

# WESTERN STATES RHETORIC AND LITERACY CONFERENCE

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS

October 25-26, 2013  
University of Utah  
Salt Lake City, UT

### 2013 Conference Theme: Material Rhetorics

Keynote Speaker: Marilyn Cooper  
Michigan Technological University  
“Rhetorical Being”

For the 2013 Western States and Literacy Conference, we turn our attention to the field’s ongoing exploration of rhetoric and literacy as material practices. In addition to traditional understandings of rhetoric and literacy as symbolic activity between human actors, the field has begun to consider human and nonhuman bodies, animality, technology, and matter not simply as backdrops for human activity but as contributors to persuasion, communication, and pedagogy. This recent turn is not without precedent or current relevance: Gorgias demonstrated the ways language shapes our understanding of nature; Plato discussed rhetoric amongst the sound of cicadas; Demosthenes trained with a mouthful of pebbles; Quintilian attended to clothing in his pedagogy; Erasmus tailored his writing process in response to the then emerging effects of the printing press, and Wollstonecraft forged the relationship between the material conditions of women and the ways women were instructed and talked about. Today, we can look no further than global digital networks and the effects of climate change as evidence that the material is at least an equal player in a vastly expanded notion of a public. In all, the suasive effects of the material subtend the histories, theories, and practices of rhetoric and writing through which we learn and communicate.

We invite proposals that grapple with these ongoing disciplinary questions of materiality informing our histories, theories, and practices in our pedagogies and research. Of particular interest are presentations that encourage audience participation and discussion, and contribute closely to the conference theme of material rhetorics and to questions concerning aspects of the following:

- Material Theories of Rhetoric & Writing
- Rhetoric of the Body
- Object-Oriented Inquiry
- Pedagogy as Material Practice
- Digital & Networked Technologies
- Nature, Animality, and Materiality

Please submit:

- A cover page that includes the title, speaker/s, address/es, email/s, and phone number/s, along with a brief 25-50 word description of your presentation
- 4 copies of a one-page abstract identifying the format of the presentation as:
  - (a) 20 minute paper (or a 90-minute panel limited to 3 speakers including time for discussion)
  - (b) 90 minute round-table (focused discussion encouraging audience participation)

**Proposals must be postmarked or sent via email by Friday, March, 22, 2013. Send to:**

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