

The Making of Available Means

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Abstract: Drawing on interviews with Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald, this essay shares the story behind the making of *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric(s)*, published in 2001. This story not only provides valuable historical context for this widely-used and referenced anthology, it captures an important early moment in the field of rhetoric and composition, and even gleans a few teaching suggestions from the collection's creators.

Key Words: Available Means; women's rhetoric; collaboration

"I say that even later someone will remember me."

—Sappho

Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald's introduction to *Available Means: An Anthology of Women's Rhetoric(s)*, begins with these words from Sappho. Because of their anthology, which brings together rhetorical texts by 70 women stretching from 410 B.C.E. to 1999, Ronald and Ritchie will be remembered as women who helped introduce many current scholars and teachers, and many of their students to numerous women rhetors and the burgeoning field of women's rhetoric. Ronald's retirement in 2016,¹ and Shari Stenberg and Charlotte Hogg's current effort to create an updated collection of women's rhetoric(s) in their forthcoming anthology *Women's Rhetorical Acts: Writing, Making, and Speaking in the 21st Century* provides the perfect moment to reflect on the making of *Available Means*.² I have known Kate Ronald since 2002. She taught the first women's rhetoric course I took, she directed my dissertation, and she

1 Ritchie previously retired in 2010.

2 I am grateful to Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald, who allowed me to interview them. They even took the time to search old files to answer some of my questions. I want to thank Charlotte Hogg and Shari Stenberg for their assistance. After working on this essay, I am especially grateful for their efforts create a new anthology. I also want to thank Jess Enoch, one of my Peitho reviewers, and Jane Greer and Liz Tasker Davis, my wonderful writing group, who read drafts of this essay and offered several helpful suggestions.

has remained a valuable mentor and a cherished friend. Consequently, I have heard bits and pieces of the *Available Means* story. In this essay, I draw on interviews with Ritchie and Ronald to share that story in order to provide historical context for this widely-used anthology, which was part of a comprehensive collaborative effort that included navigating a male-dominated department, building a composition program, and broadening conceptualizations of rhetorical history. Ultimately, this essay attempts to capture an important early moment in our field as well as the fraught and often messy process of anthologizing. It even gleans a few sage teaching suggestions from the collection's creators.

Since its publication in 2001, *Available Means* has become a foundational text in women's rhetoric. It is repeatedly cited in histories of the field, countless manuscripts, and in innumerable conference presentations. It is the second best-selling book, behind Jacqueline Jones Royster's *Traces of a Stream*,³ out of the almost 80 titles in University of Pittsburgh's Series in Composition, Literacy, and Culture, and it continues to be one of the most widely used texts for teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in women's rhetoric, rhetorical history, and first-year writing.

Available Means has been an invaluable contribution to the field for so many reasons, but especially for the story of how it came about. Colleagues at University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), Ronald and Ritchie first began working together in a composition colloquium where faculty shared writing projects in progress. However, their true collaboration began when Ronald asked Ritchie to serve as co-coordinator of composition with her. "It was a teaching and administrative collaboration before it was a research and scholarly collaboration," explains Ritchie.⁴ Yet, from the very beginning, "We knew we had to be allies." "There was strength in numbers; even if the numbers were two," adds Ronald. In 1984, Ronald and Robert Brooke were the first two hires in Rhetoric and Composition at UNL, and Ritchie, who transitioned to a tenure-track faculty position in 1987, was the third. Both Ritchie and Ronald acknowledge that it was daunting to speak out in the heavily literature- and male-dominated English Department. Administering together gave them the ability to talk to each other about decisions, problematize, and try out ideas before they went public. This was especially important because they did not have the authority

3 Royster, Jacqueline Jones. *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change Among African American Women*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001.

4 Unless otherwise indicated, quotes from Ritchie and Ronald were drawn from telephone interviews.

most Writing Program Administrators (WPAs) have today. “We had a lot of responsibility, but no real authority,” explains Ronald.

Their administrative collaboration was both practical and philosophical. “It grew out of the sense that the production of knowledge is always collaborative,” observes Ritchie. It also provided a form of mentoring. While Ritchie had chaired a high school English Department, she had no writing program administrative experience; so, the collaboration provided her with valuable training. She says Ronald also had the foresight to know that someone else should be prepared to assume that role. In fact, Ronald and Ritchie employed a similar collaborative model when they hired two graduate student associate coordinators. One student focused on the Writing Center, and the other focused on working with new graduate teaching assistants, and they too could collaborate and learn from each other.

One reason for Ritchie and Ronald’s success as collaborators was their different strengths and perspectives. Ronald grounded her approach to teaching composition in classical and modern rhetorical theory and history. Ritchie had been a high school teacher, taught literature, and was a women’s studies faculty member, and her approach to teaching composition was influenced by Ann Berthoff, Peter Elbow, and Andrea Lunsford. “We came with slightly different perspectives but with the same commitment to teaching and feminism, and that set up our collaboration for years to come,” says Ritchie. Another reason for their successful collaboration was their genuine friendship and openness. Ritchie explains that they did not separate their professional and personal lives. “At the same time that we talked about TA assignments or how to combat incoming creative writers’ skepticism toward teaching composition, we were also talking about our mothers, our children, food, or lamenting that ‘I need to get my hair colored,’ or ‘I don’t have anything new to wear to 4 C’s,’” she smiles. “We really liked each other,” adds Ronald, “we admired each other, and we made each other laugh.”

This mutual respect and collaborative spirit also extended to their classrooms. The germ for *Available Means* came about in 1994 when Ritchie sat in on Ronald’s graduate history of rhetoric seminar. Ronald was using the standard texts, which included few women, and both Ronald and Ritchie were struck by female students’ urgent and persistent question, “Where are the women?” As a result, they wrote a proposal for a graduate course titled, “The Rhetoric of Women Writers.” However, Ronald says they soon learned that teaching women’s rhetoric was a “scramble to find things. It required searching, Xeroxing and sometimes making random choices.” “There was no online,” adds Ritchie, who resorted to putting books on reserve in the library and even keeping books in a box outside of her office (*Cultivating*). At that time, there were few women’s anthologies available, and early collections such as Karlyn

Kohrs Campbell's *Man Cannot Speak for Her: Key Texts of the Early Feminists* (1989) and Shirley Wilson Logan's *With Pen and Voice: A Critical Anthology of African-American Women* (1995) had a specific focus. For this class, Ritchie and Ronald wanted to include women's rhetorical practices across a broad spectrum of contexts.

Fortunately, UNL was a pioneer in composition and rhetoric and women's studies. UNL was committed to the National Writing Project, which aligned the English Department with K-12 teachers. Dudley Bailey, the former chair of UNL's English Department was one of the founders of 4 Cs, and UNL made an early commitment to composition and rhetoric. UNL also had one of the first women's studies programs in the country. "So, there were a lot of forces that came together making this the right time to do this work," says Ritchie. Nonetheless, both Ritchie and Ronald acknowledge the struggle they initially faced interjecting their own voices into department discussions as well as interjecting women's voices into department courses. In that sense, Ronald stresses that *Available Means* emerged out of their praxis, "especially if you think of praxis as the whole context of teaching, research, your life as a colleague in a department, and your personal convictions that teaching an all-male rhetorical canon was absurd."

In the '80s, Ronald and Ritchie were two of ten female professors in an English Department of more than sixty. "It was not a welcoming climate for women even though two of the women were full professors, and quite formidable," says Ronald. "We used to meet before faculty meetings to literally plan how to talk—to say something, anything, instead of staying silent in meetings." During meetings, Ronald remembers that they encouraged each other with glimpses and nods. Years later, Ritchie would become department chair, but early on they struggled to assert their own voices at the same time that they fought to include women's voices into the rhetorical tradition. "I had not studied women's rhetoric, and when we taught rhetoric, we taught classical rhetoric and theorists like Burke," says Ronald. "We didn't teach women." When the first edition of Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg's *Rhetorical Tradition: Readings from Classical Times to the Present* came out in 1990, it had just a few women. Ronald says this reflects the debate at the time, which centered around the concern, "if you include her, that means you have to leave out him, and you can't do that."

Barbara DiBernard, who taught literature and directed UNL's Women's Studies program, championed that debate at UNL. Ronald explains that every semester when book orders were due in the English Department, "there would be a memo in your mailbox from Barbara asking, 'How many women authors are you including in your course?' Of course, she was scoffed at by most of the men who said, 'are you kidding me, there are no women in the

canon.” According to Ronald, there was one exception at Nebraska, the Willa Cather course. Cather was a UNL alum and winner of the 1922 Pulitzer Prize. Yet, DiBernard kept pushing to get more women’s texts into the classroom, and her efforts inspired Ritchie and Ronald. In fact, her name appears on the dedication page of *Available Means*.

Capturing a Critical Moment in the Field

They were also guided by scholars such as Lunsford, Lisa Ede, Cheryl Glenn, Logan, Royster, Susan Jarratt, and many more women who were trying to redress the silences around women in the rhetorical canon. Ritchie points to Lunsford’s call in *Reclaiming Rhetorica* asking scholars to interrupt, to listen, and to work collaboratively⁵ (*Cultivating*). Indeed, the conception and publication of *Available Means* came about as the field of women’s rhetoric was emerging and rapidly expanding. In 1995, in addition to Logan’s anthology, scholarly collections such as Catherine Hobbs’s *Nineteenth-Century Women Learn to Write*, and Lunsford’s *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the History of Rhetoric* appeared on the landscape. Other foundational texts included Krista Ratcliffe’s *Anglo-American Feminist Challenges to the Rhetorical Traditions: Virginia Woolf, Mary Daly, and Adrienne Rich* (1995), Anne Gere’s *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women’s Clubs, 1880-1920* (1997), Cheryl Glenn’s *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity Through the Renaissance* (1997), Carol Mattingly’s *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric* (1998), Christine Mason Sutherland and Rebecca Sutcliffe’s *The Changing Tradition: Women in the History of Rhetoric* (1999) and Royster’s *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change Among African American Women* (2000). *Available Means* was also bolstered by discussions at the first biennial Feminism and Rhetorics Conference⁶ in 1997 where Ronald and Ritchie presented a paper, “Available Means/Necessary Acts: Reading Women’s Rhetorical Practices as Theory and Teaching Women’s Rhetorical Theory as Action.” They later published part of this paper in their essay, “Riding Long Coattails, Subverting Tradition: The Tricky Business of Feminists Teaching

5 See Andrea A. Lunsford’s “On Reclaiming Rhetorica” in *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*. Ed. Andrea A. Lunsford. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995: 3-8.

6 The biennial Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference is sponsored Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition, which was organized in 1989 as the Coalition of Women Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition.

Rhetoric(s)," which "explores the tangled relations among feminist theory, feminist pedagogy, the canon of rhetoric, and emergent women's rhetorics" (218).

With their collection, Ritchie and Ronald contributed to this burgeoning field by expanding the definitions of rhetorical theory and its history. They didn't want to limit the anthology to women writing about writing or rhetorical theory. "We wanted to bridge that divide between theory and practice—to see practice as theory and theory as practice," Ritchie explains. "We also wanted to argue that rhetorical history is not linear and fixed, but fluid and multiple" (*Cultivating*). Additionally, they wanted to explore some new and unrecognized contexts that women were writing out of and speaking to. "Women were writing from their own lives and locations such as the kitchen, the nursery, the bedroom, the garden, as well as the science lab, academy, courts, and even from the often denigrated and reviled women's bodily experience," explains Ritchie (*Cultivating*). They also wanted to show women's strategies, which included opening up silences, interrupting the status quo, arguing from the personal, arguing from anger, but also using dialogue and conversation. "In other words, we wanted to see women making rhetoric come alive and thereby posit new and often innovative means," says Ritchie (*Cultivating*). As they explain in their introduction to the collection, their choice of title, *Available Means*, "reflects our desire to locate women squarely within rhetoric but also to acknowledge that their presence demands that rhetoric be reconceived" (xvii).

Not only does *Available Means* introduce 70 women as rhetoricians, Ronald and Ritchie's introduction to the collection and their introduction to each of these women and their texts, teaches students how to read, examine, understand, and appreciate women's rhetoric. "I would say the introduction is written for scholars and the introductions to each text are directed at students," says Ronald. "We're really talking to the field in the introduction in a lot of ways." While they knew the anthology would be used in graduate courses, because the need existed, they also wanted it to be used in undergraduate courses. However, Ronald stresses, "when we conceived this text it was many years before an undergraduate major in writing and rhetoric was even a glimmer in our eyes. The only undergraduate classes we taught were first-year composition." The fact that *Available Means* is used in undergraduate rhetoric courses and even undergraduate women's rhetoric courses today is a testament to field's amazing growth and the text's contribution and continued value. Certainly, anyone who has used *Available Means* will acknowledge that it is an easy text to put into undergraduate students' hands because the collection's introduction offers foundational questions for a course, and the introductions to each woman rhetor provides helpful historical context and rhetorical framing.

While the process of putting together the anthology was difficult, Ronald says choosing which 70 women to include was the greatest challenge. “At first, we wanted to include everything,” Ritchie laughs. Space limitations imposed difficult choices. There were also pieces they could not get permission for and pieces where the writer or agent never responded to their requests. For instance, Ronald laments that they could not get permission from Mary Daly, and texts by Gertrude Stein, Dorothy Parker, and Anita Hill were eliminated in the final stages because of space limitations. Having to excerpt texts also created problems. “It created issues of context and integrity,” says Ritchie. “There were pieces where we thought an excerpt won’t do this work justice.”

Before they faced those difficult choices, Ritchie and Ronald devoted a lot of time to gathering. “We both were aware of texts that we wanted to use that we found important as rhetorical texts from our teaching and from our own general reading,” explains Ritchie. They also mined work by Lunsford and Lisa Ede, Jarratt, Glenn, and other scholars as they started making lists. Ronald says, “We felt some obligation to chronology. We didn’t want to skip whole centuries.” Indeed, while some things were clear from the beginning others emerged alongside the project. For instance, Ritchie says, “We knew we needed a diversity of voices and perspectives. We couldn’t confine ourselves to the standard of pieces that would be in Bizzell and Herzberg—works that traditionally defined rhetorical theory and practice.” At the same time, they chose texts that show women using traditional rhetorical practices and theories and forging new ones.

The act of gathering was also full of discoveries. Ronald was delighted to find Hortensia and while she knew who Anna Julia Cooper was, she had never read her writing. Merle Woo and Nomy Lamm were two other women she did not know. Ritchie also notes how discovering one set of writers illuminated parallels with other writers. “Putting Audre Lorde alongside Quaker Margaret Fell or Ida B. Wells alongside Ruth Bader Ginsburg created dialogues that could enrich our study of women’s rhetoric,” she says (*Cultivating*). Certainly, that is one of *Available Means*’ greatest contributions; it demonstrates the different way we perceive women’s rhetoric when we are able to read women alongside other women instead of reading them inserted in anthologies overwhelmingly dominated by men. Prior to that, students might find a woman in an anthology every few hundreds of years. Ritchie explains, “We wanted to expose and problematize the whole conception of a few extraordinary women” (*Cultivating*). They chose texts that would bring to light material differences among women—sexuality, physicality, race, religion, nationality, etc. “We also chose texts that might unsettle us and unsettle our students,” says Ritchie (*Cultivating*).

Teaching with Available Means

Ronald acknowledges that Nomy Lamm's "It's a Big Fat Revolution" and "The Combahee River Collective Statement" were hard texts for her to teach. However, she stresses that it's good for teachers to use texts they find unsettling. "Then you are actually reading with your students rather than telling them what the text means, or trying to cheerlead them into thinking this is a great text, which we all do," observes Ronald. "That's how we get our hearts broken in the classroom, because students don't always love what we love." For Ritchie, who describes herself as "a very secular person," she says incorporating the rhetoric of religious women was both daunting and enlightening. Women like Margaret Fell and Dorothy Day stretched her perception of women's rhetoric. Ritchie also says that Minnie Bruce Pratt's "Gender Quiz," which explored transgender and gender fluidity in the mid-90's, was important for her at the time.

Both Ronald and Ritchie point to Dorothy Allison's *Two or Three Things I Know for Sure* as imperative, but demanding. "I thought that was a crucial text in so many ways," says Ritchie, "but I always held my breath a little and needed a little courage when I assigned it, especially in undergraduate classes." In the text, Allison addresses issues of class, sexual assault, and sexuality. "It's just such a painful text," remarks Ritchie. "It challenged my students, and it also challenged me to think about how I can help students approach a text like this." Whether it's religion, sexuality, social class, "you want to help students identify their own assumptions," she explains. "I remember saying to students, 'As you read this think about why you are reacting a certain way, where is your response coming from, is there something in your background that has shaped this response?'"

In addition to texts that might challenge students, they also chose texts for *Available Means* that allowed them and their students to pursue epistemological questions: How is knowledge produced? What counts as evidence? What counts as truth? "Questions that are of enormous importance right now," Ritchie asserts. Ronald says she almost always assigned Toni Morrison's "Nobel Lecture in Literature," because no matter the era, her class could apply it to the political rhetoric going on around them. To illustrate this, Ronald points to an excerpt:

The systematic looting of language can be recognized by the tendency of its users to forgo its nuanced, complex, mid-wifery properties, replacing them with menace and subjugations. Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge. (Morrison 419)

Like so many of the texts in *Available Means*, Morrison's words are timeless, and continue to speak to students.

Indeed, Ronald stresses, "It's the women in the collection that have made the anthology important and successful." However, both Ritchie and Ronald are reluctant to name favorites. With coaxing, Ritchie admitted that Adrienne Rich and Audre Lorde stand out to her. "Those pieces especially, helped me see where my own commitments lay." In addition to reiterating Morrison's powerful message about ethics of language, Ronald says she cannot read the end of Alice Walker's "The Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" without crying. "But if I had to choose one," she says, "it is Anna Julia Cooper's 'The Higher Education of Women.' There is a feminine side and a masculine side. And it acknowledges a culture that has been raised by all men. I think it is brilliant, and just a beautiful, beautiful piece."

In hindsight, Jane Addams and Ann Berthoff are two omissions Ronald regrets. To this day, she also laments that they did not discover and include Bathsua Makin, who in 1673 published, "An Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewoman in Religion, Manners, Arts and Tongues With An Answer to the Objections Against This Way of Education." In her chapter, "Feminist Perspective on the History of Rhetoric," in the *Sage Handbook for Rhetorical Studies*, Ronald points to Makin as she cautions the field from becoming too self-congratulatory. In this tract, Makin includes a long catalog of women rhetors that scholars in our field have only recently recovered. Consequently, Ronald concludes, "We're recovering what was lost, found, and then lost again" (149). Offering Makin as a cautionary tale, Ronald suggests that recovery and even publication of women's rhetoric is not sufficient. Women's rhetoric(s) must be taught.

Consequently, one of the most crucial measures of the texts in *Available Means* is how they work in the classroom. Ronald says she often began her women's rhetoric courses with Hortensia's "Speech to the Triumvirs," Queen Elizabeth's "To the Troops at Tilbury," and "Cherokee Women Address Their Nation." Because each of these texts demonstrate audience challenges that women face and women's efforts to invoke ethos, "they immediately show students, particularly undergraduates, that it is different to speak as a woman," says Ronald. In her personal copy of *Available Means*, she lists all the classes where she has assigned each text. Ida B. Wells, Terry Tempest Williams, bell hooks, and Andrea Dworkin are some of the texts she frequently used.

Ronald believes Wells' "Lynch Law in All its Phases" is the perfect text to study audience and logical appeal. "There is hardly any emotional appeal there and she rarely speaks of herself," she explains. "By employing logical appeals relentlessly, Wells is assuming that her audience is good men who clearly don't know about the lynchings, because if they did they would do something about

it." Ronald used Williams "The Clan of One-Breasted Women" to show the blending of personal and public appeals that is so common in women's rhetoric. She notes how Williams moves seamlessly back and forth from her own family's experience with breast cancer to disquisitions on nuclear weapons. And she used hooks "Homeplace" to help students see how rhetorical theory comes from rhetorical action. "Particularly for women, rhetorical theory comes from physical embodied experience," says Ronald.

Initially, Ronald worried about putting Andrea Dworkin's "I Want a 24 Hour Truce During Which There is Not Rape" in the anthology. "Not because I didn't think she was dead right," she says, "but because students might think she was so shrill. However, I found it is the perfect essay to teach audience, ethics, and ethos." Ronald has also used Susan B. Anthony's *The United States of America v. Susan B. Anthony* to demonstrate stasis theory, and she has used Zora Neal Hurston's "Crazy for this Democracy" to illustrate women's use of humor. "The text is so funny, so my classes talked about whether it's ok for women to be funny," explains Ronald. She also found that some texts work better with graduate students than undergraduates and vice versa.

In her teaching with *Available Means*, Ritchie was continually struck by the way students found essays or writers that really spoke to them and their situation. "It's amazing to think that Hortensia inspires students today. That's the marvel and fun—the myriad connections and cross currents." Nonetheless, Ritchie admits that it was sometimes a challenge to get students to move beyond reactions and ask the appropriate questions such as: What definition of woman was the writer working from? What traditions, laws, or norms were they working out of, or resisting? What were their methods and available means? What did they seek to accomplish? "While I want students to discuss the impact of the pieces on their life, I also want them to approach the pieces rhetorically," stresses Ritchie.

Similarly, Ronald continually asked students: What's the rhetorical situation? Who is speaking to whom? What is their argument? How are they making it? What are the syllogisms? What are the enthymemes? What are the appeals? What kind of style are they using—high, low, medium? "I didn't want students to come away from this text simply with a sense of awe about these women—'weren't they brave, weren't they incredible?' Yes," says Ronald, "but what can we learn from them, how did they manage to do what they're doing, and how might you deploy a similar kind of strategy?"

In the same way they hoped that their collection would change their students, Ronald and Ritchie admitted that the collection changed them and their teaching. Ritchie began assigning papers connected to action research. Students in her classes did outreach projects, some volunteered in the Women's Studies Center, she even had a student do an ethnography at

a battered women's shelter. "That was really different for my teaching," says Ritchie, "but I wanted to encourage students to take the next step and put what they were reading and learning into practice some way. I wanted them to understand that they could be active rhetoricians themselves. I think it's Minnie Bruce Pratt who says, we have to 'give theory flesh and breath.'"⁷

Ronald says that working on *Available Means* led her to be more conscientious about asking "what am I missing?" In terms of her teaching, she says the collection has taught her "how identity is inherent in the rhetorical situation and rhetoric is always about uncertainty and power." She notes that Gloria Steinem's essay "Supremacy Crimes" is especially effective in showing this. In this 1999 essay, Steinem wrote, "I think we begin to see that our national self-examination is ignoring something fundamental, precisely because it's like the air we breathe: the white male factor, the middle-class and heterosexual one, and the promise of superiority it carries" (494). Given the murders of African American men and women, President Trump's election, and the current political climate, Ronald stresses how Steinem's text still speaks to us today.

Often Ronald used *Available Means* in her first-year writing courses. "There is no exigence like that of being a woman," she asserts. "I mean if you want to teach rhetoric there is no better way to teach it than to consider how you persuade the powerful when you have no power." Furthermore, she says, "Teaching women's rhetoric teaches the rhetorical context and the rhetorical triangle in stark, stark ways that first-year writers get immediately. Instead of using a JFK speech, it is much more effective to use Angelina Grimké. Plus, they don't consider women rhetors, and dammit, they should!"

A Labor of Love

One of the most telling facets of the making of *Available Means* are the logistics, which underscores that the anthology was a labor of love. Ritchie and Ronald admit there are many trials to putting together an anthology. Ronald says their process in the mid-to-late '90s "almost seems like the middle ages today." "We photocopied, photocopied, and photocopied," explains Ritchie. And after Ronald accepted a position at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, they began shipping pages back and forth between Nebraska and Ohio. "We had a copy of every text (70 plus), and a grid that we laid out indicating who would write the introduction, whether we had obtained the permission, what the fee was, whether we had paid it, who paid it, and so on," explains Ritchie. Indeed, payment for copyrights was no small matter; the cost totaled a daunting ten thousand dollars. While they received some funding assistance from the UNL

7 See Minnie Bruce Pratt's "Gender Quiz" in *Available Means* pg. 434.

and Miami University, Ronald and Ritchie paid most of it themselves; that's how much they believed in the project. According to Ronald, Alice Walker's piece was the most expensive, but she promises that's not why reading it always brings her to tears.

Ronald and Ritchie are quick to acknowledge that compiling the anthology was a collaborative effort not only between themselves, but also with the women writers included in the collection, women scholars across the country, and librarians, who were invaluable in helping them track down first appearances, first editions, and copyright holders for obscure volumes. They also involved their students. Some graduate students helped with head notes, undergraduates helped gather bibliographic information. And everyone helped proofread, especially Ronald's late husband, Dennis. Ronald explains that all the primary texts that appear in the collection were scanned, and while that was better than typing everything, the unreliability of scanners at the time meant everything had to be closely proofread. In fact, Ronald's husband read the entire book out loud with her—over 500 pages of copy—to compare the manuscript with the original text including punctuation. For several months, Ronald says their talk around the house was punctuated.

"Quotation mark, have you let the dogs out, comma, Dear, question mark, quotation mark.

Quotation mark, Kate, comma that was a delicious dinner, exclamation point, quotation mark."

Despite their best efforts, in the back of her personal copy of *Available Means*, Ronald has a running list of errors. She regrets that the publisher did not allow them to do a second edition around 2004 or 2005. "That was a real disappointment," she says. "We would have corrected the errors and switched out some pieces."

While Ritchie and Ronald never had the opportunity to update the collection, Charlotte Hogg and Shari Stenberg have decided to continue the work by putting together a new anthology of women's rhetoric(s). Both have a direct lineage to *Available Means*. Hogg was in one of Ronald's undergraduate courses at UNL, and she was also in one of Ritchie's early Rhetoric of Women Writers graduate courses for which *Available Means* was initially envisioned. And in 2007, when Stenberg joined Ritchie as a colleague at UNL, Ritchie invited her to begin teaching the Rhetoric of Women Writers course.

Describing the need for a new collection, Hogg explains, "While an explosion of theoretical, methodological, and historiographic texts in the field of women's rhetoric have been published since the turn of the century, there still isn't another book like *Available Means* with primary works grounded in context and history with a rhetorical focus" (Creating). She believes that a new anthology is especially needed in undergraduate courses filled with students

who are about the same age as *Available Means* and immersed in new literacy practices. Some of the exigencies Stenberg and Hogg point to that are driving the need for a new collection include third wave or new feminisms; new means of persuasion; globalization, transnationalism, and climate change; and questions about what constitutes woman or gender fluidity. Hogg and Stenberg anticipate that *Women's Rhetorical Acts* will highlight up to 40 contemporary female rhetors, including well-known voices such as Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Hillary Clinton, Melissa Harris-Perry, Marjane Satrapi, Lindy West, as well as voices less known—or even unknown—such as the Stanford rape victim and “Riverbend,” the anonymous Baghdad Blog author. In a time when more platforms and media include more voices, Stenberg and Hogg consider the rhetorical work from blogs, podcasts, or YouTube that has in one way been an equalizer and in another demonstrated the kind of rhetorical resilience against exclusion that women have faced for centuries.

Ronald and Ritchie are delighted that Hogg and Stenberg are continuing the project. Moreover, they believe this new anthology needs to be guided by the next generation of scholars. Of course, it is a generation of scholars who grew out of the flourishing field of women's rhetoric that Ritchie and Ronald's anthology has helped cultivate. Inspired by students' persistent question, “Where are the women?” *Available Means* helped make it possible to teach women's rhetoric courses. Along with the substantial work of other scholars in women's rhetoric, *Available Means* has also contributed to the reconception of rhetorical history; thus, paying homage to Sappho's words.

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