teachers of rhetoric have a responsibility to interrogate and learn from the past, understand and intervene productively in the present, and construct a future that respects human rights and preserves human community. Our current cultural and political moment is one that urgently needs rhetorical perspectives. People in power flout norms of ethical engagement, democratic practices are undermined, free speech is under attack, and communities are fracturing. Voices that historically have been silenced or ignored are responding to these challenges with courage and creativity, even as their increasingly consequential efforts are met by backlash. As a venue for critical assessment and theoretical innovation, the Quarterly Journal of Speech creates a unique and vital scholarly community.

Our dialogue with one another is a robust and sometimes rowdy conversation, with diverse and divergent perspectives represented. My aim, as editor of QJS, is to facilitate a lively, ethical, and expansive scholarly exchange. I am mindful of the fact that this conversation historically has been bounded too narrowly, with too many voices and perspectives shuttled to the periphery or excluded altogether. Important strides have been made in this journal’s recent history, and I am eager to publish work that not only engages the rhetorical tradition but also challenges, interrogates, and even upends aspects of that tradition.

I look forward to the conversation.

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