

# AFTERWORDS

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I open the door. I open the computer. We open, welcome, and invite students, learners, and, yes, *writers* into the shimmering network of academic writing. We stand with them, and we sit beside them. We move together to honor their words, their voices, their manifold identities, and the complex process of bringing themselves onto the page—within the complex assemblage of systems and networks that is *academia*. That is *writing*.

As these contributors have demonstrated, this work is energizing and vital, even as it can also be challenging and discouraging. We are all interconnected in shared networks of meaning-making. I go to the writing center. I go to the classroom. I am ready to instigate an academic writing revolution where all voices will be heard and supported! But I am aware that I, we, and the writers we serve often are navigating continual and systemic networks both of support and of oppression. The joy of uplifting one writer's process coming into bloom can be tempered by a concern that a future class or supervisor might not support this writer's unique voice. I often work—as many of this collection's authors also do—to make these systems and networks visible with the writers I serve. We need not only exist within a given system. We can make that system visible, and in so doing, we can question it, disrupt (and queer!) it, and imagine alternatives.

The editors and contributors of *Systems Shift: Creating and Navigating Change in Rhetoric and Composition Administration* help me, as an emerging researcher and professional, imagine what the future of writing centers and writing programs may hold, and these imaginations thrill me. The future is collaborative and interdisciplinary. The future is diverse. The future is on-campus and beyond-campus. The future is polyvocal at every turn; for in a network, while some tendrils might be a bit longer or thicker, they too fold into the larger pattern that we are co-creating. The future of writing centers and writing programs is far less *I* and far more *we*. And welcoming more voices to the table, to question and transform these systems, is perhaps what gives me the most hope.

In closing, to honor this emerging collaborative, polyvocal future, I offer not *my words* but *our words* in the following poem: a cento. *Cento*, coming from the Greek for *to plant slips of trees* and the Latin for *patchwork*, is a poem made of lines from other works. Here, this cento is composed entirely of lines from this collection's chapters. Voice multiplies, touches, and inspires within the system of

this collection, a future system living as a seed within this present system, which we, as tutors, teachers, advocates, administrators, professionals, and writers all, may join:

Theorize a radical rearrangement:  
our bodies, minds, identities, positionalities, emotions,  
values, and experiences shape and inform our work.)

We all have stories but some are de-legitimized.  
With a broader network, broader meanings can come into play.  
(This is easier said than done, but it can be done.

Theorize a radical rearrangement:  
this narrative is always evolving and always inclusive,  
driven by a need for accessibility in the name of equity.

What do stories continue to teach us?  
We are learning who to be, how to act, and what to do;  
becoming the future story changing at each center.

Theorize a radical rearrangement:  
here is an analysis of *how the bodies we inhabit  
determine the experiences we have in the world.*

I hope this builds solidarity I hope this invites reflection.  
We are the future of this discipline, as we are told—  
Let's be brave.